

St Vincent's Parish Meeting – 22nd September 2024



Background

Father Pat calls an annual meeting with an invitation to all parishioners to attend every September. This meeting was attended by around 20 people, several of whom attended the initial meeting of potential volunteers in June 2024. Father opened the meeting with a prayer.

Areas discussed

1 INTERCULTURATION

Father Pat highlighted the dynamic nature of the parish and how the profile of parishioners and the congregation continues to change, with all groups bringing their own contributions to parish life.

2 NEEDS OF THE PARISH

Father Pat reiterated the challenges the past few years, including Covid have brought to the parish and sadly the passing away of key parishioners. This has led to gaps in key areas, as discussed at the Pastoral Team meeting in June 2024. He was, however, able to report that St Vincent's has now got its own Legion of Mary group who will be helping with the spiritual well being of the parish as well as reaching out to new potential parishioners.

3 ADDRESSING THE NEEDS OF THE PARISH

It was unanimous that a core team of parishioners, who were committed to meet regularly and to take leadership in key areas to ensure that tasks were planned and actioned, was vital to support Father Pat as our Parish Priest and to maintain and develop activities to ensure smooth and safe running of the church.

Action arising

Tony and Jennie Linnett to convene a monthly (initially) Pastoral Team meeting, with an agenda, with Father Pat's direction, with all Parish meeting and Pastoral Team attendees invited. The constitution of the meeting will be agreed at the next meeting. Members of the Pastoral Team meeting will include leaders of activities and people who are interested in providing regular help in activities.

4 URGENT ISSUES:

- A. Trees in the car park were proving to be hazardous with branches coming down fortunately not injuring anyone

Action arising

Knights of Colomba to seek out tree surgeons who can survey and provide quotes for carrying out work to ensure trees are safe (going forward Knights to lead on ensuring car park/church surroundings are clear and safe (see below).

- B. Due to revisions in readings, liturgical Lectionary books and congregation mass books needed to be replaced, at a cost of approximately £1500 involved, from Advent 2024.

Action arising

Parishioners to be invited to contribute to a fund which helps pay for the books. Also parishioners could be encouraged to buy their own from the Redemptorist Publication.

- C. Antisocial behaviour in the car park area is very serious and neighbouring residents often complain to Father Pat that drug taking, drinking and other antisocial activities are taking place in the car park and around the parish centre. This is breach of security to the Church and puts Father Pat at risk when he challenges offenders of this behaviour.

Action arising

Father Pat calls the police and asks complaining residents to do the same every time people commit this behaviour. Father Pat should not put himself at risk by approaching the situations arising. In the meantime, an approach to the council needs to be made to see if they can help with a grant to build a perimeter fence and security gates to stop this behaviour in the future. JL has started a conversation with Councillor Kelly Grehan.

5 SUMMARY OF KEY ACTIVITIES FOR THE PARISH/CHURCH AREA DISCUSSED

Other activities were discussed, many of which have been on the list of priorities for a while. The leadership and status of these activities are as follows:

Activity	To be lead by	When
Church Ground/car park maintenance - In progress and a date to be set for first session to take place	Knights of Colomba	TBC/ongoing
Church buildings including Parish Centre	John Murphy/Father Pat – more help needed?	Ongoing
Readers - training, development and rota	Tony Linnett – Mark Usher currently doing the rota	TBC
First Communion Catechist training, development and coordination of FC - Further recruitment needed	Daunna Kendall, supported by Benedicta Zanusi, Lesley Hovell and Linda??	Classes to begin 6 th November
Bazaars and Fayres - checklist to be developed and call out for action party instigated	Jennie Ounsworth with assistance from rest of the Parish	16 th November
Eucharistic Ministers for Church services and visiting people with the blessed host - Needs a leader to train, support and coordinate a new group	Mark Usher currently does the rota, but this is out of date Could someone in the Legion of Mary take this on?	ASAP
Outreach – to promote the Word and the Church in new housing developments/parish	Legion of Mary and any other parishioners who want to help	Flyer with Christmas dates being distributed in Dec in collaboration with St Anselm’s Church

Hospital visitors to support Father Pat in visiting patients who would like the blessed host while they are in hospital - Individuals would be subject to NHS safeguarding training and registration		ASAP
Older Parishioners Activities which include, monthly afternoon tea party and Christmas dinner	Eileen O'Dell leads this with Irina??	Ongoing
Finance - there needs to be more education about the Church finances and therefore more compulsion on Parishioners to donate more to the church to enable its safe and smooth running	Father Pat	TBC
Gift Aid – currently only 5 th of regular parishioners donate to church through GA. Only 15 of these do so by Standing Order. There is scope for this to increase significantly, given the convenience of this cash-free way of paying.	Gerry Mogg administrates Gift Aid	Ongoing, with regular reminders about GA
Catholic Church Jubilee - Activities to be determined for the Jubilee themed 'Pilgrims of Hope' starting on 24 th December 2024	Father Pat – could the Legion of Mary help?	TBC
Safeguarding - Awareness and discussion session about safeguarding and the Church and the support on offer within St Vincent's	Father Pat, Jennie Linnett and Maria Ahmed	November 2024 TBC

6 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- A. Contactless card reader for second collection donations was discussed, but at this stage we will not be proceeding with this. It was agreed that a drive to encourage more cashless and/or standing order donations so that the Church is able to predict income and budget accordingly, notwithstanding that not all parishioners are in a position to donate regularly on this basis.

Action arising

The bank details and instructions on how to reference standing order transfer of offerings to be put at the bottom of all newsletters. Wording as follows:

***For CASHLESS church offerings, consider sending money from your bank to:
RCAS DARTFORD ST VINCENT, ACCOUNT No 07536283, Sort Code: 60-06-33
Please add your name as a reference***