



Jesmond St Mary Partnership
Wednesday 3rd July 2024
5:00pm St Mary's Catholic School

Present – R. Blackburn, Fr M.Weymes, J. Shepherd, Fr S. Hall, A. Dack, Fr Jojo, J. Riley, G. Shepherd,
Fr M. Champion, Deacon A. Rebello, Fr J. Bowes

Apologies – M. Potts, C. Hearne

Minutes of the meeting

Prayer – RBL led prayer for the start of the meeting.

Welcome and Apologies

Everyone was welcomed to the meeting. Apologies were shared.

Update from Parishes about life post pandemic

St Vincent's is thriving. They have a choir and 8 altar servers.

St Lawrence's has different people attending but always around 40 people. A Cultural Day is being held on Sunday 7th July from 1:00pm – 4:00pm.

St Aidan's / St Mary's are having regular Parish Council meetings. There is a big international congregation in attendance. First Holy Communion programme is running and people attending coffee after Mass is increasing. At St Mary's Baptisms have increased. Due to the large amount of housing being built in the area, some people have drifted away but new people are arriving. Not much attendance at social events.

Sacred Heart have found that some families with teenagers have not returned after the pandemic. With the building of Great Park there has been a huge influx of people. The community is still experiencing shock at the sudden death of Deacon John.

St Charles and Sacred Heart continue to have One World Lunch each year, Bible Study, RCIA, Baptism Preparation, Book Club. These were led by Deacon John and his wife, Angela. Angela is hoping to continue this work. Both parishes combine for the Confirmation Group.

St Charles did run a Jo Cox event where everyone wore stickers with their names on so names could be used in the Sign of Peace and at Communion.

St Teresa's congregation has doubled. Very multi-cultural. Several students are attending and there are about 30 children attending the Children's Liturgy.

St Anthony's has increased in numbers. At St Anthony's and St Lawrence's there is no choir or music group.

Holy Name has a big online community. The two weekend Masses are in total receiving 500 views. People have stopped attending church physically for a more prayerful experience online. Clubs are as strong as ever. Lost 15%-20% of congregation when the Sunday evening Mass ended.

R. Blackburn did propose the idea of sharing bulletins across the Partnership so that various events were being advertised to all.

Reflection on the Diocesan Vision

The Diocesan Vision was circulated prior to the meeting and thoughts were invited about the vision. The four commitments provide a good starting point for discussion. It would be good to have a plan as to where the discussions are to lead to. Sacred Heart are holding Synodal meetings, and the next meeting will focus on exploration of the first commitment: To Walk with Jesus and Enable Others to Encounter Him. The Saints named at the end of each commitment was a good source of information which helped with a wider picture. Fr.S.Hall proposed asking the Jesuit Priests to provide some spiritual guidance to help the parishes continue with their listening exercises. The session / sessions will run after the summer.

Action – Fr S Hall will make initial contact with the Jesuits at St Dominic's and then a group of people will meet with them to discuss the proposed session / sessions.

Finances of the Partnership

The Partnership has a central fund which all the parishes have contributed to. In the account is just over £3,000 and so this money is available to use by the Partnership.

Sacramental Programmes / Sacramental Preparation

St Teresa's has recently confirmed 27 students and Sacred Heart has 18 students on the Confirmation programme. It was discussed if Confirmations should run every year or every two years. It was agreed that every year would be beneficial. It was discussed that the Confirmation Programme would move to a Partnership level. An initial meeting for all the Catechists would be planned before sessions start. It was proposed that the Confirmation Mass moves around the parishes each year. The same idea was proposed for Baptism Preparation with regards to joining together to run the sessions and the sessions would move around the parishes.

Action – Priests are to speak to their Catechists to see if the Catechists would be happy to join with other Catechists to have an initial meeting to share experiences with the view to potentially run the Sacramental Preparation at a Partnership level.

A.O.B

A restructure is taking place which means that Heaton, Byker and Walker are becoming one parish. In this restructure it is likely that St Lawrence's will close. The bishop has asked Fr J. Bowes to consult with St Vincent's and a meeting has recently taken place. Discussions are ongoing.

Date of next meeting to be arranged for October.

