



Parish of St John Paul II, Nottingham: Think Tank Meeting- 18th January 2025

Attendees: Isaac Amieghemen, Julie Blazewicz-Bell, Julian Caesar, Reg Carter (Chair), Serina Dougal (representing Good Shepherd Academy), Nicky Gudgeon, Peter Hanson, Theresa Joseph, Ann Lynch, Ron Lynch, Philip Martin, Janet Myers, Shaun Rawding, Maggie Tempest, Christine Thomas, Cath Verhoeven and Sarah Williamson.

Apologies: Moira Hodgkinson, Katie Kitching and Fiona Mackenzie.

1. Opening Prayer

The meeting opened with a prayer led by Reg.

2. Notes/follow up of the previous meeting held on 23rd November 2024

The notes from the previous meeting, held under the auspices of the former parish configuration, were accepted as an accurate record. There were no matters arising.

ACTION: Philip to post the notes on the parish website and the noticeboard in the Good Shepherd church narthex.

3. Parish social media & communications policy/calendar

Sarah led consideration of the parish calendar for 2025.

Sarah will incorporate various additions to the calendar which were discussed at the meeting and will in due course send an updated version to Philip to circulate to the think tank. **ACTION: Sarah/Philip**

The following additional points were discussed:

- a) The newly formed parish communications team is to meet on the third Thursday of each month.
- b) The dates of the events in the diocese's Jubilee leaflet need to be referenced by the parish in terms of its own planning arrangements; Fr Philipp is keen that the parish builds on the success of its own jubilee in 2024.
- c) The Jubilee Mass at the Good Shepherd, which is to be held on 6th March 2025, and which the Bishop will be attending, will need coordinating.
ACTION: Reg to liaise with Fr Philipp on this in the first instance.
- d) A Sacrament of the Sick service is to be held at Good Shepherd at 3pm on 8th February 2025- Reg/Julie/Philip will support this, but will require someone to

make the arrangements for refreshments to be provided in the parish centre after the service.

- e) Education Sunday is on 14th September 2025- our schools are requested to get together to plan their involvement at the 9.45am Holy Mass that day; advanced planning will be essential given the event will take place shortly after the beginning of the new school year in September. **ACTION: School representatives.**
- f) It was also suggested that our Year 6/7 pupils should attend Mass for blessings at the end of the 2024/25 and beginning of the 2025/26 school year and that this should include the blessing of their school satchels. **ACTION: School representatives.**
- g) Cantamus- building on the success of the Cantamus Girls' Choir's concert in November 2024, it was suggested that, if possible, the choir could perform at a Summer event at the Good Shepherd Church, as well as a carol service at Christmas 2025. Sarah to let Julian have a suggested date for the Summer concert; Julian thereafter to follow up these proposals as appropriate with the choir leadership. **ACTION: Sarah/Julian.**

4. Parish pastoral team - feedback

Reg advised that the parish pastoral team was keen that the think tank's role and direction of travel should be revisited. In particular, it was felt that the think tank should be more proactive, not reactive, in terms of developing ideas and proposals for improving the parish and for engaging with the wider local community. This was then discussed in more detail under item 5 of the agenda.

5. Parish Think Tank - moving forward

Reg led the discussion on this. Some of the areas discussed were:

- a) The think tank has done a good job since its inception, but now needs to move forward and be more proactive in its approach. This includes being less of a "talking shop" and instead to look to generate ideas and actions for developing the parish in the Jubilee Year 2025 and beyond.
- b) We need to take steps to adapt and develop our role as a parish with an outward focus.
- c) All our parish ministries need to engage with this approach.
- d) The role of our schools is also very important. It was agreed that the schools should endeavour to keep the think tank apprised as to any school events planned to celebrate the Jubilee Year. Links with the think tank could also

helpfully be strengthened, with school representatives on the think tank being charged with taking relevant issues back to their schools to see what help or support they are able to provide. **ACTION: School representatives.**

- e) We also need to ensure that our newly formed parish, embracing both the Good Shepherd Church and St Anthony's Church, develops in a cohesive way.
- f) We need to consider how we can forge a tighter relationship with our parish ministries, improve "cross-ministry" links and coordinate what is happening within the church. To that end, periodic meetings with our ministries should be established. **ACTION: Reg/Sarah** to consider/coordinate.
- h) The Good Shepherd Church, as one of the nine designated Jubilee churches across the diocese, might wish to design its own "Pilgrim Trail", mirroring the approach developed by the Cathedral. **ACTION: Ron/Philip** to investigate.
- i) Youth group-Peter advised that the parish youth group has now started and is meeting on Fridays of each week in the parish centre. Although in its embryonic stage, it has made a promising start. The group has been donated a pool table, but also needs to source books (eg Classics) and board games, as well as a unit/bookcase for the books. Financial support is also needed for refreshments to be provided each week. Peter is developing a budget plan for the group, which will identify its one-off as well as ongoing financial support needs. It was suggested that it might be possible to seek some start-up funding from the diocese's *Enabling Mission* Fund given that youth is one of the key priority areas of the initiative. **ACTION: Peter** to check with Ron regarding the diocese's *Enabling Mission* Fund support; and to confer with Fr Philipp about the possibility of the parish supporting the group's ongoing funding needs.
- j) The parish's Friends of Nazareth group is linking with the youth group, with a view to developing a regular Youth Mass at the Good Shepherd Church.
- k) The new cohort of children engaged with the parish's First Sacrament programme provides an opportunity to encourage parents to volunteer their talents for the service of the parish.
- l) The Alpha programme is progressing well; it is hoped in future to have two series of programmes for adults per annum. Advertising the programmes effectively will be important. The proposed Youth Alpha programme also needs to be promoted.

- m) St Anthony's are looking to develop training for altar servers at the church, as well as establishing a children's liturgy group informed by advice provided by Sarah.
- n) Forward planning was identified as being important to ensure the effective implementation of initiatives- organisers intending to use parish facilities, such as the kitchen and other rooms in the parish centre need to check their availability with the parish administrative team to ensure unhelpful clashes between activities are avoided. The development of a booking form for internal parish use of the facilities might be helpful in that respect.
- o) Reg mentioned that Fr Philipp has advised that his formal approval is not necessarily required for all proposed developments. Judgements will need to be made as to when his approval is required for specific activities. As a minimum, however, Fr Philipp should be kept apprised of significant developments.

6. Safeguarding

Julian reported that progress was being made in actioning the outcomes of the parish's safeguarding self-audit in November 2024, which had been reported to the think tank at its last meeting.

The following additional points were mentioned:

- a) Safeguarding Sunday- Julian is to seek early notice from the diocese as to the date for this in 2025, in order to anchor the date in the parish diary/calendar and ensure that it does not clash with other events.
- b) Safeguarding training- the deadline for this training has been extended to 31st March 2025 and is currently progressing at a reasonable pace. The training is a mandatory requirement of the diocese for all parish volunteers whose role is subject to DBS clearance.
- c) Julian will speak with Sarah about giving safeguarding greater prominence on the new parish website which is in development. **ACTION: Julian/Sarah**
- d) National safeguarding standards are to be introduced in due course.
- e) Parish youth group- Julian is linking with Peter about safeguarding concerns and processes relevant to the new youth group. It was explained that any volunteers currently without a DBS check are precluded from any formal involvement until their check has been completed.
- f) The parish leadership team and all ministries need to ensure that they inform the parish safeguarding representatives of any changes or activities within the parish that may impact upon the parish's safeguarding status. This will ensure

that any necessary safeguarding reviews can be considered and relevant actions or checks can be undertaken.

7. Any Other Business

Nothing was raised under this item.

8. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 10.00-11.30am on Saturday, 22nd March 2025.

9. Closing Prayer

Reg led the group in the closing prayer.