



Parish of St John Paul II, Nottingham: Parishioner Forum Meeting- 24th May 2025

Attendees: Isaac Amieghemen, Julie Blazewicz-Bell, Serina Dougal (representing Good Shepherd Academy) , Moira Hodgkinson, Ann Lynch, Ron Lynch, Fiona MacKenzie, Philip Martin, Janet Myers, Christine Thomas and Sarah Williamson (Chair).

Apologies: Julian Caesar, Reg Carter, Nicky Gudgeon and Theresa Joseph.

1. Opening Prayer

The meeting opened with a prayer led by Sarah.

2. Notes/follow up of the previous meeting held on 22nd March 2025

The notes from the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record.

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

The following issues were raised:

- a) *Proposed flower festival 2025-*** we need to check the position with Michelle Swann. **ACTION: Philip** to check with Michelle on behalf of the Forum.
- b) *Cantamus Girls' Choir-*** Sarah to follow up with Julian to discuss a date for the proposed Jubilee Year concert. It was stressed that it would be important to check any proposed date with the parish diary to avoid the situation in 2024 when the parish hall was in use by another parish group and was not available for refreshments after the Cantamus concert. **ACTION: Sarah** to follow up with Julian.
- c) *Wednesday Prayer Group-*** Ann advised that a poster and leaflet had been produced to publicise the Prayer Group within the parish. It is proposed that copies of the poster will be on permanent display in the Good Shepherd narthex and at St Anthony's and that copies of the leaflet will be made available to parishioners. Sarah will also arrange for the leaflet to be profiled on our parish social media outlets. **ACTION: Ann/Sarah.**
- d) *Parish Bereavement Group-*** it was reported that Rebecca O'Connor is to hand over responsibility for the group to another parishioner. It will be important to publicise the new arrangements within the parish.
- e) *Jubilee Pilgrim Trail-*** it was reported that sixty Year 1 pupils from Good Shepherd Academy are to visit Good Shepherd Church on 12th June 2025 to

participate in the Church Jubilee Pilgrim Trail. Each pupil will be provided with an individual set of rosary beads.

3. Parish social media & communications policy/calendar

Sarah led consideration of the parish calendar for 2025, focussing specifically on the period from June to August.

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 Forum. **ACTION: Sarah/Philip.**

The following additional points were discussed:

- ***Links with the parish diary-*** Sarah will liaise with Rosemary Mahoney in the parish admin team to ensure the calendar is cross-referenced with the parish diary. **ACTION: Sarah**
- ***Scottish saints' relics-*** Ron advised that it is likely that the relics of the Scottish saints will again be available for veneration at the Good Shepherd Church (probably from 2-4 July 2025), prior to them being taken to Nottingham Cathedral. A Holy Hour to mark the occasion will be arranged with the support of Caroline Smith and a link will also be made with a Mass for Christ the King students on 4th July. Ron will arrange for leaflets promoting the relics' visit to be circulated at Good Shepherd and St Anthony's; he will also email the leaflet to Sarah so the visit can be publicised through parish social media channels. **ACTION: Ron/Sarah**
- ***Altar servers' party-*** Julie mentioned that a date for the next altar servers' party is under consideration; she will link in due course with Sarah so it can be publicised through our parish social media channels. **ACTION: Julie/Sarah**
- ***Petitions for Lourdes-*** it was suggested that it would be helpful to publicise at an early date the arrangements to enable parishioners to submit prayer petitions for the parish to take to the Grotto at Lourdes as part of the diocesan pilgrimage in July 2025. **ACTION: Julie/Philip**
- ***Education Sunday, 14th September 2025-*** it was agreed that early planning for this event was important. To that end, it was suggested that Reg should contact our schools at an early date, before the end of the summer term, to facilitate planning for their input at the 9.45am Mass at Good Shepherd on 14th September 2025. **ACTION: Reg.**
- ***National Pilgrimage of Hope-*** Ron advised that the 2025 National Jubilee Walking Pilgrimage of Hope has been arranged as part of the Jubilee Year arrangements in England and Wales, culminating in a Solemn Mass at the Cathedral of St Barnabas in Nottingham on 14th September. It involves four main pilgrimage routes, converging at the Cathedral. The route of one of the groups is likely to pass close to Good Shepherd Church and it was suggested that it might be appropriate for the church to offer to receive the pilgrims in some way on their pilgrimage journey. **ACTION: Ron** to provide details for further consideration.

4. Parish pastoral team - feedback

Sarah provided feedback from the parish pastoral team.

5. St Anthony's

In line with parish pastoral team discussions, it was agreed that St Anthony's should be a permanent agenda item on all future meetings of the Forum. **ACTION: Philip** to action accordingly.

The following issues relating to St Anthony's were subsequently discussed:

- Parish social media channels- there was a consensus that the parish social media channels should embrace both our churches and should be labelled accordingly.
- Likewise, the new parish website, which is close to going "live", should appropriately reflect both churches. Sarah advised that her understanding is that the technical architecture of the new website will ensure that any internet searches made for either Good Shepherd or St Anthony's churches will automatically link to the new website.
- The external signage for both churches needs to be updated to reflect the new parish and current Mass times- it is understood that Fr Philipp is already progressing this. **ACTION: Fr Philipp.**
- The newly established children's liturgy group at St Anthony's will be starting at the Mass tomorrow morning. Sarah confirmed she is available to provide any necessary support and advice as the group develops.
- In her capacity as the parish Guild of St Stephen secretary, Julie advised that she needs to keep a record of all the parish's altar servers. To that end, she will liaise Christine to ensure the details of the altar servers at St Anthony's is updated. **ACTION: Julie.**
- Mass times at our churches- the Forum agreed to support the proposal that the Sunday Mass at St Anthony's should be changed to a 11.30am start, in order to give Fr Philipp more time to make the journey to Calverton after celebrating the 9.45am Mass at Good Shepherd. **ACTION: Christine** to follow up with Fr Philipp.
- It was recognised that the parish has a duty of care to its parish priest and with that in mind parishioners at Good Shepherd need to ensure that the 9.45am Sunday Mass finishes at a reasonable time. To facilitate this it was suggested, for example, that the final hymn should be sung immediately after the distribution of Holy Communion and not at the end of Mass, as is often the current practice. **ACTION: Sarah** to arrange for the parish pastoral team to follow this up with the respective parish ministries.
- There was a related discussion about the number of Masses that Fr Philipp currently has to celebrate each week-end and which was felt to be unsustainable in the long term. It was agreed that the Forum would consider this in more detail at its next meeting, informed by data on attendance at each week-end Mass which Philip will provide. Thereafter, the Forum will develop

proposals for Fr Philipp's consideration. **ACTION: Philip** to include this on the agenda for the Forum's next meeting and produce the Mass attendance data to inform the discussion.

6. Jubilee Year events

This item was not discussed in detail as a number of the Jubilee Year events had already been covered in earlier discussions. It was recognised however that there was an ongoing issue regarding identifying parishioners willing to organise and support our parish events. Ron mentioned the model adopted by the Cathedral where an ad hoc planning group of willing volunteers has been established to take forward new initiatives.

7. Vocations to the priesthood

Prompted by a recent article from Fr Philipp in the parish newsletter, there was a discussion about how the parish can provide a culture that better encourages vocations. It was recognised that the parish's Friends of Jesus of Nazareth Community has a particular remit to promote vocations: Isaac explained the Community was looking at ways to encourage and support young people to develop and deepen their faith, eg after their baptisms and after their First Holy Communion. He advised that the Community would benefit from having more members to help further its work.

The following were also discussed by the Forum:

- Most vocations are first nurtured within the family and in recognition of this the parish should be looking at ways of engaging families more actively in the Faith. It was suggested for example, that the parish might wish to consider ways of encouraging families to pray together on a regular basis at home.
- The role and work of our priests should be explained to young people through our schools (including Christ the King Academy) and as part of the parish's first sacraments programmes (First Holy Communion and Confirmation).

Ron suggested that the parish could helpfully tie in with the diocesan vocations director (Fr Neil Peoples) to identify what could be done in this regard, referencing any successful initiatives elsewhere. **ACTION: Isaac/Ron** to arrange for the Friends of Jesus of Nazareth Community to take this forward.

8. Recruitment of parishioners for ministries

It was agreed that all our parish ministries should be looking to actively encourage/recruit new members, with particular reference to facilitate succession planning. To that end, it was suggested our ministries need to be as accessible and welcoming as possible. It was felt that new members of the church, recruited through the RCIA programme, should especially be encouraged to consider joining our ministries. **ACTION: All ministry leads.**

9. Safeguarding

Christine reported in Julian's absence.

Julian has carried out a full review of all parish risk assessments. These are with the parish office awaiting typing and issue.

In response to an issue raised by the Forum, Christine will check with the diocese regarding the need for volunteers, especially those that may support a particular activity on an occasional basis (such as the parish youth group), to go through the full DBS checking procedure if they are accompanied at all times whilst working with children by someone else who has DBS clearance. **ACTION: Christine** to check with the diocese and feed back to Sarah and the Forum.

10. Any Other Business

a) Side doors at Mass- Fiona mentioned that Fr Philipp had requested that all side doors in the Good Shepherd church should in future be opened by our stewards during each week-end Mass. **ACTION: Philip** to ask Reg to organise this.

b) Picture of Pope Leo- Philip drew attention to an issue, on which Fr Philipp was seeking the Forum's advice, regarding the location in the Good Shepherd Church of a picture of Pope Leo XIV. The picture had originally been located in the vicinity of the shrine to St John Paul II but had been subsequently moved to the Sacristy at the suggestion of the Bishop. This in turn had attracted some comment that it was no longer readily accessible to parishioners who may wish to pray for the Holy Father.

After discussion, the consensus view was that the picture should not be placed near the St John Paul II shrine as it might serve to distract parishioners from devotions at the shrine. Likewise, it was felt that the church already had a number of statues and pictures located at different points and that there was a potential for this to get out of hand. It was also recognised that prayers for the Holy Father are routinely included in the bidding prayers at each Mass. As a compromise, it was suggested that a picture of Pope Leo could be located in the parish centre foyer or the Atrium, or the corridor leading to it, if an appropriate space can be identified. **ACTION: Philip** to feed back to Fr Philipp.

11. Date of the next meeting

The Forum's next meeting is scheduled for 10.00-11.30am on Saturday, 12th July 2025. Fiona gave her apologies as she is unable to attend on this occasion.

12. Closing Prayer

Fiona led the Forum in the closing prayer.