

## **Catholic Leamington Walking Together Combined Topic Groups**

Minutes of the meeting 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024 in the lower hall at Our Lady's

**Present:** Liz Mottram (LM, Chair), Anne Elson (AE), Mary & Jonathan Holden (MH and JH), David Tye, Anna Godwin, Margaret Dimambro (MD, note taker), Veronica Drumgoole (VMD), Larry Connor, Jenny Hayden.

### **Apologies**

Diana O'Reilly, Father Stephen Day, Father David Hartley, Paul Hayden, Gill Ayers-Hunt, Claire Walsh, Jenny Armstrong, Mary Grayling.

The meeting began with the Synod prayer.

### **Matters Arising from Meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2024**

#### **Folders for SP and OL**

Various changes were noted:

- AE has resigned from World Day of Prayer to be replaced by Jean Daly;
- LM has added OL's gardening group; Jenny H will add OL's cleaning team.
- MH had advertised the presence of the folders in the newsletter. She is awaiting permission to add SPARK to the folder.
- The Divine Mercy entry had disappeared from the folder at SP but will be replaced.
- The reference to mothers only in the Come and Play notices was questioned. **AE will speak to Clare Burdett about more inclusive wording.**

#### **Parish Pastoral Councils**

The joint Parish council for SP and OL now has a constitution.

VMD spoke about the AGM and parish meeting at SJ, where two more members were elected to join the PPC. Names of members are on the notice board.

#### **Finances**

The question was raised about the process of dealing with standing orders as there appears to be a delay in these being dealt with.

Jonathan pointed out that it is no longer a practice of the diocese to inform parishioners of how much gift aid each has given.

#### **Welcoming recommendations**

There is now an Offertory procession at SP 5pm Saturday Mass.

MH shared the updated version of the paper Tips for Welcomers, now renamed "Welcoming Parishioners Attending Mass / Suggested Good Practice." This will be shared with parishioners who welcome at the weekend Masses.

Q. where should these documents be kept?

One problem is that not all people wearing hearing aids can access the Loop system. The best advice is to suggest people test out different places to sit in the church where the sound may be better.

MH had done an audit of all 3 weekend Masses to find out what duties fall to the welcomers, before thinking about training. The audit showed that there is a number of pre-Mass duties

other than welcoming. OL has a team of helpers before Mass leaving the welcomers to welcome. At SP these extra duties fall on the two welcomers. This is being explored by MH.

### **Volunteers**

It was suggested that Fr. Stephen could ask for a volunteer for a specific job, both in the newsletter and from the altar.

### **Meeting of WT Team meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> September 2024**

LM referred to Fr. Stephen's email in response to the minutes. In reference to there being currently 'a veil over what options are available' for the use of the hall and presbytery he said that 'the only uncertainty exists because we are simply awaiting the professionals' recommendations and not because anyone has hidden the options.' It was agreed that the wording was wrong and 'a lack of clarity' was implied. In the light of this the minutes will be amended.

Similarly where 'marginalised' groups were mentioned 'those on the margins' would be better. It was agreed to reword the minutes.

### **Clarification of roles**

In response to Fr. Stephen's concern that WT and PPC might be overlapping the group agreed that this is not the case.

Jonathan's excellent clarification of the roles of the WT Team and WT combined groups states that the combined groups are practical and are continuing to address the 100 suggestions from the WT parish meetings last year.

The W T Team has a more strategic role in helping our parishes become part of a synodal Church, and its relationship to the combined groups is mainly advisory. One function is to encourage parish groups to conduct meetings in a synodal way and he has circulated a document to the PPC explaining this. It was agreed that it could be difficult to implement this way of working but it is essential if we are to become a synodal Church in all aspects. PH keeps the parish informed of developments through the WT page on the website.

### **Further actions from phase 2 report**

We revisited some of the suggestions discussed at the last meeting for updates:

**26. Services of the Word and Holy Communion.** There is still a desire that lay people should be trained to take these services for when a priest is not available, and particularly looking to the future when this is more likely. There is a view (including among liturgists) that regular Celebrations of the Word and Communion in a parish are valuable in their own right. There are analogies with Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist taking communion regularly to the sick or housebound.

VMD pointed out that SJ was commended for their Celebrations of the Word and Holy Communion when they were without a priest.

**29. Retreats.** Margaret Simmons has offered to lead a one-day retreat during Advent. MH and Julia FitzSimons are organising a retreat for people with intellectual disabilities and parishioners at SJ on 19<sup>th</sup> November.

**30. The Chosen.** Disappointingly there are only 5 regular attendees. Meetings are suspended until January, when it will transfer to someone's home.

**34. Understanding the Mass** sessions during Lent. There was a discussion as to what resources could be used. Jonathan suggested approaching the Society of St. Gregory. AG will find out about an eight-part DVD series. MD has a CaFE DVD, which could work for 4 weeks.

VMD has been exploring resources for deepening faith following a request made at SJ PPC for adult faith development. She has been in touch with Paul Northam (Diocesan Adviser for Evangelisation and Discipleship) who admitted the lack of resources but suggested there may be some suitable materials forthcoming.

**VMD, JH and MD will research**

**36. Social Events.** SJ has a social committee which arranges regular events, mainly to bring parishioners together; any financial profit goes to the parish.

Kindaid at OL hold regular fundraising events.

**40. Come and Play.** The advert says for children and mums, but there are some dads too! Actioned above in Matters Arising.

**41. Multilingual Rosary** to take place at OL 20<sup>th</sup> October.

**42. Helping non-Catholics at funerals etc.** Jonathan spoke about the role of 'Commentator' who works from a script to explain what's happening at the Mass or service to help those who are not familiar with the Catholic Church. The commentator does not speak from the lectern/ambo, since this should be reserved for proclaiming the Word of God.

There was only a short amount of time to briefly address further suggestions:

**45,46,52. Outreach.** The Outreach Team, led by Peter Dimambro, is now established. Visits have now started to new parishioners (Peter and Jenny H) and to parents of children who have been baptised in the last two or three years (Peter with Anna or Sicilia). DT expressed an interest.

MD suggested there could be an annual service in November in remembrance of those in the two parishes who have died in the last year. Relatives of the deceased would be invited. It was thought better to have a service rather than a Mass, as many of the relatives are not familiar with our Mass and cannot participate fully. However, this needs to be on hold until next year.

### **Time and place of next meeting**

Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> January at OL in the Lower Hall at 7.30 pm

The meeting finished with a prayer.