

**ENGLISH MARTYRS' AND ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY  
JOINT PARISHES PASTORAL COUNCIL MEETING At ENGLISH MARTYRS'  
11<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2023**

**PRESENT:** Fr Gerry (Parish Priest); Tony Sharpe (Vice chair, St Augustine's); Nikki O`Neill (Secretary, English Martyrs); Veronica Hollingsbee (Secretary, St Augustine's); Ufuoma Bakpa (AoC Member); Jeni Gardner (AoC Member); Babu Aliyath (Syro-Malabar); Liz Tomkins (EM Member);

Meeting chaired by Tony Sharpe; Minutes taken by Nikki O`Neill.

**1. Opening Prayer.** This took place in the Church. Fr Gerry used the reading quoted in the Working Document for the Continental Stage (DCS) "*Enlarge the space of your tent, spread out your tent cloths unsparingly, lengthen your ropes and make firm your pegs*" (Is 54:2) but read the surrounding context chapter 54 v1-10. There was then 10 minutes of quiet reflection to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to members.

**2. Apologies and resignation.** Apologies had been received from Karen Dinsmore, Anne Kinghorn and Will Pearce. Fr Gerry had received an email from Simon Hall (Vice chair, English Martyrs) to say that he wished to step aside from the JPPC due to personal reasons. His resignation was accepted and Fr Gerry wished to thank him for the contribution he had made in the past on behalf of EM.

**3. Suggestions for new members to the JPPC.** There was at least one vacancy for someone from St Augustine's and two for English Martyrs. Members came up with three suggestions of people Fr Gerry could approach to ask them if they would be willing to join the JPPC. Tony Sharpe commented that EM would also need to appoint another Vice Chairman from their number by the next meeting.

**ACTION:** Fr Gerry to ask the people suggested if they would be willing to join the JPPC

**4. Minutes of previous meeting 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022** - Accepted as correct.

**5. Matters arising not covered elsewhere**

**(3.1.)** Karen had contact Mandy Baker and now one of the Youth Group who was in regular contact with Mandy was liaising with her on behalf of the YG. This item was now closed.

**(3.2.)** Will Pearce had not been able to complete this action because the H +S Rep has resigned and this responsibility had now fallen on Fr Gerry for the current time. Fr Gerry was therefore overseeing the YG activities from a H&S perspective. This item was now closed.

**(3.3.)** Youth Group leaders had a meeting with Fr Gerry to discuss a few issues. This item was now closed.

**(3.4.)** Committee members photos. Tony had brought a draft sheet for each church showing JPPC Members' photos and their names for checking and approval. Several minor amendments were noted to the spelling of names and once these had been corrected, final sheets would be displayed on the appropriate notice boards. It was agreed that a similar system should be adopted for each committee

within the two churches so that parishioners could see who was involved in each committee, making it easier for them to approach someone if they had a question of query or wished to bring a matter to the attention of one of the committees.

**ACTION:** Fr Gerry to raise this matter with each committee.

**(3.5.)** Polish Mass cards. Fr Gerry had been unable to obtain any leaflets. However, CTS had Polish/English Mass booklets for children and adults but these cost £3 each. It was agreed that Fr Gerry would ask the First Holy Communion parents if they would find a booklet helpful and therefore wanted one before purchasing any.

**ACTION:** Fr Gerry to ask FHC parents if they were interested in a mass booklet

**(7.)** Bishops' Synod Synthesis – Tony and Nikki had updated parishioners at all masses one weekend in November regarding the Synod and how matters had progressed. Fr Gerry had emailed the Bishops' Synod Synthesis document to all those who received information by email.

**5.1. Ashes** – Fr Gerry had an additional item for the Agenda and the Chairman suggested it should be mentioned at this point in the meeting to ensure it was covered. Fr Gerry explained that a parishioner from EM had asked him to raise the state of the 'Ashes' sink hole with the JPPC. The location at the end of the church meant it was open to mistreatment and the cover provided a trip hazard. People, not parishioners, would not be aware of what it was as there was no obvious sign to ensure this area was treated with respect. Fr Gerry showed the JPPC photographs on his tablet of what had been done at one of his previous parishes to provide an ashes 'burial ground' and a more 'peaceful space' to highlight the area as a place of remembrance. Fr Gerry felt that something similar should be done at AoC as well as EM. He suggested that the burial area at EM could be moved into the garden at the back of the church or fence off the existing area in some way. Moving the 'burial area' into the garden could be more problematical a. because the younger children played football on Sundays in the garden area and b. people who had already had their relatives' ashes put down the sink hole may be upset by any move. In principle all agreed that it was a good idea to make the areas more respectful. The members of the JPPC were asked to consider what should be done at each church and then this would be discussed at a future meeting. Once a rough plan had been agreed, quotes would be needed to see if the projects were affordable.

**ACTION:** All JPPC Members to consider what should be done with the 'ashes burial areas' at their respective churches.

**5.2. Agendas** – In order that parishioners could raise matters and have them discussed at a JPPC meeting, all agreed that the Agenda for meetings should be publicised prior to the meeting by including it in the Newsletter. This would allow parishioners time to comment or make suggestions which would then be considered and, if appropriate, included on the final Agenda for the meeting.

**ACTION:** Fr Gerry and Secretary's of both parishes to ensure a basic Agenda is published at least three weeks before the next JPPC meeting (**e.g. weekend of 11/12 February for the next meeting**).

## **6. Lent and Easter**

**6.1. Easter Triduum 2023** – The JPPC agreed Fr Gerry's proposal, as detailed in the Agenda, that the Easter Triduum would be held at St Augustine's this year with the same start times for each service as the previous year at EM. The Syro-Malabar Rite had to be accommodated too. They would be using St Augustine's for all their celebrations this year. The timings of each service were provided at the JPPC meeting by Babu Aliyath:

Maundy Thursday, 6 April – Mass in the morning

Good Friday, 7 April – 10 am until 2 pm

Holy Saturday, 8 April – 4pm until 7pm

Easter Sunday, 9 April – 8.30 am

The only amendment to the Latin Rite schedule that would be required in order to accommodate the Syro-Malabar services would be to move the Good Friday extended morning prayer at 9.30 am to EM.

**6.2. Lent** – Fr Gerry would provide resources as for Advent. Fr Gerry asked the JPPC what they would like provided during lent. He commented that there had been various courses during lent in the past. Nikki commented that there was a very good course being run at St George's based on the film 'The Greatest Showman' and Fr Gerry confirmed that Rev Rachel would be happy to open this up ecumenically. Members asked for Stations of the Cross. Fr Gerry reminded Members that mass, stations and a soup lunch was provided every Friday during lent at AOC. It was suggested that Stations could take place after the 10am Wednesday morning mass at EM, as had been done the previous year. He was asked if an evening Stations of the Cross would be possible too. The Syro Malabar were having their own one-day retreat during lent. Fr Gerry suggested a one-day retreat on a Saturday from 10am to 4pm. Members felt this was worth exploring. Fr Gerry said he would approach Deacon Barry to see if he would be interested in running a retreat day for the joint parishes.

**ACTION:** Fr Gerry to obtain resources for lent

**ACTION:** Fr Gerry to speak to Deacon Barry about running a retreat day

## **7. Response to the Document for Continental Stage (DCS) of the current Synod – Enlarge the Space of Your Tent Is 54:2**

The DCS had been circulated by the Diocese in late November. They said that Bishop Declan had to send his diocese's response on this document by 3 January 2023 which was a very tight timescale for parishes to respond with their views. The Diocese had arranged an on-line training session regarding the DCS on two dates in mid-December. Nikki O'Neill for EM and Paul Taylor for AOC had both said to Fr Gerry that people might do the training and respond individually but getting parishioners together for their views so close to Christmas and New Year would be impossible. (Note: This had been advertised in the newsletter). Nikki

and George O'Neill had done the on-line session, had looked at the 3 questions to be answered and had provided a response based on their experience of parishioners' input at the Synodal Conversations sessions at EM. This had been sent to the Diocese by 3 January. Nikki commented that the views in the response they made were not necessarily her personal views. She also said that there would not be much benefit in getting parishioners together to discuss this further as most of the issues were now for consideration by the Synod in Rome. She suggested the JPPC should focus on the Diocesan Report and the earlier training session with Danny Curtis on 'Listening with the Heart' for the purpose of exploring our journey towards becoming a synodal church, which had eventually taken place as an on-line session following the cancellation of the day at Brockworth. This would be much more beneficial for our two parishes. Fr Gerry thanked Nikki and George for their efforts on behalf of EM parish.

### **8. Consideration of Pastoral Activities to reach out to the less fortunate living in our parishes regardless of creed**

Fr Gerry said that in Matson, The Church Army (Anglican Missionary Organisation) were providing a 'Long Table' at St Hilda's Hall every day except Friday from 8 am – 4 pm, a warm space where people could get a hot meal, teas and coffees. In Tuffley Grange Baptist church had Coffee House, Tuesday mornings and GRAB all day on Wednesdays, which were both advertised as 'A Warm Space'. St George's had a wide variety of other activities, including Coffee Pot on a Tuesday morning St Barnabas had Teapots on Tuesday every Tuesday afternoon. Fr Gerry said if EM did anything to provide a warm space, it would be essential to avoid clashing with those already running in Tuffley. It was agreed that a 'Warm Space' at EM should be explored but it would require a reasonable number of keen volunteers. It was also agreed to extend a welcome to existing events like Tea@3 at AOC and the monthly Coffee Morning at EM by advertising them more widely.

There was no time to discuss item 9. 'Volunteers support retention and encouraging new ones' and item 10. On Spiritual Accompaniment, which had been noted for a future meeting.

Fr Gerry closed the meeting at 9 pm with Psalm 120, taken from the leaflet 'Prayers Upon the Death of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI.

### **Next Meetings:**

Monday	6 <sup>th</sup> March	at St Augustine's
Tuesday	9 <sup>th</sup> May	at English Martyrs'
Wednesday	12 <sup>th</sup> July	at St Augustine's
Thursday	7 <sup>th</sup> September	at English Martyrs'

### **SIGNED**

Fr. Gerry, Parish Priest -

Tony Sharpe, Vice chair -