

**ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY AND ENGLISH MARTYRS
JOINT PARISH PASTORAL MEETING.
9TH MARCH 2022**

Bishop Declan has asked that all Parish Pastoral Councils move to a "Synodal conversation format" for meetings. This means we begin with a substantial time of prayer-mostly silence- then respectfully listen to each person on the Council as we discuss particular points. This ensures all members get a chance to contribute.

PRESENT=Fr Gerry(Parish Priest);Tony Sharpe (Vice chair St Augustine`s);Nikki O`Neill (Secretary English Martyrs`); Ofumo Bakpa; Karen Dinsmore; Liz Tomkins; William Pearce. Veronica Hollingsbee(Secretary, St Augustine`s).

APOLOGIES=Simon Hall (Vice Chair English Martyrs`);Jeni Gardener; Ann Kinghorn.

Meeting chaired by Tony Sharpe, minutes taken by Veronica Hollingsbee.

1. The meeting opened with the Synod prayer, a reading from Acts of the Apostles, a reflection based on Oscar Romero, and ten minutes for silent prayer.
2. Minutes of the previous meeting (10/1/2022) approved.
3. The members were divided into the two Parish groups to discuss the results of the Synod reports for their own Parish. Following discussions, we agreed these action plans.
4. **ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY.**

There was general agreement with the points raised and acceptance that these need to be addressed.

 - A.)**Photos of committee members. We can add photos of those on the various committees on the noticeboards and websites (if members consent) along with a description of their function.
 - B.)**JPPC meeting dates. The schedule of meetings could also be posted on the noticeboard, the website and in the newsletter nearer the time, along with the agenda.
 - C.)**Minutes. There is no reason not to publish the minutes, once they are approved by the Council Members. If there is a major topic for discussion, a representative from the JPPC could speak about it at the end of Masses.
 - D.)**Suggestion box. The suggestion box idea appeared in both Parishes`. The suggestions can be regularly checked and dealt with by the appropriate group or person.
 - E.)**Agenda items. The JPPC will discuss items that relate to just one Parish or the other when necessary. For example, a recent discussion involved the 60th anniversary at St Augustine`s.
 - F.)** Parish meetings. The pandemic has made Parish meetings difficult to arrange in an inclusive way. We could have continued with them on-line; that would have prevented many joining in. Experience has shown that meetings held this way are not as interactive. As we move back to a situation where we can safely meet again in person (and must be comfortable doing so), we can reinstate these events again.
5. **ENGLISH MARTYRS`** Thanks to Nikki for the details which follow - English Martyrs Feedback following initial study of SYNOD Report
There were several areas we felt we could work on as a parish in response to parishioners Synodal Conversations.

A) Youth

There was a need to explore the possibility of setting up a Youth Group aimed particularly at the 12+ (secondary school aged children). The young people should be guided into coming up with their own activity programme and possibly meeting on a Friday evening, fortnightly. One suggestion was that they could run an 'Afternoon Tea' for the more senior parishioners and perhaps look at ways they could help the Homeless.

It was also felt that work should be done to involve the post First Holy Communion children in some way during mass, either asking them to read at mass or do the offertory collection, if they had not chosen to become altar servers. It would also be good to have a children's mass once a month, using the percussion instruments at the end of mass (as had been done in the past). Roles should be found for some of the older children, as currently is happening with those helping with Children's Liturgy. This might then lead to those children doing a course to become Youth Catechists in the future.

B) Improve links with local catholic schools

People felt that the parish did not have direct involvement with local catholic schools and in particular St Peter's High School. The question was asked 'what do we expect from any links?'. This needs more thought and time did not allow for further discussion.

C) Visiting the sick and elderly

After the Covid pandemic some parishioners had not returned to church. This was for a variety of reasons including illness and a fear of mixing in large gatherings as well as an inability to get to mass because of the lack of a car.

People felt there was a need to set up visiting teams (not necessarily going down the route of SVP) to ensure that all parishioners felt loved and cared for. It was not realistic to expect Fr Gerry to be able to do all the home visits himself. Everyone felt that 'Outreach' in this area was essential.

D) Buddying

There are people coming to mass who have anxieties of various sorts. It was felt that individuals could be asked to become a 'buddy' for someone. The buddy doesn't necessarily need to know the whys and wherefores but could just be asked to make friends with a particular individual and help them to feel more at home in church.

E) Volunteers

It was recognised that to do new things, including those mentioned above, more volunteers were needed. Many of the current volunteers were getting older and/or were already 'maxed out' in terms of their time. New volunteers were needed in many areas of church volunteering.

It was suggested that a personal approach works best but that people in their 30s and 40s should be targeted regarding volunteering. Initially this could be for 'one-off jobs' in the hope that this would encourage them to get more involved with church activities in the future (and recognising that they probably had young families and were pulled in many directions already).

F) Identifying key people to contact in the Parish

It was noticeable at the Synodal Conversations that parishioners were not aware of who their representatives were on the JPPC. This should be addressed as a

matter of urgency. Apart from the JPPC, it would also be useful for people to know who to contact if they wanted to ask a question regarding any aspect of church life. Marisa is a good focal point for this but she's not there every day or every weekend. It would help if people could speak directly to the person in charge of each activity. E.g. choir, kitchen, cleaning, flowers, fund raising, coffee mornings etc.

People felt a 'Welcome Leaflet' would be very helpful to new parishioners and this should be readily available in the Narthex. A board in church could also be used to post photos of the key people - putting faces to names. Also, the website could be improved in this area.

It was also suggested that a 'Fun Event' could be organised to draw more people in and this would perhaps open up an opportunity to invite them along to other things.

G) Finally, it was felt that we as parishioners and the church needed to be more fluid.

6. Next meetings;

Monday 9 th May	English Martyrs`
Wednesday 6 th July	St Augustine`s.
Thursday 8 th September.	English Martyrs`.

Signed: Fr Gerry, Parish Priest.

Tony Sharpe, Vice chair St Augustine`s.