

South Bucks Area Pastoral Council Meeting - Notes

Tuesday 18th November 2025 – 7.30 pm at St Teresa’s, Beaconsfield

1.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION		ACTION
	Joan welcomed everyone to the meeting. She extended a special welcome to those who had recently taken up appointments in our Pastoral Area. Fr Mirek Misiura – Parish Priest for IHM and St Columba's Fr Deepu Daniel OCD has joined the Carmelite Community at St Joseph’s in Gerrards Cross. She also welcomed Fr James Evans- appointed to St Augustine’s and John Henry Newman in High Wycombe. He was not present this evening. Joan also thanked all the parishes which had supported and sustained the spiritual life of St Columba’s and IHM in recent months whilst they had been without an active priest.		
2.	PRAYER AND REFLECTION		
	Fr Jerome led the meeting in prayer on behalf of Joseph's Parish. He opened with music followed by a reading from the Book of Wisdom, the prayer for the Diocese and prayers for the intentions of Bishop David.		
3.	PASTORAL AREA COMMUNICATIONS		
	3.1	Schedule of meetings for 2026	
		A schedule of meetings for 2026 was agreed as follows: Tuesday 3 rd February	

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She will consider how the pastoral area might provide further support. <p>iii. Annual Priests Conference 2026 - this will be held in June at Highgate House in Creton. The priests of each pastoral area had been asked to submit two topics for consideration for the 2026 agenda. One of our topics was “The Future of our Catholic Schools” which was accepted enthusiastically. Another topic to consider might be “The success of our immigrant communities in leading Catechesis – how can we learn from them?”.</p> <p>iv. Advent and Christmas – Dates for services of Reconciliation had been agreed.</p> <p>v. Emmaus Programme – Fr Sean had reminded parishes to make a further £100 donation per parish to support the programme going forward. Fr Roy brought donations from his two parishes.</p> <p>vi. Clergy Christmas Party will be held at St Teresa’s on Tuesday 2nd December</p>	
	3.2	Update from Chairs and Deans Meeting	
		<p>Joan reported on the meeting held via Zoom in October which had been led by Avril Baigent and Fr Francis Higgins.</p> <p>i. Two new Deans had been appointed: Fr Tony Brennan for Slough and Fr Jaismon Francis for Aylesbury.</p> <p>ii. Assembly 2026 plans are in abeyance pending discussions with Bishop David.</p> <p>iii. Discernment Process - Aylesbury had completed this and their review was due at end of October 2025. They had consulted widely and engaged 400 people in the process. One positive development was to centralise the youth activities of two parishes within the parish that had facilities to support them. Parishioners in the more affluent parish were supporting the less affluent parish. Luton and North Northants are going through Discernment Process at this time. South Bucks Pastoral Area – We should start to consider in 2026 how we might prepare ourselves ahead of this discernment process in our own area.</p> <p>iv. Diocesan Assembly if this goes ahead there would be preparatory work involved.</p> <p>v. “Round Robin” The group had shared what had been happening in their pastoral area. Joan had shared the success of our Jubilee celebrations.</p>	ALL
	3.4	Christmas Booklet 2025	
		<p>Thanks to everyone for their contributions. Please sign off the draft copy tonight as this will go to print tomorrow. Booklets will be available for 1st Sunday of Advent as requested by the clergy. Digital copies will also be available. Please advise numbers required if you have not already done so.</p>	Joan ALL
4.	JUBILEE PILGRIMS OF HOPE – UPDATE – See separate Jubilee Report		
		<p>i. Marian Jubilee - An afternoon with Mary was held on 26th October at St Dunstan’s Bourne End led by Deacon Brin Dunsire. This had been well attended by approximately 40 people. Deacon Brin had given two excellent talks covering all 20 mysteries of the Rosary. We concluded our day by praying the Glorious Mysteries in the Church. He had made copies of his script available both on the day and electronically following the meeting. This presentation is available at any time should a parish wish to hold a day on Marian Devotions. Thanks to Deacon Brin for organising the day for us to celebrate the Marian Jubilee.</p> <p>ii. Pastoral Area Retreat -- Numbers to date are now 17. Christine will inform Fr Matt and Sr Julia. Please advertise this again this weekend in your parishes.</p> <p>iii. Jubilee for Prisoners 13th December @ IHM. Deacon Gerard had previously distributed posters advertising this event. Please bring a packed lunch. Please advertise in newsletters and announcements from this weekend.</p>	ALL ALL

	iv. Thanks to everyone who had supported the Jubilee Events throughout the year. Christine will prepare a summary for the February meeting of how we had celebrated the Jubilee of Hope within our Pastoral Area.	Christine
5.	<p>Emmaus Programme 2026</p> <p>Finance - to date we have received contributions from Immaculate Heart of Mary, St Peter's and St Columba's with St Teresa's making a £200 contribution this week. Initial parish contributions and donations received had sustained the programme for two years. Fr Jerome said that not everyone has taken a stipend for their talk.</p> <p>The programme for 2026 is almost complete. Deacon Peter has kindly offered to give a talk in June as Deacon Sean Ryan is not available. He will advise Fr Jerome and Christine of his topic. Fr Jerome will chase Fr Simon for his topic for November.</p>	Dcn Peter Fr Jerome
6.	CATECHISTS AGM	
	<p>Christine had spoken to Alex Heath. The current proposal is to possibly move the date of the AGM from February into the summer months. The meeting was scheduled to be held in the Centre at the Cathedral but there is now another meeting in there so the Catechists AGM is currently scheduled to meet in Bishop's House. This would mean that a much smaller group of people could attend if held in February.</p> <p>If, in the meantime, any parish has any issues or requires catechetical support please contact Alex Heath direct.</p> <p>Jubilee of Catechists - As it had not been possible to hold an event at the time of this Jubilee in October, the postponement of the Catechists AGM now gives us an opportunity to hold an event for our Paastoral Area Catechists in Lent 2026. IHM would be happy to host this. Deacon Peter would propose a date and contact Georgia Clarke at the parish of St Elizabeth of Portugal, Richmond to see if she could speak to us about their approach to sacramental preparation. If she is not available, we should still bring our catechists and liturgists together to maintain the momentum from our 2024 event. Our School Chaplains would also be invited. We should also extend invitations to Martin Fahey and John Traynor who has previously had responsibility for RE in schools and Sophie Davies, RE Coordinator, St Joseph's School.</p> <p>There needs to be an opportunity for us to share resources and experiences during the day.</p> <p>Applications for the Youth Worker in the Four Parishes close on 28th November. Fr Roy reported that they had so far received three applications. Deacon David Curtis is leading this project.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>Dcn Peter</p> <p>Dcn Peter</p>
7.	SAFEGUARDING	
	<p>Last week was National Safeguarding Sunday in the UK. In the Catholic Church we have an International Day for Safeguarding which had been celebrated earlier in the year.</p> <p>Deacon Peter is working with the Healing and Reconciliation Team to develop an Accompaniment Team to accompany people who have been abused or suffer from addictions. He hopes to be able to share more on this in the New Year.</p> <p>The current chair had agreed to stay in post as Head of Safeguarding Board until his successor has been appointed.</p> <p>Catholics in Recovery – A parishioner had come to Fr Sean about this programme re: abuse or addiction. She was particularly concerned about domestic abuse. Fr Sean and Deacon</p>	<p>Dcn Peter</p> <p>Mgr Sean</p>

	Peter will meet with Phillippa and then, pending the outcome of the conversation, see if she might give a presentation on this to our PAC in February. It was noted that the Pope's intention this month is to support those who are depressed and have suicidal thoughts. Hopefully we could offer support in the form of a pastoral area group rather than by individual parishes. Maria is aware of people in SVP who have problems with addictions – how do we walk alongside them? We need to look outward to recognise the signs of abuse or addiction.		
7.	OUTSTANDING ACTIONS		
	<div><div>i. Parish Pastoral Councils – Next year we may look at what we have as parish pastoral councils across our pastoral area. Avril's accompaniment sessions are currently running on Re-imagining Pastoral Councils.</div><div>ii. St Carlos Acutis – St Peter's are still waiting to receive their relic of St Carlos Acutis. They are still planning to hold the Carlo Acutis Festival in 2026.</div><div>iii. 40 Hour Adoration – We need a successor to Fr Jithu to take the lead on organising 40 hrs Adoration in our Pastoral Area. This will be discussed at our February meeting. If any clergy would like to volunteer to lead this, please contact Fr Sean.</div><div>iv. Welcome Packs Please send examples to Deacon Gerard as he is trying to develop one.</div><div>v. Refresher Days – Fr Sean and Maria Cox were looking a holding Refreshers Days for similar groups to come together.</div></div>	<div>ALL</div> <div>Canon John</div> <div>Clergy</div> <div>Mgr Sean</div> <div>ALL</div> <div>Mgr Sean</div> <div>Maria Cox</div>	
8.	ROUND TABLE		
	<div><div>8.1</div><div><div>i. Mission Northampton. The Council of Priests had had a talk from Maria Heath on Evangelisation, forming Missionary Disciples and Multiplication. A House of Mission and Prayer had recently opened in Northampton. Maria would be happy to give a talk to the PAC on the role of Mission Northampton. It was felt that this was not necessary at this time as she had already covered this during her Emmaus talk on "Missonary Discipleship this year.</div><div>ii. Mission Conference 2026 will be held at Woburn Sandson 14th March 2026.</div><div>iii. Bethsaida Course - Applications are still being accepted for the Bethsaida course. Formation for leadership skills and practical ideas locally.</div><div>iv. Alpha Course - Deacon Peter reported that their cluster of four parishes is hoping to run an Alpha Course. This would be led by Catholic Facilitators but open to all. Maybe Mission Northampton could customise a course for us. There is an Alpha Training Day on 7th February in Luton. The aim is to run Alpha between Easter and Pentecost 2026 at Damien Hall in Great Missenden. Deacon Peter will engage with other parishes in the area over the winter months. Everyone to consider "who could they bring along".</div><div>v. Advent Retreat - The online Diocesan Advent Retreat run by the Pastoral Development Department starts on Monday 24th November.</div><div>vi. St Peter's School Marlow is closing. Closure will be phased over two years. Birth rates have plummeted which has caused this closure.</div></div></div>	<div>ALL</div> <div>ALL</div> <div>Dcn Peter</div> <div>ALL</div>	
	<div><div>8.2</div><div>Pilgrimage to Patmos - Canon John Udris had recommended Fr Jerome to lead this pilgrimage taking place 1-8 June 2026 on "Reading Revelation on Patmos". The poster will be circulated to parishes to advertise.</div></div>	Fr Jerome	
9.	Wrap-Up and Closing Prayer		
	Joan thanked the PAC for their commitment and energy during the year. We should leave our meetings as Ambassadors of Faith, to be more missionary. She appreciated the great cooperation in this group. Before we meet in February please reflect on what we think our work has to be for next year to build a thriving Catholic Community in our parishes. She wished everyone a very happy and holy Advent and Christmas.		ALL

	Fr Sean closed the meeting with a prayer and blessing.	
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ATTENDANCE and APOLOGIES

Parish	Church/es and Schools	Attendees	Present
Great Missenden	Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church	Fr Mirek Misiura Deacon Peter Collins Tony King	Yes Yes Yes
Chesham Bois	Our Lady of Perpetual Succour Catholic Church	Fr Roy Karakkattu Margaret van Duyvenbode Bridget Harvey	Yes Apologies Yes
Little Chalfont	St Aidan's Catholic Church	Joanna Hale (Exec) Peter Kirk	Yes Yes
High Wycombe	St Augustine's Catholic Church	Fr Jonathan Hill Fr James Evans Deacon Brin Dunsire Raheel Nadeem	Apologies Apologies Yes Apologies
High Wycombe	Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church St John Henry Newman	Deacon Paul Priestley Maria Plummer	Apologies Apologies
Chesham	St Columba's Catholic Church	Fr Mirek Misiuria Deacon Gerard Felix (Exec) Lewis Canning	Yes Yes Apologies
Bourne End	St Dunstan's Catholic Church	Deacon Brent Adonis Jeff Wellington	Yes Yes
Gerrards Cross	St Joseph's Catholic Church The Most Holy Name Catholic Church	Joan Barham (Chair) Christine Cornwell (Secretary) Fr John McGowan OCD Fr Bob Davies OCD Fr Jerome Ituah OCD Fr Theophilus Nyamali OCD Fr Deepu Daniel OCD	Yes Yes Apologies Yes Yes Yes Yes
Marlow	St Peter's Catholic Church	Canon John Udris Deacon Kevin Ryan Marie Lou Stephenson	Yes Apologies Yes
Beaconsfield	St Teresa's Catholic Church	Mgr Seán Healy (Dean) Fr Kamil Kawiski Maria Cox	Yes Apologies Yes