

South Bucks Area Pastoral Council Meeting - Notes

Monday 22nd September - 7.30 pm at St Teresa's, Beaconsfield

1.	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION		ACTION
	Joan welcomed everyone to the meeting.		
2.	PRAYER AND REFLECTION		
	Deacon Brent opened the meeting with a prayer on behalf of St Dunstan's Parish. This focused on a reflection on St Catherine of Sienna.		
3.	PASTORAL AREA COMMUNICATIONS		
	3.1	Schedule of meetings for 2025	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Our final meeting for 2025 is Tuesday 18th November with St Joseph's leading the prayer. ii. A schedule of meetings for 2026 will be arranged at our November meeting. iii. All parishes should have started their annual Mass Count last week. 	St Joseph's JB
	3.2	Update from Clergy	
		<p>There had not been a pastoral area clergy meeting since our last PAC meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Fr Sean reported that the meeting of priests within the diocese held at Highgate House Christian Conference Centre had gone well. They had listened to the experience of priests serving in our diocese who had come from overseas. Joan Barham and Brid Vaughan had also given their reflections of their understanding and observations of what they saw to be the work of clergy. Fr Sean said the meeting had been a helpful and encouraging experience which they hoped to repeat next year. The meeting had concluded with a Mass with Bishop David. ii. The Clergy BBQ on 14th September had been well attended despite the poor weather. Thanks were expressed to Deacon Brent and Lynn who had organised the BBQ. iii. St Michael's School - the work scheduled to take place here had now slipped into 2026. Fr Sean has stepped down as a Governor of the school as his term of office had come to an end, although he had understood that as Dean his appointment was ex officio. If there is a member of the clergy interested in taking on the role of governor the school would be most grateful. iv. There should be a clergy meeting before the next meeting of the PAC in November and Fr Sean will invite Priscilla and Frederica to join them to discuss how they could support our school chaplains. St Peter's Marlow has not appointed a lay chaplain. 	Clergy Fr Sean
	3.4	Diocesan News	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Diocesan Pastoral Council Fr Sean reported that the DPC was in abeyance. Clergy members had been asked to step down. Hopefully the Council for Laity will soon be established. ii. Diocesan Assembly There are plans to have another Diocesan Assembly in September 2026. Hopefully the forthcoming Chairs and Deans meeting will discuss the preparation process for the Assembly. <p>The purpose of the original Assembly had been to continue the Synodal process initiated by Pope Francis in October 2021 to which all parishes had been invited to contribute. Workshops had been held on various themes emerging from the</p>	

	<p>Synodal process in our Diocese. There had been an opportunity for the assembly to worship together.</p> <p>Joan said the Assembly planned for 2026 should be a follow up with delegates representing their parishes coming together to share their experiences. One commitment from the first Assembly had been to establish the Diocesan Pastoral Council. Fr Sean said there had been so much enthusiasm in the Assembly that it was felt that we should do this more often.</p> <p>iii. Parish Pastoral Councils: Below is a summary of the status of Parish Pastoral Councils in our Pastoral Area. Fr Sean said it is important that each parish should consider what form their team should take and what best suits their parish. The focus should be on missionary discipleship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) St Teresa's – now has a new Senior Leadership Team b) St Columba's – now has a very effective Pastoral Council which had benefited greatly from participating in the accompaniment programme c) St Aidan's – has a Pastoral Council d) Our Lady s – Now has an evolving Pastoral Council. This process started with prayer and allowing people to take on roles in which they felt comfortable. e) St Augustine's – has no Parish/Pastoral Council or leadership team f) John Henry Newman – has no Parish/Pastoral Council or leadership team g) St Dunstan's – has no Pastoral Council or leadership team h) IHM - has a Parish Pastoral Council i) St Peter's – has a Pastoral Council which was formed out of the Synodal process with parishioners keen to be involved in parish life, they are connecting with finance and building bridges. j) St Joseph's – following the Assembly their parish delegates had continued to meet regularly with the clergy to discern the way forward. Their former parish council is now being replaced with a Pastoral Leadership Team with the aim of being more missionary in their approach. They are currently participating in the accompaniment programme 	
4.	CARLO ACUTIS FESTIVAL	
	<p>The Canonisation of Carlo Acutis had been delayed due to the death of Pope Francis. Relics only become available after the Canonisation of a Saint so the relics applied for by the Diocese had not yet been received. We are hopefully getting three relics within our Diocese, One at the Cathedral, one in Luton and one at St Peter's.</p> <p>Fr John Udris had advised that the Carlo Acutis Festival would be deferred to 2026. This would allow St Peter's time to create a secure area within the original church where the relic of Carlo Acutis could be permanently housed. They hope to have an open event with videos and talks for his feast day in 2026. It is hoped to link this with 40 hours Adoration. This should be a good opportunity to engage Confirmation candidates and other young people to participate in this event. Perhaps we could organise a group from the pastoral area.</p>	<p>Fr John Udris</p> <p>ALL</p>
5.	ADORATION 40 HOURS DEVOTION - UPDATE	
	<p>The appointment of a new clergy lead for the development of Eucharistic Adoration and the 40 hours Adoration will be discussed at the next meeting of the clergy.</p> <p>One idea was for each of our 10 parishes to arrange a period of 4 hours Adoration simultaneously on a given date, possibly in Lent, so that we would all be participating in the 40 hours Adoration.</p>	Clergy

5.	JUBILEE PILGRIMS OF HOPE – UPDATE – see separate Jubilee Report	
	St Aidan's and Our Lady's are making a Parish Pilgrimage to St Peter's in Marlow on Saturday 27 th September. The coach leaves St Aidan's at 10:30am and returns from Marlow at 4:30pm. All are welcome to join them.	ALL
6.	OASIS	
	Project Oasis has now concluded and a final report issued. Joanna Hale thanked all those who had supported this project either practically or through prayer. The mother and daughter who had been supported since their move to the UK are now settled and gained British citizenship. They had recently joined the HCPT pilgrimage to Lourdes. It was hard work to set this up the project but rewarding. Prayers and positive actions were appreciated especially in the current climate.	
7.	SAFEGUARDING	
	<p>Safeguarding Communications Below is the link to the Diocesan Safeguarding Communications Plan: Safeguarding Communications Plan</p> <p>The Safeguarding Team is still in the process of receiving and analysing feedback. It's difficult to get people to submit their thoughts. The team is approaching it from the perspective of the church, what issues might arise in the church. If people have other safeguarding concerns, then Diocesan Safeguarding Team would want to know and be interested to help.</p> <p>The Diocese would welcome any feedback from victims of abuse on the service provided by the Diocese. Please advertise the link below: https://northamptondiocese.org/safeguarding/</p> <p>Forms are included in the Wednesday email and been published in newsletter.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>Clergy</p>
7.	OUTSTANDING ACTIONS None	
8.	ROUND TABLE	
	<p>8.1 Emmaus Review - Thank you to everyone who had provided feedback on the Emmaus programme. The Emmaus series for 2026 is now being planned in the same format and venues but using speakers from within our Diocese who are better known by our parishioners. A list of proposed topics will be sent to potential speakers this week. We aim to have the programme complete by end of October.</p> <p>Currently we have sufficient funds to pay for speakers for at least the next two months. The initial donations raised in 2023 and offerings from attendees had covered our expenditure for two years. Parishes were invited to make a further £100 contribution per parish to maintain the Emmaus Series going forward. Fr Sean was asked to email parish priests with this request.</p> <p>Fr Jerome reported that we have good talks and speakers but attendance both in church and online has fallen significantly. Even some of those teaching the faith in the church are not attending. The talks are a good way to deepen our faith.</p> <p>Fr Jerome thought we could better promote the talks. One way to do this is promotion via WhatsApp. We have digital invitations which can be shared with</p>	Fr Sean

		<p>parishes so that others can share with their contacts. The personal invitation is most effective.</p> <p>In the interest of Data Protection personal data gathered for other purposes should not be used to send digital invitations. Separate WhatsApp groups would need to be set up.</p>	
	8.2	<p>Bereavement Counseling Joan asked if any parishes have a bereavement group. Deacon Kevin says the Church of England run a group held in a Coffee Shop in Marlow. There is an opportunity for clients to talk to an individual and there is usually a member of the clergy present.</p> <p>St Teresa's have tried to set up a group but it's been difficult to sustain. The services of specially trained bereavement counsellors are essential to sustain and support the group who can help the bereaved move on from telling their story to dealing with their new situation. He knew of someone who worked at Wexham Park Hospital involved in bereavement counselling.</p>	
	8.3	<p>Clergy Moves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Fr Alessandro Reno is appointed Parish Priest of Towcester. A farewell Mass had been celebrated for him yesterday. ii. Fr James Evans has been appointed to St Augustine's in High Wycombe. iii. Fr Mirek Misiuria will take up his appointment as Parish Priest for IHM and St Columba's on 1st October. iv. Fr Jithu James is appointed Assistant Priest to Fr Simon Penhalagan at the Cathedral of Our Lady Immaculate and St Thomas of Canterbury, Northampton. 	
	8.4	<p>Christmas Booklet - Joan will write to parish priests regarding content for the Christmas Booklet giving deadlines for submitting information. She hopes to provide a draft for sign off at the November meeting of the PAC.</p>	
	8.5	<p>South Bucks Hospice will be hosting their annual "Light up a Life" remembrance event at Holy Trinity Church, Hazelmere on Saturday 23rd November at 4.00pm. This is an opportunity to come together to remember loved ones who have died.</p>	
	8.6	<p>Welcome Packs - St Columba's Parish is trying to set up a welcome pack. Deacon Gerard would like to receive examples of welcome packs prepared by other parishes. Packs need to be outreaching and include links to counsellor and other community activities.</p>	ALL
	9.7	<p>Freshers Day – Fr Sean reported that Maria Cox is hoping to bring together a communities of communities from all parishes of those people with similar interests eg SVP Conference.</p>	Maria Cox
9.	Wrap-Up and Closing Prayer		
	Fr Sean closed the meeting with a prayer and blessing.		

ATTENDANCE and APOLOGIES

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