

**St Gregory's and Our Lady of Peace & Blessed Robert Dibdale
Liturgy and Faith Development Committee
The Minutes of the Meeting on 30 January 2024**

Present: Becky Bailey, Mandy Bennet, Elaine Binks, Pat Colman, Chris Danes (Chair), Terry Evans, Doreen Morris, Guilia Rush, Marina Smith

Apologies: Kathryn Burke, Laura Cole, David Cox, Lisa Dunkley, Sharon Elliot, Mary Valentine

Observers: Teresa and Peter Finkel (PPC co-chairs)

1. **Opening Prayers 7pm** Chris (Chair) welcomed those in attendance

2. **Apologies:** as above.

3. **The Minutes of the meeting** on the 27 September 2023 were approved with a clarification that support for the development of music at St Gregory's referred to St Gregory's school.

4. **Matters arising:** None

5. **Feedback:** Chris gave feedback from the Faith in Action and Main PPC committee meetings. Details available on the parish website <https://stgregorys-stratford.org/ppc/>

6. **Updates:**

RCIA/ Baptism. - Nuala

Five candidates to be received into the Church at the Easter Vigil. Weekly meeting will continue during Lent. Sponsors have been encouraged to participate in the course and this has enhanced the group. Arrangements have been made for candidates to visit the St Chad's 18 Feb 2024 to meet the bishop and receive the Rite of Election. Arrangements have been made for their first Sacrament of Reconciliation.

A course for parents who have presented their child for Baptism runs as necessary. Last took place 27 Jan with 16 parents present. This was a large group and Terry Horsman supported the logistics.

Children's Liturgy – Mandy

This busy group runs weekly during the liturgy of the Word at the 9.30am Mass at Shottery.

The Christmas activities were well received and the children especially enjoyed the creating the Angels and the Collage. Three Confirmation candidates have been supporting the group as part of their faith in action commitment.

First Holy Communion for those not in a Catholic School: Guilia

Guilia leads this programme on a Sunday morning after the 9.30am Mass at Shottery. Guilia had two children for First communion who had not been baptised. They attended extra lessons and Fr Alex baptised them on 14 Jan 2024. Nuala confirmed that their parents attended the Baptism course for parents on 27 Jan as arranged.

School: Laura via email

Regarding Terry's query (Altar Servers) this was put into last week's newsletter and shared in assembly to children (26.01.24).

School Masses and liturgical life within the school. Every class attends a Class Mass half-termly, which is roughly once a month. In addition to this, we have Holy Days of Obligation which children participate in as a Whole School. To further enhance provision, we pay within liturgical seasons for all classes to participate in daily retreats where they hear the daily Gospel and participate in singing with One Life Music; in addition, classes go on school visits to places of worship and participate in Masses there e.g. St. Chad's Cathedral and Harvington Hall.

Confirmation: Marina

The course for 24 young people is in full swing and going well. Candidates are working with the DOCat activities on Catholic Social Teaching and attending a two-hour lesson every Weds. Confirmation is well supported with a team of nine adults (Nuala, Chris, Leo, Simon, Elaine, Kathryn, Maureen, Zofia and Marina). With the help of Fr Alex and Fr Bill all candidates for Confirmation received the Sacrament of Reconciliation recently. They will lead the Ash Weds Mass and are preparing to lead Confirmation with Abbot Paul on **22 Feb at 6pm**. All parishioners are welcome to join us. Mary Watson who has expertise in reading and proclaiming the scriptures has agreed to give training to a small group of young people. Zofia has recently returned from the World Youth Day and Taize New Year gathering will present her experiences to the Confirmation group 31 Jan.

Marriage: Sharon Eliot and Lisa Dunkley run the marriage preparation course.

They have prepared all the couples who will be married at St Gregory's up until Sept 2024, after which Sharon intends to stand down from leading this course. We thank her for her wonderful and generous service to the parish over the years. Lisa has agreed to lead the course going forward. It was agreed that we should take this opportunity to review the materials in use for the marriage course and give Lisa all the support she needs in preparing future couples for marriage.

Service of Reconciliation

This has been arranged for **Friday 22 March 7pm**, with three priests available for Confessions.

Eucharistic Ministers update

We now have a proper register of Eucharistic Ministers and Mark C (our safeguarding officer) is working on getting everyone through the DBS checks. We are taking this opportunity to refresh this ministry. A retreat for Eucharistic Ministers had been arranged for **Saturday 23 March**. See newsletter for more details. Eucharistic Ministers will be recommissioned at the Maudy Thursday evening Mass.

Cover for Fr Alex

Chris on behalf of this committee had been involved in liaising with Ashley (Parish secretary) to ensure cover arrangements for Fr Alex in the coming months go to plan. Many priests will cover for Fr Alex over the coming weeks and we are grateful to them all for their help. Fr Denis Carter SSC, has been booked for the Easter Triduum and has arranged to say Mass in the Parish on Thursday 8 Feb at 9.30 and join the Parishioners after Mass for coffee (Simon and Mary's regular Café!).

Music – Elaine/ Kathryn

Elaine continues to develop the music at Shottery and is supporting the Confirmation programme along with Kathryn. Their partnership is proving very fruitful for the parish. Elaine intends to link with the First Holy Communion classes after Easter to begin to prepare them for the Celebrations in June.

The Christmas concert at Shottery by the newly formed choir under the direction of Kathryn was a huge success and raised money for CAFOD. Freddie Alberto's percussion workshop last Saturday was also greatly received, providing a wonderful and enjoyable community event. Philippe Seiler provided a meal with the flavours of Latin America. Money raised went to Mary's Meals. Many thanks to all involved in these two fantastic occasions.

Triduum

We have cover for the Easter Triduum with Fr Denis Carter SSC and may also be joined by Fr David Rocks OP. It was pointed out that to have two priests cover may be expensive. However, it is important to foster links with priests who could cover for Fr Alex in the future so as to make sure he gets appropriate rest days and holidays as he gets older – this way we can ensure his longevity in our parish. Chris pointed out that we intend to have an extra collection at some point to help pay for the extra stipends for priests who say Mass for us, covering for Fr Alex.

Doreen proposed that all who are interested in preparing the music for Easter week should meet to discuss. It was agreed to arrange a date post Confirmation.

Vocations – Pat

Pat reported that the vocations programme has not resumed post-covid. Chris agreed to bring this up at the next deanery meeting. Pat is waiting to hear about which month of the year has been allocated to our deanery to pray for Vocations and also which day has been allocated to our parish. Doreen said that a prayer for vocations is included in the bidding prayers on the 4th Sunday of every month.

GCSE RE course

A course ran in the autumn term following the GCSE course (without the exam). Around 30 people followed the course and it has been well received. It is proposed that a second unit will be delivered focusing on Judaism and in particular the Jewish Passover in relation to the Eucharist. We hope to run this on Tuesdays in Lent and will include a Passover meal.

AOB – none

Meeting ended with prayer