The Way Forward – Summary and Action

Firstly, thank you to all who have inputted in the process with over 70 attendees over the 3 meetings.

A final meeting with 20+ people was held to agree our; **'Way Forward'**, and how this may contribute to the direction of the parish over the next few years.

We apologise for the delay in producing this but the introduction of Fr Peter required us to 'check in' with Fr Peter. This has been undertaken and we are pleased to confirm our alignment and support with Fr Peter, some items have moved already and are described below.

The first step in our output discussion was to ratify that our common objective was to be a **'Welcoming Church Community'** in which we all display the following behaviours:

- *Approachable, and Non-Judgemental*
- *Receptive, Open, and Accepting*
- *Inclusive, Diverse, and Participative*

There was lively discussion about what the Church teaches and wanting opportunities to explore our faith and different perspectives, as individuals and as a Parish community. There was a hunger for teaching and input to enable personal and community spiritual growth. We recognise that to promote our new **'Welcoming'** culture we will need to build these capabilities:

- *Confidence in our own faith and our understanding of others*
- *The increased participation in Masses and other devotions, reaching out to those not currently engaged.*
- *Active Cooperation with Churches Together, and other faiths*
- *Work with the local community, serving its needs*
- *Communication of what we do and what's happening beyond our own church community*

We agreed that the measure of our success on delivering our '**Welcoming Church Community'** will be through:

- *Our self confidence in faith and direction, so to be able to pass on the Catholic faith with clarity and accuracy*
- *Increased acts of Social Witness, Outreach, and Charity*
- *Wider participation in Church Life*
- *Encouraging and welcoming young people and those who may have been away from the Church*
- *More debate, discussions, and challenge*
- *A congregation at ease with itself, united and committed*
- *An increased sense of 'Presence' of the Spirit and 'New Saints' being encouraged*
- *A well communicated plan and activities so everyone knows who we are and what we are doing!*

At the meeting we spent time reviewing ideas coming out of the last meetings and looking for gaps in what has been suggested to enable our **Welcoming Church Community** to grow. We worked to prioritise the ideas based on what best supported our statement and where we had willing hands to lead the activity.

We established these priority activities:

Faith Talks – To establish our personal understanding and confidence and to explore our faith, including the potential for a Mission in the Parish. This has now started with us learning about preparing our Children for Holy Communion and sessions for Readers during Advent, with more talks due in 2023.

Parish Magazine – So that everyone who comes to the churches and those in the community around the Parish can see what's on and who to contact to explore things like SVP, Cafod, Stable Door, Foodbank etc., who does what within the parish, also What's On at our church and other churches and community groups. Some volunteers already

and more welcomed hoping to publish early in 2023. The Parish website has already been updated.

Parish Project – This would be a fund raiser for some cause either local or abroad that we as a parish can get behind and work together on. Father Peter has suggested we support a charity in Tel Aviv helping the valuable work of Sister Aziza. There will be further information shortly

Churches Together Coordination – To be able to work together locally with other Christian Churches so we can share resources and be seen to be united in action in our communities, as well as building relationships through shared social and spiritual events. OLR is hosting the World Day of Prayer on 3rd March 2023, theme Taiwan

Cafod Live Simply – A parish plan on how to live more sustainably in line with Pope Francis teachings in his Encyclical 'Laudato Si' on living life in a simplified way and protecting the planet.

Other ideas included:

- **Open Church Days at St Joseph's** giving tours of the church (Being the only listed building in Sheringham and designed by Gilbert Scott of Battersea Power Station). This would build on previous outreach with local schools.
- **Car Pool –** Coordinating people who are willing to bring others to church
- **Lent Lunches –** Providing soup lunches with other churches in Lent weeks. This is already active at St. Joseph's
- **Finding out about the Catholic Faith -** Inviting those we know and neighbours to a service to encourage interest in Faith and Worship. Father Peter plans to offer Faith Talks during Lent
- **Fair Trade – Promoting fair trade principles** and along with Live Simply ensuring we are as a parish considering our sourcing of goods and services
- **More Diverse Worship –** To encourage young people and other groups e.g. family services. At the November Parish Pastoral

Council Father Peter said he is intending to look at the plurality and variety of liturgical expression.

We also recognise the need to better promote what we are already doing, and doing exceptionally well, that's adds to our **'Welcoming Church Community'** and ensure its accessible to those who may want know more about how they can help or to get involved, for example:

- **Saint Vincent De Paul**
- **Stable Door**
- **Food Bank**
- **World Prayer Day**
- **Social Events / Group**
- **World Day of Prayer**
- **Choir**
- **Teas and Coffees after Mass**
- **Readers / Servers**
- **Finance Committee members needed**
- **Notice Board Management**
- **Parish Pastoral Council members needed**

Next Steps

We want people to come forward to either lead or take part in these activities be it one or more. To do this please contact Dave Burns, Mary and Simon Mustoe Arthur or Fr Peter to express your interest.

We have told you about some activities already starting as a result of this process and more to come, so watch this space.

Thanks again for all who have helped us so far on this journey together.

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