**Parish Open Forum July 2017**

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| 36 People plus Fr Tony and 2 guests from Nugent attended, with Gina Steed chairing the Forum |
| **Parish Vision Team Review**  The new PVT members were introduced: Brian Cooney, John Sullivan (Anne Pickup couldn’t attend). |
| **Brian Cooney** came in October, found a welcoming parish, with opportunities to be involved, spread the gospel and reach out to people, feels honoured to be involved. Senior Education Lecturer at Edge Hill.  **John Sullivan** is thrilled to be welcomed, accepted and made to feel that he belongs to our parish. Hopes he can give sufficient service to the team; feels God builds great things from human straw. Teaches in schools, universities and churches; married 46 years; his book is about to be published.  **Anne Pickup** has just retired after many years’ teaching, widowed for 17 years, is a convert to Catholicism. SH very important part of her life. Has done formation herself: valuable part of scripture and RCIA groups  **Anne O’Callaghan** has been on the team for a year: is passionate about building a community of love, harmony, joy, in every way she can.  **Gina Steed** has been on the team since the beginning, and finds it a valuable, enriching experience. Feels blessed to work with a great team of people.  **Monica Gannon** is on the team in her PA role, but wants to be a member. Feels blessed she doesn’t have to leave God at home when working.  **Veronica Murphy** coordinates adult faith formation for LACE; privileged to work with a team at forefront of the Archdiocese department’s strategizing. Fr Tony thanked Veronica for her courage and skill to help us persevere with shared leadership and our growth from Listening to Discernment to PVT  A parishioner commented that it is beautiful to welcome them into active service. |
| **Listening Process 2017 summary**  34 varied responses from individuals, families, ministries and other denominations. Full report available.  Positive responses overall; some negativity on priest shortages, falling attendance, spectrum of views on Fr T’s style. The excellent work we are doing improves and empowers; people enjoy services, homilies, sacraments, and feel closer to God. Vision Statement is being realised.  External feedback: we are very community centred; positive, warm, welcoming, social, engaging in community needs, really developing a living faith. Like us to continue towards joint communion, minister exchange and Lent Safari, enjoyed Ainsdale Show tent service.  Good quality of dementia training provided by parishioner Declan Barry.  Fr Tony read all responses. He tries to be strong and up-front; the parishioner’s strength is refreshing and not always “yes sir/no sir”. Frustrated that Pastoral Area Plan not fully implemented for various reasons: original Listening exercise priorities is exactly what Archbishop wants. If you sent the Dean questions, but got no response, ask again.  Review of Parish Vision again brought up lack of youth involvement.  Parish should be a space to share Jesus’s love, by listening to each other. Historically the Church taught rather than listened. Pope Francis encourages listening and being present for each other. |
| **PPs report**  Fr Tony is proud to be part of HeartStone: we spearhead adult faith formation in Southport, with active involvement in LCR, Faith4Life, RCIA. A new short course in Sept/Oct will develop lay ministry and vocation.  Fr Tony developed the “West Coast Area” to avoid duplicating work, and share what we have been doing. Archbishop will be talking at St Josephs, Freshfield in February, details coming soon.  Fr T suggested a “Widows/ers Might” group to share their wisdom to our parish; this sharing already happens informally.  We heard from Marie Reynolds and Colin Pryor from Nugent, a Parish Charity.  Nugent, since 1881, reaches the most vulnerable in communities, wants to spread news of its work. Colin, a volunteer coordinator, will soon be based in Parish Office; he works with Margaret Roper House and Clumber House. Nugent will champion parishes sponsoring refugees. 4 parishes are to sponsor refugees: we may consider it or help another parish. Nugent will advise the practical help parishes can give. |
| **Safeguarding**  Safeguarding is a very wide concept, including: care for people, dealing with people as best we can, how do we help those with mental health issues, dementia, how do we recognise/deal with radicalisation.  Fr Lawlor knew how essential safeguarding is, he passed the baton on to Gina Steed. Fr Tony thanked Gina for the work she gives to this challenging task. |
| **Discussion: “What is HeartStone’s priority to serve our mission: on the West Coast, in Southport, in Woodvale & Ainsdale”**.   * Welcoming priority was the foundation of our strength; the next priority appears to be Outreach. * We build up the body of Christ by outreach: reaching outside the walls of church; how do we reach out to those not coming to church? The Outreach foundation comes from the community that built the church. SJS mission couldn’t answer all the cries for help it heard. It put people into God-led-moments. Faith was needed that God would lead them to the right places. God is in our centre, the people are with God, the priest is with the people. This is a hub that acts. Map areas so that we have a strategy to follow. Clarify what people can get involved in. * Improve Woodvale is a great initiative * Make a links to CtK to get young people on board in the parish. Connect with CtK, go there/bring here. * Education about faith needed at adult level that really connects to life experiences. * SJS isn’t well signposted from Liverpool Road and Sandbrook Road. * Cushions on benches in church needed. * Unity exists within SH & SJS. People loved that we are becoming united, many feel we are already united. * Fr Tony is fully committed to the Augustinian’s legacy. He hasn’t met Fr Lawlor - he invited Fr Lawlor but the invitation was declined. We should continue to pray. Parishioners might visit? We will continue to look for healing opportunities. |
| **Marriage today**  4 cardinals accused the Pope of being heretical, but the Pope is expanding (not changing) church tradition.  Our Catholic tradition is strict on marriage and divorce. We know there are wonderful loving relationships that aren’t Catholically legal; how do we sustain relationships with adult children who won’t marry?  The Church didn’t recognise how hard relationships are, or how to handle relationship failures, and how it is difficult if couples part and then enter new loving relationships. The Pope doesn’t rule out communion when God is in the relationship. People can talk with their priest: this is not new; there is an internal forum for people convinced they are living a holy life: Fr Tony respects their conscience and they could take communion.  The Pope calls us to be accompaniers of people in the situation they are in; in an open and welcoming community. We have to be open, without judging. Individual conscience is key, although the PP may have to judge at times, he balances if the individual has discerned clearly, he also examines his own conscience.  Communion is meant to be medicine for the soul and mercy for those in need, not a reward for the perfect. |
| If you have further feedback, we want to hear it.  The “Listening” form will go on website for anyone to provide feedback. |

*Acronyms in these minutes:*

AOB = Any Other Business CtK = Christ the King School

F4L = Faith For Life course LACE = Liverpool Archdiocese Centre for Evangelisation

LCR = Living Christ Retreat PP = Parish Priest

PVT = Parish Vision Team RCIA = Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

SH = Sacred Heart Church SJS = St John Stone Church