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| HeartStone now look forward to * Pentecost 2021, on 23rd May, when the Archdiocese will begin implementing Synod decisions, and HeartStone will be implementing our revised Parish priorities
* 2020, the themes and proposals emerging to go forward to the Synod Gathering on 17th October 2020 for decision and the ways
* 3rd February 2019 – Synod Cathedral Mass
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**Asking God for Fresh Vision**

****Come Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with wisdom,

love and courage. Make us more like Christ in our words and actions.

Bless the work of your Church.

Renew us all in the desire to make Christ known and loved in the world today.

Bless the work of our parish.

Guide all that we do so that our church is a place of mercy and service for all who are seeking you.

Deepen our love for the Presence of Christ in the Eucharist and guide us in prayer and action

as we journey towards Synod 2020

 to become the Church you are calling us to be.

 We ask this through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

 Amen

*Our Parish Vision Statement*

*Jesus Christ is uniting our community of HeartStone in its Vision and Mission*

*so that all might find a place of welcome, prayer and loving outreach when in need*

**HeartStone: the paired Parish of**

**Sacred Heart and St John Stone**

**Record of HeartStone’s PARISH OPEN FORUM, 7th November 2018**

Apologies: Dympna & Dennis Quinn, Eileen Howard, Norma Lloyd, Irene Walker, Dennis Jones (CtK)

The meeting was chaired by John Sullivan, and opened with the Parish Prayer

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| **PARISH PRIESTS REPORT**  |
| Fr Tony gave an addendum: his ongoing formation includes:* conflict resolution
* line-management training for the new Pastoral Associate.
* safeguarding training (special day for all priests)
* Powerpoint learning
* learning personally from the new “Synodality” document from Rome
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| **LOOKING AHEAD #1 PARISH** |
| * 1. **DATES TO SHARE**
* The Parish Year Plan will be published on the first Sunday of Advent: Fr Tony asked ministries to advise dates to the office well in advance
* Question Time will happen on Thursday **24th January**. Panellists: Fr Chris Thomas, Veronica Murphy, Eleanor Lalley and John Sullivan. Fr Tony chairing
* Living Christ Breakfast: **16th February ‘19 –** we hope this can be held at Sacred Heart
* The next Living Christ Retreat is Friday eve 8th/Saturday 9th March 2019
* There is a retreat for the LCR team on 5th December as per newsletter
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| * 1. **PARISH VISION TEAM (PVT)**

John introduced members of the PVT, and described the team: it’s not the same as some Parish Councils. It tries to be a critical friend to the PP, a kind of sounding board, it is to uphold the Parish Vision. The plan is to review the Vision in 2020. **(*So this will now become part of our Synod 2020 reflections)****.* We meet 8 times a year. 5 priorities are: collaborative ministry, loving outreach, welcoming, communication and spirituality. It is easy to get sucked into reacting to practicalities, but the Vision Team must appraise the ongoing work by looking back at how we have done in relation to our mission and priorities, then look ahead at what we need to concentrate on to make the Vision come truePart of our role is to read two different environments and bring them together: the parish and what parishioners really think, including uncomfortable/challenging issues. We also have to read the external environment: society (culture) and its challenges to living the gospel, and the wider church and any issues (of inspiration or of depression). * 1. **PARISH VISION TEAM (PVT) *continued...***

Bringing these two environments together helps us live out our mission and vision. It is relatively new to have leadership roles within our church. As a team we learning and growing in faith; about how to agree or disagree well, and how to “speak Jesus in a safe space”? What is going on which affects people’s behaviour, whether they are aware of it or not, and how they interact with fellow parishioners and with the PP. PVT goes on retreat on 11th December, with our new Pastoral Associate. **Complaints:**Does PVT mediate if there are any complaints (e.g. between parishioner and Bishop or parishioner and PP)? That is a very important question. Fr T said he would like to make that suggestion to the Bishop. It maybe that the most suitable person to mediate may be someone else from another ministry, but this is a question worth returning to. Training in mediation would be needed. There is a complaints procedure for employees/line managers via LACE as employees are employed by the diocese.  |
| * 1. **PASTORAL ASSOCIATE**

**Background**The Archdiocese introduced a scheme for Pastoral Associates to be attached to parishes, to groups of parishes, or to pastoral areas in a 3 year contract. The bulk of the costs being borne by the parish/group of parishes, and dovetailed with Synod plans. Parishes were given a chance to state the gifts they wanted. Someone able to attract and engage new adult disciples; to support parishioners in becoming more confident in faith sharing and taking on roles within the church; providing insight, energy and organising ability to take the torch of faith into the world in our area. With 2 dimensions: inward: to deepen understanding of faith and commitment to faith, outward: to build on what we are already doing to try to identify strategies to reach outwards to grow more disciples. Candidates were matched to parishes. **Eleanor Lalley** was selected by the team that Fr Tony was a part of. She has worked in LACE’s Pastoral FormationDepartment for 8 years on Family Catechesis, sacramental preparation,Adoremus, while volunteering in her parish as a youth leader. She is passionateabout parish life, scripture, family life and welcoming parishes with the Eucharistas the centre.Eleanor will undergo an induction programme, and get to know us. It’s a projectwhich supports what we are already doing, and is linked to Synod plans. She isemployed for 35 hours: 28 in the parish; 7 hours for formation and mentoring. The salary is split: £20,000 by our parishes; £5,000 paid by LACE, the employer.The bid can be made available to anyone who wishes to see it* 1. **PASTORAL ASSOCIATE *continued...***

**Discussion**Eleanor will spend time finding out what various ministries do, what the PP does, what the Administrator does, what Come & See does, what RCIA does. The Archdiocese were keen that the parishes would encourage the person to reach out beyond the particular parish, in order to strengthen what happens beyond the parish. We hope that having a Pastoral Associate will improve the relationships with the Pastoral Area and beyond.Comment: half our income will be on the PAs salary: this is an investment to reinvigorate and recruit people into the faith, so if she’s good at what she does there will be knock-on tangible financial benefits due to extra parishioners contributing to our weekly offertory.Q: Why aren’t Pastoral Associates attached to the Deanery? A: The Archdiocese knew that not all areas were ready for such an initiative.Q: If it doesn’t work, can we sack her? A: Only if she did something seriously wrong (gross misconduct under UK employment law)Q: Is there a probationary period? A: There is a statutory 6 month probation with all posts within the ArchdioceseQ: Will she be sharing office space with Monica? A: planning of office space, equipment etc. will take place soon.The Holy Spirit called Eleanor into this role, and that God is in this situation, as we have been guided in our bid and will be guided as we support her. This is an opportunity to boost what the Parish is already trying to do. The Archdiocese is doing this, and it is very close to having a Curate. The Diocese has set up this to encourage experimentation. Part of the job is to empower others to carry on her work. *(Fr Tony realised that it would be good to have parishioners feedback on the work of the new Pastoral Associate)* Fr Brian would tell everybody that money in the bank is to guarantee the churches future.The Archdiocese now has a Chief Operating Officer (COO) in LACE: Martin Miller “This new post is part of trustees' response to a review of Archdiocesan offices last year. It said departments should be more coordinated and easier to access. Martin will ensure that parishes, schools and diocesan agencies receive a service more responsive to their needs”The Archdiocese has a new Safeguarding leader: Alex Griffiths: she has over 17 years' experience of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults through working for the Probation Service, Independent Police Complaints Commission, and as a child protection social worker  |

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| **LOOKING AHEAD #2 THE WIDER CHURCH** |
| **2. SYNOD**Synods aren’t new, they go back to the beginning of the church. Synod means walking together on the road of discipleship in communion with each other, listening to the holy spirit, looking at what actions we need to take, culminating in an assembly which ensures the disciples get better on living out its mission.* 1. **Synod in Rome**

The Synod in Rome on Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment has just ended. John condensed the 60 page document for us into the following nine key points:* Young people want to be heard
* Very strong desire for greater decision-making roles for women in the church
* Reflection on the digital world, with all its opportunities and threats
* Issue of migration, which matters a lot to young people, and their fear of xenophobia or the hostility to minority groups and migrants
* Abuse within the church; the need for transparency; the need to deal with the issue
* We are moving to a church which relies less on clergy and more on the faithful. We must grow active lay people in order to overcome clericalism
* Sexual morality, needs revisiting and revitalising
* The call to holiness to young people, as well as us all. Young people need purification of heart, as do we all. Young people want an authentic, harmonious, transparent and joyful church, not one that is mediocre, arrogant, divided and corrupt
* The test of it all is what happens now. What are the concrete actions that will come out of it? We will see…
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| **LOOKING AHEAD #2 THE WIDER CHURCH *continued*** |
| * 1. **Synod 2020 the Archdiocese**

There will be lots of opportunities to identify hopes, concerns and suggestions. Each parish is to propose one Member (one Member for SH/one Member for SJS) plus eight Pastoral Area Members. Fr T asked for ideas on how the Pastoral Area might choose eight Members: We have been advised to include two young people, deacons, someone in education, someone with background in social action, but it is for the Pastoral Area to decide. Some people have been to Open Information meetings. John is hopeful: it seems to be being carefully planned, he thinks it will reinforce what we are already doing. Others expressed reservations from their experience of the information meetings. How does the Pastoral Area Member differ from those for the parish? This is an opportunity for the Pastoral Associate to encourage, support and nurture us: enabling us to be open and help us communicate and work as a Pastoral Area in Southport. Deadline for names is 14th Dec – so think of who you might recommend for Pastoral Area Members now so there is time to approach people if there is a big gap. In the next two years there will be Pastoral Area gatherings of all members |

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| **3. BUZZ TIME: discuss what is helping and hindering your faith life?** |
| **Feedback****3.1 What is Helping?*** Someone new finds social life, parish involvement and openness very encouraging
* General absolution was helpful – especially parents of children making 1st communion, which helped them decide to go up to communion with their children. Fr Albert said if the person says “I have sinned and I am sorry” he could give them absolution. This will go on PVT agenda.

**General Absolution: Fr Tony has decided, following this very helpful and inspired conversation, that from this Advent we will return to the way it was done by the Augustinians and people will be invited to a “general confession” but individual absolution.*** The church entry keypad at SJS is an opportunity to go into church at any time during the day whilst maintaining church security
* Praying for the Synod, and to the Holy Spirit, daily, both publicly and privately
* Privacy helps some, sharing helps others
* Sunday mass is very important for our faith, and sharing through hospitality.
* We feel mature enough in our faith that if we have to miss mass we know it isn’t a mortal sin.
* Sunday mass has a great effect
* Groups (faith groups) are very helpful in strengthening our living faith
* Diocesan plans for the Synod have been a great boost
* John Sullivan’s talks are very helpful
* Daily mass is a great support, it’s a shame more people can’t manage it every day
* Reading John Wooley’s “I am with you” every night before *sleep (the words in the book are described as "heart whispers" that John Wooley received in times of prayer)*
* The notion of finding what is helpful might be an easy mechanism to do in future
* Heartened at the low level of criticism of Synod (hope? Faith?)
* Something like the Synod is given the benefit of doubt. After listening to speakers at Open Meetings some felt there is a different atmosphere, a positive atmosphere

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| **3. BUZZ TIME: discuss what is helping and hindering your faith life? *continued*** |
| **Feedback *continued...*****3.2 What is Hindering your faith life?*** PA not clear in SH, or in SJS: if people can’t hear they can’t participate fully
* Newsletter far too full: it often goes unread for that reason. Reducing the amount of information mean people miss things. Give explanation on what various groups do. Consider slimming and finding other ways to communicate
* Absence of weekly confession – but going into a “box” can be intimidating.
* Compulsory sharing can be difficult
* Challenges from non-faithful can be an opportunity AND a hindrance.
* The last joint mass wasn’t well supported, it is very disappointing and a great hindrance; people being ignored in hospitality was disappointing.
* Petty feuds can be an obstacle/scandal.
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It was suggested that we might use a method called “Ketso” in this kind of discussion to highlight and decide upon strategies we’d like to see where parishioners write their ideas on coloured leaves.

These can be used to ask questions, such as:

  What works? What could work?

 What are the challenges?  What are our goals?