

**CATHOLIC PARISH OF GUILDFORD**  
**Minutes, Formation Team Meeting, Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2020**

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**Attendees:** Zelma Braganza (**ZB**), Janet Burr (**JB** until 8.00pm) Peter Charwood (**PC**), Una Corning (**UC**) Tina Nichols (**TN**) Chris Richardson (**CR**), Fr Roy Waters (**FRW**), Sinclair Webster (**SW**)

**Apologies:** Aseel Gilbert (**AG**)

**Circulation:** as preceding plus Mgr Tony Barry (**MTB**), Fr Sebastian Paul (**FrSP**), Fr Roy Waters (**FrRW**), Susie Ball (**SB**), Sandy Hunt (**SH**) Parish Secretary, Aseel Gilbert (**AG**)

**ACTIONS ARISING:** Initials in **BOLD**

**1. Welcome**

- Chris Richardson opened the meeting with a Prayer

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

- Approved without amendment
- It was discussed that it would be good to try to schedule Formation based meetings in advance, such as Discovery, RCIA and Home Groups, via the Parish Calendar, in order that that clashes are avoided for all concerned. For example, the timing of the Discovery Groups now taking place on a Thursday evening, rather than the planned Tuesday evenings, as the Home Groups also meet fortnightly on Thursdays. This represented a potential conflict for those members of the Home Groups who had been asked to be facilitators of the Discovery Groups. JB also mentioned that RCIA takes place on Tuesday evenings. It was suggested that last year's request from the Parish Office to submit dates for meetings in June, might be a way to plan forward and avoid this kind of clash

**ALL**

**3. Proposals for the Future**

**i) Current**

There is already a lot happening within the Parish, with Live Streaming plus Discovery and Home Groups. SW had also circulated additional sources available via different website links which are due to be reviewed by Fr Roy and his fellow Clergy and uploaded to the Parish website.

**FRW**

**ii) Going Forward**

**- Strategic Direction**

CR referred to his concern (raised in his email of 9<sup>th</sup> April) that the Parish might need a period of reflection/discernment that brings people together again to determine what is needed moving forward; also he felt that the Parish needed a sense of common purpose and that plans should be revisited to ensure that they reflected current or future needs

JB had responded (to CR's email) that this process had already been undertaken in the Parish and Diocese and this direction had already been determined

SW agreed that he agreed that this was 'a time to hear the people', that when we come together again to pick up again, Parishioners will need this opportunity to share in how to go forward; what needs to remain on the Parish website, what kind of Parish do we want to be, that there are all sorts of kindness happening within the Community

FRW emphasised how valued the live Streaming of Mass and Evening Prayer has been for the Community and that this will need to continue for the foreseeable future as it will be impossible to facilitate social distancing within any of the Churches

UC felt that there will have been so much change for so many Parishioners, that a new reality will exist, in which Parishioners may need time to reflect with others; that it felt challenging to return to a direction that may have been very relevant before the crisis, without acknowledging that significant change had taken place in people's lives, some of which could present real challenges to Faith; also whether there should be a focus on Mission as a first step in bringing people back to

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---

their Faith in reaching out to those who may have become distanced or isolated from their Communities eg those who may not have the means to access the Live Stream or for those whose family circumstances have made it more challenging to sustain their active participation in their Faith. She also shared the sense of fear and anxiety expressed by certain, long standing Parishioners who had previously been very active in their Communities, now living in self isolation, about returning to Church; whether there could be a return phasing of week day Masses which might spread attendance, enable better social distancing and help overcome this anxiety? ZB asked what was meant by Formation, was it about bringing people closer to their Faith and what is the Community care aspect of that

CR reflected that a common sense of purpose was needed around which a relevant plan of Formation could then be shaped

FRW felt that Formation is about shaping people so that they could feel more sure and confident in their Faith and thus more able to evangelise or be missionary

SW asked whether Parishioners had really understood what was happening at Mass, what was being said or done when Mass had been celebrated in Church versus the experience of the Live Streaming of Mass where the experience is much more one to one/personal

CR expressed optimism that Parishioners faith will not be damaged, that there could be a real resurrection in Faith

PC asked if it were right to ask people what they wanted as this has been done so many times now that there may be a case just to determine what we can offer in terms of Formation and refine that

CR reflected that this is more about re-engaging Parishioners in the Community in a meaningful way. For example, the 10% Christmas Collection at St Pius X had emanated from a process of discernment many years ago but had since become just another charitable activity in the Community. Should we be a Parish devoted to Prayer and the Sacraments or to Outreach

FRW responded that the Parish needed to focus on Prayer and the Sacraments as that we need to encourage and form people otherwise the Parish just becomes 'good works'

TN reflected that we do not know how Parishioners will feel; they may feel closer to God

FRW reflected that the Live Streaming really does give Parishioners a much closer or personal perspective on the Mass and how can we make that happen when we return to celebrating Mass in the Churches

SW reflected that the large screens in some Churches could be used to recreate that closeness to the Mass, by focusing attention on the Priest and what is happening in the Mass

PC reflected that the experience of the Live Streaming gave a real sense of intimacy and awareness of a miracle happening during the consecration that Mass in Church doesn't always afford, due to distractions represented by other members of the Community/children etc; ZB agreed that she felt her experience of live streaming was similar to that of Adoration, of being very focused on the Lord

CR reflected that we do lose a central part of the Mass in the live streaming in the 'Take it and Eat It' and that studies have shown that 'going to Mass' gives Parishioners a real sense of belonging and that we are going to have to work really hard at rebuilding our Community; FRW agreed strongly with the need to rebuild our Community

SW commented that the experience of the Live Streaming was like an 'Emmaus' moment; that people had to make a commitment to their Faith

UC asked if it might be possible to understand more of who exactly is participating the Live Stream, whether this is reaching the more committed or 'Formed' in the Community and/or what other groups of people it might be reaching (via data analytics)

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FRW commented that we need to be seen as a 'Worshipping People' when things start to return to a new normal, that there is something really special happening in the celebration of Mass  
SC commented that maybe Parishioners will need time to adjust to a 'new reality' and could Advent thus be a focus for our effort moving forward

CR drew the meeting to a close, suggesting that a process of discernment may have to wait some time down the line.

FRW offered a closing prayer.

**4. Next Meeting: Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30pm**