

# CHURCHES OF THE FOREST OF DEAN

Our Lady of Victories Cinderford  
St. Margaret Mary Coleford and Sedbury  
St. Joseph's Lydney

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PASTORAL COUNCIL DATED 12<sup>th</sup> MAY 2025 4pm

### 1. Attendance

Present: PD, (Chair), MQ, BDL, FM, DR, SP, PC.

### 2. Apologies: RW, NR.

### 3. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The Minutes of the last meeting were agreed and accepted.

### 4. Feedback on Recent Services and Future Plans

#### Mass Attendances

Recent Mass at Lydney had Baptisms and the Mass was well attended. Coleford has enjoyed quite a number of visitors recently and also new parishioners to the area have joined the church.

New Parish Registration Forms were being re-issued along with a digital on-line version.

### 5. Spiritual Update

#### Minutes of the Spiritual Group Meeting

The next Meeting was to take place on Wednesday of this week.

#### Jubilee Year

No update from the Pastoral Area with regards to the July Jubilee Event in Gloucester. St. Wulstan Southern Way Pilgrimage starts on Thursday 22nd May. There are 5 Perpetual Pilgrims doing the whole walk and various Day Pilgrims joining the group at various stages. Two coaches have been booked on Wednesday 28th May by the Pastoral Area to take parishioners from churches in the area to St. Mary's Hawkesbury and on to Clifton Cathedral to join the pilgrims at Mass in the cathedral. Our local pickup point is Dockham Road, Cinderford at 12.10pm. Information posted in the Newsletter, website and social media.

## **6. Merger of Parishes**

### Feedback on Parishioner Meetings

The two Parishioner Meetings are considered to have gone well, especially the 2nd meeting in Coleford. There was more negative feedback from a couple of parishioners in Cinderford and it is expected that Bishop Bosco will receive letters of protest.

The parishioners seemed to be concerned that the merger was occurring so quickly and it was explained that this actually had been going on for some time since the 'Inspired' programme and it was the lack of having a parish priest that had held up the process until this point.

The PPC will have to find out who will actually require transport from Cinderford to another parish Mass.

Newent have been asked to consider Mass times at Our Lady of Lourdes going forward.

No further announcements are possible at this time until the times of Masses in the Forest and Newent are confirmed. This is crucial in going forward.

A date of Closure of Our Lady of Victories is complicated by Fr. Martin's annual holiday dates being the first two weekends in August. Fr. Martin does not want a visiting priest to be in the middle of a major change. A firm date of the end of the support from St. Peter's, Gloucester is also needed.

A Friday Mass in Cinderford after closure of OLOV in a hired church or building does not look promising being that only four parishioners seem to attend the current Friday Mass. A Mass in a parishioner's house is more favoured.

Consideration needs to be given to the contents of OLOV before it is closed.

There has been no further progress on the development of St. Joseph's church. No response from the architect; Jo Long (Diocese) has pointed us in the direction of two other companies: Jonah Jay and Apex Architecture. PD is to meet Apex to obtain a quote for pre-planning.

Bishop Bosco needs to be booked for the final Celebration Mass.

## **7. Safeguarding**

Audit is in progress.

**8. Volunteer Updates**

The names of volunteers were being uploaded into a spreadsheet. Unfortunately, at this point in time we are unable to share the data between churches as we don't have permissions from the volunteers to allow us to do so. This is being addressed and permissions being sought.

**9. Social**

PC has volunteered to act as MC at the Summer Fete.  
All other aspects of the Fete are in progress.

**10. Financial Update**

No changes since last meeting.

**11. Buildings**

A subsidence dip has appeared in the car park/garden at St. Jospeh's. It was resolved to get this filled with hardcore.

**12. AOB**

Mass times for the Solemnity of the Ascension was requested in order to organise Volunteers for the Masses.

The organ originally from Sacred Heart chapel in Sedbury has been recovered to the church hall in Coleford. It is in need of repair which, if this can be achieved, will be an asset to the the musicians at St. Joseph's. PC was tasked with obtaining a quote.

**There being no further business the meeting concluded at 5pm.**

**DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**14<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2025 at 4.00 pm (in Coleford Church Hall High Nash Coleford)**

(Zoom connection available)