

# Pastoral Plan for the Brighton and Hove Deanery in the next 5 years

April 2023

Dear Sacred Heart Parishioners,

You may be aware that in the next few years there are going to be a few changes, not just in our own Deanery, but throughout the Arundel and Brighton Diocese.

On Friday 21<sup>st</sup> April 2023, the Core/Mission Teams from each parish in the Brighton and Hove Deanery attended a meeting with Bishop Richard to discuss these changes and opportunities that WE can all participate in. In this letter, I have highlighted some of the key points that were discussed on that evening...

Bishop Richard wants “...to **invite everyone in the Diocese**...to join with (him) in forging our parishes into **communities of saints**, into strong, lively and welcoming **schools of discipleship**...where **all are welcomed**...” (Bishop Richard, 2022).

We all have a part to play within our own parish, but also in the wider community. The buzzword of the evening was **co-responsibility**. We need to start to work together, and offer and share our skills, resources, and services in the Sacred Heart, in the other parishes, and in our school communities within Brighton and Hove. This could mean, sharing and collaborating with other parishes for our Sacramental Programmes (Baptism, FHC, Confirmation, RCIA). We have already started doing that with our Confirmation programme, collaborating with St. George’s and St. Theresa’s parish.

What other ways can we share our skills and resources? Can we identify ministries within art, music, and media? Can we facilitate, or offer our buildings for prayer groups, community hubs, or workshops? Could we create a Deanery Newsletter, to share appeals, news, and events happening in our area? How do we improve our communication with our schools and parishes? Collaborating with teachers and students, and to encourage each other in our parishes to build up the strength in this Mission. As Fr. Colin highlighted in his homily last week, we are not guests in our churches, but through baptism we are full members of the Church and have a mission to maintain good spiritual wellbeing for everyone.

For each Deanery, Bishop Richard would like to select one or two Lectors and Acolyte Ministers. The Lectors will support the Readers, and the Acolytes will support Eucharistic Ministers. Bishop Richard would conduct an interview and appoint these Ministers, and the selected Lector(s) and Acolyte(s) will embark on a 1-year formation to lead and form the Ministers in our Churches. A similar formation may also be introduced for a new stable ministry of Catechists once the Bishops of England and Wales have agreed the role.

As you all know, there are not enough priests, so in the worst-case scenario, we may only end up with 3 priests in the Brighton and Hove Deanery in the next 5 years. This may sound scary, but if we all pitch-in, and collaborate within the Sacred Heart and in our schools and other parishes in Brighton and Hove, we can continue to thrive as a Parish and Deanery. We can continue to pray for new vocations, and for our pre-pandemic parishioners who haven’t come back, to come back. Our prayers don’t always have to be silent. Pray can be through our actions, and Ministries. Don’t be afraid to be bold and embrace these new opportunities.

The full Pastoral Plan from Bishop Richard, ‘The Word who is Life’ 2022, can be read on our Parish website, and we also have hard copies in the office. Any questions or concerns don’t hesitate to contact Fr. Colin or me.

Best wishes,

Cassie Jocerand (Pastoral Assistant)