

Meeting of Parish Core Team 22 nd November 2023 7.30pm	
Present:	Sarah Cooper (SC), Claire Fairlie (CF), Kevin Rourke (KR), Canon Tim Madeley (CTM), Jenny Marsden (JM), Claudine Maude (CM) Minutes Secretary: Denise Bass (DB)
1.	Opening Prayer
2.	Apologies: Denis Woodhouse
3.	Minutes of last meeting: Agreed
4.	Matters arising from the Minutes not on the agenda: There will be 3 Advent groups running in the parish on different days, times and locations. It has been suggested to the Team that a coordinator for the Lent groups 2024 should be appointed in order for a different organisational approach to be taken resulting in more parishioners being involved. The second draft of the census was amended by the team ready for distribution and completion on the first two Sundays of Advent.
5.	Finance Update: SC gave a summary of the first meeting of the newly appointed joint finance committee. Our thanks go to those who prepared detailed reports for the meeting. The chair of finance from Horsham parish will attend the next meeting in January to explain the process they went through to increase giving within the parish. The members of the Core Team were invited to attend this meeting if they wished. A question was raised about running this initiative during Lent. CTM felt it might be a good time when we should be focussed on almsgiving.
6.	Synod Question 9 Discerning and Deciding: The Core Team examined the summary of responses to this question and made the following observations: • It was felt that consultation and involvement of everyone in all decision making would be very difficult. Very little would get decided or the decisions would be very subjective based on feelings and emotions. As a result the wrong decisions may be made. • Communication is the key. Explanations for decisions need to be given so people have the opportunity to express an opinion. • Things do not move on as quickly as people would like them to. • Can we learn from the past? What decisions have been made that caused upset or controversy? • The Synod is about the whole Church not just our parish, Not every parish can do everything. We need to share our skills with one another, discern what we are good at to offer to others. This follows on from the meeting with the Bishop who asked Core Teams to share skills and talents within the deanery. • We need to be outward looking. Promote things happening in the diocese. Make the pool bigger by inviting parishioners from Horsham for example to join our Lent groups and vice versa. • Use the Suggestion Box also to say what parishioners can offer. • There is more communication now than ever before. • The formation of lay people with the clergy has been tried but before but not always with success. • We need to concentrate less on trying to change the Church and more on developing a greater understanding of our own faith and belief in Jesus Christ. • Use of spiritual directors who have a charism which is not isolated to ordained ministers. We have a trained spiritual director in our parish who would welcome the opportunity to work with people. • Look at using resources such as CAFÉ, Life in the Spirit etc within the parish or deanery. • Find out what 'special interest' groups would people like in the parish – outreach, communication, liturgy, youth etc. KR to draft item for the newsletter. • Meet with the Core Team of Horsham early next year once we have all heard the Bishop's plan in January.

7.	Update on developments: CTM gave a brief outline of developments. For Our Lady of Consolation the new altars have been approved by Historic Churches. The new font is being removed from the church in Salisbury in January and discussions have been held about its transfer to the Shrine. At St. Gabriel's the new security measures have been completed.
8.	Suggestion Box Submissions: Each is summarised below: • <i>When should the 'Tree of Faith' be removed from the narthex?</i> The Team felt as we are now about to begin a new church year that this would be an ideal time for it to be taken away. • <i>Would it be good to have a library bookshelf containing books on our faith for people to borrow?</i> The Team felt it might be good to trial the idea at St. Gabriel's. A shelf of the unit on the right-hand side of the narthex would be best suited. The books could be borrowed on trust rather than signed for. The books must be about the Catholic faith and only stored in the allocated shelving. • <i>Could there be more planting to soften the appearance of St. Gabriel's?</i> The idea of having a garden bench near the Garden of Remembrance will be pursued and there would be an opportunity to have a couple of planters alongside this. Other ideas will be looked into when the site has had other developments completed such as the disabled access to the church and the hall. • <i>What plans are there for the 100th anniversary of the Catholic Church in Billingshurst 1925-2025?</i> None as yet but thank you for bringing it to our attention. • <i>Who are the members of the Parish Core Team?</i> The Core Team have been introduced in the past and their photos are on the parish website. Their role is to advise Canon Tim. KR will produce a sheet with their names and photos for the noticeboards. (Also for Finance Committee). • <i>There is no Social Team; could one be arranged with co-opted parishioners?</i> For the past year a St. Gabriel's parishioner and his team of helpers have run 4 very successful social events for which we are extremely grateful. He would be happy for new members to join the team. • <i>Could we produce a prayer bookmark for visitors to take as a gift from the parish?</i> The Team thought this was a good idea especially for the Shrine as it has many visitors passing through. CTM said we would need to get sponsorship from parishioners in order to pay for the printing.
	Date of next meeting: 16th January '24 7.30pm (provisional) 7th February (in reserve) at JM's house