

Catechesis – Specimen (1)

VISION

Our parish desires to be a place where our catechesis is centred on the person of Jesus, and where everyone's personal relationship with him is established, confirmed and strengthened. We desire to be a parish with weekly catechesis for all our children, and ongoing catechesis by well-formed and supported parents in the home. We desire to be a people who, having been bound to Christ and to each other in the Church, place the call of the Lord to make new disciples at the very centre of our catechetical life.

REALITY

At the moment we only run sacramental catechetical programmes for FHC (about 50 children, 14 sessions) and Confirmation (about 30 teenagers, 8 sessions). There is no catechesis outside any of these. On average about 50% of families bringing their children to these programmes are weekly Mass goers. Our retention rate after Sacramental programmes is poor, but we don't have the statistics to know exactly what it is. We have stable catechetical teams (19 catechists in total) but both our catechetical teams and parents need formation. Our sacramental catechetical programmes don't include any formation or evangelisation of parents, just administrative meetings. No one in the parish has completed the Archbishop's Certificate course. Our baptism preparation consists of an hour-long meeting with the parish priest, there is no follow-up in place. We have a Friday night youth club, with about 20 regular members, but there is no catechesis, just pizza and games. We are worried that if we include this, they won't come.

PLAN

With the desire to have parents and catechists who have a personal relationship with Jesus we have decided to implement parent meetings for parents of both FHC and Confirmation children. In January 2024 we will run four sessions of Sycamore for FHC parents before the programme begin. This will be led by the FHC Catechist team with the parish priest in attendance. We will begin with a meal, in person, the rest of the sessions will be on Zoom. We will do the same for the Confirmation parents in March 2024. This is a huge shift for our parish but with Father's leadership we are confident it will be positively received.

We are also going to explore how we can form our catechists better and hope to have three or four catechists begin the Archbishop's Certificate together in October 2024. We plan to apply to Archbishop's Appeal to fund 50% of the fee of at least one of our catechists.

We are meeting with the Evangelisation parish lead and team in February 2024 to discuss how we support young people. This will include a discussion on the Friday night youth club and additional provision for ongoing catechesis and formation of our young

people. We are looking to provide some sort of catechesis for young people outside sacramental programmes in the new academic year, September 2024.

We have decided to leave improving our baptism preparation to 2025, once all these changes are embedded. This will be discussed at our next parish planning session, which we have decided will be held on the second weekend of September each year.

Outcomes we hope to see - We would like to see an increase in regular Mass attendance from the families experiencing Sycamore. We are going to look at how we can measure this. We would hope for an increase in requests for ongoing formation from these parents (for themselves and their children). It would be wonderful if some of the parents who have attended Sycamore can perhaps offer their time to provide ongoing catechesis for their children in the parish.

What is required - A team to run Sycamore (how many people? Skills/roles needed). Catechists will sit at tables/run breakout groups. We need a separate group to provide the meal, and importantly we need to identify someone who can run all the tech needed to run this course. We need a new projector, screen and sound for the parish hall. We also need a parish Zoom account, which the Parish Priest has agreed will be funded from Parish funds.

We need to actively follow up with parents who have experienced Sycamore (we are looking at asking them to fill in a feedback form). We also need to explore additional ways of financing the Archbishop's Certificate in 2024.

Catechesis – Specimen (2)

VISION

We would love to be a vibrant parish known as a place of welcome and joy. We would like our catechesis to be attractive and Christ-centred.

REALITY

We are a small parish on the coast with few resources and very few young families (retirement area). We don't have regular sacramental programmes, we just respond to the need as presented. We only have 1 person who helps the parish priest with this. Confirmation happens every 3 years on average. We don't have a church hall or our own website and have very little money. At times it can all feel hopeless.

PLAN

We have 5 baptisms a year on average, and we have realised we don't really provide any catechesis, just prepare them by taking them through what will happen on the day. We would like to look in detail at how we support families coming for baptism. We want to actively include Godparents in this if possible. Our baptisms are so spread out that we can't do this as a group, so would like to put in place individual support for each family by pairing them up with a couple from the parish. We will begin by finding and training these couples (we hope to find 2 couples able to do this work). We hope to find an online course for this. This is an opportunity to embed families into the life of the parish, but we have realised we need to really work at this. It will take time to do, but we must not lose hope, mindful of our vision statement where we want to be welcoming and joyful.

We plan to contact the Agency so that they can put us in touch with any other parishes who have faced the same issues we do, or who have an accompaniment model for baptism already in place. We are hoping they will have advice for us on what training is needed. Our parish priest has 2 couples in mind and will approach them once we know what training we can provide.

We also intend to speak to the whole parish about this plan, as they need to all play their part in ensuring we are a welcoming and joyful parish. We have a small welcoming team, we intend to have a training day for them too (in March 2024) (we will open this to everyone in the parish).

We also plan to look at our Sacramental programmes in 2025 to ensure they are more attractive and Christ-centred and to work with the Agency to focus on parental catechesis, which we have never offered. No one has attended the Day for Catechists at the Cathedral before, but we have decided to aim to find and send a small team (2 or 3 people) to this on 28th September 2024. The Parish has decided to invest in paying the travel costs (we might need a small fundraiser to do this). We hope this will help ensure we don't feel isolated in the work we do, but part of a bigger endeavour.

Outcomes we hope to see – We would like to retain the families who come for baptism. If 60% of these families attend Mass regularly and are known by all parishioners we will be delighted. We would like to see a slightly larger catechetical team, rather than just the parish priest and one catechist.

What is required – A training course for couples who will be accompanying Baptism families. The Parish Lead will contact the Agency before Advent to see if any other parishes can help us with this.

Welcomers' Day: Find a date in March 2024 and advertise it early in January 2024. The PP will contact the Agency for advice on the development of a training day for welcomers, which he intends to run. We intend to provide lunch in the presbytery, we already have a volunteer to help with this.

Evangelisation - Specimen

VISION

We desire for our parish to be a place where increasing numbers of people encounter Jesus through the Sacraments and the community. We desire to be a parish that is open and loving, welcoming and genuine. We desire to be a place where lives are changed, hearts are healed, and an environment that fosters worship as a lifestyle and prayer as a heartbeat.

REALITY

At our parish, most parishioners attend Mass on Sundays and leave right after. We have few new people entering the Church, and when they do, they are not really noticed or attended to. We have few active ministries but have a growing desire to become more missionary and have been praying for ways to do this and for our hearts to become bolder and more expectant. We have a few parishioners who have done an Alpha / Sycamore course in the past in other parishes and got very excited. There are people that are willing to help, but they need to be asked and have limited time. We have a small Church Hall that can be of use.

PLAN

We want to discover what gifts and talents people in our parish have. This will be a sort of inventory. We are familiarising ourselves with the Catherine of Siena institute and read about charisms and what it means and how their materials can be of use for us. Father is very much on board, which is essential as he leads the parish.

Fr will give a homily on the charism and explain them a bit more and why they are important and what it can do for individuals and our parish community and beyond. He will do that at all Masses for two weekends.

We have contacted the Catherine of Siena Institute / Called & Gifted here in the UK to organise a parish day for late January 2024. <https://www.calledandgifted.org.uk/>

In the meantime, our parish leads are reading up more about charisms, and are inviting parishioners through our church database and personally to register for the day in January. Father would like for about 40 % of all parishioners to attend.

Already 5 people have committed to cooking lunch for the day because we want it to be cozy, enjoyable, inspiring and a great start of the new year.

We have designed some nice flyers through www.canva.com and written a little blurb on our parish website.

After the Charism day in January, we want to use Lent to 'practice' our charisms and learn more about the ones that will have by teaming people up in the same charism groups. We plan to meet the third Saturday of Lent for this in the afternoon and provide snacks, coffee and tea in the parish hall.

We desire for those that will go through the charisms to discern how their gifts and talents can be used in our parish for us to become more missionary.

In the autumn of 2024, we would like to start looking at Alpha / Sycamore for current parishioners and have people use their charisms as part of the team. We then hope to have our first external Alpha in early 2025 inviting non-church goers.

Our Parish Lead in Evangelisation will attend the Evangelisation Expo on April 20, 2024.

We will set dates to assess and evaluate in January and Easter and see how the recognition of people's charism can help them grow personally in their faith and step into roles at the parish and help others take steps in faith.

Outcomes we hope to see - We hope to see our current parishioners changed and start having a more personal relationship with Jesus. We start with internal evangelisation and discovery of charisms, and Alpha for our parish in the autumn of 2024, and from there plan to go to external evangelisation with Alpha / Sycamore in early of 2025. We hope to foster more intentional genuine community through this process. We hope for our parishioners to discover their charisms and for it to bless them personally and the community as a whole and discover how we can become more missionary and outgoing due to our giftings.

What is required - We need to get in contact with Called and Gifted and secure the date(s) for them to come to the parish. Father needs to explain the charisms during his homilies. We need to get flyers ready to give to people and update our website about it. We need to invite parishioners to commit to the January date and remind them and invite others. We need to check our budget and how much we will spend on Called and Gifted resources. We could apply to a Mustard Seed fund for some of this as well.

We need to start covering this whole process in prayer. Charisms are for the edification of the church. We want our parish to become more alive as a result and more missionary going forward, eyeing an Alpha or Sycamore course in the autumn of 2024 for our current parishioners (aiming at 40 %) followed by the first external Alpha for outsiders early 2025. We need to start familiarising ourselves with Alpha and visit a parish that has run it well to see what is required for a team by the summer of 2024.

Formation – Specimen (1)

VISION

“Always be ready to make your defence to anyone who demands from you an account of the hope that is in you.” (1 Peter 3:15). We aim to be a dynamic parish where every parishioner has a personal relationship with Jesus and intentionally fosters this relationship through ongoing, lifelong Formation. We aim to offer a variety of opportunities for this Formation that meet our parishioners at their particular development levels, as well as to equip our parishioners to foster their own Formation. The goal will be to challenge and enable each parishioner to embrace their missionary calling. This will be measured in part by increased engagement in Formation opportunities.

REALITY

We are a medium-sized parish with a very busy community. This busyness means that it is difficult to find volunteers and to get parishioners to engage in our offerings on a regular basis. Our most active parishioners are older or single, whereas young families come irregularly and hardly participate. We see there is work to do with building people’s personal relationship with Jesus.

PLAN

We will look at the obstacles preventing parishioners from engaging via a survey at the start of 2024. One obstacle, already identified, is childcare for young parents. We will, therefore, aim to offer childcare for one Formation event held at the parish to test the concept. If it is successful, we will look at implementing childcare whenever possible. We understand this will need to comply with safeguarding and will discuss this with the Safeguarding Department. We will explore funding this through grants like the Archbishop’s Appeal, as well as by charging a small fee per child (approx. £2).

We will implement weekly formation-based small groups throughout Lent 2024 which will be organised based on the days of the week that people are available. Small groups can meet at the homes of parishioners, or at the parish hall. The different groups will journey through the same material and we will restructure them every September. The parish will begin by using free online videos like Wild Goose and Sycamore (we note that there are other options mentioned on the inspire website: <https://inspire.rcaos.org.uk>). Once we gauge the level of involvement, the parish will purchase subscriptions to Formed and the Catechetical Institute’s Franciscan at Home, following an application to the Mustard Seed Fund.

The parish will also host an Advent mission in 2024 and a Lent mission from 2025. We would also like to host an ongoing speaker series which move through various pillars of the Catholic Faith, building on existing collaboration with other parishes in our deanery. Future themes could be discerned based on the outcomes of our parish synod discussions back in 2021/22. We will also implement regular adoration so that parishioners can spend time in the presence of Jesus.

Outcomes we hope to see - We hope to see small-group participation to increase by 40% each term. We hope to offer childcare for each of our Formation offerings, and to eventually be able to offer childcare for the majority of our parish events. We hope to increase our rota of both paid and volunteer childcare helpers who are safeguarded to 10 people by 2025. We hope to increase Mass attendance by 25% by 2026. We want to see RCIA and Alpha retention increase by 20% each year. We hope to reach seating capacity for each of our parish missions. We also hope to inspire and be a proof of concept for other parishes who are unsure about the need for Formation or how to move forward with it.

We hope to see a parish full of well-formed Catholics who have an intimate relationship with Jesus and who actively respond to their call to be missionaries. We want our pews full of joyful parishioners who support the parish through their time, treasure, and talent; who are Bible-literate, who understand the foundational tenants of Catholicism, and who take their roles as primary catechists seriously. We want to build a flourishing community where Catholics and non-Catholics feel supported and welcomed by us. We want our parishioners to make Jesus the centre of their lives, to change the culture of their offices, schools, and towns, and to re-Christianise England.

What is required -

- Administration
 - Creating a sign-up form for participants
 - Sign-up form for facilitators
 - Training for facilitators if the material requires it
 - Promotion
- Facilities to run small groups: material (videos, books, Bibles, TV, etc), venue (parish hall, parish meeting room, people's houses, coffee shops)

Formation – Specimen (2)

VISION

Our goal is to be a mission-oriented parish. We desire to equip every parishioner to be joyful witnesses of Catholicism, and to actively strive to share Jesus' love with the world.

REALITY

We are a large parish, with two priests, and active and engaged parishioners from a variety of cultural and economic backgrounds. Many are well-meaning but lack training and formation. Ministries rarely take root. The priests must do most of the teaching for catechesis and have to be the ones to give talks. Sometimes we show movies or try to do Bible studies, but these initiatives don't last long, in part because of our priests' busy schedules. Everyone has a desire for more, but we do not really know how to begin, or what to aim for. Formation is poorly understood among our parishioners, but the desire is there.

PLAN

Through consultation with the Agency, we will begin by implementing training and formation for our volunteers. We will invite a Deanery Mentor to lead the Discovery faith study in February 2024. We will then offer training in small group facilitation (April 2024), leadership (May 2024), and evangelisation (June 2024). We will be inviting other parishes in our deanery to these training events, and will also be promoting and assisting another parish's retreat in September 2024. The Knights of Columba have agreed to fundraise for the retreat so that our volunteers will not be prohibited from attending.

We plan to assess our goals, implementation, and success every March and September. We hope to begin regular Bible study and other Formation-based small groups in January 2025, to eventually offer weekly Adoration, and to sponsor Called and Gifted for all of our volunteers. We are seeking to partner with neighbouring parishes for many of our endeavours with the hope of halving the work and doubling the reward.