Minutes of the Joint Meeting of St Anthonys' and St Edmunds' Pastoral Councils

Thursday 23rd April 2026, 7.00 pm at St Anthony of Padua, Melksham

Present: Paul Blake, Joan Boorer, Anne Doyle, Helen Murphy, Cecilia Parsons, Sharon Pearce (minutes), Brigid Rodgers, Mary Rooney (chair), Susan Whyte.

1. **Opening Prayer, Scripture Reading, Reflection and Sharing.**

The meeting opened with a prayer, and a reading chosen by Joan Boorer (Lk 24: 13-35), followed by reflection and short discussion on the reading.

2. **Apologies**

Apologies had been received from Linda Cassidy, Fr Vincent Curtis, Aniela Downar, Gay Harris, Gabriel Lopez, Christine Martin, Rob Pickford and Jonathan Quinlan.

3. **Minutes of Joint Meeting at St Edmund's on 3rd April 2025 and Matters Arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed.

4. **Coach for Chrism Mass 2027**

Numbers taking the joint coach to the Chrism Mass this year had fallen substantially, although spaces had been advertised to the parishes of Devizes, Chippenham, Corsham and Trowbridge. The cost of this 47-seater with hoist for a wheelchair has become prohibitive, with a deficit of £300 for the coach hire to be funded by the two parishes. As numbers have reduced, it was decided that a coach of this size cannot be afforded next year, and alternative arrangements will have to be made for 2027.

5. **Celebration of St Anthony's Feast Day, Saturday 13th June 2026**

To celebrate St Anthony's feast day this year, coffee and cake will be served in the church hall after the 10.00am morning Mass. Everyone at St Edmund's is invited to attend, and St Anthony's neighbours in West End will also be invited. **Sharon will advertise this event in both parish newsletters.**

6. **St Edmund's BBQ, Sunday 14th June**

St Edmund's annual parish Barbeque will be held on Sunday 14th June, after the 11.00am Mass. St Anthony's parishioners are invited, and **Sharon will advertise this event in both parish newsletters.** Sunday 14th June is also the date for the St Edmund's children's First Holy Communion (Sunday 21st June for St Anthony's).

7. **Plans for Mass and Reception for the Institution of Readers and Acolytes, St Edmund's, early July 2026**

Gabriel Lopez will be Instituted as Acolyte at this Mass, but a date has not yet been set by the Diocese. An Order of Service is also required, as well as information on the musical arrangements.

Sharon will contact the Diocese (Vicar General) to discover and forward to St Edmund's

i. **The date of the Mass;**
ii. **Whether the Dioese will produce and provide the Order of Service, and**

iii. **What are the expectations/arrangement for music (ie will the Diocese expect a keyboard player or the folk band)?**

This Mass will be followed by a reception at St Edmund's school, and volunteers will be needed to contribute and co-ordinate this reception.

8. **Ways of Sharing our Respective Parish Newsletters**

There was discussion regarding the possibility of combining both parish newsletters into one publication. It was decided that this would not be feasible because:

i. The resulting newsletter would be at least 4 sides of A4 paper, increasing costs as 80 copies are taken for St Edmund's; only 16 copies are taken for St Anthony's newsletter as the vast majority are emailed out.
ii. Time issues - the newsletters are published on different days. St Edmund's is completed before Wednesday lunchtime so that Fr Vincent can take the copies with him after Wednesday morning Mass, and St Anthony's newsletter is not usually started until this has been completed.

A possible solution was suggested so that parishioners of both parishes could have access to each newsletter: **Sharon will email Paul a copy of St Anthony's newsletter when completed, for posting on St Edmund's website, and a hard copy on St Edmund's notice board.**
Sharon will email a copy of St Edmund's newsletter to St Anthony's webmaster for St Anthony's website, and put a hard copy of St Edmund's newsletter on the notice board in the church hall.
Events at each parish are advertised in both newsletters.

9. **Further Joint Events**

St Anthony's had hosted a Lenten afternoon of reflection, facilitated by Deacon Remi Thivet, which had been well received. This type of event could be replicated in Advent as a joint venture.

10. **Any Other Business**

Paul Blake and Brigid Rodgers had both been taking part in the "Reimagining Parish Pastoral Councils" initiative, and as a result had decided that the next St Edmund's PPC meeting would be dedicated to having a deliberate pause, reflect on how the PPC works now, and debate the needs of the parish and how the PPC could work in the future. St Edmund's next PPC meeting is on Thursday 18th June.

Anne Doyle handed out copies of her booklet "Walking with God", a series of poems and reflections she had written over the years. Anne asked if the parishioners of St Edmund's might be interested in it. Copies are on sale for £5 with all proceeds going to St Anthony's, but Anne said that if St Edmund's parishioners bought some the proceeds could be equally shared between both parishes. This was agreed and **Sharon will advertise the booklets in St Edmund's newsletter, with copies available in the church porch.**

11. **Date of next meeting**

The next joint meeting will take place on Thursday 17th September (or Thursday 24th September if Fr Vincent is unavailable on 17th) 2026 at 7.00 pm at St Edmund's church hall.

The meeting concluded with a prayer at 7.55 pm.