

Road to Emmaus

AVON STOUR PASTORAL AREA

Fordingbridge Ringwood Highcliffe,
Southbourne Christchurch Iford



Update from Richard Martin, Director of Lay Formation

April 2018

Welcome to my latest update on just some of what is happening in our Pastoral Area to help us be formed and grow as missionary disciples. If you have any questions comments or queries, or you would like to help in some way, please do get in touch!



Welcome to Worship

This is our very popular termly evening of worship music, Scripture, reflection & prayer, all focused on helping us

grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. So far our themes have been "Follow me", "I stand at the door and knock", "Seek first the Kingdom" and "Trust in the Lord with all your heart". (One parishioner shares her experience of the last one here: www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/enews/welcome-to-worship2.php)

Our next evening will be on **Tuesday 15th May 2018 at St Joseph's, Christchurch, 7-9pm**, with the theme: "**You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**" (Acts 2:38), since this is in the week leading up to the wonderful feast of Pentecost. **Please do come along – and why not bring a friend?** (This event is suitable for anyone, whether Catholic or not). *So far we have had very few teenagers, but it is an ideal evening for them, so please encourage any young people you know to come along too!*

A few comments from some people who came to the last *Welcome to Worship*...



"It was like a mini-retreat"

"I need to wait a while before I drive home - it has been such a time of heightened awareness of God's presence"

"It was as though that prayer time was aimed directly at me. I came away walking on air."

"a wonderful reflective and uplifting evening. Many thanks"

"Just wanted you to know how beautiful yesterday evening was - a lovely sense of calm and deep prayer"

"I feel much more peaceful now"

ALPHA

– CAN YOU HELP, PLEASE



This time last year we were in the middle of our very successful Alpha Course! Now we aim to get Alpha Courses going regularly across our Pastoral Area and **we need your help, please!**

If you might be willing to help in any way in your local area (or elsewhere) – organising, planning, publicity, admin, cooking, welcoming, refreshments, moving chairs and tables, technology, facilitating a group, music, or hosting a group in your home – please come to St Joseph's, Christchurch on **TUESDAY 24th APRIL, 7.30-9.00pm**.

You are not committing yourself to anything at this stage! We will be discussing potential dates and venues then too.

Please contact me (*details below*) if you're interested or if you would like more information.



Youth
*Come to
the Feast*

27 April, 11 May, 8 June

A special version of *Come to the Feast* for **anyone of secondary school age** will be held at St Joseph's, Christchurch, on three Friday evenings from **7-8.30pm** – focusing on understanding the Mass through activities, games, teaching, discussion and prayer/worship.

To find out more and to sign up, please visit the *Come to the Feast* website:

<https://rmartin236.wixsite.com/feast/youth-event>

We will need adult support - **if you could help in any way, please contact me** (*see below*)



Do you know that we have our own private Facebook Group?

You are invited to join our Avon Stour Pastoral Area Facebook Group – it's a great place to keep up to date with what is happening and you can join in the conversation with others from our Area. It is a 'closed group' - anyone wishing to join has to be accepted by the group administrator, so it is not available to the general public.

So far, we have 90 members – let's try to reach 100 in the next few weeks...!

In Facebook, search for "**Avon Stour Pastoral Area**" and click "**Join**"

Exploring the Bible

What part does the Bible play in your life? Would you like to know/explore more?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church tells us that: "In Sacred Scripture, the Church constantly finds her nourishment and her strength, for she welcomes it not as a human word, 'but as what it really is, the word of God'. 'In the sacred books, the Father who is in heaven comes lovingly to meet his children, and talks with them.'" Also that "the Church has always venerated the Scriptures as she venerates the Lord's Body" (from paragraphs 103 and 104)

I invite you to explore the Bible further using one or more of these opportunities:

Bible Study Group Meets at Holy Redeemer, Highcliffe, every Wednesday 7.15pm, led by John Murphy.

Scripture Home Group Led by Moira Whelan, this group meets in her home in Mudeford every Thursday at 7.30pm.

Newcomers always welcome at both of these groups and it doesn't matter if you cannot go every week. Let me know if you would like to go along and I will put you in touch.

Wednesday Gospel Webinar (also available as audio podcast) Every Wednesday 7-8pm, Sister Hyacinthe from the Dominican Priory in the New Forest leads a wonderful study and reflection on the coming Sunday's Gospel, finding in it more about God, about ourselves and about the Church. These webinar sessions are open to everyone in Portsmouth Diocese. Don't worry – you are not on camera! But you can type comments or questions in the live chat box on-screen. Just register once, then drop in and out through the year as often or as little as you want. You can register here by clicking on 'weekly webinar': <http://www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk/formation/>

word on the >>GO "the Bible for busy Catholics" The Bible Society has a great new resource specifically to help Catholics get started on reading the Bible, even if they are busy people! Visit this website for tips to get started and a short video story: www.biblesociety.org.uk/explore-the-bible/word-on-the-go/

IMPORTANT: ALL READERS

Proclaiming the Word of God at Mass is so much more than being a 'good reader' or 'confident speaker'. It is a vital liturgical ministry that requires commitment, preparation and training.

The Church teaches that "It is necessary that those who exercise the ministry of reader...be truly suited and carefully prepared, so that the faithful may develop a warm and living love for Sacred Scripture from listening to the sacred readings. Their preparation must above all be spiritual, but what may be called a technical preparation is also needed. The spiritual preparation presupposes at least a biblical and liturgical formation." (*Introduction to the Lectionary*, para 55)

To this end, **all readers in our Pastoral Area, however experienced**, are invited and urged to attend together the Readers' Day to be run by the Diocese on **Saturday 16th June 2018, 9.30am-3pm, Basingstoke**. It will be led by Fleur Dorrell of the Bible Society and Sr Hyacinthe from our *Formation for Mission* Team.

Parish Renewal

Sherry Weddell, internationally renowned Catholic speaker and author of best-seller *Forming Intentional Disciples* is coming to our Diocese and you are invited! She will lead a day for anyone interested in helping their parish focus on developing intentional missionary fruitful disciples in relationship with Jesus Christ. Our own Pastoral Area has been asked to contribute to the day, sharing our experiences of things like *Welcome to Worship*, *Alpha*, *Come to the Feast* and *Taizé*!



Saturday 19th May 9.30am-4.30pm
Basingstoke Country Hotel

There is no charge – to book your place visit www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/parish-renewal-in-the-portsmouth-diocese-with-sherry-weddell-tickets-42527602203

[You are also invited to attend the day before **Friday 18th May 2.00-7.00 pm** when Sherry will focus on issues of particular interest to those in parish leadership roles. Book in the same way.]

If you can help in any way, have any questions or would like more information about any of these items, please contact me:

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