



Saint Vincent de Paul

Catholic Church, Altrincham

Report of the Parish Meeting October 2025

The Parish meeting held in October this year was led by the Parish Pastoral Team (PPT) and attended by 22 additional parishioners.

Members of the team began by introducing themselves, their role and the team mission statement.

Parish Pastoral Team

Fr
Jonathan



Ruth
Holland
(chair)



Penny
Howes
(vice chair)



Alison
Lowe
(note taker)



Anna
Croughan



Nick
Hopkins



Mark
Pniewski



Monika
Timkovicova



Way of working

We meet monthly and aim to be a strategic team that is inclusive and representative of all aspects of parish life. We view our role as gently steering the parish community by praying together to help discern what is God's will for our parish at the time.

Mission statement

The overall purpose of the Parish Pastoral Team (PPT) is to seek God's will for the parish and work with the clergy to share the Gospel message, build a community of disciples who respond to their baptismal call to lives of holiness, witness and service, and further the mission of Christ in our parish community and beyond.

We work within the parish priorities identified during the synodal process and subsequent parish meeting in 2022, namely:

- Growing our faith (later adapted to include a subgroup of Faith in Action)
 - Growing our community
 - Young people
- all underpinned by:
- listening, prayer and reflection
 - communication

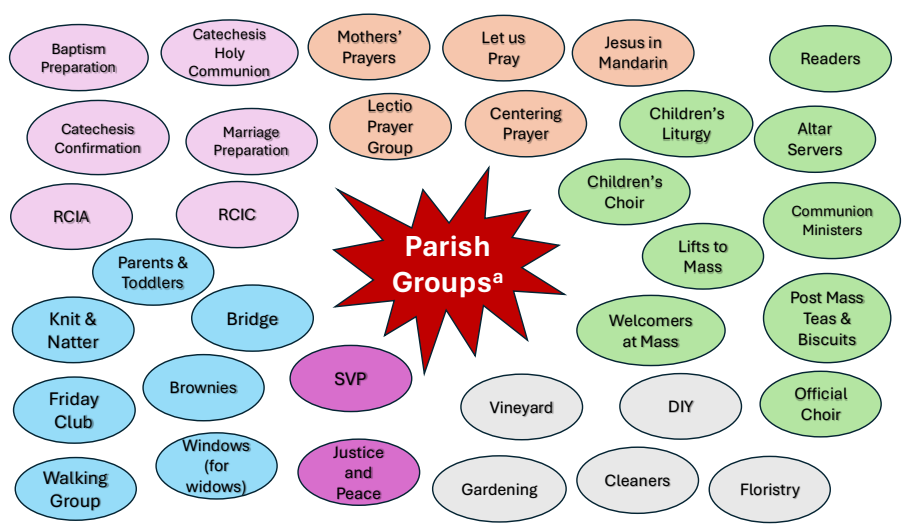
Our way of working is presented in a [short video](#) (link also on our website page) that explains how we use discernment to help us make decisions.

A unique parish

Some of the qualities that we believe make St Vincent’s unique were outlined and the number and diversity of parish groups was also recognised, as well as the commitment of all those who volunteer their time and talents to lead groups:

St Vincent’s is:

- A large multicultural parish with good Mass attendance
- Rich in talents and material resources but poor in time
- Diverse in the ways we choose to practise our faith and spirituality
- Fortunate to have daily Mass and five weekend Masses



^aApologies to any groups we may have omitted

Strategic planning

Our strategic plan was outlined, and the way in which every parish activity is reported and used to show fruitfulness in a specific area related to one of the parish priorities. Copies of the plan summary can be downloaded [here](#) or from our website page and are available on request from the office.

Some of the new initiatives in the past year were briefly presented, such as:

- Pray and Reflect series for Advent, Lent and other specific events such as the war in the Middle East, the general election (Growing our Faith)
- Jubilee Sunday – to celebrate the Jubilee Year called by Pope Francis (Growing our Community)
- Production and distribution of a leaflet outlining the principles of Catholic Social Teaching (Faith in Action)
- Support for the South Manchester Catholic Young Adults Group (Young People)
- The new digital noticeboard (Communication)

Challenges

The meeting then looked at the challenges we face, recognising that our size and diversity can sometimes make us feel like five different parishes, which can present particular challenges for feeling part of a cohesive community. We endeavour to strengthen the priority areas identified by parishioners who engaged with the synodal process and the parish meeting of 2022. We understand the stresses of everyday life but low attendance and offers of support for some events have been disappointing. The importance of recognising that ***we are all on a pilgrim journey, shared with one another in our faith community***, was emphasised.

Seeking solutions

The meeting next took a few minutes of quiet to reflect on what had been presented and how we might address some of the challenges. Attendees were then invited to share feedback on two questions:

- How do we involve the whole parish in praying for and discerning solutions to the challenges in furthering the mission of Christ?
- How do we encourage more involvement and for people to recognise and offer their talents in service to the parish community?

A summary of suggestions/comments is shown overleaf.

Communication

- Explore social media platforms for communicating with different groups
- Use of the digital noticeboard as another medium for messages/invitations to events across; could we display a very short reflection each week?
- Could we expedite progress on the new website?

Ongoing adult formation

- Ongoing adult education is key – but how do we get adults to engage?
- Parents are children's first educators but many need formation themselves; can we engage parents at key points such as baptism, first communion and confirmation?
- Urgent need for adults who are confident enough in their own faith to act as RCIA catechists

Encouraging volunteers to come forward

- Whatever you volunteer to do, with a positive approach you get back much more than you put in
- Personal encounter is the best way; people are more willing to offer one-off help than a regular commitment
- A reflection day for all parishioners to discern their gifts and talents that they already use in their daily lives and could consider offering in service to the parish?

Key points

- Our greatest challenge is to find new ways to support members of our parish to recognise their talents as gifts that can be offered in service to the parish community
- Personal approach to encourage volunteering works best
- Communication and outreach must use social media to reach younger people
- Website update is urgently needed to ensure all groups feel they are valued
- Mass and the sacraments are touchpoints for engaging adults with ongoing formation