



ZOOM MEETING HELD ON 14 OCTOBER 2020 AT 7:30PM

*CHAPTER 6 “Our New Reality” &*

*CHAPTER 7 “Our Journey”: Harvey Martin*

*CHAPTER 8 “Breaking Through”: Charles Pinsent*

## Contributions

### Group 1

We discussed the realisation that due to accelerated social change, our Western society is now firmly at the end of Christendom, a time when faith and popular culture had been aligned.

Fr Mallon goes into a lot of detail about how churches may need to restructure referencing various models, but the reality for each church may be quite simple and obvious.

However difficult times may become, we must keep going.

There was recognition and strong support for Fr Mallon’s assertions in relation to the needs of the priest in charge of a parish. He cannot bring about change alone; he would become exhausted and discouraged. He needs the support of other structures within his parish; a Pastoral Team, finance committee and a willing and helpful laity. Fr Mallon suggests that he needs a “Best friend at Work” to support him. He also suggests regular reviews with the Bishop.

The world has changed greatly over the years, improved literacy, the effect of social media etc., the benefits of which can be utilised by the



Church so long as we can rise above negativity and the disappointments of reducing numbers. We must persist.

We must follow Jesus' example of going into people's lives with his message. We must have a team with the skills needed to succeed in our missionary work.

In conclusion, the pastoral mission is based on 5 pillars:

- The Word of God
- Prayer
- The Eucharist
- Caring for the poor and the sick
- Welcoming

all of which can be achieved by invoking the Holy Spirit in prayer.

## Group 2

We felt that both summaries were wonderfully short and to the point. Sacred Heart Parish being small, it would make sense to work at a Deanery level or combine with other parishes. Unity is strength. Our Vision will take a long time to form; this is going to be a long process. But we will be led by the Holy Spirit so we need to pray to Him a great deal.

We must not think negative thoughts: the Church is not in decline, Christianity is still alive. Take the example of the Pastor who started with 2 people at a student Mass and ended up with 200. However, that did not happen overnight.

We must not compromise our Catholic traditions though our evangelising - the Eucharist, Adoration and weekend Mass must still be celebrated. No pastor should be forced to do this alone. The best interests of the parish should be paramount. If needs be, join up with other parishes or work as a team with the Deanery.



### Group 3

We discussed the importance of finding people's strengths and how everyone has different ranges of strengths and talents- not one person has all.

It was agreed there will be opposition to change in a parish but that is not a reason to stop.

We found it amazing how the Priest who started with 2 students, within 5 years had over 200 attend the Sunday evening service. We also need to be patient in our mission, it is lifelong.

We felt it was a good idea parishes supporting each other. When people are alive with the spirit inside a church community they can then start to go outside that church and evangelise.

The power of intercessory prayer is never to be overlooked.

At least 3 other parishes in our Deanery are involved in Divine Renovation.

They are already doing Alpha courses. Should we ask for their help? Perhaps not yet but the dynamics of Divine Renovation allow for helping other parishes.

We discussed "Church Transplants" and how it seemed to be a very successful initiative.

Where is Bishop Richard on the subject of Divine Renovation and parish renewal. The Bishop is not opposed and would be aware that parishes were doing it. It could be a matter of showing the Bishop the fruits of the work each parish is doing.

We discussed amalgamation of Churches that was mentioned in the book. This was already happening within our own Deanery and Diocese. It is a matter of Priest shortages and sharing resources.



Indeed even in Weybridge there have been occasions when at funerals, a Priest will celebrate the funeral service but it will be a lay person who goes to the cemetery for the blessing there.

### **Further Sharing before closing the meeting**

A few closing comments were made stressing that coming together was key, working with other churches would help us to build strength and with that unity. The entire effort needed many willing helpers and as wide a range as possible of their strengths.

## **NEXT MEETING**

**28<sup>th</sup> October**  
**7:30 p.m.**  
**“Beyond the Parish”**

**Chapter 9:** “Leadership. Essentials” - pp. 139-154

**Fr Julio Ocana**

**Chapter: 10** “Leadership as Influence” - pp. 155-168

**Peter Wills**

**Chair Person:** **Pauline McKenna**

**Secretary:** **Alice De Lima**