

CATHEDRAL DEANERY NEWSLETTER

Meet the Dean

Introduction from our
new Dean,
Fr Con Foley

Pastoral Plan: what's next?

What are current plans
in the Deanery,
and how does Bishop Richard's
move affect them?

Evangelisation & Mission

Opportunities to
share the Gospel
with people
across our Deanery



Introduction from our new Dean

Fr Con Foley moved to Chichester in August 2025, as Moderator Elect for this deanery and Parish Priest of the Parish of Our Lady and the Saints of Sussex.

I grew up in Athy, Co. Kildare, about 40 miles from Dublin and I'm the fourth of nine children (five boys and four girls). Growing up, I played a lot of sports as well as being a daily altar server at the parish church in Athy. I also liked to attend Mass at the local Dominican church as there were some fine preachers there.

Both of my parents were people of deep faith and great witnesses for Christ through their love, hard work and joy. On completing my secondary school education, I trained as an accountant, and after working for a

while in Ireland I moved to Gatwick to work in finance for an airline.

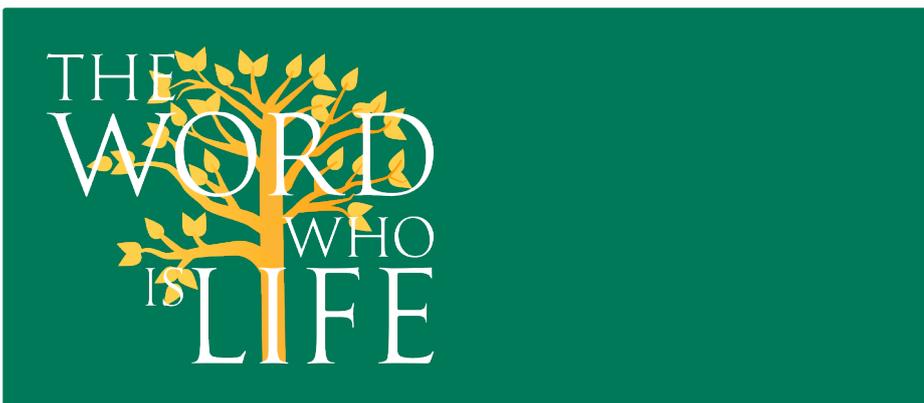
I felt a call to the priesthood at an early age, and this idea never left me. My favourite passage of the Bible to read as a teenager was Matthew 28:19-20, where Christ says "Go, make disciples of all the nations..."

When I was 23, I decided to go on a long train journey from Prague to Hong Kong via Siberia. The propose of the trip was to help me decide whether to apply to be a missionary or diocesan priest and when I got back I decided to apply to this Diocese of Arundel & Brighton, where I'd enjoyed being involved in parish activities, in Crawley. *(continued on back page)*



Fr Con Foley

Dean



Pastoral Plan update

Bishop Richard published [The Word Who is Life: The Call to Mission](#) in January 2024. Underpinning the Plan's vision for the growth of prayer, formation and mission in our community was the transformation of the Diocese's 11 deaneries into 11 mission-focussed new parishes, which will be 'communities of communities'. Brighton & Hove, Guildford, and Weybridge each became new parishes in the Autumn of 2025 and more deaneries were due to follow this year.

Sede Vacante – Vacant See

The Diocese entered *Sede Vacante* on 14 February, when Archbishop Richard took possession of the See of Westminster, until a new bishop is appointed for Arundel & Brighton - which may take some considerable time.

Canon Jonathan Martin has been elected by the priests of the College of Consultors to serve as Diocesan Administrator until Pope Leo appoints a new bishop.

While the See is vacant no significant or consequential decisions can be made that would limit the ability of the next bishop to make his own decisions about the future of the Diocese.

However, this does not mean that the future needs of our community have changed, or alter the logic that led to the writing of the Pastoral Plan.

Canon Kieron O'Brien, who served under Bishop Richard as Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Planning, recently wrote that:

"During this time, the diocesan Pastoral Plan, *The Word Who is Life*, is not put on hold... rather, we should redouble our efforts and prayers to transform our parishes into the 'communities of saints' mentioned in the founding vision for the Plan. Although no more of our new parishes can be officially set up until we have a new pastor for the Diocese, there is much that we can, and should, still do.

"Ongoing support and resourcing from the central team in the Diocese will always be available to moderators and their teams as they look to the future. Although we would not want to present a new bishop with a *fait accompli* about the future of the Diocese, we can hopefully present him with a gift: a gift [of] parishes and communities which are flourishing and committed to renewal and mission, with clergy and lay people in shared leadership and collaboration - all of us united by the call of our baptism."

Deanery Steering Group

After his arrival in Chichester last summer, Fr Con Foley began work on preparing the Cathedral Deanery's 12 churches, five priests

and two deacons to work more closely together to fulfil the mission of the Church in this part of the Diocese. He formed a "Deanery Steering Group", which, together with a group comprised of all active clergy in the Deanery, is taking the lead on this process.

The members of the Steering Group are drawn from the clergy and laity across the Deanery, and include Fr Con Foley, Canon Peter Newsam, Deacon Jon Harman, Phil Sharp and Becky Sleven. Additional members with particular knowledge and skills will be appointed in due course and as needs arise.

The group has so far met five times, discussing the opportunities that closer integration offers us, and how to take advantage of them, as well as the practical steps that would need to be taken before any merger would, eventually, be possible. The members expect to meet regularly throughout the year, to progress plans.

Vision for our Community

In consultation with the other clergy of the Deanery, and with leadership teams in some parishes, the Steering Group has formulated a vision for what the new parish should be, priorities to work on to achieve that vision, and principles that will guide how we go about it.

Our Vision and Principles will be universal: what we believe a Catholic parish should be and how it should approach its work. The priorities are temporary: looking at the current strengths of each community and opportunities, these are the first areas for development across our deanery. The priorities are expected to change over the years.

This Vision is presented on the next page for your review and feedback. The Steering Group will review your feedback and publish a final version of the Vision by the end of July.

Prayer

Formation

Mission



Formation

- Be rooted in the teaching, liturgical tradition and spiritual treasures of the Catholic Church
- Recognise and cherish the God-given gifts of each person and community in our parish
- Work with our Catholic schools to equip and empower parents as the primary educators of their children in the Faith

Mission

- Proclaim the Good News of salvation to all
- Listen to one another, and be open and welcoming to all
- Serve our neighbours with compassion and generosity

Vision: for consultation

Vision

That every person may **believe** in Jesus Christ, **belong** to His family, and **build up** His kingdom.

Principles

In our pursuit of our Vision, we will:

Prayer

- Be centred on the life-giving power of the Sacraments
- Be nourished by the wisdom of Sacred Scripture
- Draw inspiration from Our Lady & the saints, our intercessors and models on the path to holiness

Priorities

for initial development

- Prayer & sacramental life of the faithful
- Youth and family ministry
- Adult formation
- Evangelisation
- Communication
- Stewardship of resources (Missional focus)

Submit Feedback

Deadline: 31 March

To submit feedback to the Clergy & Deanery Steering Groups on the proposed Vision, Principles & Priorities, please visit:

W: abcathedral.churchsuite.com/-/forms/yjprfmzl

Or call or email your local parish office:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| E: arundel@abdiocese.org.uk | T: 01903 882297 |
| E: bognor@abdiocese.org.uk | T: 01243 823619 |
| E: chichester@abdiocese.org.uk | T: 01243 782343 |
| E: petworth@abdiocese.org.uk | T: 01798 342169 |
| E: storrington@abdiocese.org.uk | T: 01903 882297 |





The work of Evangelisation & Mission in our Deanery

'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.' Mt 28:19-20

Across our Deanery, groups are working on plans for evangelisation. Some have run outreach programmes before, while others are coming to it new. Some will run in-person sessions, and others will reach out to enquirers online, and may use the Alpha programme or another course.

Alpha is a globally recognised evangelisation programme that begins from the question 'Is there more to life than this?' and explores the Person of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, prayer, the Bible, healing, the nature of the Church and much more, over 12-16 weekly sessions.

In Bognor, Alpha has been running for 10 years and has borne tremendous

fruit in bringing people to Christ, with the numbers coming into the Church in Bognor each Easter testimony to the effectiveness of the programme. It is hoped to run Alpha twice yearly, in the Spring and Autumn.

In Chichester, Alpha has also been run in person in the past but most recently, after Easter 2025, was run online, taking advantage of the low barriers to access that enquirers face when joining a group is a simple click on their phone or computer, rather than walking in an unfamiliar building, with people they don't know, and customs that are new to them.

Groups in the Petworth & Midhurst and Arundel & Storrington communities are also exploring the options for Alpha, and the training possibilities for leaders.

Alpha will run next in person in Chichester after Easter and in Bognor begins on Wednesday 15 April, 7pm, in the Parish Centre.

Could you be a small group leader, host, helper or cook, offering hospitality and welcome to those who wish to find out more about the Christian Faith, in the next year

Contact your Parish Office or register your interest here: abcathedral.churchsuite.com/-/forms/w4yefc7f

(cont. from p.1) I began my studies for the priesthood in 1994 at St John's Seminary, Womersley, and I was ordained priest in 2001 at St Joseph's, Guildford.

I have served in parishes in Bexhill, Woking, Crawley, Storrington and Weybridge. After I left Woking parish, I moved to Chicago for further studies at the Catholic Theological Union, where I completed a Doctorate of Ministry in liturgy, specialising in Homiletics. On my return to the

UK, I and others set up the Catholic Association of Preachers, which aims to encourage and equip priests, deacons, chaplains and catechists in the ministry of preaching. I have also been a formator at St John's Seminary and was also Diocesan Vocations Director. Each year, I teach a homiletics course at Allen Hall seminary in London.

The saints that have inspired me most are St Ignatius of Loyola and St Paul because of their zeal,

creativity and courage. Mary, the Mother of Jesus, has been a great help to me over my life.

Bishop Richard appointed me as Moderator Elect for the Cathedral Deanery, and parish priest of Our & the Saints of Sussex Parish, in August 2025.

I take an interest in all sport and enjoy photography and hiking. I'm just waiting for the rain to stop so that I can get out on my bike soon and learn more about this part of West Sussex!

Cathedral Deanery Parishes

Arundel & Storrington
Bognor Regis & Slindon
Petworth & Midhurst
Our Lady & the Saints of Sussex

The Arundel and Brighton Diocesan Trust is a Registered Charity No. 252878.

For the latest news from the Diocese

Sign up to the weekly E-Bulletin at mailchi.mp/7529e811ae63/joinourlist