

SAINT MARGARET OF SCOTLAND CATHOLIC CHURCH,
CARSHALTON BEECHES,
ARCHDIOCESE OF SOUTHWARK

RACIAL AND CULTURAL INCLUSION



A toolkit

for Catholic churches

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ONE VOICE

A TOOLKIT FOR A GROUP WORKING TO PROMOTE RACIAL AND CULTURAL INCLUSION IN A CATHOLIC PARISH



“There’s more than one voice
Singing in the darkness
Joining with your one voice ...
Hands are joined and fears unlocked”
{Copyright: Universal Music}

This toolkit is based on the experience of St Margaret of Scotland Church, Carshalton Beeches, in the London Borough of Sutton. St Margaret’s is a small parish, the smallest in the Sutton deanery. In October 2023 its average total attendance at Saturday Vigil and Sunday Masses was 217.

The racial composition of the Carshalton Beeches area is predominantly white - although no longer overwhelmingly so, as was the case 20 years ago. Until recently the ethnic composition of the congregation at St Margaret’s was also predominantly white.

However, the congregation has become significantly more multi-racial in recent years and is visibly more racially diverse than the surrounding population.

Steps to promote racial and cultural inclusion in a parish will need adaptation from one area to another. However, we believe that the overall approach described in this publication is likely to be appropriate for many Catholic parishes.

Race can be a sensitive area. People are often uncomfortable talking about it. Therefore, two things are important in undertaking any initiative to promote racial and cultural inclusion. The first is that the whole approach must be positive, inclusive and non-confrontational. It is not about jumping down people’s throats for inadvertently using slightly the wrong language.

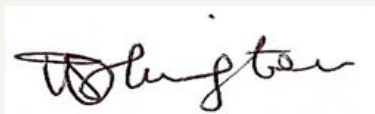
It is about emphasising that the racial and cultural diversity of a parish is a blessing from the Lord; that the experiences, traditions and worship of different racial and cultural groups can enrich the life of a parish; and that the whole parish benefits from the experience of racial and cultural diversity.

Secondly, an initiative is more likely to succeed if it is driven by a small multi-racial group of parishioners who are not hesitant about talking clearly and straightforwardly about racial and cultural inclusion and who are upfront and clear about the importance of this issue for the Church, individual parishes and the whole community.

We hope that this toolkit will be of assistance to anyone wishing to undertake initiatives to promote racial and cultural inclusion more effectively in their parish. At St Margaret’s we are very aware that our efforts are very much a work in progress and that we are far from having all the answers. We would be pleased to exchange ideas with other parishes and to learn from their experiences.

Foreword by Canon Victor Darlington

The Catholic Church has a crucial role to play in speaking out against racism and promoting racial inclusion in our communities. Racism is a sin and has no place in our world. As followers of Christ, it is our duty to welcome all people, regardless of race or background, into our Church and show them there is a place for them. This is something our Archdiocese knows is important and is determined to lead the way on. That is why the Archdiocese of Southwark became the first Catholic diocese in England and Wales to establish a Commission for Promoting Racial and Cultural Inclusion. The Commission's purpose is to support engagement with marginalised communities and promote opportunities for growth in understanding issues of diversity and inclusion. But this work can only be effective if our parishes take up the call to promote racial inclusion in our communities too. St Margaret's Carshalton Beeches are doing exactly that. They are leading the way in putting the message of welcome and inclusion into practice. It is wonderful to see how they have transformed their parish into one which is more inclusive, welcoming and reflective of the people they serve. This is shown not only in the diverse Saints featured around the Church, but also in their approach to encouraging readers and Eucharistic Ministers from a range of different backgrounds. Their model is one that can and should be replicated. I am delighted with their toolkit, which is designed to provide practical and helpful tips for parishes to transform their practices to ensure they are welcoming to all. The toolkit provides examples of how to set up a racial and inclusion group, how to welcome new joiners effectively, as well as tips on how to promote Saints from around the world. The Lord Jesus loves us all and we in turn must love and welcome all. By implementing this helpful toolkit across our Archdiocese, we can put our Lord's loving words into action.



Canon Victor Darlington

Episcopal Vicar for Promoting Racial Justice and Cultural Inclusion
Archdiocese of Southwark

1-SETTING UP A GROUP



St Margaret of Scotland parish began its work to promote racial and cultural inclusion following an invitation by Fr Anthony Uche, our Parish Administrator, to Canon Victor Darlington, Episcopal Vicar and Chair of the Archdiocese of Southwark's Commission for Promoting Racial and Cultural Inclusion. Fr Anthony invited Canon Victor to visit the parish and to preach the homily at Sunday morning Mass. In the course of his homily Canon Victor invited interested parishioners to hand in their names after Mass. Those who did so then established a parish Racial and Cultural Inclusion group with guidance from Canon Victor.

Recommended steps for a parish wishing to do the same are:

Begin with a talk to the parish about the importance of racial and cultural inclusion and ask those interested to give their names to a co-ordinator:

Parishes in the Archdiocese of Southwark can invite Canon Victor Darlington to preach a homily or or to give a talk in the parish. Parishes in other dioceses can potentially use a number of other approaches. An earlier initiative to promote racial justice at Our Lady of Fatima parish, White City, began with a homily on the importance of racial justice by the parish priest, Fr Richard Nesbitt. The response of members of the congregation led to meetings of parishioners and Fr Richard to discuss these issues and experiences of racism. These meetings led to initiatives to promote racial inclusion in the parish.

One option might be to invite a speaker from another parish (such as St Margaret's) which has experience of promoting racial and cultural inclusion. If possible, the initial talk should be to the whole parish at Sunday Mass. If a talk is arranged on a separate occasion, there is a risk that some potential members of a group would be unavailable for the meeting and would not be prompted to volunteer to be involved. An initial homily or talk during Mass also helps to make it clear that the work of the subsequently established group has the support, blessing and encouragement of the parish.



Ensure that the group is multi-racial and, if possible, that it includes people in key positions who can make things happen in the parish

The membership of the group should be multi-racial. This is essential given the nature of the initiative and it also helps to ensure that it has credibility with all sections of the parish community. It is desirable to include some people in key positions who can make things happen in the parish. This might include the parish priest, Sacristan, liturgy co-ordinator, social events co-ordinator or key members of the Parish Pastoral Council. However, the most important consideration is that all members of the group must be committed to and convinced of the importance of combatting racism and promoting racial and cultural inclusion

Draw up a list of key areas for the group to explore

At its first meeting the group at St Margaret's drew up an initial list of areas to explore. This was based on the report "Rooting Out Racism" produced by Our Lady of Fatima parish, White City, with some additional items suggested by group members. The group agreed to:

- Make regular announcements at every Sunday Mass welcoming newcomers to the parish, inviting them to stay for refreshments after Mass and asking existing parishioners to make new arrivals welcome.
- Display a notice at the Church entrance saying "Welcome" in many different languages.
- Increase the diversity of images in the church by obtaining additional pictures of Black and Asian saints.
- Display a gallery of images of Our Lady's apparitions in different parts of the world where she has appeared with features, skin colouring and dress appropriate to the local population.
- Obtain cards (e.g. prayer cards, Easter cards and Christmas cards) and Repository items featuring a range of racially diverse images.
- Feature a regular Saint of the Month in the parish Newsletter, ensuring that in the course of the year saints from a range of different countries and ethnic groups are featured.
- Increase the diversity of Readers, Eucharistic Ministers and those presenting Sunday morning announcements, so that they were more visibly reflective of the parish community.
- Ensure that Bidding Prayers regularly include prayers for communities in different parts of the world (including, but not restricted to, those affected by emergency situations).
- Follow the parish's annual multi-cultural celebration on Pentecost Sunday with individual Masses featuring prayer and worship by particular national and ethnic groups.
- Ensure that parishioners are aware that the parish's safeguarding procedures include procedures to support and protect any parishioners who experience racial abuse or discrimination.



A similar list of areas to be explored is likely to be appropriate in many parishes.

Resources

Below is a link to a “Saints of Southwark” video featuring the racial and cultural inclusion work of St Margaret’s parish:

<https://www.rcsouthwark.co.uk/mission/saints-of-southwark/st-margaret-s-of-scotland-carshalton-beeches/>

Contact details: The St Margaret of Scotland parish office – carshaltonbeeches@rcaos.org.uk – can forward queries or requests for advice or assistance from other parishes to the parish’s Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group.

Report: The report “Rooting Out Racism from Our Parish” describes an exercise to promote race equality which the West London parish of Our Lady of Fatima, White City, undertook in 2020. The exercise looked at a range of questions including:

1. Do leadership and decision-making roles in the parish reflect the racial profile of the parish?
2. Are different racial groups appropriately represented in parish ministries, especially those which are most visible (such as Reader, Eucharistic Minister, Altar Server, Choir, those making announcements and appeals)?
3. Are the religious images in the church reflective of racial diversity?
4. Is there a variety of skin colours and racial imagery in the cards and other items available in the church entrance and repository?
5. Does the music at Masses reflect the parish’s multi-racial community?
6. Should the parish celebrate Black History Month to highlight the role which black saints have played in the church?
7. Have parishioners from racial minority groups experienced racism in the parish and, if so, have any efforts been made to tackle this?

The full report can be found online at <https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2021/01/Rooting-Out-Racism.pdf>

2 - WELCOME ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEW PARISHIONERS



Parishioners at St Margaret's who have arrived in the parish in recent years have emphasised the importance of the welcome which they received in determining their decision to make our parish their spiritual home rather than to go elsewhere. Experiences of being greeted, welcomed, invited to refreshments and engaged by other parishioners in conversation were more likely to encourage new arrivals to return. Conversely, experiences of being ignored after Mass, while long standing parishioners engaged in conversation with their existing friends, were more likely to dissuade new arrivals from returning and to make them more likely to seek a friendlier church.

Recommended steps include:

INITIATE WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS WELCOMING NEW PARISHIONERS

At St Margaret's we have initiated regular announcements as part of the notices at every Sunday Mass welcoming new parishioners, asking them to make themselves known to our priest and Welcomers, asking them to take a copy of our Welcome booklet and inviting them to join us for tea and coffee after Mass. These weekly announcements also ask existing parishioners who see someone new to the parish to approach them and make them welcome.

INSTALL A WELCOME NOTICE IN A RANGE OF LANGUAGES

At St Margaret's we placed two Welcome Notices in a range of languages in our church porch. These are on either side of a carving of Our Lady which faces worshippers as they enter the church. Another local parish has installed such a notice on the external wall near the steps which lead up to the main entrance to the church.

Any other parish wanting to display such a notice is welcome to use the same design as the one at St Margaret's. A version with the St Margaret's logo removed can be sent to other parishes on request.

[See illustration of Welcome Notice on page 9]

PRODUCE A WELCOME BOOKLET

St Margaret's has produced a booklet with details of all the groups, ministries, worship and activities in the parish. This covers times of Masses and Adoration, activities for young people, the Children's Liturgy, choirs, Bible Study and prayer groups, the 180 Club (a regular fund-raising draw), ecumenical activity, social and fund-raising events, the Repository, home and hospital visits, the RCIA process, the Sacraments, altar servers, the Racial and Cultural Inclusion group, safeguarding procedures, facilities for disabled access, parish finances and local Catholic schools. The booklet includes contact names for the organisers of the various ministries and activities in the parish.

Parishes can also consider producing a separate leaflet specifically aimed at those newly arrived in the UK, containing information about local support agencies and facilities in the local area.

WELCOME NEW ARRIVALS BY NAME IN THE PARISH NEWSLETTER

Another way of making newly arrived parishioners feel part of the parish is to welcome them by name with their permission in the parish Newsletter. This can be facilitated by establishing a system whereby the Parish Secretary notifies the Newsletter editor each time a new parishioner completes a registration form.

HOLD WELCOMING SESSIONS FOR NEWLY ARRIVED PARISHIONERS

A further way of welcoming new parishioners is to hold regular sessions – for example, these could be held twice a year for those who have joined the parish in the previous six months. These sessions can include presentations about the worship and activities in the parish; provide an opportunity for new arrivals to talk about themselves and their families; and enable new parishioners to ask questions, seek advice and share their early impressions of the parish.



ST MARGARET'S WELCOME NOTICE

RESOURCES

Contact details: The St Margaret of Scotland parish office – carshaltonbeeches@rcaos.org.uk – can forward requests for the Welcome Notice to the parish's Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group. You will then be emailed the image of the Welcome Notice (with the St Margaret's logo removed) which you can print, laminate or frame for use in your parish.

You can use the same email address to request a copy of the St Margaret's Welcome Booklet if you would like to gain ideas for the production of a similar publication in your parish.

Weekly announcement:

The wording of the weekly announcement which is made at all Sunday Masses at St Margaret's is:

If you are visiting St Margaret's for the first time, you are very welcome. We are a welcoming, diverse and inclusive parish - so please introduce yourself to Fr Anthony and our Welcomers. Please take a copy of our Welcome Booklet and join us for tea and coffee after Mass. And please could all parishioners who see someone new to the parish make a point of approaching them and making them welcome.

Welcoming new parishioners in the parish Newsletter:

A suggested simple form of wording for a Newsletter item is:

St Margaret's is pleased to welcome two new families who are newly arrived in the parish. They are Stanley and Joy Eze and family and Bill and Margaret O'Riordan and family. We are delighted that they are now part of our parish community.

3 - DIVERSE IMAGES IN THE CHURCH

Jesus and his mother Mary were Palestinian Jews. They are likely to have had an olive skinned complexion. However, they are usually depicted with white European features in statues and pictures throughout Europe and in many other countries which were evangelised by European missionaries. Other statues and pictures of saints and angels in many British churches are often limited to images of white European saints or angels with all white faces.

One parishioner of Our Lady of Fatima parish, West London, wrote in the report "Rooting Out Racism" of her experience as a young woman:

"When I entered the church I felt like it was God's house and I would feel his warm loving embrace, but then I started looking at the images around the church and realised that I (along with anyone non-white) wasn't in them. A home which doesn't include you in the 'family photos' doesn't seem inviting and so you begin to question your part in the Catholic family. The only saints Catholics appeared to celebrate were white with blue eyes, thus implying that only white people were worthy to be canonised."

At the beginning of the 2020s this was also true of Saint Margaret of Scotland Church in Carshalton. Until the Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group began its work, all the images, statues and pictures in the church were of white people. Taking the view that all parishioners should see images of people like them in the church, the group obtained pictures of Black and Asian saints and displayed them in the church alongside those of white European saints. The pictures obtained included images of Saint Charles Lwanga and companions (Uganda), Saint Joseph Vaz (from Goa, missionary to Sri Lanka), Saint Euphrasia Eluvathingal (India) and Saint Martin de Porres (Peru). Brief descriptions of each saint's life were added below each picture. A statue of Saint Martin de Porres was also commissioned and added to the existing statues in the church.



MARY HOLDING JESUS

Prints were also obtained of the Ascension of the Lord and of Mary holding Jesus taken from the Vie de Jesus Mafa series. This series of pictures of the life of Jesus was created at the initiative of a French missionary to help to spread the Gospel in Northern Cameroon. Local people re-enacted scenes from the Gospel and these scenes were reproduced by an artist. They formed the basis of a set of 63 Images in which Jesus, Mary and other characters in the Gospels are depicted as Black people in local dress and African settings.



STATUE OF ST
MARTIN DE PORRES

We were aware that Our Lady had appeared throughout the world with skin colour, dress and appearance appropriate to the local population. However, many British Catholics are only aware of Our Lady's appearances in European locations such as Lourdes, Fatima, Medjugorje and Knock. The group therefore decided to obtain a set of pictures of Our Lady's apparitions in different parts of the world and to display this as a gallery in a prominent position in the meeting area which adjoins the main church. The gallery showcases appearances that have all been officially approved by the Church, including:

OUR LADY OF KIBEHO:

Our Lady appeared to three schoolgirls (Alphonsine, Nathalie and Marie Claire) in Kibeho, Rwanda, in a series of apparitions between 1981 and 1989. The visionaries described Our Lady's features as "somewhere in between" black and white. She communicated a number of messages including a vision of Rwanda descending into violence and hatred, which is believed to have foretold the Rwandan genocide of 1994 and 1995. Our Lady asked people to pray the Chaplet of the Seven Sorrows to obtain the favour of repentance. Between 25,000 and 30,000 pilgrims now gather at the shrine in Kibeho on Marian feast days

OUR LADY OF FATIMA:

In a series of apparitions in 1916 and 1917 Our Lady appeared to three children (Lucia, Francisco and Jacinta) at Fatima, Portugal. Our Lady revealed three secrets to the visionaries. These included a vision of Hell and predictions of the end of the Great War and the assassination attempt on Saint John Paul II. Our Lady asked for the consecration of Russia to the Immaculate Heart of Mary. She asked the visionaries to pray the Rosary daily for peace and to undertake prayer and sacrifice to save sinners from Hell. During her final apparition the sun appeared as a spinning disc in the sky and careered towards earth before zig-zagging back to its normal position. The Miracle of the Sun took place before a crowd of between 30,000 and 100,00 people. Today Fatima is a major pilgrimage centre, visited by millions of people every year.

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE:

In 1531 Our Lady appeared to St Juan Diego at Tepeyac Hill in Mexico. On Our Lady's instructions, Juan Diego found and gathered roses from the summit of the hill, which was normally barren. Our Lady arranged the flowers in Juan Diego's tilma (cloak). When he later opened the cloak, the flowers fell to the floor revealing a miraculous image of Our Lady. The image depicts Our Lady with Mexican mestizo features. The tilma is displayed in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in a suburb of Mexico City. It is the most visited Catholic shrine in the world

OUR LADY OF AKITA:

In 1973 Our Lady appeared to Sister Agnes Katsuko Sasagawa in the convent of the Seitai Hoshikai Handmaids of the Holy Eucharist in Yuzawadai, Akita, Japan. At the time of the apparitions a wooden statue of Our Lady wept tears and small quantities of blood emerged from the hands of the statue. Our Lady's messages to Sister Agnes emphasised the importance of repentance, penance and prayer (especially the Rosary).

OUR LADY OF VAILANKANNI (ALSO SPELT VELANKANNI):

In 1570 Our Lady appeared with the infant Jesus to a shepherd boy at Velai in Tamil Nadu, India. In 1597 Our Lady appeared at a nearby location to a boy who was cured of a disability. Devotion to Our Lady of Good Health of Velankanni spread after reports of the apparition, the miraculous cure and the sudden calming of a raging storm in the nearby Bay of Bengal following prayers to Our Lady by Portuguese sailors. Velankanni is now the biggest Catholic pilgrimage site in India.

OUR LADY OF LA VANG:

In 1798 Our Lady appeared at La Vang in Quang Tri Province, Vietnam, at a time when Catholics were under severe persecution. She appeared to a group of Catholics hiding in the rainforest while they prayed the Rosary. Our Lady appeared in traditional Vietnamese dress with the child Jesus in her arms. She said that she was aware of her hearers' illnesses due to contaminated water and told them to boil the leaves of nearby trees which would cure their sickness. Many people later came to pray at the site and a series of churches have been built there. The current Basilica of Our Lady of La Vang was constructed in 2012.

OUR LADY APARECIDA:

Our Lady Aparecida is the Patroness of Brazil. In 1717 in Guaratingueta, Brazil, three fishermen were fishing in preparation for a local feast in honour of the visiting Governor of Sao Paulo. After having little success, the fishermen prayed to Our Lady and cast their nets again. They dragged up a statue of the Virgin Mary (a black version of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception), following which they had a large catch of fish. Devotion to the statue grew rapidly and many miracles were attributed to Our Lady Aparecida. The statue is now in the Basilica of Our Lady Aparecida in Sao Paulo. The building is the largest Marian shrine in the world.



OUR LADY APARECIDA

In addition to the above eight apparitions, a picture of Our Lady of China has been obtained and added to the images in the main church with the following description:

OUR LADY OF CHINA:

In April 1900 during the Boxer Rebellion, 10,000 soldiers attacked the village of Donglu in the Hubei province of China. The village was a small Christian community established by the Vincentian order. The parish priest, Father Wu, prayed to Our Lady asking for her help and protection. An apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared in the sky surrounded by light. A fiery horseman (believed to be St Michael) then charged towards the soldiers who scattered and fled. Father Wu commissioned a statue of Our Lady and the Christ Child dressed in imperial robes. This became the image of Our Lady of China. The statue was destroyed in 1966 during the Cultural Revolution. In 1989 a canvas of the image was painted. It is now enshrined at the altar of Our Lady of Donglu parish church.

RESOURCES

Picture images: Images of saints and of Our Lady's apparitions can be downloaded and printed from a range of websites including:

www.portraitsofsaints.com

www.pinterest.co.uk

Pictures of Our Lady and the child Jesus from a diverse range of countries can be downloaded from the website of the Catholic Bishops' Conference at:

www.cbew.org.uk/in-the-image-and-likeness-of-god/

Statue: The statue of Saint Martin de Porres which the St Margaret's group purchased was produced by E Carrara and Sons whose website is www.catholicstatues.co.uk

Costs: The statue was the single most expensive item. However, the cost of purchasing diverse items and of framing printed images did not affect the parish's finances as individual parishioners covered the cost of all the purchases with specific donations.



OUR LADY OF KIBEHO



OUR LADY OF CHINA

4-REPOSITORY ITEMS



Many parish Repositories contain devotional items, books and cards in which the images are either exclusively or overwhelmingly of white people. The main suppliers of items to Repositories in the UK stock few First Communion or Confirmation gifts or cards with pictures of Black or Asian children. The Parish Priest at St Margaret's, in a letter to a major supplier in late 2023, wrote:

"In common with many Catholic parishes, we have a multi-racial congregation which has become significantly more racially diverse in recent years. We have therefore sought to obtain a range of books and devotional items with racially diverse images for our church Repository... However, one area which is causing us continuing difficulty has been the problem we have encountered in sourcing First Holy Communion and Confirmation gifts with suitably diverse images. All the First Communion and Confirmation items available only seem to feature pictures of white children. This is inappropriate for a display of gifts in a multi-racial parish where our Repository should be able to supply and display items with images of children from a range of different ethnic groups.

"Your 2023 First Communion and Confirmation catalogue is 100 pages long. The only non-white image appears on page 12 on the cover of a book entitled 'My Mass Colouring Book', which has a picture of several children, two of whom are brown skinned. Otherwise, the catalogue consists of page after page of images of white children, white angels and white saints without a single image of an African-Caribbean or Asian child or adult. I hope that you are able to take this on board in your future planning, with a view to making available a range of First Communion and Confirmation gifts with a more diverse range of images."

Faced with this problem, the Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group at St Margaret's therefore sought to find websites and suppliers from which statues, cards, books and other devotional items could be obtained with a more diverse range of images. Some examples are provided in the "Resources" section below.

RESOURCES

Sources of Repository items: Examples of items which have assisted in making the images in St Margaret's Repository more racially and culturally diverse include:

- *Prayer cards and statues of Saint Martin de Porres which can be obtained from CBC Suppliers, Aid to the Church in Need or Piety Stall.*
- *Larger prayer cards of Saint Martin de Porres and Saint Josephine Bakhita obtained from www.zazzle.com/showerofroses and www.zazzle.com/eklektix*
- *Prayer cards of Saint Anthony Abbot and Our Lady of Guadalupe obtained from St Paul's Bookshop*
- *First Communion cards featuring pictures of Black First Communicants obtained from www.bespokediva.com (displayed alongside cards featuring white children obtainable from UK suppliers such as CBC)*
- *Confirmation card entitled You Have Been Taught the Scriptures from jenjarohmi.typepad.com or www.zazzle.com*
- *Cards featuring a Japanese Madonna and child obtained from www.zazzle.com/cowboyanniedesigns*
- *Card entitled Mother of the Streets from www.fineartamerica.com or www.trinitystores.com*
- *Christmas cards with racially diverse depictions of people and angels obtained from www.charity-christmascards.org.uk and cards by Carlos Maraz from www.zazzle.com*
- *Easter card with black Jesus figure entitled For God So Loved the World from www.zazzle.com*
- *Christmas cards featuring photos of the work of the Sylvia Wright Trust's schools in India obtained from www.sylviawright.org*

Books: An increasing number of books (particularly children's books which sell well in parish Repositories) include images of people from a range of ethnic backgrounds. Examples of books which feature a diverse range of pictures include:

- My First Missal, Pauline Books
- My Mass Book, Pauline Books
- Let's Go to Mass, Redemptorist Publications
- My Simple Prayer Book, CTS Kids
- My First Interactive Mass Book, Jennifer Sharpe
- First Holy Communion, Pauline Books
- The Holy Mass in My Pocket, St Paul's
- See Let's Be A Good Friend, Gemma Hunt
- Knowing God – J John (and How Can I Pray?, The Christmas Story and The Easter Story by the same author)
- God's Very Colourful Creation, Tim Thornborough
- I Am A Precious Child of God, Misty Black
- Known: Psalm 139, Sally Lloyd-Jones (and Loved: The Lord's Prayer by the same author)
- His Grace Is Enough, Melissa Kruger
- When God Made You, Matthew Paul Turner
- God's Very Good Idea, Trillia J Newbell
- Mother Teresa, Rev Jude Winkler
- Henry/Felipe/Journey/Tyree Learns to Pray, Daniel B Lancaster
- God Made All Your Feelings, Beaming Books
- Why Can't I See God, Joanne Gilchrist

5- SAINTS OF THE MONTH

In addition to increasing the racial diversity of the saints depicted in the church building, the St Margaret's Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group decided to include a picture and description of a Saint of the Month as a regular feature in the parish Newsletter. The group drew up a month-by-month list of potential Saints of the Month with a view to ensuring that saints from a wide range of countries were featured in the course of each year, including a significant number of saints of colour. Examples of the latter have included:

Saint Charles Lwanga was a Ugandan convert to the Catholic faith who was martyred with a group of companions in 1886. Charles Lwanga served in the court of King Mwangwa II of Buganda, who insisted that Christian converts should abandon their new faith. Charles was in charge of the royal pages and he often protected the boys in his charge from improper advances by the King. On 25 May 1886 the King interrogated members of his court to see whether they would renounce Christianity. Led by Charles Lwanga, the royal pages declared their fidelity to their faith, upon which the King condemned them to death. Charles was burned to death together with 12 other Catholic men and boys and nine Anglicans. Saint Charles Lwanga and his companions were canonised by Pope Paul VI in 1964.



SAINT CHARLES LWANGA AND COMPANIONS



**SAINT AUGUSTINE
ZHAO RONG**
1746-1815

Saint Augustine Zhao Rong is one of 120 people who were martyred for their faith in China between 1648 and 1930. Eighty-seven were Chinese people and thirty-three were Western missionaries. Saint Augustine Zhao Rong was a soldier who was assigned to escort a French priest. The priest's example led him to convert to Catholicism and he became a priest. After a short period of priestly ministry, Fr Augustine was jailed, tortured and left to die in prison during the reign of an emperor who was bitterly hostile to Christianity. The feast of Saint Augustine Zhao Rong and companions is celebrated on 9 July.



**SAINT JOSEPHINE
BAKHITA**

Saint Josephine Bakhita was born in the Darfur region of Sudan in 1869. At the age of seven she was seized by slave traders. She was bought, sold and given away more than 12 times before being freed in 1889. She was left with the Canossian sisters, where she encountered Christianity for the first time. She entered the novitiate and spent the rest of her life in the Canossian convent in Schio, northern Italy. Saint Bakhita is the patron saint of Sudan and of survivors of human trafficking. Her feast day is celebrated on 8 February, which is the International Day of Prayer Against Human Trafficking.



**SAINT EUPHRASIA
ELUVATHINGAL**

Saint Euphrasia Eluvathingal was born in 1877 in Kerala, India. She was a Carmelite nun who spent more than 50 years in her convent in Ollur, Kerala. Saint Euphrasia endeavoured to lead a life of constant prayer, penance and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She became known as the "Praying Mother". Miracles of healing have been attributed to her intercession. Many thousands of people have visited Saint Euphrasia's tomb in Ollur to pray, ask for her intercession and give thanks for favours received. She was beatified in 2006 and canonised in 2014. Her feast day is celebrated on 30 August.



ST JOSEPH VAZ

St Joseph Vaz was born in 1651 in Goa. Ordained a priest in 1676, he became a popular preacher and confessor. In 1687 he travelled to Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) which was occupied by the Dutch, who had imposed Calvinism as the official religion. St Joseph travelled throughout the country, bringing the Eucharist and the Sacraments to clandestine groups of Catholics. In 1692 he moved to Kandy. He was permitted to minister openly to Catholics in the area and was responsible for many conversions. He was beatified in 1795 and canonised in 2015.



SAINT JUAN DIEGO

Saint Juan Diego was born in 1474 in Cuauhtitlan, Mexico. In 1531 Our Lady appeared to St Juan Diego on three occasions at Tepeyac Hill. On Our Lady's instructions, Juan Diego found and gathered roses from the summit of the hill, which was normally barren. Our Lady arranged the flowers in Juan Diego's tilma (cloak). When he later opened the cloak in front of the initially sceptical local Bishop, the flowers fell to the floor revealing a miraculous image of Our Lady. The image depicts Our Lady with Mexican mestizo features. The tilma is now displayed in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in a suburb of Mexico City. It is the most visited Catholic shrine in the world. Juan Diego was beatified in 1990 and canonised in 2002 by Pope John Paul II, who travelled on both occasions to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. He was the first indigenous saint of the Americas. Saint Juan Diego's feast day is celebrated on 9 December.



SAINT PERPETUA AND SAINT FELICITY

Saint Perpetua and Saint Felicity were African women who were martyred in 203 AD at Carthage (in modern day Tunisia). Perpetua, a noblewoman, had an infant son. Felicity, a slave, was pregnant and gave birth in prison two days before her martyrdom. They were among five catechumens who were put to death during Roman games held in honour of Emperor Septimus Severus. Perpetua wrote an account, published after her death, entitled "The Passion of Perpetua and Felicity" which described their sufferings in prison before their martyrdom. The martyrs were thrown to wild beasts, following which Perpetua and Felicity were killed with a gladiator's sword. Their feast day is celebrated on 7 March. They are the patron saints of mothers and expectant mothers.



**SAINT LORENZO
RUIZ**

Saint Lorenzo Ruiz is the patron saint of the Philippines. Born in Manila, he was martyred in Japan during the persecution of Christians in the 17th century. After being falsely accused of killing a man, Saint Lorenzo sought asylum on board a ship with four priests and another layman. They sailed for Japan, where they were imprisoned and subsequently tortured by being hung upside down over a pit. Refusing to renounce his faith, Saint Lorenzo died two days later. His last words were: "I am a Catholic and I do wholeheartedly accept death for God. Had I a thousand lives, all these to Him would I offer." Saint Lorenzo was canonised by Pope John Paul II in 1987, making him the first Filipino saint. The feast of Saint Lorenzo Ruiz and companions is celebrated on 28 September.



**ST MARTIN DE
PORRES VELAZQUEZ
O.P**

1579-1639

St Martin de Porres Velazquez O.P. (1579-1639) was a Peruvian lay brother of the Dominican Order. He was noted for his work for the poor and the sick. He was placed in charge of the infirmary at the Dominican monastery in Lima where he lived. A hospital providing medical care for poor people continues to operate on the site to this day. St Martin had gifts of prayerful ecstasy, levitation and a special rapport with animals. Miraculous cures were attributed to him. He was beatified in 1837 by Pope Gregory XVI and canonised in 1962 by Pope John XXIII. St Martin de Porres is the patron saint of public health workers and of people seeking racial harmony. His feast day is celebrated on 3 November.

RESOURCES

Examples of possible Saints of the Month: Below is a short (and far from exhaustive) list of saints from different countries for each month of the year from which saints could be chosen for a Saints of the Month feature.

- January – St Joseph Vaz (from Goa, missionary to Sri Lanka) or Saint Thomas Aquinas (Italy) or St Anthony Abbot (Egypt) or St Elizabeth Ann Seton (USA).
- February – St Josephine Bakhita (Sudan) or St Paul Miki and companions (Japanese) or Saint Brigid (Ireland) or St Miguel Febres Cordero (Ecuador) or the Fatima visionaries (Portugal)
- March – Saint Oscar Romero (El Salvador) or Saints Felicity and Perpetua (Tunisia) or St Patrick (Ireland) or St David (Wales)
- April – St Stanislaus (Poland) or St George (of Greek origin, Patron of England) or St Mary Euphrasia Pelletier (France) or St Teresa of the Andes (Chile) or St Pedro de Betancur (from Tenerife, first saint of Guatemala)
- May – St Rita or St Mary Magdalene de Pazzi (Italy) or St Simon Stock or the English Martyrs or Saint Margaret Clitherow (England) or St Mariana de Paredes (Ecuador) or St Philip (Palestine) or St Pachonius (Egypt) or Saint Corona (Syria) or Saint Matthias (Palestine)
- June – St Charles Lwanga and companions (Uganda) or St Mariam Thresia Chiramel Mankidiyan (India) or Saint Anthony of Padua (Italy) or Saint Peter (Palestine) or Saint Paul of Tarsus (Turkey)
- July – St Augustine Zhao Rong and companions (China) or St Mary Zhu Wu (China) or St Anna Wang (China) or St Charbel Makhlouf [Sharbel Makhluf] (Lebanon) or Saint Kateri Tekakwitha (Native American) or Saint Athanasius (Turkey) or St Kilian (Ireland)
- August – Saint Teresa Benedicta (Germany) or Saint Euphrasia Eluvathingal (India) or St Rose of Lima (Peru) or Saint Augustine (Africa) or Saint Maximilian Kolbe (Poland) or Saint Mary Ellen MacKillop (Australia)
- September – Saint Andrew Kim Taegon, Paul Chong Harang and companions (Korea) or Saint Francis Choe Kyong-hwan (Korea) or St Lorenzo Ruiz and companions (Philippines) or Saint Pio (Italy)
- October – St Margaret Mary Alacoque or St Therese of Lisieux (France) or St Francis of Assisi (Italy) or St Faustina (Poland) or Saint John Henry Newman (England).
- November – St Andrew Dung-Lac and companions (Vietnam) or St Andrew (Scotland) or Saint Cecilia Yu Sosa (Korea) or Saint Martin de Porres (Peru) or the Martyrs of Paraguay or The Martyrs of Vietnam or Saint Catherine Laboure (France)
- December – Saint Juan Diego (Mexico) or St Cecilia or St Lucy or St Mary de Rosa (Italy) or St Narcisa de Jesus (Ecuador) or Saint Thomas Becket (England) or Saint Francis Xavier (Spanish, missionary to Goa and Japan).

6 - BIDDING PRAYERS (PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL)

At St Margaret of Scotland parish, Carshalton, we have sought to ensure that the Bidding Prayers at all our Sunday Masses include prayers for church communities in other countries. This includes prayers for the victims of current disaster situations and persecuted Christians. However, it also includes regular prayers for Church communities in all countries where members of our congregation have families and friends. A frequently used prayer of the latter type is:

For Church communities throughout the world, and especially in those countries where members of our parish have families and friends: that the Lord will bless them and protect them from all harm. Lord in your mercy ...

Featuring prayers of this kind on a regular basis confirms to members of our parish community who have relatives and friends in other countries that the whole parish is thinking of their families, particularly – but not exclusively – when their countries of origin are facing particularly difficult and traumatic events.

Resources

Examples of Bidding Prayers for those in other countries:

Below are some examples of Bidding Prayers used at St Margaret's in 2023-2024:

For an end to violence, conflict and division in the Holy Land; and for the safety and welfare of all those living in the place where Jesus lived, taught, died and rose again. Lord in your mercy ...

For those who have been killed, injured and displaced from their homes in the continuing conflict in Ukraine: that aggression and conflict may cease, that those who have died may find eternal rest and that the living may receive the help they need to rebuild their lives. Lord in your mercy ...

For the persecuted church in Nicaragua and in every country where Christians are suffering for their faith: that God will strengthen all persecuted Christians and make their witness an inspiration to the world. Lord in your mercy ...



For those who have lost their lives and their homes in the storms in Malawi, Mozambique and Madagascar: that those who have died may find eternal peace and that the living may receive speedy help to rebuild their lives. Lord in your mercy ...

For those suffering the effects of the continuing drought in East Africa: that they may urgently receive the help they need to survive the current crisis and to build productive future lives. Lord in your mercy ...

For an end to violence and conflict in Sudan, and for the safety and welfare of all its citizens. Lord in your mercy ...

For persecuted Christians in Afghanistan and for those who have fled as refugees to Pakistan: that they may find a place of safety and that their brave and constant witness to the faith may be to their eternal glory. Lord in your mercy ...

For those who have been killed, injured and made homeless this week by floods in Northern Italy and the cyclone in Myanmar and Bangladesh: that God will grant eternal rest to those who have died and that the survivors will receive the help they need to rebuild their lives. Lord in your mercy...

For those who have been killed, injured and displaced from their homes in the floods in Southern Brazil: that those who have died may find eternal rest, that those still in danger may be rescued and that those made homeless may receive speedy help to rebuild their lives...



For those who have lost their lives, homes and livelihoods as a result of Hurricane Beryl in the Caribbean and South America: that the dead will find eternal rest and that the living will receive the help they need to rebuild their lives ...

For an end to the continuing terrorist attacks in West African countries, including Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger and Benin; and for Church communities providing care and support to the victims of terrorism. Lord in your mercy ...

For the victims of this week's attacks on Christians in Pakistan, and the continuing attacks in Manipur, India. That the Lord may transform the minds of those motivated by intolerance and hatred; and that conflict may give way to peace, harmony and human fellowship. Lord in your mercy ...

For those who have been killed, injured and made homeless by the floods in Libya and the earthquake in Morocco: that those who have died may find eternal peace and that the living may receive the help they need to rebuild their lives. Lord in your mercy ...

For the people of Israel and especially those who were killed, injured and traumatised by the recent massacre of men, women and children by Hamas: that those who have died may find eternal rest and that those injured and traumatised may receive the help they need to rebuild their lives. Lord in your mercy ...

For the people of Gaza and especially the men, women and children who have been killed, injured and traumatised by military bombardment and the threat of starvation: that those who have died may find eternal rest and that those injured and traumatised will receive the help they need to rebuild their lives. Lord in your mercy ...



For the people of Gaza, Israel and the neighbouring territories: for a speedy end to violence and bloodshed, the protection of civilians, the release of hostages and the unimpeded passage of food, water, fuel, medicines and electricity to all those who need them. Lord in your mercy ...

For the millions who have fled war zones in the Democratic Republic of Congo: that violence and terror in that country may cease and that the Church may be strengthened in its task of supporting victims of the conflict. Lord in your mercy ...

For those who have lost their lives, homes and livelihoods in the floods in eastern and northern Kenya: that those who have died will find eternal rest and that the living will receive speedy help to rebuild their lives. Lord in your mercy ...

For those who have been killed, kidnapped and driven from their homes by the recent terrorist attacks on Christian communities in Mozambique. That those killed may find eternal rest, that the kidnapped may be safely returned and that the homeless may receive the help they need to rebuild their lives. Lord in your mercy ...

That the plight of refugees will be met with justice and compassion; and that those making perilous journeys may be guided to a place of safety and belonging. Lord in your mercy ...

7 - DIVERSITY OF PARISH MINISTRIES

The report “Rooting Out Racism”, produced by Our Lady of Fatima parish in West London, underlined the importance of ensuring that the most visible ministries in a parish – such as Readers, Eucharistic Ministers and those making announcements at Sunday Masses – reflect the diversity of the parish community. This is particularly so on the most important occasions of the liturgical year such as Easter, Christmas and Pentecost. One parishioner quoted in the report said:

“During special occasions such as Easter and Christmas I’ve found the reading ministry dominated by white readers and have questioned why we often don’t get to see the diversity of our wider reading group at these times ... If there are people who perhaps need more support or training to be better readers, that’s understandable – however, the white readers selected were often of mixed reading ability so it was confusing to see why these decisions were being made ... People may think that the point of who reads at Mass is a small one but it’s not – it’s about representation, it’s about role modelling, it’s about inspiring others, it’s about relatability, diversity, inclusion and equal opportunity – for all these reasons it’s important to have a racial mix and cross representation.”

Where a particular ministry has an under-representation of people from racial minorities, the issue is not likely to be solved simply by appealing for more recruits to the relevant ministries and hoping that the volunteers will include members of minority groups. Pro-active steps must be taken to identify, approach and encourage suitable members of racial minorities to come forward.

At Saint Margaret’s we surveyed the ethnic composition of all the main ministry groups within the parish. (This did not require a sophisticated racial profiling exercise: it simply involved looking at the rotas for different parish ministries and observing the number of people from visible minority groups in each ministry.) We found that those groups which had been set up or had significant new recruitment relatively recently – such as Welcomers, the Central Choir, the Youth Music Group and our Altar Servers – were multi-racial in composition. The groups which were least diverse were Eucharistic Ministers and Readers. These consisted largely of long-standing parishioners who had carried out these duties for many years and there had been little new recruitment in recent times.

At the instigation of the Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group, a meeting was held involving one of the group’s Co-Chairs, the Parish Priest and the Co-ordinator of the Eucharistic Ministers and Readers. A list was drawn up of recent arrivals in the parish who were potential Readers and Eucharistic Ministers. The majority were from minority ethnic groups. Those identified were approached and encouraged to undertake these ministries, with training and support where needed. As a result, the diversity of these groups was significantly improved, so that they now better reflect the racial composition of the parish community. The diversity of those making announcements at Sunday Masses has been improved by stipulating that the announcements should be made by the Reader at each Mass. In consequence, as the diversity of our Readers’ group has increased, so has the diversity of those seen to be delivering the parish announcements.

A converse issue was found in the composition of the parishioners who serve refreshments after Mass, all of whom were from minority ethnic groups. Every ministry in the church is important in the sight of God and in its contribution to parish life. It is nevertheless important to ensure that parishioners from visible minority groups are not perceived as being expected to be those who exclusively carry out traditional “servant” roles. Steps have therefore been taken to redress this imbalance in the additional recruitment of some white parishioners to this ministry.

RESOURCES

Survey: Below is a fictionalised example of how the results of a survey of the ethnic composition of different ministries in a parish might look:

Results of a survey of the racial diversity of ministries at Saint Polycarp’s Church, Blanktown

Currently around one-third of our congregation are from visible minority groups. The ethnic composition of our principal ministries is currently as follows:

- Readers – We have 12 current Readers, two of whom are from minority ethnic groups, a significant under-representation. All the Readers on the rota for the 9.00 Sunday Mass, our best attended Mass, are white.
- Eucharistic Ministers – We have 10 Eucharistic Ministers, two of whom are from minority ethnic groups. This is a significant under-representation.
- Announcers – We have three regular announcers, one of whom is from a minority ethnic group. The latter normally delivers announcements at our Saturday Vigil Mass. Both regular announcers at our Sunday Masses are white.
- We have 13 Welcomers, four of whom are from minority groups. This is a slight under-representation.
- Choirs – our Central Choir and Youth Music Group are racially diverse and reasonably representative of the parish community.
- Altar servers – We have 13 regular altar servers, six of whom are from minority groups.
- Children’s Liturgy – We have five Children’s Liturgy leaders, two of whom are from minority groups.
- Refreshments – we have five people who regularly serve refreshments after Mass, all of whom are from minority groups.

Conclusion – our priority must be to improve the diversity of our Readers, Eucharistic Ministers and Sunday morning announcers by recruiting more members of visible minority groups to these ministries; and to ensure that some white parishioners are among new recruits to the Refreshments rota.

8 - CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS

As in many parishes, the most important multi-cultural event of the year at St Margaret of Scotland Church, Carshalton, takes place on Pentecost Sunday. Below is the notice we used to announce the event in 2024.



pentecost sunday

Join us to celebrate the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus on Sunday 19th May.

On Pentecost Sunday the 9.00 and 11.00 Masses will involve a liturgical celebration of the cultural and racial diversity of our parish. The 11.00 Mass will be followed by a multi-cultural celebration and parish social event in the garden of St Margaret's Parish House. This will be a 'bring and share' event. Please bring your own drinks. There is a sign-up list in the meeting area for those willing to bring food (nut free) and to help with the event. Parishioners are encouraged to wear national dress and to bring national flags to decorate the celebration



St Margaret
of Scotland
CATHOLIC CHURCH
Fir Tree Grove, Carshalton, SM5 4NG



www.stmargaretofscotland.co.uk

Our annual Pentecost celebrations include:

- Hymns in a range of languages.
- Bidding Prayers are read in various languages by parishioners of different nationalities. These typically include prayers in French, Yoruba Nigerian, Filipino, Brazilian Portuguese, Twi Ghanaian, Irish, Swahili, Spanish, Italian, Igbo Nigerian, Marathi and Cantonese.
- The Our Father is read in sections in various languages by different parishioners.
- The last Mass on Sunday morning is followed by a multi-cultural social event. This is a "bring and share" event which involves cuisine from different countries and continents.
- Parishioners are encouraged to wear their national dress and bunting is hung in front of the church featuring the flags of many different countries.
- In the weeks leading up to Pentecost a map of the world is displayed and members of the congregation are invited to insert a pin in their family's country of origin to demonstrate the wide range of countries from which our parishioners come.

Other opportunities for events reflecting the theme of racial and cultural inclusion include:

- Key dates of particular importance to different national and cultural groups within the parish. For example, in 2023 the St Margaret's African Community organised a social event after Sunday Mass to celebrate Nigerian Independence Day (1st October).
- Racial Justice Sunday, which occurs in January each year. At St Margaret's this features appropriately themed Bidding Prayers, a short talk at every Mass by a member of the parish Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group and the distribution of handouts describing the work of the group.

Below are examples of Bidding Prayers suitable for Racial Justice Sunday:

Priest: On Racial Justice Sunday we give thanks to God our Father for His diverse creation. Recognising that every human person is created in God's image and likeness, let us pray:

Reader: For an end to the suffering caused by racism, and for the courage to challenge prejudice wherever we find it. Lord in your mercy ...

We recall the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust and the genocide in Rwanda, Darfur, Cambodia, Bosnia and Herzegovina; and we pray that racial hatred and genocide may be banished from the earth. Lord in your mercy ...

For victims of racism in our present day: that they will be uplifted through experiencing the love of God and the support of our Christian community. Lord in your mercy ...



For our Church and parish community: that we may pray together and work together for a future based on justice and healing. Lord in your mercy...

For those in authority: that they may work to build communities where injustice and division will give way to justice, peace and love for all men and women. Lord in your mercy ...

For migrants, refugees and asylum seekers: that they may find a place of safety, inclusion and welcome. Lord in your mercy ...

For the grace to celebrate our differences and to build on what unites us as children of God. Lord in your mercy ...

We join our prayers with those of Mary our mother, as we say – Hail Mary etc. Let us pray to the Lord in the silence of our hearts. (Silence)

Priest:

Loving Father, grant us the grace to recognise and treat all men and women as brothers and sisters in Christ. May we discover anew the beauty of your creation, reflected in all the peoples of the earth. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

An example of a short talk by a member of a parish Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group suitable for Racial Justice Sunday is:

I would like to say a few words this morning/evening about the St Margaret's Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group.

The group was set up in February last year following a visit to the parish by Canon Victor Darlington, who is the Chair of the Archdiocese of Southwark's Commission for Promoting Racial and Cultural Inclusion. The aim of the group is to ensure that we promote racial and cultural inclusion across all the parish's activities. Everything we do is grounded in the belief that God made every human being in His image and likeness and that He loves members of all nationalities and ethnic groups equally.

When the group was formed, we began by asking ourselves what kind of welcome new parishioners receive when they first arrive in our parish. We know from our own members' experience that this can make a crucial difference to whether people of all backgrounds feel included in the parish and decide to make their spiritual home here. So we began making regular announcements at every Saturday Vigil and Sunday Mass welcoming newcomers to the parish, inviting them to join us for tea and coffee after Mass and asking parishioners to make new arrivals welcome. We also put up a welcome notice in the entrance to the church in many different languages.

We noticed that all the pictures and statues in the church were images of white people. We therefore obtained additional pictures and statues of Black and Asian saints – as well as saints from countries like Poland and Italy - in order to increase the diversity of images in the church. We set up a gallery of images of Our Lady's apparitions in different parts of the world where she has appeared with features, skin colouring and dress appropriate to the local population. You will all have seen this gallery of beautiful images of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the meeting area. We have also obtained cards, books and other Repository items which have a range of images of people from different ethnic groups.

We started featuring a Saint of the Month in the parish Newsletter with the aim of featuring saints from many different countries and every continent in the course of each year.

Our group has supported the parish's annual multi-cultural celebration on Pentecost Sunday and we are planning future celebrations featuring prayer and worship by different national groups. We have taken steps to increase the diversity of the most visible ministries in the church – such as Readers and Eucharistic Ministers - with the aim of ensuring that they reflect the diversity of our parish community. We have made sure that our Bidding Prayers regularly include prayers for communities in different parts of the world, including those affected by emergency situations. And we have made sure that the parish's safeguarding procedures include the protection of parishioners from racial abuse or discrimination.

All these things are designed to make sure that people from every national, cultural and ethnic group feel welcome, valued and included in our parish community. Thank you to everyone who has supported the work of our group over the past year – and if you are interested in joining and helping the work of our group, please let us know.

RESOURCES

Examples of multi-lingual prayers: Below are examples of Bidding Prayers in different languages which were used at St Margaret's on Pentecost Sunday 2023:

Sunday 28 May 2023: Pentecost Sunday 9 am Mass

Priest: As we come together to celebrate the Holy Spirit dwelling among us, we offer our prayers in many languages but with one united voice:

Reader: That the Holy Spirit will reconcile all people and enable them to know the joy of the Resurrection. Lord in your mercy ...

Reader 1 Spanish

That the Holy Spirit will inspire the leaders of nations to bring an end to war and conflict throughout the world. Lord in your mercy ...

Que el Espiritu Santo inspire a los lideres de las naciones, para que puedan poner fin a las guerras y conflictos que se llevan a cabo alrededor del mundo.

Lord in your mercy ...

Reader 2 Twi Ghanaian

That the Holy Spirit will make each of us a messenger of peace and forgiveness. Lord in your mercy ...

Yɛn mpaebɔ ne sɛ, wo honhom kronkron bɛ hyɛ yen ma ama yeayɛ wo asomdwie ne bɔne fakye adanse di foɔ. Lord in your mercy ...

Reader 3 Irish

That the Holy Spirit will bring comfort to all those who are poor and despairing. Lord in your mercy ...

Go dtabharfaidh an Spiorad Naomh sólás dóibh siúd go léir atá bocht agus eadóochasach....A Thiarna faoi do throcaire Lord in your mercy ...

Reader 4 Cantonese

That the Holy Spirit will inspire those who have abandoned their faith to find their way back to the Lord. Lord in your mercy ...

請為那些放棄了信仰的人祈禱。求聖神光照，引導和慰藉他們，讓他們找到希望和勇力，重新回到主的懷抱。為此，我們同聲祈禱。Lord in your mercy ...

Reader: We join our prayers with those of Mary our mother, as we say – Hail Mary ...

Reader: Let us pray to the Lord in the silence of our hearts. (Silence)

Priest: Loving Father, bless us with the seven-fold gifts of your Holy Spirit. Let our lives always manifest the fruits of the Holy Spirit so that we may be a source of forgiveness and a community of hope. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

Pentecost Sunday 11 am Mass

Priest: As we come together to celebrate the Holy Spirit dwelling among us, we offer our prayers in many languages but with one united voice:

Reader: That the Holy Spirit will reconcile all people and enable them to know the joy of the Resurrection. Lord in your mercy ...

Reader 1 French

That the Holy Spirit will inspire the leaders of nations to bring an end to war and conflict throughout the world. Lord in your mercy ...

Que le Saint-Esprit inspire les dirigeants des nations pour mettre fin aux guerres et aux conflits dans le monde entier. Seigneur, dans ta miséricorde. Lord in your mercy ...

Reader 2 Yoruba Nigerian

That the Holy Spirit will make each of us a messenger of peace and forgiveness. Lord in your mercy ...

Ki emi mimo se ikankan wa ni iranse itura ati idariji ese.

Lord in your mercy ...

Reader 3 Filipino

That the Holy Spirit will bring comfort to all those who are poor and despairing. Lord in your mercy ...

Nawa ang Espiritu Santo ay maghatid ng kaginhawahan sa mga mahihirap at nawawalan ng pag asa.

Lord in your mercy

Reader 4 Brazilian Portuguese

That the Holy Spirit will inspire those who have abandoned their faith to find their way back to the Lord. Lord in your mercy ...

Que o Espírito Santo inspire aqueles que abandonaram a fé a encontrar o caminho de volta ao Senhor.

Lord in your mercy ...

Reader: We join our prayers with those of Mary our mother, as we say – Hail Mary

Reader: Let us pray to the Lord in the silence of our hearts. (Silence)

Priest: Loving Father, bless us with the seven-fold gifts of your Holy Spirit. Let our lives always manifest the fruits of the Holy Spirit so that we may be a source of forgiveness and a community of hope. Through Christ our Lord. Amen

The Lord's Prayer was also said in different languages. The translations used can be supplied on request: contact the Saint Margaret's Parish Office on carshaltonbeeches@rcaos.org.uk

9 - DEALING WITH RACIAL INCIDENTS

The report “Rooting Out Racism in Our Parish” produced by Our Lady of Fatima parish, White City, described initiatives taken by the parish in 2020. These initiatives followed homilies preached by the Parish Priest, Fr Richard Nesbitt, on the importance of combatting racism. This stimulated animated informal discussions among Black parishioners about their experiences in the parish. Fr Nesbitt arranged a series of meetings held by Zoom to explore these experiences in more depth.

Fr Richard was shocked by some of the participants’ accounts. Black parishioners told him that some white parishioners had either turned away from them, refused to acknowledge them or been unwilling to shake their hands at the Sign of Peace. They said that they had not felt welcomed, when first attending the parish, by white parishioners who had spent time talking only to their own group of friends. They said that some white parishioners had used racist terminology (sometimes unwittingly) when speaking to them; had made unwarranted assumptions arising from their race in conversation; had spoken to them “as though they were servants”; and had made derogatory references to images of Black people in the church. They said that if they had raised any of these matters, they had been told that they were making too much of them and had been warned not to “play the race card”.

Fr Nesbitt had previously been unaware of these experiences. The parishioners who told him these things were reluctant to repeat their experiences in front of white parishioners. As a result, it was agreed that they should write them down and that their comments would be shared with other parishioners on the basis of anonymity. These anonymous reports were included in the subsequent report “Rooting Out Racism”. The report describes the steps which were then taken by the parish to combat racism and to promote racial equality in all aspects of the parish’s activity.

At St Margaret’s we decided that the most appropriate way of dealing with any incidents of racial abuse or discrimination would be through our parish safeguarding procedures. The rationale for this was that safeguarding procedures aim to establish practices which reduce the likelihood of abuse, provide support for the victims of abuse and take appropriate action in relation to perpetrators. The Catholic Church has strengthened and extended its safeguarding procedures over the last two decades in response to incidents of sexual abuse and past failures to deal with these appropriately. However, safeguarding approaches are not restricted to sexual abuse. They are just as applicable to racial abuse or discrimination as to other forms of abuse. We have therefore taken steps to highlight this in our safeguarding notices and parish Newsletter, in order to encourage reporting by anyone who experiences or witnesses racial abuse or discrimination.

Resources

Wording of Newsletter items: The St Margaret's parish Newsletter now includes a regular item worded as follows:

If any parishioner suffers, or is aware of, any incidents of abuse within the parish, these should be reported to the parish Safeguarding Officer, Andrea Fernandes. This applies to any kind of abuse – whether it be physical abuse, sexual abuse, verbal abuse, financial abuse, bullying, or racial abuse or discrimination. All reports will be treated in strict confidence and any necessary support will be provided. The confidential email address for reporting is carshaltonbeeches3a@safeguardrcaos.org.uk

Report: The full report “Rooting Out Racism in Our Parish” produced by Our Lady of Fatima parish can be found online at

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2021/01/Rooting-Out-Racism.pdf>

10 -SHARING PROGRESS WITH THE PPC AND WIDER PARISH

When the Saint Margaret's Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group was established, we were clear that we needed to convey our message clearly and share progress regularly with the wider parish. We decided from the outset that we would report our discussions and progress to the Parish Pastoral Council on a regular basis. We included an item in our parish Newsletter setting out our plans at an early stage. We have continued to seek a high profile for the group and its initiatives. For example, on Racial Justice Sunday members of the group spoke at all Saturday Vigil and Sunday masses setting out the actions and purpose of the group. We anticipated that there could be some resistance to, or misunderstanding of, the steps we were taking. In practice, there has been little in the way of overt negative responses and a significant amount of positive feedback. In our view the main reasons for this are:

- From the beginning the group has included members of the parish who are known for their commitment to the parish and for work to facilitate the mainstream worship and activities of St Margaret's.
- One of our earliest initiatives, the gallery of Our Lady's apparitions around the world, was particularly popular in a parish which (like most Catholic parishes) has a strong devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The images of her apparitions convey with striking clarity the importance of racial and cultural diversity to Our Lady herself.
- The group has taken an entirely positive approach to the promotion of racial and cultural inclusion and its benefits for the whole parish. It has not criticised or attacked anyone. It has not adopted a hectoring tone. In our reports and statements, we have simply taken it for granted that any practising Catholic should accept the Church's teaching on racial equality and the inherent dignity of every human being, and we have sought to build on this assumption.
- The group has not sought to displace or denigrate any of the existing practices of the parish. For example, we were clear that racially diverse statues, pictures and Repository items would be additional to - not instead of - the images which were already in the church and familiar to parishioners. Our newly acquired images of saints in the form of statues, pictures, Repository items and Newsletter items have included European saints (such as Saint Faustina, Saint Pio, Saint Maximilian Kolbe and Saint John Henry Newman) as well as saints of colour from around the world.

Recommended steps:

- If your parish has a Parish Pastoral Council, ensure that your Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group submits regular reports and speaks about its activities at PPC meetings.
- Submit regular articles to the parish Newsletter featuring the work of the group and highlighting the benefits of racial and cultural inclusion to the parish as a whole.
- Ensure that parishioners know that popular initiatives (such as a gallery of Our Lady's apparitions) are an initiative of the Racial and Cultural Inclusion Group and that they demonstrate the importance of racial inclusion to Our Lady, Jesus and the parish.

A Prayer for Racial Justice

God of justice, in your wisdom you create all people in your image, without exception.

Through your goodness, open our eyes to see the dignity, beauty and worth of every human being.

Open our minds to understand that all your children are brothers and sisters in the same human family.

Open our eyes to repent of racist attitudes, behaviours and speech which demean others.

Open our ears to hear the cries of those wounded by racial discrimination, and their passionate appeals for change.

Strengthen our resolve to make amends for past injustices and to right the wrongs of history.

And fill us with courage that we might seek to heal wounds, build bridges, forgive and be forgiven, and establish peace and equality for all in our communities.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen

Acknowledgments

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“The diverse face of the Church must be seen in everything we do in the parish.
Wherever you are from, you are welcome at Saint Margaret's.”
Fr Anthony Uche, Parish Administrator, Saint Margaret of Scotland.

MAY GOD
BLESS
YOU!

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