



Parish **E**vangelisation **C**ell **S**ystem
national awareness day

Holy Innocents', Orpington
Saturday 12 May 2018



From 8 am helpers arrived to set up for the day, meeting together for a short time of prayer before the attendees arrived. Refreshments were served by Sister Esther and her wonderful catering team as people gathered from 9 am, followed by a time of prayer and praise.

There were a mixture of priests and parishioners from other parishes along with members and non-Cell members of Holy Innocents' parish. Ian Insley acted as Master of Ceremonies (MC), linking all the proceedings together in his great humourist style.

Father Victor was the first speaker, sharing his personal journey towards the setting up of the Parish Evangelisation Cell System (PECS) at Holy Innocents'.

Cell leaders, Maureen Evans and Cecilia Skudder then spoke about how being member of Cells has affected their own journey in faith and about the benefits of belonging to the 'extended family' of their Cell members. Two of our new Catholics, received into the Church at Easter then gave testimony, namely Chris Brand and Kim Warner.

This was followed by Kathryn Murrell speaking on 'methods of evangelisation through the Cell system' and Jaine Ferreira giving her testimony.

After a wonderful lunch Kathryn Murrell spoke about 'Spiritual growth and wellbeing of Cell members'. This was followed by the testimony of Prem Coutinho, being interviewed by Kristina Cooper, the editor of 'Goodnews' magazine, who has accompanied and supported us from the beginning of the journey of setting up PECS at Holy Innocents'.

Anne Scripture then spoke about the administrative process of managing the Cell system, followed by Stephen Walsh sharing how Cells have contributed to our parish outreach and how members have been instrumental in volunteering to help run the Alpha course in the parish.

In 'Teaching for the Cell meetings' Fr. Victor recounted how he prepares his teachings. These, filmed by Bob Skudder are then uploaded to youtube, where they are available to the public (search for 'Fr Victor Vella'). Father Victor stressed the importance of PECS having the backing of the parish priest and as all priests prepare homilies, any one of these could be adapted for use for Cell teaching.

We then had a 'workshop' time with everyone separating into groups to discuss various aspects of the Cell system and the final session gave the opportunity for 'Questions & answers', chaired by Ian Insley. We ended the day with a prayer and final hymn.

Eighty-eight people present witnessed the enthusiasm of all who welcomed, helped and spoke throughout the day.

The feedback following the day has been very encouraging, especially that of the Director of the Westminster Diocesan Agency for Evangelisation.

He wrote,

"Just a very quick email to say a very big "thank you" to you and all the team for your welcome and hospitality at the school today. I came back buzzing and managed to share the joy of what I received today with almost 100 new Catholics at Westminster Cathedral before their 6pm Mass with the Cardinal.

God bless you all and all that you do. Fr Chris (Vipers)