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stmichaelscroydon.com

Pastoral Assistants at St Michael's Croydon

The Role

Pastoral Assistants at St Michael's, Croydon participate fully in the liturgical life of the Parish, especially the daily offices and Mass in Church. Pastoral Assistants have a thorough grounding in the Church's liturgical year and a strong sense of the rhythm of daily prayer.

Our Pastoral Assistants play a full part in the pastoral life of the Parish. They take part in baptisms, weddings and funerals and we arrange for them to be responsible for taking the Eucharist to the sick and housebound. It is very likely that they will experience ministry to the dying and bereaved.

Throughout the year there is a programme of catechesis in the Parish. Pastoral Assistants take a share in leading these study sessions. This is facilitated by a programme of accompanied reading and theological reflection for the Pastoral Assistants. This year the reading programme has focussed on Church history – including the Early Church Fathers, the lives and writings of St Bede and St Cuthbert, and the legacy of St John Henry Newman.

Pastoral Assistants take a key part in the chaplaincy to Croydon College, a large further education institution in the town, as well as participating each week in the chaplaincy at Croydon University Hospital. The presence in Croydon of Lunar House, the Home Office facility for processing asylum claims, means that this Borough has a particular focus on asylum seekers and immigration. Pastoral Assistants work each week with our friends at West Croydon Baptist to Church in a Refugee Welcome project and this is a very important feature of our ministry. Also, during the winter months, we volunteer as helpers in the Croydon Churches Winter Night Shelter scheme.

We are particularly keen to appoint Pastoral Assistants who are exploring a vocation to the priesthood and we have a lot of experience of guiding people towards their BAP, in close collaboration with their DDO. Whether or not they are exploring the call to ordination we expect that each Pastoral Assistant will be committed to a weekly time of supervision with an experienced priest-mentor to reflect on experience and to plan work. We also strongly encourage Pastoral Assistants to meet regularly with a spiritual director.

Accommodation & Money

Accommodation free of charge is provided. This is in an attractive two-bedroom apartment in a block next to the Church. All utility bills are covered and a personal allowance of £500 per month is paid to each Pastoral Assistant. Any work expenses are reimbursed. For tax purposes etc we consider our Pastoral Assistants to fall into the HMRC category of 'volunteer workers' (rather than employees).

The placement lasts for 11 months, from September 2020 to July 2021.

Croydon

Croydon is a very diverse part of Greater London, with fast and easy access both into the West End and into beautiful countryside in Surrey and Sussex. The Parish of St Michael's is set in one of the 10% of most deprived local authority wards in the country and we encounter that reality every day in the people we meet. Anyone undertaking ministry here would be very well-placed to demonstrate a commitment to the poorest in our society and we view that challenge as a very positive feature of this placement, demanding as it is.

Meanwhile, St Michael's itself is a stunningly beautiful 19th century gothic Church and a traditional Anglo-Catholic parish. We have no 'Churchmanship requirements' of our Pastoral Assistants other than they be aware of the tradition of the Parish and be willing to spend a year working in that tradition, even if it is not exactly what they have been used to themselves in the past.

You can learn more about St Michael's, Croydon, by visiting the Parish website <https://www.stmichaelscroydon.com> and our social media feeds (all /stmichaelsc1).

Catholic Ethos

We aim to provide our Pastoral Assistants with a generous and happy exposure to Catholic life in the Church of England, including pilgrimage to Walsingham, intentional contacts with former PAs at theological college and the collegiality of the Clergy House here in the Parish. There is plenty of opportunity for Pastoral Assistants to get to know ecumenical partners in Europe, especially Russian Orthodox friends and Roman Catholic religious at Chevetogne in Belgium and, through the Company of Mission Priests, in the Vincentian family.

Family and Friends

We are always keen for Pastoral Assistants to invite their family and friends to Croydon to see where they are working and what they are doing.

Endorsement

The scheme is endorsed jointly by the Bishop of Fulham and the Bishop of Croydon. The posts are currently funded by grants from the Number One Trust, the Fellowship of St John, the Society of the Sacred Mission and the Diocese of Southwark.

The placements are overseen by Fr Tim Pike, the Vicar of St Michael's Croydon.

Please see overleaf for the Person Specification and details of the application procedure.

Person Specification

Applications are invited for the role of Pastoral Assistant at St Michael's Croydon. This post runs from September 2020 until July 2021.

We seek to appoint people who love God, who are enthusiastic about the Christian faith and who want to put their faith into practice by serving God in our urban Parish setting.

Pastoral Assistants at St Michael's must be people who are keen to recognise the image and likeness of Jesus Christ in the face of other human persons, especially those to whom we minister in our Parish and in the chaplaincies and projects we support.

A person wishing to be a Pastoral Assistant at St Michael's will be someone who is excited at the prospect of a fairly intense liturgical life. They will be keen to experience Catholic Christianity as lived out in the Parish. They must be willing and able to commit to a disciplined framework of daily worship. They should be baptised and confirmed.

Pastoral Assistants must be people who are keen to grow into the study of theology, Holy Scripture and the Tradition of the Church. They must have sufficient educational background to undertake such studies.

Anyone who applies to be a Pastoral Assistant here would have to be committed to living an intentional common life with their colleague in the Pastoral Assistant flat. They would need to be courteous, generous-spirited and gracious towards the person with whom they lived.

Pastoral Assistants need to be motivated, punctual and polite. They must be physically and psychologically robust enough to cope with the rigours of life in a busy town-centre parish. They must be prepared to participate openly in regular supervision during their placement.

Although it is not a requirement of the placement, we particularly welcome expressions of interest from persons who are considering ordained ministry in the Church of England.

Applicants should be ready to commit to serving for the entirety of the placement.

Anyone applying to be a Pastoral Assistant at St Michael's Croydon must be committed to working within the Safeguarding Policies of the PCC and the Diocese of Southwark. The post is subject to Enhanced DBS Disclosure.

Anyone wishing to apply should complete the accompanying application form and return it, along with a CV to the Assistant Curate, Fr Philip Kennedy, by 12 noon on Monday 23 March 2020. Please also direct any questions about the role to him. He can be contacted at fr.kennedy20@gmail.com or 020 3609 4184.

Interview arrangements will be confirmed after the closing date.