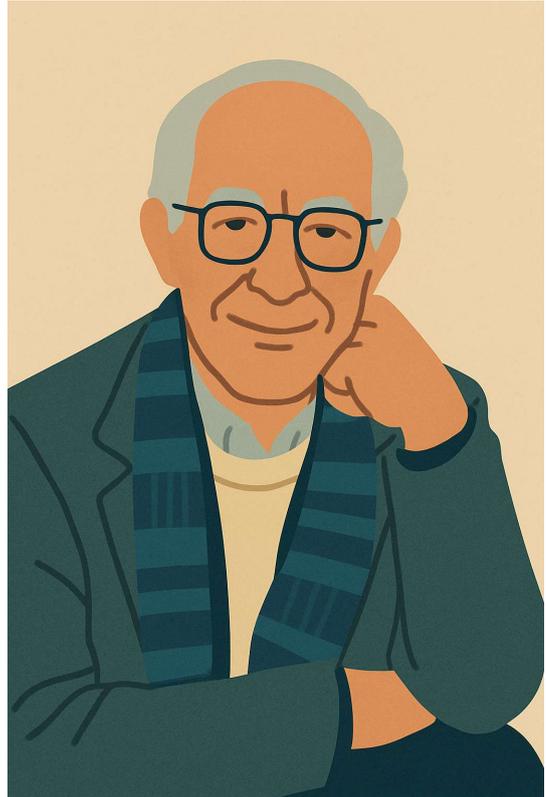




**A Non-Residential, New Missional Community at Sheffield Cathedral**

“Mysticism and revolution are two aspects of the same attempt to bring about radical change. Mystics cannot prevent themselves from becoming social critics, since in self-reflection they will discover the roots of a sick society. Similarly, revolutionaries cannot avoid facing their own human condition, since in the midst of their struggle for a new

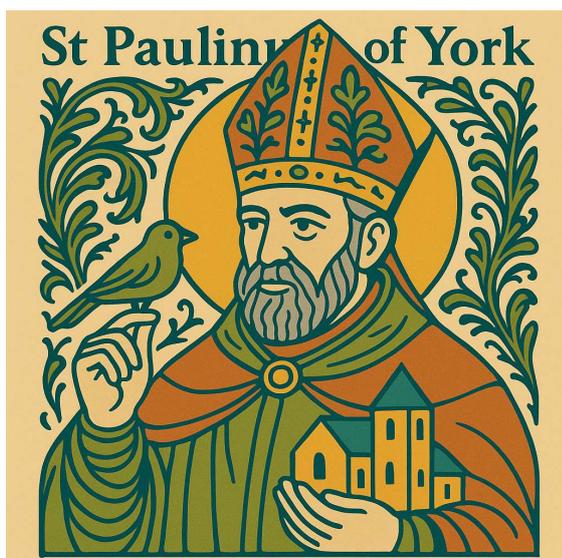


world they will find that they are also fighting their own reactionary fears and false ambitions.”

Henri Nouwen – The Way of Change

# Introduction

The Church of England is rooted in a rich heritage of evangelism driven by apostolic monasticism. Indeed, Christianity in these islands is the centuries long legacy of evangelistic communities of monks and nuns, both Celtic and Roman. We are seeking to recover and harness this vibrant tradition of contemplative mission but contextualized for twenty-first-century Sheffield.



We aim to do this by launching a contemplative community anchored at Sheffield Cathedral but dispersed in mission called The Community of St Paulinus (CsP). It will be a new monastic community in the sense that it will integrate features from traditional Christian monastic communities as well as learnings from contemporary missiology and practice, particularly the planting of new worshipping communities and the pursuit of social justice through community organising. We have chosen the patron of St Paulinus, because he was the first Bishop of York, who joined the

mission of St Augustine of Canterbury and was sent to evangelize the Anglo-Saxons in the North.

Through a common life of prayer, service and fellowship and in partnership with parishes, the CsP will build on Sheffield Cathedral's three strategic commitments to:

1. be a confident, joyful, growing Christian Community in the heart of Sheffield
2. develop and embed a nationally renowned Schools Singing Programme reaching the most economically deprived places across the Diocese of Sheffield
3. deepen our partnerships, prioritising our relationship with the Archer Project, working together to serve the most vulnerable members of our community

# Key Features: The Community of St Paulinus

This CsP will be a community of contemplative activists - immersed in the deep rhythms of spiritual formation at Sheffield Cathedral whilst living out that vocation in practical mission in some of Sheffield's most economically deprived urban parishes. It will:

- be rooted in the cycle of prayer and worship at the Cathedral but dispersed in evangelistic work particularly through the planting of new worshipping communities and missional activities
- be shaped by a rule of life that incorporates the marks of sacrament and prayer, intentional community, sacred study, creativity and renewal, service (see 'Formation and Structures')
- be led by the Canon Missioner working with a Sub-Prior who will design, resource and co-ordinate the rule of life and patterns of formation
- recruit members who feel called to an intentional life of contemplation-in-action, called 'missioners'
- develop missioner cohorts that will serve in the CsP for a period of 3 years, designed around a 3-year curacy timetable.
- grow amongst the cohort a grounded understanding of ministry and mission in economically deprived parishes by fostering creative thinking about the shape of ministry in these communities and provide a supportive network, pastoral support and reflective practice in an area of ministry that can often be isolating and difficult
- grow the confidence and resilience of missioner cohorts to lead new worshipping communities already into further growth and long-term sustainability with a view to establishing local expressions of missional community and planting out again

*St Aidan's Church (right) on the Manor Estate (far right), Sheffield. The first of three parish partnerships will be with the Manor Parish. The Estate falls in the bottom-10-percent nationally on the 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation. There is a proud heritage and strong sense of community in the area. The Parish has recently appointed a new incumbent committed to revitalisation and social justice. She will soon be licensed as Diocesan Canon for Estates Evangelism at Sheffield Cathedral.*



# Community Rhythms

The CsP will immerse missionaries in communal formation grounded in deep prayer, fellowship and missional practice over three years. The Community will inhabit weekly, monthly, bi-annual and annual rhythms (Table 1).

Table 1: CsP Rhythms

Weekly	On Cathedral-based days, engage in full daily rhythm of morning and evening prayer with midday Eucharist Meditation and study 2 x Training seminars/Learning Circles Community Eucharist and lunch/dinner Community Check-in Meeting
Monthly:	Whole morning Community meeting Extended learning circle (whole day programme) Spiritual Direction Supervision and Coaching
Biannual:	Three-day Community retreat (e.g. Wed to Fri)
Annual:	Seven-day Community retreat, refreshment and learning time (could be linked to something like Greenbelt)



# Formation

The basis of formation will be a cycle of learning – action – reflection, grounded in communal prayer and mission. Every cohort will be trained in the core practices of church planting in the sacramental tradition and community organising. The Project Resource Team will work closely with the Sub-Prior to deliver and support this training with best practice. This reflection-praxis approach to training will mean that:

- cohorts will apply and refine these skills through the direct experience of building teams to plant and run new worshipping communities
- the dynamic development of a practical training syllabus that can be offered across partnerships and networks, leading to seeding of similar communities at other locations.

Table 2: Core Themes and Practices in the Draft 3-year Formation Syllabus

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
<b>AUTUMN</b>	Urban and Estates Mission: Tools and Concepts	Secularity, Mission and the Western Church in the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century	Catholic Social Teaching and Liberation Theology: See, Judge, Act
<b>WINTER</b>	Working with Conflict Creatively	Trauma-Informed Practice	Tools of Contemporary Evangelisation: Social Media, The Arts and Events
<b>SPRING</b>	Sacramental Church Planting and Pioneering 1: Theological foundations and models of mission	Sacramental Church Planting and Pioneering 2 - Lessons from the New Testament	Sacramental Church Planting and Pioneering 3 - Lessons from the Anglican Communion
<b>SUMMER</b>	Evangelism through The Anglican Choral Tradition	Using Community Organising to Deepen and Grow Congregations	Mission versus Ministry? Tensions and opportunities in the contemporary Church of England

Table 3: Composition of the Missioner Cohorts

<p><b>MISSIONER COHORT 1</b> – 2026 to 2029</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planting Curate</li> <li>• Ordinand</li> <li>• Centenary Project Worker</li> <li>• MES Intern</li> <li>• 3x Music Missioners (choral and contemporary) – Lead on Choir Church and support Noisy Mass, support charismatic catholic NWC</li> </ul>
<p><b>MISSIONER COHORT 2</b> – 2029 to 2032</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planting Curate</li> <li>• Ordinand</li> <li>• Centenary Project Worker</li> <li>• MES Intern</li> <li>• 2x Music Missioners (choral and contemporary) – Lead on Choir Church and support Noisy Mass</li> </ul>

## Alongsiders

We are already receiving inquiries about the possibility of an ‘alongsider’ programme for the CsP. Alongsiders could share in a paired down pattern of commitments with the Community with the intention that their participation supports mission and revitalisation in their context. The Sub-Prior will need to work with the Canon Missioner as Prior and Diocese to consider how this might work without detracting from the core stability of the CsP.

## Models of New Worshipping Community

Our resourcing project proposal includes the following models of new worshipping community which missioner cohorts from the CsP will collaboratively build together with parish leaders as appropriate. All of these models draw on the Cathedral’s strategic capabilities of growing diverse congregations, expanding music mission through the Schools Singing Programme and transformation through trauma informed practice (notably through partnership with The Archer Project). We wish to build on the success and impact in these areas. It is understood that there will need to be adaptation of these models as discernment with the Holy Spirit deepens and partnership between the CsP and local parish team evolves.

MODEL	DESCRIPTION	CONTEXT/S
<b>CHOIR CHURCH</b>	Recognising that music is a powerful evangelistic tool for the Church, Choir Church seeks to multiply disciples among children in our schools and communities, through singing, sacrament and justice”	2 Parish Partnerships
<b>NOISY MASS/CATHEDRAL</b>	Noisy Mass is a toddler group with a very simple and interactive Eucharist at its heart. Through these gatherings, young families are evangelised through fun, food, sacrament and social justice.	Cathedral 1 Parish Partnership
<b>LUNCH CHURCH</b>	Lunch Church is a midday worship gathering built around sharing a simple meal and brief liturgy. The anchor will be a feeding ministry such as food bank. This model offers an entry point for people who can't attend traditional services or are on the periphery of church due to fragile life circumstances.	Cathedral 2 Parish Partnerships
<b>CHARISMATIC CATHOLIC</b>	This new congregation will offer Spirit-filled, liturgical worship that blends Catholic sacramental richness with a fresh charismatic spontaneity. Inspired by Pentecost and Catholic Social Teaching, mission and justice will flow from prophetic witness, healing ministries, environmental stewardship, and radical inclusion of all people.	Cathedral 1 Parish Partnership
<b>SOUL SPACE</b>	Soul Space will be a counter-cultural Christian community designed for the “spiritual but not religious,” drawing them in through beauty, hospitality and shared experiences in the arts and food. Gatherings will alternate between Soul Sounds (an hour of live, soul-stirring music) and Soul Food (guided cooking or arts workshops), bookending a “Future/Ancient” Eucharistic liturgy supported by a professional contemplative music ensemble.	Cathedral