Archdiocese of Glasgow - South Deanery

"Pathway for Change"

The Deanery in the South of Glasgow is presenting this document following discussions and consultation across the Deanery, particularly informed by discussions in Pastoral Areas and parishes. Having established the Deanery and the Pastoral areas these structures have been used to inform the recommendations made in this paper.

The commitment to the process of consultation has varied across the Deanery, but the Working Group has undertaken to co-ordinate and advance the recommendations in alignment with the Deanery Profile set out by the Archdiocese.

The Working Group has largely focused on advising on the optimum arrangements for evangelisation in the period to 2028. Further work will be undertaken to consider how the structures, the distribution of churches and buildings, and the personnel will be used to advance the processes of evangelisation.

Recommendations:

The Working Group considered a wide range of factors and has concluded that the profile of the Deanery that will best serve the needs of the people by 2028 will be based round the following parishes:

Pastoral Area 1 St Helen's, Blessed Duns Scotus; and

Holy Cross merging with St Brigid's with one church, that being Holy Cross. (The rationale for this is the geographic location of Holy Cross, and the significance of the buildings of that parish.)

Pastoral Area 2 Christ the King, and

The merger of St Bartholomew's and St Margaret Mary's with one church remaining, that being St Bartholomew's.
(The rationale for this is the geographic proximity and access of St Margaret Mary's to Christ the King parish.)

Pastoral Area 3 Our Lady of Lourdes, Our Lady and St George's, and

The merger of St Anthony's with St Constantine's, with one church – that to be determined after an analysis of the quality of buildings and locational considerations.

The merger of St Albert's with St Leo's with one church, that being St Leo's for the time being. The longer-term future of this will be kept under review.

Pastoral Area 4 St Mary Immaculate, St Gabriel's, St Vincent's

Holy Name parish will merge with either St Vincent's or St Mary Immaculate and there will be one church – that not being Holy Name.

Pastoral Area 5 St James's and St Conval's will merge, and 2 churches will remain, given the presence of the Syro-Malabar community and wider responsibilities of the parishes.

St Bernard's and St Robert's will merge with one church remaining – that to be determined by a review of the quality of the buildings.

NOTE: Where there are mergers, the implication is that the resources of the church to remain will receive the assets of the other church. In certain places there is need for further local consultation, as well as determination based on the quality of buildings, proximity to other churches, and other factors thought to be relevant in each specific case. These parishes have been asked for advice on the options open to them.

The Working Group emphasises that this distribution and number of parishes is in alignment with

a) The number of priests likely to be available during that time;
b) The number of churches and buildings required for the parish communities;
c) The economic viability of parishes.
d) Timescales for change which will be dependent on local circumstances.
e) Future planning, e.g., for weekend Masses, should take account of the Pastoral areas.

FUTURE PLANNING

It is also expected that this distribution of parishes would allow the emergence of certain hubs that would allow specialist provision for lay ministries to develop and impact across the Deanery. Future planning should be undertaken across Pastoral areas, addressing the needs of the local communities.

Further criteria for consideration for pastoral development should include:

Parishioner Volumes - confirming the actual attendance numbers at weekend Masses. Every attempt should be made to create "vibrant communities."

Church Buildings – assess the condition of the buildings and identify likely costs of any capital improvements prior to 2028. The utilisation of existing buildings, such as church halls, should be examined for effective use as church buildings. The use of halls for community events/employment such as after school care/classes should be considered.

Building Projects – Consider any outstanding capital projects associated with the buildings, with an estimate of costs would this incur to complete.

Finances – Is the parish able to meet the costs of your current utility bills? Also confirm that the parish is able to meet their contributions as set by the Archdiocese. Does the parish have healthy financial reserves?

Appointment of Priests – Some attention should be given to the appointment of priests to the parishes that will sustain the Deanery. The inevitable ageing of clergy should not be ignored, and the synodal development of the Church should support the work of priests. (In general priests seem tired and burdened with duties that are not canonical.)

Miscellaneous – any other factors to be considered such as:

- Geography to the next nearest church – including those in adjacent dioceses.
- Current programmes related to evangelisation, such as Family Centres, Food Banks, prayer groups etc.

The Deanery Council is setting up a Committee on Evangelisation to consider the current provision and future planning for evangelisation in the Deanery. The Council believes this will be more effective when there is agreement on the rationalisation of parishes, and an awareness of the known resources for evangelisation.