

## St Mary Crowned and All Saints Parish, Glossop

### Meeting held at St Mary's Hall on Sunday 14th July 2019

The meeting had been arranged in response to the letter dated 13<sup>th</sup> June sent to the parishes by Bishop Patrick. Approximately 40 parishioners participated in the meeting and shared their views and ideas in a very open manner.

The meeting commenced with prayer.

Everyone was aware of the forthcoming Quinquennial inspection of the church of St Mary Crowned. Question 4 of the letter had requested that consideration be given to whether the church would be financially viable, depending upon the report of the inspection. There was a shared feeling that this implied possible closure of the church and a member of the Building Committee explained that the previous inspection had not found any major problems with the building and that a significant amount of repairs and improvements had been carried out to both the church and hall. It was felt reasonable to assume, at this stage, that the report may prove to be similar. However, there were strongly held views and strong emotional feelings about the church that held great memories for many.

The following views were expressed:

- Over the years, many people had worked tirelessly to raise funds to ensure that the church was restored and maintained. Any closure was likely to be viewed as a "breach of trust" and should be avoided.
- A very emotional contribution referred to the growing and vibrant Church in several countries including Russia, Vietnam and Singapore and that the Church locally needed to respond to the challenges that exist.
- It was accepted that the decline in the number of priests was posing a particular challenge to the Diocese and a parishioner had approached several Orders to ascertain whether they would have the resources to assist in the local parish. One Order had already agreed to consider this.
- Some expressed concerns about the ability of the community to continue its support and maintenance of the building with a declining congregation.
- Being the largest church in Glossop, it was the only one that would have the capacity to meet the needs of the community, especially when high attendance occurred at Easter, Christmas and other special occasions.
- There was a concern that there should not be too much focus on buildings as the focus needed to be on the spiritual life of the parish.

The parishioners entered into discussion in small groups and recorded their views and ideas which were shared with everyone present. Photographs were taken and are attached.

### ***Question 1: Please consult on the reorganisation into the 3 pastoral areas and what the impact will be on all areas of parish life and pastoral ministry.***

- It was generally agreed that it should be possible for the 3 pastoral areas to be covered by one priest, but not without the full support of deacons, laity and a paid parish administrator.
- There would be a requirement for one mass at each church for the sabbath observance with a preference for Saturday evening vigil, Sunday morning and Sunday evening.
- There was an acceptance that the need for 3 masses and church centres would need to be reviewed if the decline in mass attendance continued.
- It was accepted that there was a likelihood that there may be only one weekday mass at each church.
- Support would be required from deacons to cover baptisms, weddings and funerals.
- Concerns were expressed about the workload and impact on the priest if 3 churches have to be covered, including concerns about his health and well-being.

- The priest was highly likely to have significantly less time for pastoral care, visiting schools, visiting the sick, evangelisation and mission.
- It was suggested that additional Eucharistic Ministers would be required.
- The challenge of ministering to the sick and housebound was likely to increase due to the age profile of parishioners.
- It was suggested that the potential of lay ministry should be considered with roles defined and training being provided. Training should be made available locally rather than requiring people to travel long distances to Nottingham or Derby.
- There was support for a lay chaplain to be appointed for the Catholic life of St Philip Howard and the 4 primary schools.
- More needed to be done to reach out to younger people and to attract them back.
- Now, more than ever before, there was a need for strong leadership.
- The PPC should be involved in any changes and there should be more transparency with reports or minutes being published and communicated.
- There should be regular liaison with the schools and encouragement for young people to become more involved in the life of the parish. There was little to specifically encourage young people after they had left school. Perhaps parents could be invited to attend training at the same time as catechists.
- The importance of mission and evangelisation was recognised.

**Question 2: *Identify training for lay ministry and leadership and actions that can be taken at deanery level to provide this formation.***

- It was accepted that there would be a need for increased support from parishioners and involvement in lay ministry - and there was a willingness to consider how this could be developed.
- It was strongly felt that all training would need to be delivered locally.
- Training would be required for:
  - Catechesis, sacramental preparation and adult faith formation – Alpha, Café, Bible Study
  - Evangelisation - face to face
  - Crisis counselling
  - Spiritual direction
  - Liturgy
  - Service of Word in schools
  - Youth ministry
  - Social media
  - Funerals
  - Chaplaincy
  - Alter serving
  - Baptism courses
  - Marriage preparation
  - Eucharistic ministers
  - Property management
  - Operating an effective PPC
  - Safeguarding
- Rather than asking for volunteers it was felt more appropriate to identify people who may be willing and able and invite them to participate in lay ministry.

**Other**

- It was suggested that the management of property should be the responsibility of the Diocese rather than the parish.

Parish of St Mary Crowned, Glossop, Derbyshire, UK.

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