

Our Lady of Furness Parishioner Consultation Group

Report from meeting held 10th December 2024

The consultation group is made up of the following people : The Clergy, Paul Burden & Mary Mancey-Jones - Holy Family, John Newby & Liz Nugent - Sacred Heart, Pat Hurley and Keith Johnson - St Columba's and Andrew McEwan and Sue O'Neill - St Mary's.

- The group has been established to begin to address the issues which the Parish is facing ; the decreasing number of priests, the decreasing number of practising Catholics attending Mass and supporting the parish and the financial position of the Parish.
- 52 written submissions had been received and analysed by each of the members prior to the meeting. (Many of these submissions were from family groups)
- In the main, the submissions from parishioners have been positive about the need for change, although a significant proportion expressed anxiety and concern.
- There have been sound ideas amongst the submissions regarding finance, future organisation and the general path forward. These will be taken into consideration.
- Arguments for and against the potential closures of 1, 2 or 3 churches were discussed.
- No decisions have been made

Next Steps

- More detailed financial information will be given to the group and a member of the finance team will attend the next meeting.
- An independent agent will be valuing all Parish estate in the New Year and it is likely that information will be available for the next meeting.
- The group would value more written submissions in advance of the next meeting. Please could these be submitted to the Parish Office by 14th January 2025
- The group will meet again on 21st January 2025. A further report will be published after the meeting.

The consultation group understands that these are worrying times for every member of our Parish and we ask for the support and prayers of our parish family in these difficult times.