

Notes of LPA 12 Extra-ordinary meeting

Held on Friday 4th November 2011 at Our Lady's Palacefields

Present

Fr. George
Fr. Peter O'Neil
Fr. Colin Wilson
Fr. Peter Wright
Fr. Luca Ngya
Chris Cunningham
Lilian Brockelsby
Helen Bailey
John Grice
Margaret Morgan
St. Teresa
Phil Hallman
Bill Yates
Pauline Stitt

Apologies

Peter Robertson
Andrew Keeley

1. The team was welcomed to the meeting by Fr. George, who reminded the team of the purpose of the meeting which was to consider the issues regarding the Church communities within our LPA
2. Fr. George has already had a brief discussion with Bishop Mark, and related to him the teams wishes to be proactive rather than reactive in relation to the future of the LPA parish communities.
3. Bishop Mark has expressed a wish to meet with the team, but unfortunately cannot make our next meeting on 24th November. We will need to have an additional meeting for him to attend for discussions.
4. Two key issues were highlighted at the commencement of the teams discussions
 - The desire to support the individual Church communities
 - Whatever decisions are made, we must ensure that it is manageable for our priests. We have to consider what the priests are physically able to do. It is important to remember that apart from the critical needs of the Holy Mass, there are other needs which Parishioners have and these must be kept in mind in the decision making process.

5. A Map of the Runcorn area was projected (which Bishop Mark has already seen) which identifies the location of the 5 Runcorn Churches. East side is St. Augustine's, Our Lady's and St. Martin's. West Side is St. Edwards and Holy Spirit;
6. The Bishop considers the need to reduce the number of parishes
7. Whilst the impact is not immediately on St. Luke's in Frodsham, it was agreed that this should be kept in mind for future developments.
8. Given the numbers currently attending Masses at weekends as below:
 - St. Augustines 170
 - St. Edwards 300
 - St. Martins 80
 - Holy Spirit 75
 - Our Lady's 170
 - St. Luke's 300

It was agreed that there was no longer a requirement for a Sunday evening Mass. The current Sunday evening Mass might be considered a Mass of 'convenience' and if this is the case, are we diluting the importance of the Mass?

9. If all 5 parishes are to go into 2 there will be a need to consider the names of the Parishes, with sensitivity to the needs of all the Churches in Runcorn but without reinforcing separateness. It is important not to send out negative messages to the churches in the more deprived areas.
10. Some discussion ensued around the concept of 2 'Parish Churches' and 3 'Chapels of Ease', however, apart from one or two proponents of this idea, the Team is against and is concerned of the negative effect this would have on some of the communities.
11. Weekday Masses- discussed that there could always be a Mass at one of the Churches during the week.

KEY POINTS

- It was the mind of the meeting not to have a Sunday evening Mass
- There will be a Mass at each Parish community
- What would it mean to have 2 Parishes rather than the current 5 in Runcorn?

Finally two discussion papers were circulated to remain Confidential, but to be considered by the Team.

Fr. George will contact Bishop Mark with a view to arranging a meeting with the team. Once agreed the team will be contacted.