

Report from this week's Parish meetings (published 21/22nd January 2012)

7pm. Monday 16th January – Saint Augustine's, Castlefields
7pm. Tuesday 17th January – Saint Martin's Murdishaw
7pm. Wednesday 18th January – Our Lady's, Palacefields

As you already know, this week's parish meetings were the continuation of the consultation process leading to the changes necessary to enable our two priests to cope with their increased responsibilities and it was encouraging to see the number of parishioners present.

As you will have seen from the last two weeks' newsletters, the main items on the agenda reflected the three concerns and the three priorities identified and agreed upon by the LPA Team. These were clearly spelt out in the LPA Rep Statement read out in early December, copies of which have been available ever since. (By the way, if you have not yet had a chance to read it for yourselves, you will still find copies in the porch.)

In order to be able to cope with the increasing demands in looking after the three church communities on our side of the town (the East side), it was agreed that it would be necessary to reduce the number of masses and to arrange them in such a manner to enable the priest to have greater availability for parishioners. The proposal that will now go forward to the LPA Team, and on to the Bishop for approval, will be that St Augustine's, Our Lady's and Saint Martin's will celebrate one Mass each at the weekend:

- **Saint Augustine's** will retain its 5pm. Mass on Saturday evening.
- **Saint Martin's** will move its Sunday Mass to 9am.
- **Our Lady's** will move its Sunday Mass to 11am.

This arrangement, which will see both the Saturday evening Mass at Our Lady's and the Sunday morning Mass at Saint Augustine's ceasing, will also be in line with church guidance that says wherever possible, no priest should be celebrating more than three Sunday Masses (remembering, of course, that the Saturday Vigil Mass is a Sunday Mass).

The overriding concern of those present at each of the three parish meetings this week was that the priest could cope with his workload. Also clearly expressed was how we as parishioners could work in closer co-operation with him. Father George assured us that he will do all he can to ensure that each church celebrates at least one mid-week Mass and, as we are now moving in the direction of becoming a single parish with three church communities, hoped that people would come together for Mass, wherever it was being held on that day.

The next stage in the process is the gathering together of all six parishes at Saint Chad's High School. This will be at **7pm. on Wednesday 1st February** to which all are encouraged to attend. In the meantime, if you need any issue clarifying, please speak to your LPA Rep or your priest.

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