

## **CARDIFF CITY PARISHES FACING THE FUTURE.**

### **CHRIST THE KING PARISH RESPONSE.**

#### **Response to proposal as a whole and to Clusters C & D in Particular.**

In general, the proposals appear to meet the second and third themes listed by the Archbishop but only partly meet the first.

#### **STRENGTHS**

- Enables parishes to make best use of clergy and lay resources available.
- With reducing clergy numbers clustering is a positive start to ensuring that the whole of the City has access to services and named clergy on a regular basis.
- Removes the situation of “orphan” parishes when a priest retires or dies.
- Clustering should lead to less administrative work for clergy and lay assistants.

#### **WEAKNESSES.**

- Does not address the shortage of clergy.....or propose any ideas for increasing clergy numbers in the future.
- Does not plan for greater involvement of Deacons or positive plans for recruitment of more Deacons.
- Not radical enough, ten years will soon pass. Perhaps larger clusters are needed.
- The clustering of the three Rosminian parishes affects the clustering of others.
- If this Rosminian cluster is later broken up, how would it impinge on others?
- Assumes that clergy within clusters will be willing and able to work together as a team.
- Clustering puts extra pressure on priests who may be unable to cope.
- Appears to be based on numbers not people.
- Closing churches leaves parish communities feeling abandoned.
- Experienced people tend to resent being told they need “training”
- Transport systems within City restrict easy access by public transport to some clusters.
- Some clusters divided by major roads and rivers making communication and access more difficult.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES.**

- Greater opportunities for collaborative ministry between clergy and laity and across parishes.

- Opportunity for exploration of the ROLE of a priest in a parish.
- Opportunity for lay involvement to allow clergy to focus on their real mission.
- Opportunity for training priests and laity for new roles.
- Opportunity for central training courses leading to consistency of approach across all parish communities.
- An opportunity for discerning more lay leaders.
- Opportunity to use new situations to encourage people to be more active members of their community.
- The opportunity to share good practice, new ideas, involve new people and pool resources for the benefit of all.
- The opportunity to use church premises (redundant and in use) for activities within the local communities to increase visibility across the City.
- Opportunity for Cathedral to develop as a City Centre church ministering to the needs of the many different communities who make up the City centre at different times.

### **THREATS.**

- Insensitive approaches to new working situations.
- Lack of sensitivity to feelings of existing clergy affected by these proposals.
- If policy is to close churches without resident priests, whole communities will be destroyed and valuable lay leadership and ministry lost.
- Inter parish bickering and rivalry.
- Entrenched attitudes and lack of will to change, protective attitudes to current situations.
- Apathy and a resistance to training and evaluation.
- Extra stress on clergy, particularly elderly, who will be facing a totally new way of parish life.
- Parishioners will “vote with feet” and not respond to new groups.
- Parishes will become less visible within the community.

### **Other suggestions:-**

Create larger groups across the City.

St Philip Evans with Group A (crosses A48)

St Teilo's with Holy Family

St Teilo's with St Mary's

Break up the Rosminian parishes and :-

St Joseph's with St Teilo.

St Alban's with Group A

St Philip Evans with St Peter's.  
St Peter's and St Joseph's form a group

## **CITY OF CARDIFF PARISHES FACING THE FUTURE**

### **CHRIST THE KING Response to proposal to clusters C & D**

**C comprises St Brigid's (with St.Paul's) and St Philip Evans.**

**D comprises Christ the King, St Teilo's (with Our Lady of Lourdes)**

In all the discussions clustering is seen as the way forward.

An experiment in clustering was begun nearly six years ago when one parish priest was appointed to the two parishes and three churches viz:- Christ the King, St Brigid's and St.Paul's.

#### **STRENGTHS of PRESENT CLUSTERING**

A big investment has been made during this time by clergy and laity of the three churches in order to achieve the commonality of approach which now exists.

The vision, trust and openness, fuller lay participation and growing collaboration within the churches which have developed have brought renewal and hope to this part of the City.

The majority of the parish enjoys the benefits of being part of the Three Churches community.

We work and pray together.

Over the years joint catechesis and liturgical programmes have been developed, shared services regularly take place throughout the year. Single groups for the three churches have developed such as the Youth Group, United for Justice and Peace group and the Charismatic Prayer group. The latest project "LANDINGS" is a united programme reaching out to non practising Catholics in our area.

The present grouping is well organised and successful.

None of the above has been achieved without hard work and effort, developing good relationships and the building of the new Three Churches community by everyone involved in any aspect of parish life.

The Three Churches grouping is seen as a great strength within the North Cardiff Ecumenical movement

This appears to already exemplify the way parishes are intended to work together in the future.

### **WEAKNESSES of PROPOSED NEW CLUSTERING**

Christ the King and St Teilo's with Our Lady of Lourdes have already experienced working together and, in spite of good intentions by both parishes, it did not work. The feelings of all the clergy involved have not been considered.

The years of work and effort by everyone involved are dismissed without consultation. Any such project develops slowly over years and starting again with another parish would take many years to approach our present position.

Although Three Churches we view ourselves as one extended community.

It would be a retrograde step to disband the links (liturgical, spiritual and practical) established with St Brigid's and St Paul's.

Many parishioners are dismayed by the proposal to break up the present clustering. Good geographical links mean that the majority of Christ the King parishioners are within walking distance of St Brigid's or can use the local bus.

Many people living in Rhiwbina also choose to worship at Christ the King, again within walking distance.

St Teilo's and Whitchurch are divided from Llanishen and Rhiwbina by the A470 and the only public transport link is via the City Centre. This means that it is more difficult to reach.

**Question.** Would the new proposal mean the return of a resident priest to Christ the King?

For how long? In the light of shortages of priests, probably only for a brief time.

The impact of this on parishioners would be very upsetting and a retrograde step.

### **SUMMARY**

The overwhelming majority of parishioners of Christ the King wish to remain in a cluster with St. Brigid's and St Paul's.

Christ the King parishioners accept the need for clustering. However we are seriously concerned and upset by the proposal to remove us from the St Brigid's group and re-align us with the St. Teilo's group.

Over more than five years we have enjoyed collaboration with St Brigid and look forward to the new projects in preparation at present. Our experiences could be a model for future development.

We appreciate that St Teilo and St Philip Evans need to be in a group and one suggestion we would like to make is the groups C & D are combined to make a North Cardiff grouping.

This means we could continue to develop our collaborative work with St Brigid's while our Three Churches begin to work in a similar way with the other two parishes.