

Summary of the Cluster Meeting (1)

held in St Kentigern's Church Hall on Saturday 18 June 10.30 am -12.30 pm

What Works Well

We do not work together as a cluster of parishes. For the most part, we are standalone parishes, although St Mary's Ratho and St Margaret's SQ share a Parish Priest. There is very little sharing, geography may play a part here.

Liturgy:

For the last two years Confirmations, celebrated by Archbishop Cushley, have taken place within the proposed Cluster of parishes. It was noted, however, that here have been a number of joint initiatives and services which could be a model for the future:

- Sacramental Preparation (St Mary's/St Margaret's SQ)
- Penitential Services (St Kentigern's/St Margaret's D'Mains/St John the Baptist)
- Mass for the Sick (St Kentigern's/St John the Baptist)

Mass Scheduling: Mass Scheduling could be better balanced. Four of the parishes have Vigil Masses (albeit St Mary's don't have a Sunday morning Mass) but there is no Sunday evening Mass. The Masses also tend to be around a similar time frame, limiting options across the cluster.

Training for Lay People for Service: There is none within the cluster but it is required. Gillis could be more proactive in this regard and laity within parishes, with particular skills, should be encouraged to share their gifts and experiences across the cluster. The declining age population is also a concern and we need to encourage and promote initiatives for children and families and the youth in our parishes.

Community:

- Fox Covert RC School served by St Kentigern's and St John's
- Youth Groups (St Kentigern's/St John's), but disbanded earlier this year.

There was CONSENSUS that better Communication between parishes and within parishes is vital. We know very little about what is going on in our respective parishes (and sometimes our own). We should make better use of the media - parish newsletters, web pages and Facebook – perhaps have a periodic cluster spot in the newsletter or a cluster page on the web, to inform of each other's activities. *Fr James suggested he speak to David Kerr re a Cluster Facebook page.*

Single Parish Provision:

There was CONSENSUS that we retain our Church buildings and retain our community. A Parish Sunday Mass was essential and pivotal to maintaining a parish community, with shared priests visiting. Weekday Masses could be by rotation. Weekday services could also be taken by the Laity (as happens in some of the parishes) and training could be offered where appropriate. Concerns were raised that if a parish closed down how would the people without transport (particularly the elderly) be able to attend Sunday Mass. Would there be a bus supplied?

Individual parishes may have differing perspectives but there are many things to share and to make use of facilities and the human resources available within the cluster.

There is an understanding that we will all have to make sacrifices, but a clear decision was necessary to move forward.

We ran out of time before the Community and Services sections were completed.

The next Cluster meeting is on 17th September in St Margaret's, D'Mains, 10.30 am - 12.30 pm.