

LEO

DEI ET APOSTOLICÆ SEDIS GRATIA
 ARCHIEPISCOPUS S. ANDREÆ ET EDIMBURGENSIS

DECREE

Concerning the pastoral provision for the parishes of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, Kirkcaldy, St Pius X, Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill

Preamble

1. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that a parish is 'the place where all the faithful can be gathered together for the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist [...] it initiates the Christian people into the ordinary expression of the liturgical life [...] gathers them together in this celebration; it teaches Christ's saving doctrine [and]; it practises the charity of the Lord in good works and brotherly love' (CCC 2179). The Catechism further states that '[the Church] exists in local communities and is made real as a liturgical, above all a Eucharistic, assembly. She draws her life from the word and the Body of Christ and so herself becomes Christ's body' (CCC 752). The Law of the Church provides that a parish is 'a certain community stably constituted in a particular church, whose pastoral care is entrusted to a pastor under the authority of the diocesan bishop' (cf. can. 515, §1);
2. With all of this in mind, it is only after prayer, careful study, sincere consideration and the due observance of ecclesiastical jurisprudence and the canonical provisions before the diocesan bishop alters parishes in the Diocese that has been entrusted to his care and which he shepherds with the cooperation of the presbyterium (cf. can. 369);

The consultation

3. In Lent 2015, a pastoral letter from the Archbishop was sent to the faithful of the Archdiocese entitled *We have Found the Messiah* (hereinafter *WHFM*), in which it was outlined how, against the backdrop of markedly falling Mass attendance, the decline in the

number of priests and fewer projected ordinations, a renewal of the Archdiocese would be possible if Catholic communities were gathered closely around Jesus in the Eucharist and in a way that allowed them to be pastored effectively by their priests. In the same pastoral letter, it was stated, 'pulling together into fewer but more concentrated parish centres will enable us to intensify our spiritual and evangelical activity' (*WHFM*, p.8);

4. Following the pastoral letter and mindful of can. 50, the Archbishop personally went to all of the clusters of the Archdiocese to speak to them of the principles that he would use when making decisions about the future of the parishes. He met with the parishioners of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour (hereinafter "St Marie"), St Pius X (hereinafter "St Pius") and St Ninian's on 18 March 2016.
5. At the aforementioned meetings, the Archbishop invited each cluster of parishes to hold three further meetings to consider certain questions that he had posed. Again, mindful of can. 50, after these three meetings, each cluster was asked by the Archbishop to submit a report to him detailing the particular circumstances of the parishes in question;
6. The Archbishop met individually with the deans of the Archdiocese and, on two occasions, with the priests of each deanery in order to learn their views of the best form of pastoral arrangement for parishes in their areas.
7. The proper and informed consultation of the Council of Priests (can. 515, §2) took place over three days on 7 March 2018, 28 March 2018 and 25 April 2018.
8. Having received the recommendations of the Council of Priests, on 14 May 2018, the Archbishop wrote a letter to be publicly read to the parishioners of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy, St Pius', Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill on the Solemnity of Pentecost 2018 to outline his proposal for them. In the same letters the parishes were invited to meet with their parish priest and write a letter of response to the Archbishop with any further comments and concerns (can. 50);
9. The Archbishop received the response from the parish priest on 3 June 2018;
10. Following the letter from the parishes and having considered all that was put before him, the Archbishop was in a position to decide on the structure of the pastoral provision for the people of the parishes of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy, St Pius', Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill

St Marie's, Kirkcaldy, St Pius', Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill

11. The parishes of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy, founded in 1865, St Pius', Kirkcaldy, founded in 1964, and St Ninian's, Bowhill, founded in 1920 currently share a priest who is resident at St Marie's;
12. St Pius', Kirkcaldy has not had a resident parish priest since 2016. St Ninian's, Bowhill has not had a resident parish priest since 2014. St Pius' and St Ninian's share a parish priest with St Marie's. The parish priest is resident at St Marie's;
13. The distance between St Pius' and St Ninian's is 4.3 miles. This is a 15 minute bus journey or an 11 minute car journey. The distance from St Marie's to St Pius is 1.4 miles which is an 8 minute bus journey or 6 minutes by car. The distance from St Marie's to St Ninian's is 5.6 miles or 24 minutes by bus or 16 minutes by car;
14. The Archbishop met with the parishes of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy and St Pius', Kirkcaldy on 18 March 2016 to outline the situation facing the Archdiocese, the principles that he would use making decisions regarding pastoral provision and to hear the comments and concerns of the faithful (can. 50);

15. Following the ensuing cluster meetings, the resultant report described how the parishes have shared priorities for pastoral action and the high importance that they give to the local celebration of the Eucharist;
16. The priests of the deanery in which St Marie's, St Pius' and St Ninian's are located are well acquainted with the facts and the circumstances of the area, recommended to that the three parishes should be merged into one;
17. The Council of Priests, having been provided with relevant information regarding both parishes, was lawfully convoked on 7 March 2018, 28 March 2018 and 25 April 2018 to consider carefully the best pastoral arrangement for the parishes of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy, St Pius', Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill (cann. 127; 166; 515, §2).

Proposal

18. Wherefore, having considered all of the foregoing, a specific proposal could be made for the parishes of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy, St Pius', Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill;
19. Whereas, following the extensive consultation and having been lawfully convoked, on 7 March 2018, 28 March 2018 and 25 April 2018, the Council of Priests met to make recommendations regarding the parishes structures of the Archdiocese and recommended that the parishes of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy, St Pius' Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill should be merged in such a way as to become one parish known as St Marie's, as per 1.c).ii of the procedural guidelines of the Congregation for the Clergy, sent to the Ordinaries on 30 April 2013, known as extinctive union;
20. Whereas, the Archbishop received and accepted the recommendation and on 14 May 2018 wrote a letter to be read publicly at the Masses on the Solemnity of Pentecost in the parishes of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy and St Pius', Kirkcaldy;
21. Whereas it is not the intention to close the churches in questions so that activities and liturgies can be maintained locally;
22. Whereas the simplification of pastoral structures would allow for a more effective pastoring of the territory and would be for the good of souls;
23. Whereas such a merger would ensure the vitality of the Church in the area;
24. Whereas such a merger would ensure an optimum use of resources;
25. Whereas such a merger would provide an optimum use of clergy and;
26. Whereas in the response to the proposal received from the parishes on 3 June 2018, it was requested that, while the parishes could merge, a new name be given to the extended territory instead of "St Marie's" as had been proposed:

Decision

27. In consideration of all of the foregoing and in virtue of the precepts of cann. 121 and 515, §2 of the Code of Canon Law, and so that the Archdiocese can provide more effectively for the spiritual welfare of the faithful and the salvation of souls, I, Leo Cushley, Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh hereby

DECREE

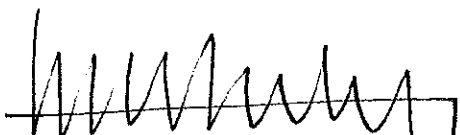
28. The extinctive union of St Marie's parish, Kirkcaldy, St Pius' parish, Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's parish, Bowhill in such a way that all three become one parish called "St Serf's" as per 1.c.i of the procedural guidelines of the Congregation for the Clergy, sent to the Ordinaries on 30 April 2013, known as extinctive union;
29. The boundaries will be that of the former St Marie's parish and extended to include the territory of the former parish of St Pius', Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill;
30. The faithful domiciled in the former territory of the parishes of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy, St Pius', Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill will become parishioners of St Serf's, Kirkcaldy;
31. That all three churches will retain their own names and may continue to be used for the liturgies of the parish;
32. As per ecclesiastical jurisprudence, in accordance with the prescript of cann. 122, 1° and 123 and having due regard for the wishes of benefactors and statutes, all monies, assets and liabilities of the former parishes of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy, St Pius', Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill will transfer to the new parish of St Serf's, Kirkcaldy;
33. This DECREE becomes effective on 15 July 2018.
34. If a person considers himself or herself aggrieved by this administrative DECREE, that person is within his or her canonical rights to seek revocation or emendation according to the norm of can. 1734 and to make hierarchical recourse according to the norm of can. 1737 and;
35. I instruct that this DECREE be communicated immediately to the parishioners of St Marie's, Kirkcaldy, St Pius', Kirkcaldy and St Ninian's, Bowhill. This DECREE is likewise to be published immediately on the archdiocesan website.

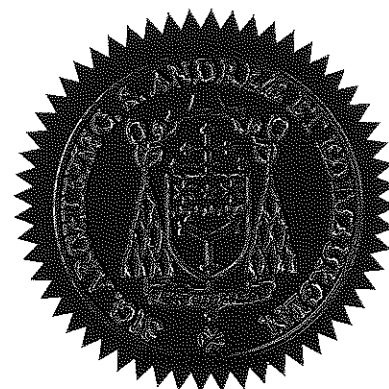
Given at Edinburgh, 14 June, in the Year of Our Lord, 2018.

+ Leo Curley

Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh

in cuius rei fidem


Chancellor



Page 4 of 4