



To the parishioners of St Kentigern's, Barnton
[to be read publicly at the Sunday Masses on the Solemnity of Pentecost 2018]

Edinburgh, 14 May 2018

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As you know, after the publication of my pastoral letter *We have Found the Messiah*, I met with the parishioners of your cluster on 30 January 2016 in your parish hall so that I could set out before you my pastoral priorities for the future planning for the Archdiocese and learn of your own experiences and concerns.

After our meeting, there followed three cluster meetings with St John the Baptist's, St Margaret's, South Queensferry, St Margaret's, Davidsons Mains and St Mary's, Ratho, together with your own parish. From these meetings I received your cluster report in April of last year. From this, I was able to learn of your desire to further coordinate the activity of the parishes in the cluster and of the importance of the celebration of the Eucharist in your particular parish communities.

As well as my meetings with all of the other clusters of the Archdiocese, I have had meetings with the priests of each deanery, the deans and individual parish priests. Most recently I have had three important meetings with the Council of Priests so that I could have their recommendations on the way ahead for every parish of the Archdiocese. I have considered all that has been put before me and I am now making certain proposals to a number of our parishes.

From the beginning of this process I was of a mind that many of our churches would be considered for closure. Following the extensive consultation, and understanding your commitment to our places of worship, I decided that, where possible, this should be reconsidered. However, it also became apparent that the commitment to maintain such buildings would have to be accompanied by a simplified pastoral structure and so I have considered each case individually.

Firstly, in the case of St Kentigern's parish, I would like to propose that the church building should remain open as a place of worship. Secondly, to enable a more effective pastoring of the parish territory, it is my proposal that the parish of St John the Baptist's Corstorphine be merged with St Kentigern's so as to become one parish, known as St John the Baptist's.

I understand that, on learning this, some may wish to express an opinion or a concern about the proposal. I am therefore asking your Parish Priest to hold a meeting with you within the next few weeks to discuss my proposal, and for him to pen a reply to me with your assistance. I would ask that this reply, and any others, kindly reach me no later than 18 June.

Today and in the coming weeks, across the Archdiocese other parishes are being informed of my proposals and I know that, for some, this will be a difficult moment. Mindful of this, let us remember each other in prayerful charity as we face this time of change that lies ahead, always asking that God's will be done in all things.

Yours sincerely in Christ,



✠Leo Cushley

Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh

