

DIOCESE OF DROMORE

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Pastoral letter on the formation of 'pastoral areas' in the diocese of Dromore

The priests of the diocese and I met in Drumalis, Larne, to consider further how a reduced number of priests can meet the spiritual, sacramental and pastoral needs of the people of the diocese.

We worked hard and reached some proposals that will address the challenge of ministering to the people of the diocese in the most effective way.

The proposals are as follows:

The parishes, as presently constituted in the diocese, will remain.

Each parish will continue to have its own parish priest, though he may not be resident in the parish; it will also have its own parish pastoral council and parish financial council; other parish groups and committees will also continue to play their key roles in each parish.

However it is proposed that priests in a pastoral area will work even more closely in cooperation with one another and will, where practical, share the workload of other parishes in the pastoral area.

Parishes will operate within what is called 'a pastoral area'. A pastoral area is a group of parishes committed to a long-term relationship of collaboration in planning and providing for the spiritual, sacramental and pastoral needs within their respective communities. We propose that there will be five pastoral areas in the diocese:

Aghaderg/Donaghmore/Tullylish/Annaclone/Seapatrick

Drumgooland/Dromara/Dromore/Magheradroll

Burren/Mayobridge/Saval/Drumgath/Clonduff/Warrenpoint/Kilbroney

Moyraverty/Seagoe/Magheralin/St. Peter's/St. Paul's

Newry

I want to keep you informed about the proposed developments in the diocese;

I also want to hear your views or comments about the proposals.

In each parish there will be opportunities for consultation and feedback through your Pastoral Council and directly through the priests of the parish.

I would appreciate receiving these comments by 6th November 2012. I would ask you to continue to pray for vocations to the priesthood for the diocese. 'Pray the Lord of the Harvest to send labourers into his harvest'.

+John McAreavey

2nd October 2012