



Our Lady Immaculate Tolworth

Report on the meetings
held throughout Lent

2007



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How was the report compiled?

The Parish was invited, via messages in the weekly newsletter and appeals from the Clergy, to attend meetings on the subjects in the Archbishop's consultation document. Three meetings were held on each of the topics at different times of the day to allow as many people as possible to attend. We asked people to attend one meeting in each set. A reply box was also placed in the narthex for people to make their comments if they were unable to attend the meetings. The meetings were held without the direct involvement of the clergy in order to facilitate a potentially more open debate.

Part 1—Growing in Communion

What and how do we celebrate really well in our parish?

It was felt by everyone that our parish was a great parish to belong to. It was considered to be a warm and friendly parish to both parishioners and visitors alike. Some of the things which people felt strongly about which they wanted to mention are listed below: both positive items, and also some areas which need some work. However, although there are areas which do need attention, on the whole, this is a great parish!

Converts: Converts are included very well within the Parish. They are being encouraged to join the readers lists, to become ministers of communion and so on. Credit to the RCIA programme for what they are doing.

Welcoming: There is a welcoming feel to the Parish, and people are not afraid to hang around after mass and chat.

Baptism: This works well, with comments from the families concerned that the whole experience has been "family friendly."

Marriage: This works well with a good programme leading up to the big day, and like the baptism programme, is also "family friendly."

Family Mass: This is good for young families, along with the children's liturgy.

Lenten Project: Financial support to the Third World and other good causes throughout the year is fantastic.

Open Church: The fact that the church building is open all day every day is great, as it encourages prayer, rosary, and so on, and also makes it available to the wider community (including those of other, and no faith).

Special Services: Well organised and well attended.

Mass Attendance: Mass attendance seems to be increasing, with particular note with those from ethnic communities.

Ethnic Masses: These have encouraged people to travel to the church for these special events, which perhaps has made them feel welcome in OLI and encouraged them to attend masses at the weekend as well.

Justice and Peace: Works well, and does a valuable job within the Parish.

Organisations: We have a huge number of organisations which suggests a healthy and growing parish.

Outside events: If you look at our parish as not just what goes on within the walls of the church but in a broader concept, then we celebrate many important events in our lives such as weddings, births, deaths, and family occasions.

What needs to be developed in the community at this time?

Communication: Communication in several areas (which also came out in the other parts of the three part process) are listed in the Parish Action Points.

Visiting Clergy: Find a way of benefiting from the view and skills of visiting clergy to gain additional view points.

What is a deanery and diocese? People do not understand what a deanery, and especially a diocese does, and what goes on there. People in this Parish seem to believe the boundaries of the parish of Tolworth is the extent of the Catholic Church (other than perhaps Rome). In fairness, unlike many dioceses, this one is very poor at telling people what is going on (diocesan newspaper etc), so it is not surprising people are in the dark. Equally, people are usually not aware of what is taking place in the deanery until it has happened, and sometimes not even then.

Teachings of the Church: Greater opportunities to benefit from reading Papal documents and press releases from Rome, better clarification on the Church's teaching when issues are raised in the press, and an ongoing formation of catechises to the people of the teachings of the Church.

Youth: For the size of parish, we have failed at retaining almost all of our teenagers in any form of active participation within the Parish, and there is nothing from the age of children's liturgy upwards (perhaps explaining the loss of the young people before they become eligible for the present youth club).

Ethnic: Although the Parish is very good at bringing members of newer communities into the building, it seems to fail to get them more actively involved in the life of the Parish (or perhaps they do not want to). There are also many Catholics coming over from Eastern Europe—how will we integrate them within our community, and also harness their enthusiasm?

Keeping focused: Readers days, days of prayer and retreats are great, but the people need to take ownership to keep this good work alive, so that these events do not just happen once in a blue moon.

How could we exchange our gifts with neighbouring parishes in our deanery?

Combined events: Better communication between parish organisations so that resources can be pooled: e.g. rather than having a UCM mass in Tolworth of an evening for less than a dozen people, have a deanery one instead—better use of resources (clergy) and opportunity to share ideas. There are some combined events (e.g. deceased clergy mass), but they tend to be poorly supported so we could start by promoting what is already taking place better or thinking about the times when they are on.

Youth: New Malden for example have a good youth group, so sharing resources and would perhaps kick start something in this Parish.

Education: We have, for example, a good RCIA programme, but some parishes do not. For this, and other areas of teaching, catechises, and education, parishes with larger resources could assist those which have limited resources.

What resources do we need to move our parish and deanery forward?

Deanery Meetings: People do not understand what a deanery is, or what goes on in it. We need better communications about what is going on, which parishes are doing what, so that we can get a better idea of where we can help elsewhere, or where would could do combined events or share resources. We almost need a deanery newsletter to come out say monthly, or bi-monthly. What is discussed at Deanery meetings? Perhaps we could incorporate a summary of points discussed in our own newsletter?

Diocese Communication: People have no idea what goes on in the Diocese, and that is because it does not communicate—it is like a secret society! We need a Diocesan newspaper like Northampton and A&B. There is also quite a strong feeling that this consultation process is purely academic, and that the nature of the wording of the questions asked by The Archbishop suggests some hidden agenda—effectively getting us to decide (by presentation of ideas on greater collaboration and so on) which parishes will end up clustered.

Part 2—Reaching Out In Mission

How do we / can we reach out beyond the boundaries of our parish community to believers and non believers?

Open Church: This allows non Catholics to come into the building to pray (to St Anthony for some) or just to have quiet time.

Non believers: It can be difficult to reach out to non believers as approaching discussions on this kind of topic can be difficult as people feel uncomfortable raising it.

Residential Homes: There will be a mixture of Catholics, members of other Christian churches, and also those of no faith. We should set up a system of taking an ecumenical service to them once a week (perhaps hosted by the local churches on a rota basis).

How do we bring the Good News to those without faith? How do we reach out in dialogue and collaboration to other Christians and to members of other religions?

Street Pastors: This is a good practical way of reaching out to those with little or no faith.

Unity Service: Although poorly attended, this is a good facility for the local churches to have. Perhaps they could be held more regularly. However, this is unifying us with other churches, but does facilitate those of no faith in taking part.

Educating: It was felt that there was a feeling amongst a majority of Catholics that they do not really have any responsibility to “reach out” to other Christian faiths or non believers.

How could we enable our parish to become a more welcoming home?

Mass Attendance: Although we seem to have a growing mass attendance over all, it is also clear that some (especially amongst the young) are dropping away. We need to see where and why we are losing them.

Reaching out to parishioners: We are struggling in today's world to get existing parishioners to take a more active part in their own parish life, so we may well struggle to get people to look beyond those boundaries to deanery, diocese, and other Christian faiths.

Lapsed Catholics: We need to find out who has lapsed, and try to get in touch with them.

Welcomers: Encourage some young people to act as welcomers, which would add a good dimension to the narthex and welcoming people of all ages, but also be one step forwards in encouraging them to fulfil and more active role in the life of the Church.

New Parishioners: Ensure each new family which moves to the parish get a visit by someone who can give them an overview of the Parish, the activities which take place, and find out how they would like to be involved.

Immobile: How many parishioners do we have (or others) who would like to get to mass or other services, but can not due to no transport? Who are they? Perhaps a “taxi rota” could be established once the names of those concerned has been formed.

Aware of the joys and sufferings both within our parish and community beyond it, how do we connect with those in greatest need?

Lenten Project: Well supported. Perhaps we could do better at advertising what we are doing for this project within the deanery and other churches as we could combine forces and make it an even bigger event: a community event more than just a parish event.

All year round project: We have a huge focus on the Lenten project, but it was felt that it would be good to have an all year round focus by sponsoring or linking with a school, hospital, community etc in a developing country.

SVP: We are aware that this exists, but we know very little about how it works, how we might join, or offer help to widen its availability.

Hospice & Homeless: Again, there must be things we could be doing all year round for these local organisations such as collecting blankets, tins of food, etc, but if lines of communication are not opened we will never know what is required.

Bereaved & the sick: Having these services is good, but they could be extended to include the whole deanery. Perhaps we could set up a network database of those who could receive counselling from the Church, or indeed may welcome visits from parishioners who have gone through similar experiences.

International tragedies: Support of international tragedies by way of financial

and practical items (e.g. tsunami) is good.

Experience: In order that we might have a greater understanding of life at the poorest end of the spectrum or at the most disastrous, can we encourage more people to come in and tell us about their experiences (as we did with John Pridmore) so we can then be better at recognising those in greatest need?

Part 3—The Future of Pastoral Provision

What fears do you have about the future of the parish or deanery or diocese?

Reduced numbers of clergy: The lack of, or reduced availability of priests would have a large impact on the sense of security of parish life. Many people will not readily accept sharing their priest with others, and seeing less of him.

Older people would find it most tough, and may not accept communion from someone other than a priest, and may not accept liturgies led by a non-ordained minister.

Aging population: The housebound and visits to the sick and elderly will be affected.

Education: One of the issues for lack of vocations could be parents' attitudes towards this as a potential career for their sons.

Youth: With the loss of many of our young people in their lower teens, the future of vocations is further in jeopardy. This has been discussed earlier, but we need to find ways of keeping their interest. However, our schools could play a part here in controlling the "information overload" with regards to religious education. Although it can be advantageous to have an understanding of other faiths within a multicultural society, we perhaps need to give more time to our own faith.

Press: The Church is very poor in its communication about national issues or international issues which hit the headlines. E.g. recent issues where clergy have gone astray over children: the press crucifies them and the Church, but the Church appears to do very little to support the accused, and its P. R. leaves a lot to be desired. It is also very poor at educating people on other national issues such as Government debates on abortion and euthanasia.

Treatment of Clergy: Priests are often treated shabbily by the hierarchy, and all too often they inadvertently get caught up in the political wrangling and nonsense which seems to keep dioceses going. The parishioners often treat them poorly by not thinking about them as human and needing to have some space to themselves. Some feel that the priests are used by people when they need something, but otherwise are forgotten.

Newly Ordained: That they will have to shoulder greater responsibilities from an earlier time than previously has been the case, which will affect them trying to find their feet.

What forms of shared collaboration could be developed at parish and deanery level?

Sick: Visiting the sick could be put onto a rota system for the deanery which would help those parishes which have been amalgamated or could benefit from additional resources.

Mass Times: Re-structure mass times around the deanery so that if one priest were on holiday, other parishes could more easily provide cover. Also consider reducing the number of masses around the deanery e.g. Sunday evening— rather than most parishes having one, have say 3 (makes covering easier). Masses which have few people attending could be cut. Also publicise the mass times throughout the deanery better so that every parish advertises the mass times for each other.

Administrator: This new role must really be used to take some of the pressure off of the clergy.

Visiting other parishes: Some feel as though they should not go to mass in another parishes as it is being disloyal to their own, which could also have a financial implication. They should not feel like this, and in fact, greater collaboration will never be achieved until people feel more comfortable about their deanery.

Prayer for Vocations: We do not seem to pray for vocations, other than now and again. We must pray more. Not just as part of bidding prayers, but dedicated liturgies, novenas, benediction and holy hour, and so on.

Vocations: What has been done to look at whether the process to, and through seminary, and out the other side is actually working? We need to look at the reasons why young men are either discounting a vocation to the priesthood, or not thinking about it in the first place. By the same token, our treatment of priests both active and retired (or sick) must be improved—they are entitled to the same dignity of treatment as the rest of us. There are countries within Europe and indeed the wider world who do not seem to have this problem of lack of vocations (or have fixed it) —what can we learn from them? Perhaps we need to look at the programme of formation as potentially off-putting to a more mature person considering this path. The same must be said of vocations to the permanent diaconate.

Lack of Vocations: Lack of vocations is the fundamental reason for the lack of priests in the future. Discussing statistics about the reduction in clergy is a smoke screen: it is trying to put a sticking plaster on a gaping wound, rather than trying to plug the gap. The gap is the reduction of vocations—that is the bit that needs fixing, but this consultation does not seem to go that far!

What forms of co-ordination and collaboration could be developed in our area if our own parish or a neighbouring parish did not have a resident priest?

Religious: We must look at ways of making better use of religious communities (priests and nuns) who could be in a great position to assist within parishes and deaneries in all sorts of ways from visiting the sick, or assisting with sacramental preparation. This must be for those communities from within the British Isles, and those from over seas.

Priestly Communities: Create communities of priests living under one roof all serving the deanery, rather than an individual parish. This would make the serv-

ing of all the individual communities within it more efficient. It would also provide a greater aspect of community for the priests themselves and better support for them.

Church closures: It would be preferable not to close church buildings as this would destroy communities, and could lead to a good many people not going to mass any more. This would be the ultimate painful experience.

Some felt that as the Diocese is so poor at communication and tends to operate what they call a "mission behind a smoke screen," perhaps it should put its own house in order first.

People have generally found these questions quite difficult to answer. We are asking them to visualise what life will be like with fewer priests, but they have struggled to some extent to be able to do this as it is an unknown entity.

Additional Parish Action Points

These points are in addition to the points raised to some of the questions:

- **Converts:** Although the parish is doing well at encouraging converts to participate in an active way within the Parish, we must do more to stop the growing number of "cradle Catholics" becoming an ever increasing percentage of the mass going attendance.
- **Communication:**
 - Volunteers: Need to be better at collating the names of people who volunteer for things within the Parish and ensure we keep in touch with them: people may only offer once!
 - Website: Place press releases etc from Rome on the website for all to read. The website also needs to be kept more up to date with events, organisation lists and who to contact, and the history of the parish and furniture within the sanctuary.
 - Robot Effect: People are attending mass without really understanding what is taking place before their very eyes. We need to find a way of educating (or re-educating) people of each stage of the Sacrifice of the Mass.
 - Cliquish: It is quite difficult to establish what groups are taking place within the Parish, and even harder to find out how to join them, or what they do. This gives the effect of organisations being hidden away to the extent that people feel as though they are not open to new members. This could be solved by better use of the website and other forms of promotion.
 - Organisations: Allow a cycle of organisations to promote themselves in the newsletter—say two organisations per week.
 - Narthex: Too many posters and notice boards which puts people off stopping to look at them. We would be better off with few notice boards, but which are better managed, perhaps with posters being rotated.

- **Cradle Catholics:** Need to find a way of encouraging “re-conversion” using perhaps something like an RCIA to educate people in their Faith, and the traditions of the Rites in which they take part—perhaps also “60 second” slots at each mass.
- **Welcomers:** This works well before mass, but we need a similar system after mass to clear the church, collect rubbish, and when appropriate, encourage people into coffee mornings (after 9am mass), and act as a point of reference for people to ask questions of or for directions rather than queuing to ask the priest.
- **Support Network:** A mechanism to establish when people are in hospital (e.g. mothers), and for the church to offer support or advice (child care, visiting, prayers, communion, and so on).
- **Days of Reflection:** Ministers of Communion have not had one for 2 years, but this should be extended to other ministries to focus peoples minds on the importance of these roles (and also to improve in some areas the apparent lack of respect for what they are doing).
- **Youth:** For the size of parish, we have failed at retaining almost all of our teenagers, and there is nothing from the age of children's liturgy upwards (perhaps explaining the loss of the young people before they become eligible for the present youth club). We must find a way of developing a replacement for children's liturgy with an element of “teaching” and a large element of “belonging” (not only to the Church, but to a group of young people of a similar age).
- **Newer Communities:** They could offer additional ways of looking at various parts of parish life, and issues in the wider world, so we need to try harder to encourage them to become more actively involved in the life of the parish (they are coming in through the front door, but seem not to join groups etc).
- **Young Mums:** There is nothing for young mums. Although there is the UCM, the younger mums feel that it is for more mature ladies—they would like something like this, not necessarily with a formal structure, where they could meet, socialise, and share concerns and support each other.
- **Helpers:** We have a huge parish where people are generous with their money, but not necessarily with their time. There is a relatively small number of people doing many jobs, and some of them are not getting any younger. If people are going to be slow at coming forwards, perhaps we need to find a way of going to them to invite them to join groups or help with specific tasks or events.
- **Children's Liturgy:** Suffering for lack of helpers. We can not allow this important function to disappear, and at the same time, it should be developed further so that when the children reach the age of 8, there is a step (a natural progression) into an older group to continue their development of understanding the mass and scripture.
- **Ministers of Communion:** Need some additional training on how to carry out their role at mass and to ensure proper respect is shown before and to the Blessed Sacrament.
- **Parish Audit:** This has been a useful exercise to see how people feel about their parish. Perhaps it would be a good idea to have a set of questions answered by people every couple of years as a kind of parish audit or performance review.
- **Education:** There are many good courses offered by such places as the Tooting Bec Centre, but we need to do more to bring these to people's attention, and also encourage people to attend them.

14 Year Old Answers

How do you find being a young person in the Catholic Church?

- We don't really understand what is happening in the mass, and the sermon is boring.
- No experience of belonging as there is no youth club up to our age, and we don't feel as though we want to join one now.
- We feel as though we are not wanted by the older generation who have stereotypical views of people our age.

Do you feel you have an important part to play within the Church?

- No, as we feel as though we do not belong.
- The mass belongs to the priest, so there is no way we can get more involved.

Do you feel listened to and welcomed?

- No, as our views are never listened to, which is because they are never sought.

What do you think you need as a young person in the Church to help you better understand and live out your Catholic Faith?

- Some form of club to follow on from children's liturgy age to allow us to meet other Catholics of our age, and leading on to something more grown up from Confirmation age.
- Some sort of replacement for children's liturgy for 8 year olds so we continue to learn more about the mass and scripture in an environment which we can relate to.
- We want to understand more about the mass and our faith, but it all seems too alien to us.
- A music group formed of young people that could either play regularly, or at young peoples masses.

What do you think you could offer the Church as a young person?

- My attendance.

Our Lady Immaculate Primary School Response **to Vision for the Diocese**

Discussion with & Responses from pupils

Growing in Communion becomes Loving God:

What do you like about celebrating Mass at school?

Masses are special celebrations to which mums and dads come. Makes us feel part of a special community. We enjoy gathering together for Mass and everyone gets to take part. We enjoy singing hymns and feeling proud of our school.

What happens at your church that you would like to do at school?

Have a room where children can go at lunchtime to do work about Jesus. Get children to do readings about Jesus in RE lessons.

If you could tell another school something they should do in Mass, what would it be?

Listen to the priest, read prayers & play instruments. Be respectful and think about Jesus. Get Fr. Anthony with a "Boris" (Boris is a puppet that Fr. Anthony uses in his homily with the children).

Do you have any ideas of your own to improve class prayers/ our celebration of Mass?
Children lead and read own prayers more, e.g. twice a week.

Do we need extra items to help us praise God?

Praising God comes from within the heart. We can praise God in the way we treat others.

How can we share what we enjoy with other schools?

Joint Masses with other Catholic schools sometimes

How does God love us?

He gave us Jesus, who died for us. He made us and loves us as we are.

How can we show our love of God?

Always trying to follow our conscience. Praying and being kind to others. Talking about Him.

How can we show our love for God by praising Him in different ways?

Reading the bible. Going to Mass. Treating others as you would like to be treated.

Reaching Out in Mission becomes Sharing God's Love:

How do we know about God?

From the Bible, from mums and dads, from teachers, at church, at our Holy Com-

munion classes. He made us to know Him.

What activities do you do and how do you show your Christian belief in these?

In school we learn about God, we write stories, pray, sing hymns and try to help others.

How do we use the Word of the Gospel in our own lives?

We use it to live a loving, caring and happy life.

How can we get people in our local area to be involved in our school and parish community?

Tell them about school events in newsletters etc.

How can we welcome new children into our school community?

Showing them around. Being kind to them. Have a special circle for them. Involve them.

How have we helped those in need in our local area and further away?

Raising money for them. Praying for them. Being aware of their needs. Sending food from the harvest.

How can we use our school and parishes to spread the Good News?

Be good followers of Jesus.

How can we become aware of those who need our help?

We are aware when we see people are sad, from TV appeals and from the news.

How are we aware of other religions?

In RE lessons. From visits to other places of worship and visitors to the school.

Facing the Future becomes Growing in Love:

How should we treat others?

Share with them. Treat them as we would like to be treated.

How will you grow in love as you grow up?

Develop our prayer life. Be confirmed. Get married. Go to church. Take care of others.

Do you have any worries about growing in love?

No

How could our school community and parish help us to deepen our love for God?

More Masses and prayer services. More visits from priests.

How could you get involved in showing love to others in your school, parishes and further away in the world?

Lenten project and other fund raising charity events. Twin with another school over seas.

How would we worship God at school and in our parishes if we didn't have a priest?

Prayer groups, bible readings. It would be difficult.

How could we encourage more boys to think about becoming priests?

Make sure they have greater knowledge of what it means to be a priest. Let them get married and have children. Encourage boys to think about being a priest.

Discussion with & Responses from staff

Growing in Communion:

What do we as a school do to contribute to the parish community?

- We are a focal point for the whole parish, thus we help build community.
- We support sacramental programmes, e.g. staff are involved in preparation for HC, Reconciliation & Baptism.
- Lenten Project
- Easter – Christmas services
- Parish celebration/picnic day - PTA new parents meeting.

What do we do as a school to contribute to the deanery community?

- Deanery Mass for staff and governors
- Sr. Josephine represents the school at the various Deanery meetings e.g. Deanery Education Group.

How does the parish, deanery or diocese acknowledge and celebrate the contribution made by the school?

- School Masses / services/ Reconciliation services
- Displays – Lenten Project / Fair Trade
- Volunteer support from parishioners (not current parents)
- Links from the parish website to the school's website
- Training from CEC.
- Capital resources allocation.

Reaching out in Mission:

Indicate the ways in which the school demonstrates it is an inclusive school reaching out to all members of the local community regardless of ability, social class or faith?

- Clear and comprehensive Admission's policy
- Assemblies - Cultural events – International Evening / Dancing etc

- Curriculum time e.g. other faiths
- Resources for SEN & disabled learners
- Homework club - vulnerable pupils

How do we share our good practice and learn from the good practice of others within the deanery and the diocese?

- Good links with the other schools in the Deanery, especially with the secondary schools – supporting aspects of the curriculum.
- Members of staff from the various schools have worked on specific projects i.e. Primary Network
- RC Subject Leaders' meetings.
- Sharing policies etc
- Supporting other schools with staffing issues – Acting Head teacher role

How closely do we work with the local priests and parish?

- Very strong links with the parish re Masses, services, visits to the church.
- Priests of the parish support aspects of the curriculum – providing talks for groups of children.
- Head on parish council and liturgy committee.
- Year 6 Day of Reflection – priest in attendance.
- Café – Dancing etc
- Parish events are sometimes mentioned in the school Newsletter

What practical projects do we embark upon to reach out to those in need ?

- Lenten Project
- Parcels for the children in Poland
- Harvest – food
- Christmas – collection for the Homeless
- Carol Singing – Old people's homes / hospitals

Facing the Future:

What forms of shared collaboration in proclaiming the gospel could we as a school offer the parish and deanery?

- More information about the school in the Parish Newsletters
- Taking more of a role at the parish Masses

How can we ensure our school effectively proclaims the gospel in an increasingly secular and materialistic society?

- As a school to stress the importance of the individual and the role each person has in society
- Ensure emphasis is on development of the whole person, not narrow focus on academic achievement
- Ensuring that the RC programmes uphold the key elements of the school's mission statement.
- More out reach work in line with the work being undertaken in the Cluster groups.

Conclusion & Summing Up

Many people have said they are suspicious of the real reasons behind the Diocesan Consultation, but have commented that as we have taken the trouble to compile answers to it, and effectively audit the Parish, we must ensure that it is not relegated to the archives to gather dust. We must ensure that any points for development, are actually developed. We must not lose focus.

We must also not lose sight of the fact that although we will have a shortage of priests in the future, the actual problem is not so much a shortage of priests, but a reduction in the numbers of men considering a vocation to the priesthood. This must be seen as the heart of the problem—other countries have had similar issues, but have turned things around. We must analyse the reasons why men seem to be put off the priesthood, or perhaps why they have not been encouraged to think about it in the first place. It is the lack of vocations that is the fundamental reason for the lack of priests in the future.

We must also look after our priests better. They are not super human, and can not continue to serve the people morning, noon and night, starting the day saying an early morning mass, and finishing the day when an 8pm meeting finishes without risking an early grave, or pushing them to a point of not being able to cope. We must, in any re-structuring or re-organisation, ensure they are able to continue their ministry in a way which is acceptable to them.

It is our Church. It belongs to us all, and we all have a duty to look after it. We must pray for the future of the Church and our Parish. We must pray for our priests that the Lord will look after them and guide them, and give them the strength and courage to help the Church through these times, and that He will bless their ministry now and always.

We must pray for vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. This must not just be a once a year effort on 4th Sunday of Easter (Vocations Sunday) but a continuous commitment of prayer for vocations. We must pray for those in seminary that they be given the strength and courage to see their period of studies through.

The future is perhaps in some respects a little uncertain. However, we should not panic or be afraid of change. Any reorganisation of the Deanery or Diocese will be measured and well thought through. Working with other parishes will give us many great opportunities to make new friends and benefit from other and new ideas. In many ways, the future is exciting as we will be part of a visibly developing Church. A Church which is developing in new and exciting ways in order to survive and indeed grow into the next millennium.

Once again, thank you to everyone who has played a part in this consultation process.

God Bless!

*Heavenly Father, in Your loving design for your people,
You sent your only Son to earth to die on the cross for the salvation
of every man and woman.*

*During His life on earth, He gathered to Himself disciples who were sent
out to bring the Good News to all men and women.*

*We pray that you will touch the hearts of young men and women to
follow You and so continue the salvation of the world. Also, give all
priests and religious the grace and courage to be faithful to their commitment.*

Through Christ our Lord.

AMEN