

His Grace
Archbishop Leo Cushley
Archdiocesan Offices
100 Strathearn Road
Edinburgh
EH9 1BB

Sunday, 17 June 2018

Your Grace,

Following on from your letter dated 14th May to the parish of St Anthony's, Rumford in which you set out your proposal for the future of the parishes in the Falkirk Cluster, I now write to you on behalf of the parishioners to give their response.

I held a meeting for the people of the parish on Friday 8th June, there were only about 15 people present including the parish clergy and religious. It was noted that perhaps a Friday was not the best day for the meeting.

At the meeting I presented the people with an overview of the process so far, commenting on the pastoral Letter "We have found the Messiah" and the subsequent meetings with yourself, the cluster, the deanery and the council of priests.

At the meeting there was a question raised as to why Larbert, although part of the cluster, had not been mentioned in the proposal. Why does it remain a single parish? It was also noted that the fabric and finance of the parish are both in good order although more needs to be done to bridge the gap between attendance and participation. The parish is internally vibrant but less vibrant "Ad extra".

There was also lots of discussion about mass times and a request for a vigil mass at St Anthony's to aid the growing population in the area. It was felt that priority is always given to St Francis Xavier's.

Following on from this the discussion moved to the proposal to close St Mary of the Angels. There was some expression of concern, some had experienced the closure of Slammanan and did not want to see the people of Camelon being affected the same way. The discussion also covered the future use of St Mary of the Angels church as well as financial considerations.

Prior to the close of the meeting there was some discussion about Lay leadership and the use of Permanent Deacons as well as a recognition of a need for some kind of "parish assembly" in order to create a forum for various areas of parish life to be improved.

When it came to vote on the proposal there was some discomfort about voting on the future of St Mary of the Angels, Camelton, especially since so few parishioners were in attendance. However, **there was a consensus to accept the merger of St Anthony's with St Francis Xavier's and St Mary of the Angels with the proviso that St Anthony's church keep its name.**

In terms of the closure of St Mary of the Angels, closure received two more votes than those voting against closure. Two parishioners abstained. It should be noted again that very few parishioners were present at the meeting.

I attach the notes taken at the above meeting and I hope that these will help you in your deliberations about the future of St Anthony's, St Francis Xavier's and St Mary of the Angels.

Yours in Christ

Fr. Jamie Boyle