



LEO

DEI ET APOSTOLICÆ SEDIS GRATIA
 ARCHIEPISCOPUS S. ANDREÆ ET EDIMBURGENSIS

DECREE

Concerning the pastoral provision for the Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead

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 The Sacred Heart and St Margaret's on 16 February 2016;
5. At the same aforementioned meetings (cf. n.4), 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 which was duly received;
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 which is necessary when the bishop is considering the alteration of a parish (can. 515, §2) took place over three days on 7 March 2018, 28 March 2018 and 25 April 2018;
8. Having undertaken the aforementioned public consultation and having received the recommendations of the Council of Priests, on 14 May 2018, the Archbishop wrote a letter to be read publicly to the parishioners of the Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead on the Solemnity of Pentecost 2018 to outline his proposal for these parishes. In the same letters the parishioners were invited to meet with their parish priest and write a letter of response which would detail any further comments and concerns regarding the proposal (can. 50);
9. On 13 June 2018, the letter from the parish priest of Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead, having met with the parishioners, was received. The letter contained the response of the parishioners to the proposal. This was given careful consideration;
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 Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead;

The Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead

11. The parishes of Sacred Heart, Penicuik, founded in 1882, and St Margaret's, Loanhead, founded in 1881, currently share a parish priest who is resident at the Sacred Heart;
12. St Margaret's, Loanhead has not had a resident parish priest since 2010 and shares a priest with the Sacred Heart, Penicuik;
13. The church of the Sacred Heart and church of the St Margaret's are 5.3 miles apart and there is a bus service between the two places which takes around 19 minutes. By car the journey is 14 minutes. The boundaries of the parishes of The Sacred Heart and St Margaret's are contiguous;
14. The Archbishop met with the parishes of Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead on 16 February 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 this meeting and the ensuing cluster meetings, the resultant report described how Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead are organised together and in a coordinated way;
16. The priests of the deanery in which The Sacred Heart and St Margaret's are located are well acquainted with the facts and the circumstances of the area, recommended to the Archbishop that the two parishes should be merged into one to enable a more effective pastoral care for Faithful of both parishes by their priest;
17. The Council of Priests, having been provided with all relevant and statistical 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 Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead (cann. 127; 166; 515, §2);

Proposal

18. Wherefore, having considered all that has gone before and mindful of God alone, a lawful and informed decision could be taken with regard to the pastoral provision for the parishes of Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead;
19. Whereas, following the extensive consultation, on 7 March 2018, 28 March 2018 and 25 April 2018 the Council of Priests recommended that the parishes of Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead should be merged in such a way as to become one parish known as The Sacred Heart, 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. The recommendation was accepted and on 14 May 2018 a letter was read publicly at the Masses on the Solemnity of Pentecost in the parishes of Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead. In this letter, the parishioners were informed of the proposal to merge the two parishes into one and that the new parish would be called "The Sacred Heart";
21. In the same letter (cf.n.20) the parishioners of The Sacred Heart and St Margaret's were informed that it is not the proposal to close either of the churches 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 clearly 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;
26. Whereas, in the letter of response received on 13 June 2018 the parish priest indicated the acceptance of the need for the merger among the parishioners but that the parishioners would rather have the form of extinctive union as per 1.c).i of the procedural guidelines of the Congregation for the Clergy, sent to the Ordinaries on 30 April 2013 and that the parish be called "The Sacred Heart & St Margaret";

Decision

27. Therefore, 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 Margaret's, Loanhead and The Sacred Heart, Penicuik, both parishes being merged to form a new parish, known as "The Sacred Heart & St Margaret";
29. The boundaries will be that of the former Sacred Heart parish, Penicuik and the former parish of St Margaret's, Loanhead;
30. The faithful domiciled in the former territory of the parish of St Margaret's, Loanhead and the parishioners domiciled in Sacred Heart, Penicuik will become parishioners of the new parish of the Sacred Heart & St Margaret;
31. That, as per the law of the Church, the church of St Margaret's and the church of Sacred Heart, Penicuik retain their titles;
32. As per ecclesiastical jurisprudence, in accordance with the prescript of can. 122, 1° and 123 and having due regard for the wishes of benefactors and statutes, all monies, assets and liabilities of the former Parish of St Margaret's, Loanhead and the former parish of Sacred Heart, Penicuik will be transferred to the new parish of the Sacred Heart & St Margaret;
33. That there will be one new set of parish registers for the newly founded parish of the Sacred Heart & St Margaret;
34. This DECREE becomes effective on 12 August 2018, the 19th Sunday in Ordinary Time;
35. 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
36. I instruct that this DECREE be communicated immediately to the parishioners of Sacred Heart, Penicuik and St Margaret's, Loanhead. This DECREE is likewise to be published immediately on the archdiocesan website.

Given at Edinburgh, 5 July, in the Year of Our Lord, 2018

[Handwritten signature]

Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh

in cuius rei fidem

[Handwritten signature]
Chancellor

