

CLUSTER PARISHES TOGETHER HANDBOOK



Edinburgh, 1 January, 2016

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

I am very pleased to make this resource book available to every parish within the Archdiocese of St Andrews & Edinburgh. It follows on from the public meetings held in each of the 27 cluster areas that make up our Archdiocese. Let me also renew my thanks to all those attending the cluster meetings, I'm very grateful to you all.

In this booklet, you will find the framework for a series of three meetings to be held over the coming year within your parish cluster. All parishioners in each cluster ought to feel free to attend any or all of the meetings set out here, to listen and to contribute as constructively as possible. During those three meetings, I would like you to help answer the following questions:

- Where do you see signs of spiritual vibrancy in your cluster parishes and how could these be strengthened?

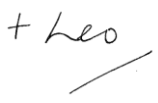
- Where do you see signs of physical vibrancy in terms of such things as finances and buildings?

- What pastoral provision could be shared among your cluster parishes and what, in your considered opinion, would need to remain a single parish provision?

I would suggest that the meetings be spaced across the three school terms of 2016. This will hopefully make attendance more manageable for busy people. I would then ask that the senior priest in each of the clusters lead a writing-group to compile a final report for me by Easter 2017. This will provide me with essential information as we chart the future of our Archdiocese.

Finally, let us pray for each other in 2016, also the Jubilee Year of Mercy, that we may be open to the Holy Spirit as we discern a way forward, with our eyes fixed on the Lord, present among us in the Eucharist.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+ Leo

+ Leo

Archbishop of St Andrews & Edinburgh



THE PURPOSE OF CLUSTER PLANNING TEAMS

Archbishop Leo is inviting Cluster Planning Teams (CPT) to be formed in the cluster parishes from PPC's or parish groups

- To enable priests and people to work together
- To engage in a process of discerning together
- To meet three times over the space of one year
- To examine questions posed by Archbishop Leo
- To agree and formulate a response which represents fairly the views of the cluster parishes
- To interact with parish communities and feedback findings
- To provide a report to Archbishop Leo by the end of the year

THREE CLUSTER PLANNING TEAM MEETINGS

The CPT's will meet three times in the space of one year and undertake specific tasks:

1. To name what works well together and how that can develop, then name what needs to continue as single parish provision within the cluster.
2. To take part in a detailed examination of joint resources in the cluster.
3. To explore what makes parishes vibrant and name three further goals for joint action.

THE FORMAT FOR THE THREE MEETINGS

1. PRAYER & WELCOME: Begins with a reading from Scripture and a reflection question for sharing
2. FOCUS: The Chair introduces the focus theme for the meeting
3. REFLECT TOGETHER: Using the material given time is taken to share on the reflection questions
4. NOTES TAKEN: Time is spent agreeing on what might be shared with parishes in the month ahead
5. FINAL PRAYER: Ends with a prayer and thank you to everyone for sharing and working well together

RELATING TO THE PARISH

In between these three meetings time should be allotted to communicate the reflections of the CPT with each individual parish in the cluster through Parish Assemblies, Parish Newsletters, Websites and Facebook.

REPORTING TO THE ARCHBISHOP

CPT's will provide a report to Archbishop Leo by Easter 2017. A common framework will be given for this. Archbishop Leo will use this to discern the way ahead for our parishes.



CPT MEETING 1 – EXPLORING WHAT WORKS WELL TOGETHER and SINGLE PARISH PROVISION

PRAYER & WELCOME (15 minutes)

A reading from the first letter to the Corinthians

1 Cor 12: 4 - 7

There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

The word of the Lord Thanks be to God

REFLECT in silence and notice what words or phrases strike you.

SHARE your response to these questions with the person beside you:

What gifts do I see my parish bringing to the cluster?

What gifts might I be open to receive from other parishes in the cluster?

When everyone has shared end by all saying the Glory Be together

FOCUS ON: WHAT WORKS WELL (40 minutes)

In 'We have found the Messiah' page 6, Archbishop Leo reminded us that the word 'Church' denotes the local parishes and dioceses to which God's people belong.

At this meeting we are invited to do two tasks:

- To share what we feel works well together in our cluster of parishes.
- To share what we think needs to continue to be done as a single parish.

To help us to do this, there are some reflection questions for each of us to consider. It is suggested that each individual spends ten minutes answering these for themselves and writing down what they would like to share.

We are asked to focus on three main areas where clusters currently work together:

- LITURGY: What is currently shared in liturgical celebrations in the cluster?
How does this give life to the parishes of the cluster?
- COMMUNITY: What joint community action takes place in the cluster?
How does this give life to the parishes of the cluster?



- SERVICE: What joint opportunities for service are shared in the cluster?
How does this give life to the parishes of the cluster?

<p>LITURGY notes</p> <p>What is currently shared in liturgical preparation & celebrations in the cluster? How does this give life to the parishes of the cluster?</p> <p><i>Sacramental celebrations?</i> <i>Children's sacramental preparation?</i> <i>Baptism preparation?</i> <i>RCIA? Mass scheduling?</i> <i>Communion to the sick?</i> <i>Joint prayer together?</i> <i>Opportunities for the Sacrament of Penance?</i> <i>Joint Marriage preparation?</i> <i>Training of lay people for service?</i> <i>Other?</i></p>	
<p>COMMUNITY notes</p> <p>What joint community action takes place in the cluster? How does this give life to the parishes of the cluster?</p> <p><i>Youth group?</i> <i>Justice and Peace group?</i> <i>Marriage and Family life group?</i> <i>Lunch club for the elderly?</i> <i>Ecumenical group?</i> <i>School Events? Other?</i></p>	
<p>SERVICE notes</p> <p>What joint opportunities for service are shared in the cluster? How does this give life to the parishes of the cluster? <i>SVP? PPC?</i> <i>Pope Francis Faith Award? Caritas Award?</i> <i>Training for leadership?</i> <i>Visitation of the sick?</i> <i>Bereavement ministry?</i> <i>Marriage and family life support? Other?</i></p>	



REFLECT TOGETHER:

Now take time to listen to each other, noting where there is agreement and strong consensus.

- What are the three most common areas of consensus?
- Where are there fewer consensuses?

NOTES TAKEN:

The group is asked to agree on what the three most important areas of consensus are, and to generate a list of what is currently working well in the cluster in the following order:

STATEMENT of CONSENSUS:

In the area of liturgy all are agreed this is what works well:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

In the area of community all are agreed this is what works well:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

In the area of service all are agreed this is what works well:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



FOCUS: SINGLE PARISH PROVISION (40 minutes)

We are invited to share what we think needs to continue to be done as a single parish.

To help us to do this there are some reflection questions for each of us to look at, it is suggested that each individual spends ten minutes answering for themselves and writing down what they would like to share.

We are asked to focus once more on three main areas of liturgy, service and community, but this time to explore what provision needs to remain in our individual parishes.

- **LITURGY:** What parish liturgies need to be available in our separate parishes? Why is it important that these remain separate from cluster provision?
- **COMMUNITY:** What community action needs to be centred on our separate parishes? Why is it important that these remain separate from cluster provision?
- **SERVICE:** What opportunities for service need to be available in our individual parishes? Why is it important that these remain separate from cluster provision?

LITURGY notes Examples Celebration of Mass? Sacrament of Penance? Sacramental preparation? Service of Word and communion? Other examples	
COMMUNITY notes Examples Local community projects? School events? Youth events? Ecumenical? Other	



SERVICE notes

SVP?

Other societies of apostolic life?

Prayer groups?

Outreach to the elderly?

Communion to the sick?

Other

REFLECT TOGETHER: (20 minutes)

Now take time to listen to each other, noting where there is agreement and strong consensus.

- What are the three most common areas of consensus?
- Where are there fewer consensuses?

NOTES TAKEN:

The group is asked to agree on what the three most important areas of consensus are. Generate a list of what activity needs to continue as a separate parish provision.

STATEMENT of CONSENSUS:

In the area of liturgy what needs to be a separate parish provision is:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

In the area of community what needs to be a separate parish provision is:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



In the area of service what needs to be a separate parish provision is:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

CONSIDER:

How will this information be shared with your individual parishes?

When can dates be set for individual Parish Assemblies to share this with a wider group?

Share how you felt about the outcome of this meeting.

FINAL PRAYER:

Leader: Lord our God, we thank you for gathering us together, thank you for the gifts you give to your Church and help us to work together for the good of the Kingdom.

St Andrew and St Margaret Pray for us

St Cuthbert and St David Pray for us

St Mungo and St Ninian Pray for us

St Giles Pray for us

Mary, Mother of the Church Pray for us

(Final blessing is given)



CPT MEETING 2: A DETAILED EXAMINATION OF JOINT RESOURCES

PRAYER & WELCOME

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles Acts 2: 24- 27

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

The word of the Lord Thanks be to God

REFLECT in silence and notice what words or phrases strike you.

SHARE your response to these questions, with the person beside you.

In what way do you take your part in building up the fellowship of the cluster?

What resources of time, talent and treasures do you see in the cluster parishes?

When everyone has shared end by all saying the Glory Be together

FOCUS: JOINT RESOURCES OF THE CLUSTER (40 minutes)

In 'We have found the Messiah' page 8, Archbishop Leo wrote: 'We need to rediscover the early Church's vision of evangelical holiness, missionary fervor and commitment to practical charity....Pulling into fewer more concentrated parish centres will enable us to intensify our spiritual and evangelical activity.'

At this meeting we are invited to share what are the joint resources of the cluster in terms of people, plant, celebration and finance.

To help us to do this there are some reflection questions for each of us to look at, it is suggested that each individual spends ten minutes answering for themselves and writing down what they would like to share.

PEOPLE:

How many parishioners are there from the households of the cluster parishes?

How many are engaged in an active apostolate in the cluster parishes?

What is the overall joint community size?



PLANT:

How many buildings are shared between the cluster parishes?
What is the condition of these buildings and what is their up keep costs?

CELEBRATIONS:

How many baptisms have taken place in the past year in the cluster parishes?
How many RCIA participants?
How many funerals?
How many marriages?
What is the Mass attendance for the cluster parishes together?

FINANCE:

What are the operating incomes of the joint cluster parishes?
What are the operating expenses for the joint cluster parishes?
What anticipated financial needs are there for the future of the cluster parishes?

PEOPLE notes	
PLANT notes	
CELEBRATION notes	
FINANCE notes	



REFLECT TOGETHER: (40 minutes)

Now take time to listen to each other, noting where there is agreement and strong consensus.

- What does this study reveal about the current resources in the cluster parishes?
- What do these indicate for the future?

NOTES TAKEN:

The group is asked to agree on what the data reveals about cluster resources and what that might indicate about the future.

STATEMENT of CONSENSUS:

PEOPLE RESOURCES:

PLANT RESOURCES:

CELEBRATION RESOURCES:

FINANCE RESOURCES:

FINAL PRAYER:

Leader: Lord our God, we thank you for gathering us together, thank you for the gifts you give to your Church and help us to work together for the good of the Kingdom.

St Andrew and St Margaret Pray for us

St Cuthbert and St David Pray for us

St Mungo and St Ninian Pray for us

St Giles Pray for us

Mary, Mother of the Church Pray for us

(Final blessing is given)



CPT MEETING 3: EXPLORING WHAT MAKES PARISHES VIBRANT and NAMING GOALS for JOINT ACTION

PRAYER & WELCOME (15 minutes)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew Matthew 13: 4- 9
Jesus said: "Listen! A sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up. Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil. But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away. Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them. Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. Let anyone with ears listen!"

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ

REFLECT in silence and notice what words or phrases strike you.

SHARE your response to these questions with the person beside you.

What is the rich soil in your cluster that has the potential to yield a hundredfold, sixtyfold, or thirtyfold?

End by praying the Glory be together.

FOCUS: EXPLORING PARISH VIBRANCY (40 minutes)

In 'We have found the Messiah' page 10, Archbishop Leo refers to 'renewed sources of grace and growth' bringing about a 'more vibrant community of spiritual, pastoral and evangelical life.'

At this meeting we will be invited to share what makes parishes vibrant and to examine where there are signs of vibrancy in the parishes of our cluster.

To help us to do this there are some reflections for each of us to look at, then questions to consider. It is suggested that each individual spends ten minutes answering for themselves and writing down what they would like to share.

EUCCHARIST: A vibrant parish provides good Sunday celebrations where there is full, active and conscious participation of the whole assembly. How does current parish provision help this to happen?

EVANGELISATION: A vibrant parish is conscious of its responsibility to share the Good News and has a variety of ways of doing this. How have the parishes of the cluster focused on this activity in the past year?



LEADERSHIP: A vibrant parish is able to identify lay leaders who can enable the parish and help it grow and change in collaboration with the pastor who is the leader of the flock. How is lay leadership identified and rotated in the parishes of the cluster? How are new leaders formed and trained?

CATECHESIS: A vibrant parish attends to the faith development needs of young and old, recognizing that we are all on a life long journey of deepening faith. How many trained catechists are available to the cluster? What impact do they have on catechesis in the parishes of the cluster?

OUTREACH: A vibrant parish reaches out to those in need in a variety of ways, both practical and spiritual. What kinds of outreach take place in the parishes of the cluster? How could these be further developed?

STEWARDSHIP: A vibrant parish takes special care of what has been entrusted to it, nurtures, sustains and grows it through fostering time, talents and treasures. In what way/s are time, talents and treasures given special care in the parishes of the cluster?

EUCCHARIST notes	
EVANGELISATION notes	
LEADERSHIP notes	
CATECHESIS notes	



OUTREACH notes	
STEWARDSHIP notes	

REFLECT TOGETHER: (40 Minutes)

Now take time to listen to each other, noting where there is agreement and strong consensus.

- What does this study reveal about the indicators of vibrancy in the cluster parishes?
- What do these indicate for the future?

NOTES TAKEN:

The group is asked to agree on where there are indicators of vibrancy in the parishes of the cluster and what that might indicate about the future.

STATEMENT of CONSENSUS:

We agree that these are indicators of vibrancy in our cluster parishes:

1.

2.

3.

Other



THREE FURTHER GOALS FOR ACTION

You are now invited to share how we can identify three further goals for action in the parishes of our cluster.

To help us to do this we are asked to look back on the process of journeying together this year taking time to note what you have learned about life in the cluster and what insights have emerged. It is suggested that each individual spends ten minutes answering for themselves and writing down what they would like to share.

MY LEARNINGS ABOUT CLUSTER LIFE:

INSIGHTS I HAVE GAINED ABOUT THE FUTURE:

- *What does this reveal about the possible future joint action in the cluster parishes?*
- *What aims or joint goals could emerge?*

Name three joint goals which are specific, measurable, achievable and targeted for further joint action in the cluster:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

FINAL PRAYER:

Leader: Lord our God, we thank you for gathering us together, thank you for the gifts you give to your Church and help us to work together for the good of the Kingdom.

St Andrew and St Margaret Pray for us

St Cuthbert and St David Pray for us

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Mary, Mother of the Church Pray for us

(Final blessing is given)



APPENDIX 1: PARISH COMMUNICATION

In between the Cluster Planning Team meetings you are asked to communicate to the cluster parishes what has been agreed and shared:

This can be done in a variety of ways:

- Through the Newsletters of the Parish
- Through the Parish Facebook page
- By calling a Parish Assembly organised by the PPC

If there is a Parish Pastoral Council then you may want to use them as the communications group for their parish.

Your CPT can seek advice on how best to do this from the Archdiocesan Communications Officer, David Kerr:

Email: david.kerr@staned.org.uk



APPENDIX 2: REPORTING TO THE ARCHBISHOP

This process is completed by each Cluster Planning Team submitting a report to the Archbishop outlining the following:

- 1) What is considered to be a fair and discerned representation of the views of the cluster parishes about what needs to be done together in pastoral provision?
- 2) What should continue to be focused on single parish provision for pastoral provision?
- 3) Where you see signs and developments of vibrancy in your cluster parishes that may lead to new growth and life.
- 4) Naming pastoral goals for the cluster to work together more closely in a spirit of mission and evangelisation.

Your CPT can seek advice on how best to frame this and present it from the Pastoral Resources Director of the Archdiocese, Patricia Carroll.

Email: patricia.carroll@staned.org.uk



THE CLUSTER WORKING GROUP

Archbishop Leo will form a Cluster Working Group to support and sustain this process. The members of this group are composed of a representation from the deaneries with the Dean and can be contacted for support.

The Cluster Working Group is a reference group for the Archbishop as the process moves forward, and will help him to examine the Reports from the CPT's.

POWERPOINTS for the PROCESS

You can obtain power point presentations for leading the process from the Pastoral Resources Department. These will also be available on the front page of the Archdiocesan Website to download.

PRAYER and LITURGY RESOURCES

From January 2016 a supplement for supporting the process in prayer will be available with six parish prayer sessions based on themes from 'We have found the Messiah.' This will be on the homepage of the Archdiocesan website.



*We need constantly
to contemplate
the mystery of mercy.*

*It is a wellspring of
joy,
serenity,
and peace.*

*Pope Francis
Misericordiae Vultus*



*Misericordes
Sicut Pater*

Merciful like the
Father

