LEO

DEI ET APOSTOLICÆ SEDIS GRATIA
ARCHIEPISCOPUS S. ANDREÆ ET EDIMBURGENSIS

DECREE

Concerning the pastoral provision for Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing

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 Our Lady of Lourdes, SS. John & Columba and St Peter in Chains on 1 March 2016. Also present at this meeting were parishioners from St Margaret’s, Dunfermline and The Holy Name, Oakley which are in the same cluster;

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 Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing on the Solemnity of Corpus Christi 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. The parish priests of Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing, having met with the parishioners, duly wrote back with the responses of the parishioners to the proposal in letters of 15 June 2018 and 29 June 2018. These were given careful consideration;

10. Following the letters from the parishes and having considered all that had gone before, an informed decision on the structure of the pastoral provision for the parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing could be made;

Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing

11. The parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, founded in 1964, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth, founded in 1913, and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing, founded in 1979 currently share a parish priest who is resident at Rosyth;

12. Until 2 September 2018, Our Lady of Lourdes had a resident parish priest, SS. John & Columba and St Peter in chains sharing a parish priest. Since 2 September 2018, all three parishes have shared a parish priest;

13. The church of SS. John & Columba and church of St Peter in Chains are 1.1 miles apart and there is a bus service between the two places which take around 5 minutes. By car the journey is 5 minutes. SS. John & Columba is a 2.4 mile walk or an 8 minute car journey or a
9 minute bus journey to Our Lady of Lourdes. St Peter in Chains is a 3.5 mile walk or a 10 minute car journey or a 13 minute bus journey to Our Lady of Lourdes. The boundaries of the parishes are contiguous;

14. The Archbishop met with the parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing on 1 March 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 there had been discussion of a single parish provision across the cluster with recommendations as to how this could work. No objections were raised to the proposal of a single parish provision in the report;

16. The priests of the deanery in which Our Lady of Lourdes, SS. John & Columba and St Peter in Chains are located and are well acquainted with the facts and the circumstances of the area, recommended to the Archbishop that the three parishes should be merged into one to enable a more effective pastoral care for Faithful of all 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 Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing (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 Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing;

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 Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline and SS. John & Columba, Rosyth should be merged in such a way as to become one parish 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 sent to the parishes on 14 May 2018 to be read publicly at the Masses on the Solemnity of Corpus Christi in the parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing. In this letter, the parishioners were informed of the proposal to merge the two parishes into one;

21. In the same letter (c.f.n.20) the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes and SS. John & Columba and St Peter in Chains were informed that it is not the proposal to close any 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;

Decision
26. Therefore, in consideration of all of the foregoing and in virtue of the prescripts 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

27. The extincitive union of Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing, all three parishes being merged to form a new parish, known as “The Most Holy Trinity”;

28. The boundaries will be that of the current parishes of Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing;

29. The faithful domiciled in the former territory of the parish of Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing will become parishioners of the new parish of The Most Holy Trinity;

30. That, as per the law of the Church, the churches Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing retain their titles;

31. As per ecclesiastical jurisprudence, in accordance with the prescript of cann. 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 Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing will be transferred to the new parish of The Most Holy Trinity;

32. That there will be one new set of parish registers for the newly founded parish of The Most Holy Trinity;

33. This DECREE becomes effective on 28 October 2018, the thirtieth Sunday of Ordinary Time;

34. 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 canon 1734 and to make hierarchical recourse according to the norm of canon 1737 and;

35. I instruct that this DECREE be communicated immediately to the parishioners of Our Lady of Lourdes, Dunfermline, SS. John & Columba, Rosyth and St Peter in Chains, Inverkeithing. This DECREE is likewise to be published immediately on the archdiocesan website.

Given at Edinburgh, 13 September, in the Year of Our Lord, 2018.

\[signature\]
Archbishop of St. Andrews & Edinburgh

\[signature\]
Chancellor

\[signature\]
The Archdiocese of St. Z.