

St Anne, St Augustine, Holy Family, St Mary, St Osmund

Hogarth Partnership

St Teresa, St Thomas Aquinas, SS William & Francis De Sales

January 2019

Dear Partnership Parishioner,

Hogarth Partnership has been in existence for almost two years and we have reached the point where we must make firm plans for the future of the Catholic Community in Darlington, Gainford and Barnard Castle.

Partnerships are a reality within our diocese; they are the next stage in the Forward Together in Hope process, which was focused on developing sustainable MISSIONARY CATHOLIC CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES. Working in partnership gives us the opportunity to plan together for the future of a thriving Catholic community, but with a reducing number of priests in the short to medium term.

Developing Hogarth Partnership is much greater than simply considering the issues of Mass times and the potential for closing churches, but of course for many people these are real concerns.

The issue of buildings is addressed first in this document, not because it is the most important but because it is one which causes the greatest anxiety.

The Hogarth Partnership is committed to retaining all current parish communities.

We are fortunate that the partnership is currently financially stable and there is no reason to have to consider closing buildings. We recognize the value of these buildings, both as financial and community assets. We also recognize their importance in the history of our Catholic communities and understand that they are the fruits of our forebear's toil and sacrifice.

However, our buildings are often underused, and we need to realise their potential; financially and as centres for community growth. Currently our Property and Community team is working closely with the diocese to look at these issues.

SUNDAY MASS

We **must** prepare step by step for a reduction in the number of priests serving the partnership so we are ready for the time when we are quite likely to perhaps have only one partnership priest.

As a partnership we will work towards minimising distress of these changes by:

Planning systematically for a reduction in partnership priests by considering a number of possible scenarios with a steadily reducing number of priests.

Develop proposals for the celebration of Mass within all our local communities.

Providing opportunities to build friendship and community in Hogarth Partnership.

To ensure that all people have access to weekly Mass in a variety of venues, we will explore providing viable transport arrangements. (The partnership has the funds to do this)

COMMUNICATION

Regular and timely communication needs to be improved both across the partnership and beyond it. We will look creatively at ways of doing this.

YOUTH

A priority identified and agreed universally within the FTIH Partnership Plan was to develop provision for our youth including building bridges between our parishes and schools. Within our diocese there are some very successful youth development programmes; we will look at these to find ways of extending the excellent work provided by our schools. We have the finances to be able to do this.


MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP

Foundations for exploring this were made during our Mission. We need to build on this so that all partnership parishioners are able to use their gifts for the good of all.

The Hogarth Partnership Development Group believe the way forward, is to work towards becoming a single administrative unit with eight smaller communities within this.

There is much work to do. We welcome your help and ideas with any aspect of this.
If you'd like to become involved in developing our Hogarth Partnership please let your priest or partnership representatives know.

On behalf of the PDG



Julie Humphrey (Chair)
Fr Gordon Ryan (President)