

**THE RE-STRUCTURING OF PARISHES
WITHIN THE DIOCESE**

A PROPOSAL FOR CONSULTATION

JUNE 2016



My dear brothers and sisters,

Since the *Preparing the Way* consultation in 2015, which drew a great response from people across the diocese and beyond, I have been working with the priests of the diocese to look at how we might re-structure the parishes. Pope Francis frequently requests that all our parishes should be "missionary parishes". In essence, that is what any parish should always have been but it is all too easy for a parish to slip into simply maintaining its own life and not looking out to the wider community around it. Pope Francis wants our parishes to be places where we, the missionary disciples, are nourished and sustained in our Faith, in order to then be able to go out and serve the people who are in need of our Faith and love in the area. So our parishes need to be of a sufficient size to facilitate and sustain a dynamic and life-giving community. At the same time, we need to look at how we can serve these missionary parishes with fewer priests in the years ahead whilst also acknowledging that there are fewer people regularly attending our churches.

This document contains a proposal for re-structuring that is based on discussions with the priests in each deanery over the past few months. I must stress that this is a proposal and that no decisions have yet been made. Before making any decisions, I want to hear from you. In talking to the priests and in the statements issued to each deanery between April and May this year, I have used the biblical image of "pruning for growth" as a way of understanding what we are doing. Sometimes it is only by cutting things back that they can grow stronger.

Thank you for showing an interest in our consultation. Please respond as fully as you are able to do. All of the responses will be collated and will feed into the final decisions that I must make later this year about our future structures. The consultation remains open until 14th October 2016.

Yours devotedly,

+ John Arnold
Bishop of Salford

PART ONE – THE REASONS FOR CHANGE

THE NEED TO RE-STRUCTURE

This proposal document is just one part of a much longer process. For the benefit of those who may read it in isolation, I think that, before setting out my proposal, it would be wise to rehearse, once again, the reasons why there is a need for change. It is necessary to review how we organise ourselves as the Church in the Diocese of Salford and consider the various priorities for our mission and apostolate. This must include the radical review of the number of parishes and their distribution in the Diocese which has been under consideration for some fifteen years. Even at the beginning of the 21st Century, it was well understood that there would need to be change because of the shift in the Catholic population, the ageing profile of the priests, the impending retirement of a generation of generous Irish priests who would not be replaced and the realisation that the Diocese had established too many parishes and built too many churches. A programme of review was begun called *Faith in the Future* which, having resolved a number of questions in some parts of the Diocese, came to an end before the plan was completely implemented. This present review must go wider than just considering the number and location of parishes. We must consider the appropriate provision of pastoral care for our schools, our hospitals and our prisons. We need to consider the best way of providing most effectively for the elderly and infirm, the isolated and the marginalised. There are increasing concerns about the homeless on our streets, the refugees and those who find themselves dependent on foodbanks. We need to organise ourselves as a Church which addresses the needs, and the opportunities, of our present circumstances. In all this we must also have a care for our priests.

In all this discussion and review, there is also the invitation and challenge of Pope Francis to see ourselves in a missionary context, where we have the duty to present Christ to the world which is so strongly influenced by secularisation, materialism and consumerism. We must heed Pope Francis' teaching that we must be a poor Church for the poor. We are to be a channel for God's Mercy in the wider communities where we minister.

Having been installed as Bishop of Salford, in December 2014, it soon became apparent to me that a further, and rather more radical, review was now required. I am very grateful for the enthusiastic participation of the thousands of people, both as individuals and in groups, who responded to the consultation *Preparing the Way*. The wide-ranging consensus of opinion in that consultation has assisted me in setting a direction for more involvement by parishioners, a revision of the sacramental programme, the establishment of the Permanent Diaconate and other matters.

The next stage of the review must concern our parishes. Although 210 parishes had already been reduced to 150, and a number of churches closed and even demolished, it was clear that a further reduction was required owing to a reduced number of priests available for pastoral ministry and because a number of parish communities had reduced in size to become unviable or communities had dispersed.

Is there a shortage of priests, or a shortage of people? The media and some people in the Diocese have concentrated on the assertion that there is a shortage of priests and this is a crisis and the

cause of the review. We have to be very careful in understanding the reality of our situation. We certainly have a reducing number of priests in pastoral ministry but it cannot realistically be claimed that we have a shortage. Compared with almost every other country in the world we have more priests in proportion to the number of Catholics. We might well have considerably fewer priests than in the recent past in the light of the fact that we have enjoyed the presence of so many Irish priests who have generously served in our Diocese. They are now reaching retirement or have already retired. They will not be replaced. Enjoying the presence of so many priests, it was reasonably assumed that the same number of priests would be maintained and, as a consequence over the years, parishes were subdivided and more churches built so that the priests could be accommodated and assistant priests might look forward to having parishes of their own. The retirement of so many priests has returned us to the sort of number of clergy that we saw in this Diocese a century ago. Something of this process can be seen this year in that we have had the death of one serving parish priest and the pending retirement of eight priests while we have just two ordinations to the priesthood. There are fifteen priests still serving in parishes beyond the retirement age of seventy five.

When people talk of the shortage of priests I am tempted to tell them about priests I have met while travelling to meet CAFOD partners in various countries in Africa and Southeast Asia. While the number of priests in many countries is slowly increasing there are still priests who have responsibility, like Fr Paul Mwamba in Zambia, for a parish with 45 mission stations in an area larger than the whole of the Diocese of Salford. In comparison we are certainly not short of priests. Nonetheless, we are used to a different structure and the presence of much greater numbers of priests. Therefore, we feel a sense of shortage when those numbers reduce. With fewer priests we must learn to do things in a different way.

There is also the question of the dispersal of the Catholic community. Probably more than in previous generations, people move. Certainly, in the Diocese of Salford, there has been a dramatic shift of the Catholic population. The major influx of Irish migrants, in the 19th and 20th Centuries, was concentrated in the town centres where there was available housing and more possibilities of work. It was here that the large Catholic churches were built. But those communities have dispersed to suburbs and to new developing areas. The Catholic Church expanded by building many churches in these new suburbs while parish communities in town centres declined. In the dispersion, much of the sense of close communities was lost and Catholics settled throughout residential areas. We must accept, too, that many Catholics have drifted away from any active participation in the life of the Church. While many people would wish to see their children baptised, they have no commitment to educating their children in their faith, by word or example. This is certainly a matter which we all, as Church, need to address.

Put these different considerations together and we see the need for a review so that the best provision can be made for the Catholics in the Diocese. But the review must also include other factors. Pope Francis has been reminding us of the missionary nature of the Church. We are being asked to be Church in a rather different way. Our parishes are not simply to be places of liturgy and sacrament, where people come to pray and the younger generation come to learn about their Faith. Parishes are to be the base for a missionary outreach. The Gospel values in which we believe are urgently needed in a society which is becoming increasingly secular and materialistic. Too many

people have found themselves on the margins, often living in poverty while others live in exaggerated prosperity and wealth. We have much to say and contribute to the common good in recognising the dignity of every person and helping to ensure that no-one in our society is rejected or isolated. As a Church, we need to be outward-facing and making our world a better place.

Despite the apparent prosperity of our society, we have significant social problems. There are many homeless people and families and individuals who live in conditions which are unacceptable. There are all the social ills connected to drug and alcohol abuse, racial and inter-religious tensions and the breakdown of marriage and family life. There is knowledge of a growing reality of human trafficking. Our Church and Faith must be at work to make our world a better place, by applying the values of the Gospel within our communities and promoting them in the wider communities in which we live.

The role of the priest must also be refined. Having had the luxury of so many priests in the past the temptation has been to allow the priest to be a sort of “manager” of the parish, responsible for all the aspects of administration and maintenance. We are now being reminded by Pope Francis that a priest has a specific ministry, concerning the sacraments, pastoral care and evangelisation. He must be directed to do those things for which he has been ordained. It is for all members of the Church to discern and discover their place in the mission of the Church, using their God-given gifts in the proclamation of our Faith to the wider community. It must be for all members of the Church to assist both in the administration of the parishes and in the many and various ministries that they can be commissioned to undertake both within the parish community and beyond. We are all called to discern the gifts that God has given to each of us and to recognise that those gifts have purpose and need to be used. It is not just that all Catholic people have a right to participate in ministry and administration; they have a duty to do so.

I should also speak here about the wellbeing of the priests. I am aware that our priests work very hard. Much of their daily ministry is in spontaneous response to people’s needs. Any plan for the day may be interrupted by hospital or sick calls, requests at the presbytery door or by telephone, all of which have to be shaped around the liturgy of the day and other duties and meetings. Pastoral needs can make great demands on the priest’s personal life. A priest must have a duty to himself to take care of his health and well-being, whether spiritual or material. Within a given review about the Diocese, careful consideration must be given to the demands made on priests. In recent years, as a priest has retired or moved to another parish, many priests have been asked to absorb the duties of a neighbouring parish, with its liturgical timetable and pastoral needs. I think this has the danger of demanding too much of our priests. We certainly need to rationalise the number of Masses celebrated on each Sunday. We must also acknowledge that it is becoming increasingly difficult for priests to find “supply priests” for those Sundays when they wish to be away, or when a priest is ill. A priest is not only entitled to take holidays – it is important for his well-being that he should do so. In our review of parishes, it is important that we so timetable our Sunday Masses so that neighbouring priests may be able to assist one another in the event that one priest is ill or plans to be away. This will inevitably mean a reduction in the number of Masses. As things stand, the average attendance at individual Sunday Masses in many parts of the Diocese is small. Fewer Masses will mean larger congregations and, hopefully, richer celebrations in terms of music and the availability of children’s liturgies. We must remember that the Eucharist lies at the heart of our community. As far as possible, our Eucharistic Celebrations should draw us into the communion of the whole community.

This task of re-assessment is daunting. It will include the sort of changes that will not be welcome to many. For some it may mean the loss of the familiar and new ways of expressing their Faith. But what if we do nothing? What if we say “let’s just see what happens and how things evolve?” I would say that we will lose any real sense of purpose and we will simply hope for “maintenance” and a “status quo”. But even this limited vision will never be realised. We will find ourselves covering gaps as priests retire. Every community will be asking whether, when their priest retires, they will have another priest appointed to their parish. Priests may well find that, through loyalty to their community, they will not feel able to retire even at the age of 75 years and later. That is an unacceptable state in which a priest should find himself after a lifetime in ministry. Our parish communities could find themselves lacking any sense of purpose and become, increasingly, places where people attend Mass and do nothing more. In short, we will be speaking of decline.

Pope Francis is calling us to much more than this. He is asking us to be heralds and ambassadors for Christ. There is so much good already being done in our Diocese and it needs to be properly coordinated so as to have the greatest impact not just on the well-being of the Catholic community but on our society as a whole.

THE PROCESS OF THE CONSULTATION

December 2014	Bishop John arrives in the Diocese
2015	<i>Preparing the Way</i> consultation
February 2016	Clergy Days with the Bishop and a facilitator
February & March 2016	Deanery Conferences (to begin shaping proposals) and Parish Meetings (on strengths/challenges)
April & May 2016	Individual Deanery Meetings to present proposals to Bishop
June 2016	Compiling the overall diocesan proposal (Bishop & advisers)
Mid-July 2016	Publication of Proposal Document
Mid-July to Mid-October 2016	Consultation with priests and people of the Diocese
November 2016	Publication of Bishop’s decisions and final plan for the Diocese
November 2016 & beyond	Implementation of the plan at appropriate stages and with all canonically required consultation on individual proposals

It seemed appropriate on my arrival in the Diocese to spend time familiarising myself with a Diocese about which I previously knew very little. I have made it a priority to visit the priests in their parishes and to visit schools and social projects, hospitals and prisons. I have accepted invitations to as many social and liturgical celebrations as will fit into the diary so as to meet the people of the Diocese. That priority for me to learn more about this “local Church” must go on. While I have learned a good deal about the recent history and the current needs of the Diocese, it would seem to me to be quite wrong that I should make decisions on my own concerning the structure of the Diocese while I have so little experience of it. I must rely on the priests and the people of the Diocese to assist me with

their experience and knowledge. The consultation *Preparing the Way* was very helpful in informing me of many people's opinions and aspirations.

In February 2016, almost all the priests of the Diocese, together with priests from religious orders and other priests working in the Diocese, attended one of two "Clergy Days". The intention of these days was to identify what needs to be done within the Diocese to prepare ourselves for our future mission. We considered the facts and the reality of the life of the Diocese. We found that it was unacceptable simply to have a pragmatic approach which reacts to each retirement of a priest – handing on his responsibilities to a neighbouring parish. It was agreed that we must look at the Diocese as a whole and consider how we might best organise ourselves so as to meet the pastoral and sacramental needs of the people, while organising ourselves for greater missionary outreach and evangelisation. On both days we reached a considerably similar consensus about what needs to be done.

Priests were invited to organise parish meetings so that parish communities might consider their own parish in the context of the Diocese and to recognise both strengths and challenges. Many priests did organise such meetings, while others preferred to delay such meetings until a proposal for change had been made, which they could then consider.

Following those "Clergy Days" in February, the priests of each deanery were asked to convene Deanery Meetings with the purpose of proposing how re-structuring might best take place. Knowing what needed to be achieved, how was it all to be practically done? These eight meetings took place between 5th April and 19th May 2016. Why should the priests of the Diocese be called upon to do this? It seemed to me that the priests working here in the Diocese have the greatest experience and knowledge of the local Church. Because of their pastoral presence in their communities, they would also have knowledge of the experience of their parishioners.

The eight deaneries produced proposals about a re-structure. These proposals addressed the need to combine some parishes in new alignments, to suggest the closure of some churches and even, in the longer term, to consider the possibility of building new churches which might better serve a particular community. The proposals had to include a wide range of criteria concerning such diverse considerations as the size of the parish community, the state of the buildings, access to public transport, parking, and distance from neighbouring parishes. A long list of criteria had to be selectively applied, according to the circumstances of each parish. Interestingly, there was only a rare mention of financial viability amongst these criteria because the priests were primarily concerned with looking at what new configurations of parishes might best sustain the local communities.

The eight proposals had then to be merged into a single proposal for the whole Diocese, considering some overlapping needs between neighbouring deaneries. I asked several people, well-experienced and knowledgeable about the Diocese, to cast an expert eye over the completed proposal that is now offered in this document. **This initial proposal is based on the advice and opinions of priests at the deanery meetings. Now I must look to you, the people of the Diocese, to consider what has been suggested and to make further suggestions. I will welcome comments from clergy and people alike over the three month period of consultation, ending on 14th October.**

INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS

I would ask that anyone wishing to make any comment should keep certain principles in mind. This consultation is concerned to produce the best possible distribution of buildings and priestly availability for the whole Diocese. Personal loyalties and affections for buildings or priests need to be put aside if we are to be as objective as possible. I can well understand that there will be disappointment among people who may see proposals for their churches to close or their habitual times for Masses disrupted or the possibility of their priest being moved. We must be thinking of the best possible arrangements so that our parish communities can focus on developing their missionary character. This means going beyond the preferences and wishes of each particular parish community so that the whole Diocese can be a presence in the wider community in which we live and where we must care for the elderly, the marginalised, and the homeless. We must be promoting the Gospel values and encouraging the flourishing of families and neighbours. I hope that all the suggestions will be concerned with developing the best possible provision for the one Church, which is our Diocese of Salford. We must think beyond our own parishes about the best provision for all.

CONSIDERATIONS WHICH GUIDE MY PROPOSAL

Before describing proposed changes, I think it important that I write about principles that have been a guide to designing the plan for the parishes. Pope Francis has had a great deal to say about the Church and how we are to be Church, and build Church, in our times. I have been particularly influenced by some of the images that he has used when speaking about the Church. He considers it to be like “a field hospital after a battle” where people are not coming to have minor health problems considered. They are coming to save their lives. I am particularly taken by many statements in *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Laudato Si* and *Amoris Laetitia*, and his other statements to the Church, about the role of the Church in welcoming, nurturing and encouraging people in their lives of Faith. He is the first among us all to speak about his own mistakes and faults. The Church is not a place for perfect people but a place where we seek salvation and strive, by our actions and God’s grace, to make our world a better place. He has asked us not just to be prepared to welcome people into the Church when they feel inclined to come to us, but much more demandingly to have the courage “to walk with others, even while they are walking away from the Church”

In meeting you all individually and in large and small groups my overwhelming feelings are of respect and admiration. In today's context the people of this Diocese already do remarkable work. Many parishes speak of mission and outreach already and there is much to celebrate. Even in a single generation we have seen dramatic change in the world and the Church and I know that continued change is difficult and challenging. Against great odds our ministry as Church brings the message of the Risen Lord to so many. I want to thank you for what is already happening. Asking for change is not disguising a criticism. The changes proposed now are designed to help us achieve more and to strengthen our parish communities.

Any vision for our future has to be grounded in prayer. We are a people built on prayer and, in particular, prayer centred on the Eucharist. Without that essential form of prayer we will not make the progress that is open to us. So I want to propose that as we work our way through these changes

we renew and increase our devotion to the Eucharist across our parishes. Most parishes have some time given to Adoration. Can I suggest the following: if there is no adoration in your parish that you begin it, even an hour a week? If you already have some time for adoration can you increase that perhaps to daily adoration and if you already have regular adoration can that be increased even more? Would it be too bold to envisage a time when there is perpetual adoration in most if not all of our churches? That is my sincere hope and something that I wish all of us to take seriously.

Whatever programmes or plans we have will only flourish if we are sustained and inspired by prayer. There is strong evidence from parishes, and whole dioceses elsewhere, that this Eucharistic approach bears much fruit. Obviously what is possible in each place will vary but let's not be afraid to ask what can be done.

In the next section of this document all the proposed parishes of the Diocese are listed, deanery by deanery. Some of these are already in existence; others will result from the amalgamation of existing separate parishes. In most cases there should be no more than two churches in a parish, though some rural parishes may have three. Amalgamated parishes may be given new names.

I have no wish to see churches closed. However, we must be realistic in calculating how best our priests may serve dispersed and often small communities. A building in which only a Sunday Mass is celebrated, where there is no catechesis of the young, or sense of evangelisation nor care for members of the community cannot claim to be "Parish". It is better for those few people to transfer their commitment to more vibrant church communities, at the neighbouring parish, and offer their gifts and talents for use in a wider community.

It seems inevitable that some churches will close. What should happen to these buildings? There would seem to be a number of options. Some structures, particularly the more modern designs, might well be useful for community purposes and might be leased to local charities or Local Authorities. I can understand that people might feel upset if such buildings were given over to purely secular use; such as a restaurant or gymnasium. It might well be sensible for the Diocese to retain ownership of the building because, given the migration of people in this part of the United Kingdom and the forecast development of residential areas, these buildings might be needed again as churches in the future. In a few cases, we must probably consider demolition but that should be a last resort and the future use of the land be considered for appropriate development, such as social housing.

RE-STRUCTURING WITH PURPOSE

All this change must be understood as a necessary next step in our journey as a Diocese. From all this re-organisation a new type of parish will need to emerge. This must be a place where the community organises itself in such a way as to free the priest to be about his priestly ministry. That means that the parishioners of each parish must gradually take responsibility for the administration and the upkeep of the buildings while undertaking diverse ministries in the liturgy and the pastoral life of the parish. It must also be the parishioners who must drive the mission of the parish, with those projects most needed by the wider community. There will be some parishes where foodbanks

may be in particular need, perhaps being run in collaboration with other Christian or Faith communities in the area. Parish communities must ensure that the elderly and the housebound do not lose touch with the parish community even if they are physically unable to attend liturgies and events. Catechists will need to take more responsibility for the young, collaborating with the local schools to ensure that Faith underpins learning and socialising and decision-making. Are there members of the parish who are able to engage in organising youth activities which will engage the young people of the district? At the time of this review, there is an urgent need to work in association with Caritas to welcome refugee families.

These are major developments and will need time. It is also important that, if we ask people to take on responsibilities, we make sure that there are suitable resources for training them in the tasks and for responding to questions and problems that arise when they work in the parish. That, in turn, may mean providing greater resources in the Central Services of the Diocese.

I have no doubt whatsoever that the future is very bright. If we can learn to see the Diocese of Salford as a single Church then we will delight in all that is already going on and we will identify the pressing challenges and needs. Many people are already working generously in our parishes, schools and communities and their work needs to be communicated and networked for its good practice. Our greatest challenge is to excite the next generation in what it means to be a Christian and how our Faith can make the world a better place where no-one is forgotten, isolated or alone and where the dignity of every person is cherished and protected. There are enormous challenges which face us both nationally and internationally, but we can most certainly have a significant impact for the good and, who knows, we might just present a vision for the future that others will want to embrace, and Catholics who have drifted away from the Church might see as reason to re-engage with the practice of their Faith.

PART TWO – THE RE-STRUCTURING OF THE PARISHES

In reading this section of the document, it may be helpful to understand the processes involved in the proposed re-structuring. Each of the proposed parishes is either an already existing parish or the coming together of two or more parishes. The first stage of any re-structuring would be to bring these groupings into being at the most appropriate time for that individual situation (e.g. when one of the priests retires or moves). The second stage would then be to look at formally amalgamating those parishes into one new parish, following proper canonically required consultation. The third stage would be to consider whether all the existing buildings within that new parish are required or whether, again after proper canonical consultation, one or more of them might be closed.

The purpose of having proposals spelt out in a plan is so that we aren't simply reacting to each change of circumstance but we know in advance how things in a particular area could eventually best be shaped for missionary outreach.

In considering the proposed parishes outlined here, it is important to recognise that (with a couple of exceptions) they are each designed to eventually be served by one priest.

[Note: Locations are only stated where a deanery has more than one parish with the same title]

THE DEANERY OF ST JOHN (SALFORD)

Currently: 17 parishes, 19 churches and 14 diocesan priests

Proposed: 8 parishes, 14 churches and 9 diocesan priests

Proposed parishes:

1. Cathedral Parish of St John the Evangelist
2. St James and All Souls *and* St Joseph, Ordsall
3. St Thomas of Canterbury *and* St Sebastian *and* St Boniface (discontinuing the use of St Boniface as a Mass centre)
4. Holy Cross, St Matthew and St Gilbert *and* St Mary, Eccles (with suggested closure of St Matthew)
5. St Luke and Ss Peter & Paul
6. St Mark *and* St Mary, Swinton *and* St Charles (with suggested closure of St Mary)
7. St Teresa *and* St Joseph, Irlam (with suggested closure of St Joseph)
8. Christ the King *and* St Edmund (with suggested closure of Lancashire Martyrs)

Schools: 18 primary; 3 secondary

Hospitals: Salford Royal; St Ann's Hospice; Psychiatric Hospital

Prison: HMP Forest Bank

University: Salford

THE DEANERY OF ST AMBROSE BARLOW (SOUTH MANCHESTER)

Currently: 26 parishes, 31 churches and 26 diocesan priests

Proposed: 14 parishes, 21 churches and 14 diocesan priests

Proposed parishes:

9. Our Lady & the English Martyrs *and* St Monica
10. Our Lady & St John *and* St Ambrose
11. St Cuthbert *and* St Bernadette (with suggested closure of St Bernadette)
12. St Ann *and* St Anthony *and* St Hugh of Lincoln (with formal closure of St Anthony)
13. St Catherine
14. St Mary & St John Fisher (with suggested closure of St John Fisher)
15. St Joseph, Reddish and Holy Family (with suggested closure of Holy Family)
16. St Joseph, Longsight *and* St Edward
17. St Kentigern *and* English Martyrs
18. St Winifred *and* St Mary, Stockport (with suggested closure of St Mary)
19. St Mary (The Hidden Gem)
20. Our Lady & St Alphonsus
21. Sacred Heart & St Francis (with suggested closure of St Francis)
22. St Mary, Levenshulme *and* St Richard *and* St Bernard (with suggested closure of St Richard)

Schools: 27 primary; 6 secondary; 2 sixth form colleges; 1 special; 3 independent

Hospitals: Manchester Royal; St Mary's; Eye Hospital; Children's Hospital; Christie; Francis House Hospice; Stretford Memorial; Trafford General
Universities: Manchester, Manchester Metropolitan, Royal Northern College of Music
Notes: All Saints, Barton is a non-parochial church within the deanery
Holy Name is a non-parochial church within the deanery
St Augustine's would cease to be a parish (finding alternative use for church)

THE DEANERY OF ST CHAD (NORTH MANCHESTER)

Currently: 15 parishes, 17 churches and 8 diocesan priests (& 9 non-diocesan in parishes)
Proposed: 9 parishes, 14 churches and 6 (or 7) diocesan priests (& ? non-diocesan)

Proposed parishes:

23. St Patrick (with suggested closure of St Malachy)
24. St Chad (Oratorian Parish)
25. St Anne, Crumpsall *and* Mount Carmel
26. St John Bosco *and* St Margaret Mary (with suggested closure of St Margaret Mary)
27. St Anne & St Brigid *and* St Willibrord (with suggested closure of one church)
28. St Stephen *and* St Anne, Fairfield
29. Christ the King *and* Immaculate Conception
30. St Dunstan *and* St John Vianney
31. St Clare (Franciscan Parish)

Schools: 16 primary; 2 secondary
Hospital: North Manchester General
Prison: HMP Manchester

THE DEANERY OF MOUNT CARMEL (OLDHAM)

Currently: 12 parishes, 16 churches and 11 diocesan priests
Proposed: 5 parishes, 10 churches and 5 diocesan priests

Proposed parishes:

32. St Mary and St Patrick *and* Sacred Heart and Our Lady *and* area of the former Holy Rosary parish (with suggested closure of St Mary, Sacred Heart and Holy Rosary)
33. Our Lady of the Angels *and* St Christopher *and* St Joseph, Mossley (with suggested closure of St Christopher)
34. St Herbert *and* Corpus Christi *and* Holy Family (with suggested closure of Corpus Christi)
35. Ss Aidan & Oswald *and* St Joseph, Shaw
36. St Edward *and* St Anne & St Michael (with suggested closure of St Michael)

Schools: 14 primary; 2 secondary
Hospitals: Royal Oldham; Tameside General; 2 Hospices

THE DEANERY OF ST THERESE OF LISIEUX (BURY AND ROCHDALE)

Currently: 20 parishes, 24 churches and 17 diocesan priests (& 4 non-diocesan in parishes)

Proposed: 11 parishes, 19 churches and 11 diocesan priests (& ? non-diocesan)

Proposed parishes:

37. Sacred Heart *and* St Mary, Littleborough *and* St Patrick (with suggested closure of one church)
38. Holy Family *and* St Gabriel & the Angels and St John the Baptist (with suggested closure of one church)
39. St Vincent
40. Our Lady & St Joseph, Heywood (with suggested closure of Our Lady)
41. Our Lady of the Assumption *and* St Peter *and* St Thomas More *and* St Agnes & St John Fisher (with suggested closure of St John Fisher – and would need 2 priests)
42. Guardian Angels *and* St Hilda *and* St Joseph, Ramsbottom
43. St Marie & St Joseph, Bury
44. St Mary & St Philip Neri (with St Teresa, Little Lever moving to Bolton deanery)
45. St Michael & St Bernadette
46. Our Lady of Grace
47. Our Lady of Dolours (Servite Parish)

Schools: 24 primary; 5 secondary; 1 sixth form college; 1 independent

Hospitals: Fairfield; Prestwich; Bealeys Community Hospital; Bury Hospice; Birch Hill; Rochdale Infirmary; Rochdale Hospice; Highfield Hospital

Prison: HMP Buckley Hall

THE DEANERY OF ST JOSEPH (BOLTON)

Currently: 18 parishes, 21 churches and 13 diocesan priests (& 5 non-diocesan in parishes)

Proposed: 10 parishes, 17 churches and 9 diocesan priests (& ? non-diocesan)

Proposed parishes:

48. Our Lady of Lourdes & St Gregory (with possible discontinuation of St Gregory as Mass centre)
49. St John Fisher *and* St Teresa (with Schoenstatt Shrine)
50. St Osmund *and* St Brendan
51. Holy Infant *and* St John the Evangelist *and* St Columba (with suggested closure of St Columba)
52. St Edmund & St Patrick (with formal closure of Ss Peter & Paul)
53. St Thomas of Canterbury *and* St James *and* St Joseph (with suggested closure of one church)
54. St Mary
55. Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception *and* Holy Family
56. St Ethelbert *and* St Vincent de Paul *and* St William of York (with suggested closure of one church)
57. Sacred Heart

Schools: 18 primary; 3 secondary
Hospitals: Royal Bolton; Bolton Hospice; Beaumont Hospital; Fallbirch Sanatorium
University: Bolton

THE DEANERY OF ST JOHN SOUTHWORTH (BLACKBURN AND RIBBLE VALLEY)

Currently: 24 parishes, 29 churches and 15 diocesan priests (& 6 non-diocesan in parishes)
Proposed: 10 parishes, 28 churches and 8 diocesan priests (& ? non-diocesan)

Proposed parishes:

58. Holy Family (St Joseph & St Teresa) *and* Our Lady of Perpetual Succour
59. St Alban (including Good Shepherd) *and* Holy Souls
60. Sacred Heart *and* St Anne *and* St Peter *and* St John Vianney *and* Ss Mary & John (with closure of St Paul chapel of ease)
61. Sacred Heart & St Edward *and* St Joseph, Darwen
62. St Wilfrid *and* Ss Peter & Paul *and* St Mary, Chipping
63. Our Lady of the Valley (Clitheroe & Sabden) *and* St Hubert
64. St Peter, Stonyhurst (with chapel of ease) (Jesuit Parish)
65. St Mary, Bamber Bridge *and* Our Lady & St Patrick *and* St Mary & St John Southworth (with no Sunday Mass at Salmesbury)
66. Our Lady of Lourdes & St Gerard Majella (Benedictine Parish)
67. St Mary, Langho *and* St Mary, Osbaldeston *and* English Martyrs

Schools: 22 primary; 5 secondary; 1 sixth form college; 3 independent
Hospitals: Royal Blackburn; Blackburn Hospice; Beardwood Hospital; Clitheroe Hospital; Kemple View Hospital, Longridge Community Hospital, St Catherine's Hospice

THE DEANERY OF ST JOHN VIANNEY (BURNLEY)

Currently: 18 parishes, 28 churches and 20 diocesan priests
Proposed: 9 parishes, 22 churches and 10 diocesan priests

Proposed parishes:

68. St Charles *and* St Hubert & St Wulstan *and* St Mary, Clayton-le-Moors
69. St Mary, Oswaldtwistle *and* St Anne *and* St Joseph, Accrington (with closure of Our Lady's chapel of ease, Huncoat)
70. Christ the King *and* St Mary of the Assumption *and* St John the Baptist, Burnley (with suggested closure of St Teresa)
71. St John the Baptist & St Philip, Padiham *and* St Mary Magdalene (with suggested closure of St Philip and St Augustine)
72. St Joseph, Todmorden
73. St John Southworth (including Christ Church shared with Methodists)
74. The Good Shepherd

75. St Mary & St Anselm *and* St Joseph & St Peter (with suggested closure of one of these three churches)
76. St Marie *and* St James the Less (with closure of St Veronica)

Schools: 26 primary; 4 secondary; 1 independent

Hospitals: Accrington Victoria; Mount ESMI Unit; Burnley General; Pendle Community Hospital; Pendleside Hospice

There are also a number of churches and chapels across the Diocese serving the Polish and Ukrainian communities which are not included in these listings.

PART THREE – THE NEXT STAGE

This document is my proposal to the priests, religious and people of the Diocese of Salford. There may well be significant factors which have been overlooked. I am ready and prepared to receive comments and suggestions from anyone who feels that they can contribute to making the best plan for the whole Diocese. We need to look beyond our own affections for buildings and our established routines.

This period of reflection and comment will last until 14th October 2016. When all the comments and criticisms have been fully considered, I shall make a decision for a plan for the whole Diocese. We will then have to begin the implementation of the decision but that will not all happen at once. It must take time to be properly planned and organised and everyone must have time to consider and absorb what changes may mean for them. But it will be important that we have a plan towards which we are progressing and about which everyone is aware. Churches will not suddenly be closed and communities moved.

On the day of my installation as Bishop of Salford, I invited people to join in a prayer for the Diocese. It is a simple prayer and I have been made aware that it is being widely used in parishes, schools, diocesan organisations. The prayer is “Stay with us, Lord, on our journey”. It expresses our need very well. We are on a journey which must include change and discernment. If we try to do all this on our own then we will fail. But if we are asking that the Lord stay with us then we can be sure that we will be moving in the right direction and going at the right speed. If the Lord is with us then we can also be sure of the working of the Holy Spirit, who will achieve more than we could ask or even hope for. I invite you to the daily offering of that simple prayer so that we are never at risk of journeying alone.



RESPONSE TO THE CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED PARISH RE-STRUCTURING

You are invited to use this form to submit your response to the consultation. The form can be downloaded from the diocesan website and returned by e-mail if you prefer to reply electronically. It is also possible to respond directly online via <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/salfordparishes> If you feel the need to make a longer reply, then you can e-mail consultation@dioceseofsalford.org.uk or write to Consultation, Wardley Hall, Worsley, Manchester M28 2ND.

Your name	
Parish you belong to	
In which deanery	

In seeking a consensus on what we need to do, it would be helpful to know your views of the principles that have guided this proposal:

[Please tick one option on each line]

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Sure
There is a need to change because of reduced numbers of priests and parishioners					
We need to strengthen our ability to be the missionary Church that Pope Francis is calling us to be					
Larger, dynamic and sustainable parishes are preferable to smaller struggling communities					
We need to consider the welfare of our priests and allow for the possibility of retirement at 75					
There must be greater lay involvement so that priests can do what they were ordained to do					
Re-structuring of parishes will enable us to develop our outreach to the wider community					
We should consider retaining ownership of some of the closed churches for future use					
Changes to our parish structures are a necessary next step in our journey as a Diocese					

In considering how re-structuring might best take place, please offer your thoughts on the following:

Looking at your particular parish:

Please make any brief comments you wish to about the benefits or the drawbacks that you see in the proposed arrangement

Please put forward any suggestion you have about any other arrangement you think might be better for your parish

Looking at your deanery:

Please comment on whether you think what is suggested for your deanery provides an adequate spread of parishes across the whole area?

Please put forward any suggestion you have about any other arrangement you think might be better for your deanery

Looking at the overall proposal:

If you have a knowledge of the diocese as a whole, please state in what capacity you have acquired that knowledge (e.g. as a priest, a diocesan worker, a headteacher) and then say whether or not you believe that the overall plan for the diocese is likely to achieve what we are setting out to do

Please return this consultation response by **14th October 2016** using the contact details given at the start of the form. Thank you.