

DIOCESE OF SALFORD



Wardley Hall, Wardley Hall Road, Worsley, Manchester, M28 2ND

14th January 2017

My Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am very grateful to all those who have helped me throughout this last year to consider the challenges to our Diocese and plan for our future. Thousands of people, priests, religious and members of parish communities throughout the Diocese have responded with comments and suggestions. In interpreting the “signs of the times”, Pope Francis urges us to consider that commission given to us by Jesus Himself. We are “to go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News”. Pope Francis asks us to become “missionary disciples” in “missionary parishes”. To enable us to do this in the changed and changing circumstances of the present time, there is need to re-draw parish boundaries and choose the best distribution of churches and priests for ministry to our Catholic community and for the development of our mission to the wider community.

I have written at some length about the purpose and rationale of the consultation and how it has progressed. That document can be found in printed form at the back of churches and on the Diocesan website, together with a description of the proposed arrangements for parishes throughout the Diocese. In just a small number of cases, it has not yet been possible to determine the best alignment for a particular parish and so it is necessary and just that these communities have a little more time to discuss their situation.

The implementation of these proposals will happen in stages, appropriate to each situation, over the coming months and years.

Whatever your feelings may be (agreement, disappointment, relief or sadness) I would ask you to accept the decisions I have made about how our parishes might best be organised and engage in the growth and development of the Church in this Diocese, where each one of us is an ambassador for Christ and a missionary disciple. Let us all use the challenges of this present time to build a Church for future generations.

“Stay with us, Lord, on our Journey”

With my prayers and good wishes,

+ John Arnold
Bishop of Salford