

Sacred Heart (SH) , Penicuik & St Margaret's (SM), Loanhead

Joint Response

April 2017

Q.1. What is considered to be a fair and discernible representation of the views of the cluster parishes about what needs to be done together in pastoral provision ?

Answer : Initial concerns and fears at the start of the process from both parishes turned into greater positivity and understanding of the issues facing both parish communities. It was agreed that the geographical distances of both communities makes regular interaction difficult.

There is substantial scope for increased co-operation in the provision of mutual support in all aspects of parish life. In particular in the establishing of functioning ministries where these are absent in either community and in increasing communication and activity with the schools in both communities.

A Joint Development Committee should be established as a focal point for identification of areas of mutual support requiring attention. It is acknowledged the limitations of having a joint priest places firstly, on the priest, and secondly the parishes.

Question 2 What should continue to be focussed on single parish provision for pastoral provision ?

Answer: There was a strong desire that St Margaret's and Sacred Heart should remain a mass centres to some degree going forward-with special focus remaining on the Sunday mass.

Question 3 : where you see signs and developments of vibrancy in your cluster parishes that may lead to new growth and life.

Eucharist

Current Parish Provision-

Musicians, Choir (SH only), Eucharistic Ministers, Pass Keepers, Altar servers. SVDP group, Bereavement Group at SH which meets on an ad hoc basis.

Both parishes agreed that there are lots of parishioners who take an active part in the Sunday service, however we could work towards involving the children/families who attend mass regularly a bit more particularly as they get older – requirement applies to SM more than SH.

Evangelisation

Parishes activity in the last year-

SH are active members of 'Penicuik Churches Working Together', with many joint activities/services taking place throughout the year.

SH also has FOSH and the Food Banks. It was identified that more effort needed to be placed on ecumenical services – Monday Club, Bereavement, Christmas Parcels. There was a feeling that baptisms should take place during mass rather than at the end-which has now been implemented as regular practice.

SM actively support/encourage community/charity fundraising activities via free use of hall for events. SM established a Development Group 3 years ago with one objective being how to channel and realise the desire for evangelisation. This could be developed further via a Joint Development Group going forward.

Leadership

Leadership identification, formation and training-

Answer: There was a lack of understanding on how this is structured or operated in the parishes. There was recognition that there are some very active, passionate and knowledgeable parishioners. But what is the process in becoming a leader? Historically it appeared that people have volunteered or recruited by the PP. SH have greater succession and support structures in place to ensure continuity, whilst SM is coming to terms with the requirement to have more parish responsibility and involvement in running parish affairs.

Areas to be addressed: How do parishioners gain the confidence to do such a role despite the fact that there are many knowledgeable people in both parishes who have great skills but perhaps don't realise or appreciate that they have talent?

The Priest is viewed as the "leader" and the parishioners as the "followers". There was general recognition that parishioners have to become leaders and support to the Priest in the future to maintain sustainable parishes.

What training and support could be given to potential leaders? Perhaps a census of skills, knowledge, key areas of interest could be developed?

Catechesis

How many trained catechists are available to the cluster? What impact do they have on catechesis in the parishes?

Answer: The general consensus was that there was poor knowledge and understanding of this and what was the structure/process? Gillies College and Craiglockhart apparently run a variety of courses – more information could be provided on faith development opportunities for adults.

There appears to be a divide between what happens within SM's School and the parish, there does not seem to be much formal support for those of us who rely on the parish for faith formation. Of the families who attend mass at SM on a regular basis the majority do not attend St Margaret's School.

SH-with the greater population of Penicuik, the parish school has greater numbers of children, but also have the issue of regular mass attendance.

Outreach

Parish outreach in joint parishes and future development-

Answer: Both parishes provide support for charities within the wider community through coffee morning, raffles, quiz, carol service, collections, etc. SM could further link the parish and school community, particularly involving the school children more regularly in parish life and provide links for those children who attend mass regularly but don't attend the school with the families who attend for sacramental preparation. Involve/provide opportunities for the children on our congregation during mass.

At SH great outreach work is done through FOSH and the Food Bank.

Stewardship

Answer: There was joint recognition that there are “Sunday Catholics” and we should not confuse this with apathy. But are people aware of what is needed? Parishioners require working in partnership – joining of parishes on holy days of obligation. School masses where parents & grandparents could attend services.

There were musicians in both parishes and coffee after mass (social aspect).

There was a void of no young people serving on the altar in SM .

Question 4. Naming pastoral goals for the cluster to work together more closely in a spirit of mission and evangelisation.

- Possible Joint Parish Cluster Life
There was now a “can do” attitude. There was more cohesiveness and a renewed enthusiasm and vibrancy, along with an understanding of the reality of parish life and the longer term issues facing both parishes. There a different atmosphere/level of support available within SH parish. Perhaps something SM could try to foster going forward via a Joint Development Group.
- Insights gained about the future
“Sign posting” would be helpful – there was a lack of communications – a lot of activities which could be developed jointly. Therefore develop a structure for clear communications and help parishioners to gain an understanding of leadership roles. There is still a sense that the “future has already been decided” amongst some of the congregations , however there was a genuine display of positivity amongst many. Hopefully the discussions should help move us forward together and support one another.
- Possible future joint action in the cluster parishes

Suggestion that the current Development Group in SM could be developed into a Joint Development Group to develop stronger parish links. A joint focus on strengthening links with the parish schools.

- Aims or joint goals

All recognised the challenges ahead – there was a lot going on in small groups – not a lot as a “whole Church”. We seem to have a way to go in terms of having a joint aim/vision for the future. We need to have our aims clear before they can be transferred into actions, however, there did appear a genuine willingness to help others to develop.

The identification of appropriate goals would be an important function of the proposed Joint Development Group. The material in the *Cluster Parishes Together Handbook* provided a wide basis for group discussion in which each of the parish communities was able to explore areas in which they might be able to improve their existing parish working groups.

That discussion tended towards enhancement of activities within each of the existing parishes as opposed to functioning as a single unit.

Report jointly prepared by :

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ADDENDUM ONE-Supporting Statistics and Information

People :

Q 1.How many parishioners are there from the households of the cluster parishes ?

It was not clear whether this was intended to reflect mass attendance or the nominal Catholic population of each of the parishes.

The figures for the nominal populations are taken from the Archdiocesan Directory as follows :

Penicuik : 1000 Loanhead : 750 Total : 1750

Census Mass attendances :

St Margaret's	Sacred Heart
2016 - 66	2016 - 97
2015 - 81	2015 - ?
2014 – 87	2014 - 190
2013 – 94	2013 - 230

Q 2. How many are engaged in an active apostolate in the cluster parishes ?

The figure for Penicuik is approximately 40 : Loanhead is approximately 30

Q 3 What is the overall joint community size ?

If what is intended is the total Catholic population the figure is the same as the answer to Question 1, namely 1750.

If what is intended is the total population of each of the communities Penicuik is normally taken at approximately 22,500 and Loanhead at 6500.

Plant :

Q 4. How many buildings are shared between the cluster parishes ?

Penicuik : Church and two conjoined tenement buildings adjoining the church. One is occupied as the Presbytery and the other is let to business tenants which provides additional income for the parish.

Loanhead :Church, Hall and conjoined Chapel House. The house is currently let as a residential tenancy and provides additional income for the parish.

Celebrations :

Q 5. How many baptisms have taken place in the past year in the cluster parishes ?

Penicuik : (2015) 11 Loanhead : 1 Total 12

Q 6. How many RCIA participants ?

Penicuik : 0 Loanhead : 0 Total 0

Q.7 How many funerals ?

Penicuik 10 Loanhead 5 Total 15

Q 8. How many marriages ?

Penicuik : 4 Loanhead 0 Total 4

Joint incomes, expenditure and future financial needs of the joint cluster parishes.

It was agreed that the relevant information would be extracted from the parish accounts for inclusion in the final report.

Some discussion took place concerning specific items of what was regarded as both necessary and proposed future expenditure in both parishes. In particular concern was expressed about the need for immediate expenditure on the toilets in the hall at Loanhead. The refusal to allow the expenditure to be carried out was seriously restricting the use to which the hall could be put and restricting additional earning capacity of the parish. Discussion also took place as to what financial savings could potentially result from the amalgamation of the parishes. No such savings were immediately obvious. Some reference was

made to proposals which had already been advanced by Sacred Heart to the Diocese for the construction of a new presbytery in the church grounds which would be capable of accommodating a number of priests to serve the existing parish structure and further expansion of the cluster.

ADDENDUM 2-Finance

2016	SH	SM	Joint
Income	£51,543	£26,028	£77,571
Rental Income	£6,116	£7,283	£13,399
Outgoings	(£42,257)	(£14,201)	(£56,458)
Surplus/(Deficit)	£9,286	£11,641	£20,927
Bank Balance	£186,516	£95,228	£281,744