



Parish Priest: Rev. Mgr. John M Walsh

Parish: Our Lady of Compassion

Tel No: 07104 873230

Email: ourladyofcompassionformby@rcaol.org.uk

Web: ourladyofcompassionformby.org.uk

9 Apr 2021

Dear Friends

CONSULTATION OF THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF FORMBY ABOUT A PROPOSAL CONCERNING THE FUTURE OF ST. ANNE'S CHURCH

Just over 12 months ago, all three of our churches in Formby were closed as we entered the first lockdown. Last summer, when churches were permitted to reopen, we were required to carry out a full Health and Safety risk assessment on the churches to determine whether they could conform to the new restrictions. Unfortunately, St. Anne's failed to pass the risk assessment and remained closed.

Now, many months and three lockdowns later, the situation here in Formby has changed. The Archbishop has merged the three parishes into one new parish. Just one Priest serves the whole town. Our financial income has been hit hard by the pandemic and we are unsure about numbers coming to worship in the future.

What is clear is that we cannot sustain three separate church buildings. They have served the Catholic community well and were served by up to five priests at one time. The two year consultation which will culminate in the Archdiocesan Synod in June has asked for, among other things, an all encompassing review of church properties and their sustainability.

It will come as no surprise that the future of St. Anne's church is now under review. It is time to consult all Catholics in Formby about a proposal concerning the future of St. Anne's church, before any final decision is made. The good people of the former St. Anne's parish have had their church closed to them for over a year. This has caused much pain and anxiety. The hammer of this pandemic has fallen very heavily on them, and I want to thank them for their example of patience and forbearance.

The proposal being put before us all is as follows;

'The parish of Our Lady of Compassion should be served by two churches, Our Lady's and St. Jerome's. St. Anne's church will be taken out of sacred use and disposed of appropriately'.

It is important to point out that, in common with the whole Archdiocese, this is only the beginning of a process of review into the needs of the Catholic community here as we adjust to new realities. It will proceed gradually. Our community will, of course, be consulted about future plans.

The consultation period for this proposal will last for six weeks. It will commence today Friday, April 9th and close on Friday, May 21st. Please send your thoughts through the Parish email system ([click here](#)), or by



Our Lady of Compassion

18 School Lane, Formby, L37 3LW

Served by the Churches of Our Lady of Compassion and St. Jerome

Roman Catholic Archdiocesan Trustees In. Reg. Charity No: 232709



Parish Priest: Rev. Mgr. John M Walsh

Parish: Our Lady of Compassion

Tel No: 07104 873230

Email: ourladyofcompassionformby@rcaol.org.uk

Web: ourladyofcompassionformby.org.uk

Page 2

letter to Our Lady's Presbytery or St. Jerome's Presbytery. At the end of the consultation period, all the replies will be collated and formed into a report which will be sent to the Archbishop. The report will be made available to everyone in the parish.

Finally, and whilst we are still celebrating the Octave of Easter, may I ask your prayers for this process of consultation and in particular for the community of St. Anne's for whom this will be a very difficult time.

God bless.

Father John



Our Lady of Compassion

18 School Lane, Formby, L37 3LW

Served by the Churches of Our Lady of Compassion and St. Jerome
Roman Catholic Archdiocesan Trustees In. Reg. Charity No: 232709