

ONE ISLAND PARISH

Frequently Asked Questions on our move to a single Parish

The organisation of Diocese into 24 parishes has been outlined in "Go out & bear fruit" but the practical implementation has been largely left to local areas to work out. There are many questions people have about how this will affect them. We hope here to be able to answer some of the most frequently asked questions.

1. Does "One Parish" mean having only one church building on the Island with a single worshipping community?

No it doesn't. Local congregations will continue, with their own distinct character and style. The basis of the plan is subsidiarity, which means that decisions should always be taken at the most local level possible.

2. What does "subsidiarity" mean for us in this matter?

Subsidiarity means that, wherever possible, decisions which affect the local congregations will be taken by the local congregations. Parish councils may change their name but will continue to be responsible to their communities.

3. What areas might be shared in common across the Island?

- ✓ *Training of Ministers of Holy Communion, Catechists, Safe-guarding Officers*
- ✓ *Ministry to our Island Hospitals, Christ the King College, and Prisons*
- ✓ *All Islands events eg "Week of Guided Prayer", Confirmation, CAFOD days*

4. What would be dealt with locally?

- ✓ *Liturgy, music, evangelisation.*
- ✓ *Social events & fund raising events e.g. Christmas bazaar.*
- ✓ *Visiting the sick.*
- ✓ *Preparation for the sacraments.*
- ✓ *Societies & prayer groups*

The priorities would be determined by local communities.

5. Will all the finances go into a central 'pot'? Will we lose our overdraft/savings?

Each community currently has a Finance Committee, constituted under Canon Law. On the Island we have a Treasurers Group, where representatives from all the Island Finance Committees meet. The Island Pastoral Council have asked them to consider how best to organise ourselves financially. Again the overriding principle is subsidiarity, and communities will be responsible for their own management

within a broad framework.

5. What will be the benefits of a single Island parish?

The main answer is - effectiveness in our mission to spread Christ's message and be witnesses to him to our world. In practice this means giving each one of us more opportunities to participate in the life of the Church. As a united Island parish we shall:

- ❖ provide more opportunities for developing and growing our faith,*
- ❖ be more effective in serving the sick and the needy,*
- ❖ provide better services for our young people,*
- ❖ have better communications between our worshipping communities, organisations, people and priests.*

6. Will I lose my mass?

With fewer priests in the future it may be necessary to re-organise mass times. However the principle will be to ensure that in each worshipping community everyone will have the opportunity to attend mass. As one Island Parish we will be better able to co-ordinate mass times so that our priests are supported in their ministry. The role of the priests and lay people within our communities will change and develop as we move forward in a collaborative ministry.

7. I have heard that my parish church will be suppressed, what does that mean? Are churches going to be closed?

In this context suppressed is a canonical term, it means that in order to create one Island parish, all the existing "parishes" will cease to exist - in name only. For example, there will still be a church in East Cowes called St. David's, and people will still say I go to mass at St. David's. Just as we belong to the Portsmouth Diocese, we will be part of the Parish of the Isle of Wight.

8. The Isle of Wight Parish is a geographical name not a religious one. Why are we going to be called that?

It was felt that for the moment it is necessary to make it clear what the new parish is; a joining of the existing parishes on the Isle of Wight. It may well be that in the future we change to another name such as St. Wilfred's (after our patron saint). For now it was felt that we should emphasise clearly what the new parish comprised, both to our own communities and to the rest of the world.

If you have more questions please come to the presentations that are being organised in each community. Visit our website: www.iowcatholicdeanery.co.uk