

St Wilfrid's Rectory
Friday, 26th September, 2014

Dear Parishioner,

It is now nearly eleven months since Fr Nicholas and I arrived at St Wilfrid's. It has been a very busy year. We have been overwhelmed by the warm welcome we have received. There are many things I would like to single out but I must keep this brief. I will mention only the generosity that inspired many individuals to raise £17,000 for the repairs to the roof and gutters. Thank you all for that and for so much else.

We have had the joy of clothing the first novice for the proposed York Oratory and we have received the generosity of two dioceses who have lent us their priests. Fr David and Fr Mark will help us as we begin to take care of St Joseph's Parish as well. It has been a time of change, but also of blessing and growth.

When Bishop Terence invited us to York he asked us to be faithful to the Oratorian liturgical charism. He invited us to celebrate a liturgy with a more formal liturgical style. He asked us to provide for the Mass in the Extraordinary Form. He also asked us to be sensitive to the needs of the people of the parish.

Arriving in York we found a Family Mass at 11am which was and continues to be a flourishing and well-attended service. We have done something towards making this a more formal Mass; but there is a limit to how much liturgical variety one Mass can take without becoming overloaded. We need to look at other ways of fulfilling the bishop's mandate.

From October we will have three full-time priests and one part-time priest serving the two parishes of St Joseph's and St Wilfrid's. This seems to be an opportunity to look at the Sunday Mass provision at St Wilfrid's so we can address all the elements of Bishop Terence's request.

We are proposing to have a Family Mass with a music group, organ and Children's Liturgy of the Word at either 10am or 10.30am and to move the 5pm Mass in the Extraordinary Form to 11.30am or 12 noon and increase the musical element of that Mass by forming a choir.

Preliminary soundings among families and among those attending the Masses concerned have indicated support for this development. There are also enthusiastic members of the congregation keen to help with the music at these two Masses. We believe this change will mark a clear distinction between a Parish Mass for families and a Mass with a more formal liturgical style.

We would also like to know parishioners' views on music at the other Masses. It would be easier to pool our musical talent in the Sunday morning Masses. We would like to know if there is any demand for a quiet Sunday Mass without music or hymns. If there were such a demand this Mass would be either at 6.15pm on Saturday or 8.30am on Sunday.

There will also be some small additions and changes to the weekday timetable as follows:

From Monday, 6th October, we propose to have the 12.10pm Mass on Mondays and Saturdays as well. This means there will be a Mass at 12.10pm every day from Monday to Saturday. Like the other lunchtime Masses the additional Masses will be preceded by exposition and confessions and followed by rosary and/or devotions. There will continue to be a Mass at 8am on Monday and at 10am on Saturday in the Shrine of St Margaret Clitherow.

It is difficult to find people to watch before the Blessed Sacrament during the period of exposition on Thursday mornings. From Thursday, 9th October there will no longer be exposition on Thursday morning. Instead there will be exposition on Thursday afternoon from the end of the 12.10pm Mass until 2pm. Additionally, from Saturday, 18th October, there will be a period of exposition of the Blessed Sacrament during confessions from 10.45am until 12 noon.

This consultation process has been approved by the Vicar General, Mgr Gerard Robinson, and the clergy of the York Deanery. Now we would like to know parishioners' views on this matter. If you would like to make your views known, please reply in writing either by post, hand-delivered letter or email. This letter will also be made available on the parish website with a link for replying.

We would like to be able to make a proposal for the Bishop Terence's approval by the middle of October and to implement any changes we make from the first Sunday of Advent, Sunday, 30th November, 2014. With renewed thanks for all the help and support of the parish over the last eleven months,

Yours in Christ,



Fr Richard Duffield
Parish Priest