

CLUSTER 1 (PEEBLES, INNERLEITHEN, GALASHIELS, MELROSE, SELKIRK)  
CLUSTER MEETING 2 - "A DETAILED EXAMINATION OF JOINT  
RESOURCES"

TUESDAY 17<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2017 - PEEBLES

**Present**

Fr Kevin Murray, Fr Wojciech Rybka, Fr Jeremy Milne

Ca. 40 parishioners with at least one person from each of the communities except Melrose.

A compilation of available figures for the various reflection questions posed in the handbook was handed out.

The handbook asked us to discuss the information under the four broad headings of people, plant, celebrations and finance, guided by the following questions:

- *What does this study reveal about the current resources in the cluster parishes?*
- *What do these indicate for the future?*

PEOPLE

- Not much confidence in the figures for Estimated Catholic Population.
- Melrose figure (500) seems particularly high given that the total population of Melrose is 1600. The estimated Catholic population though, as for all parishes, is drawn from a wider area than the town.
- Estimating the figure is not straight-forward. In addition to births and deaths there are migrations of Catholics in and out of the area to be accounted for.
- Possible avenue for verifying the figure is National Census. An attendee offered to look into this.

PLANT

- Numbers and condition of buildings was obtained during the meeting.
- Upkeep costs of buildings to be obtained from 2016 financial report. This should consist of the cost of heating and lighting, routine maintenance and insurance. To be circulated.

- What will these figures be used for?
- Figures need to be interpreted in the report.

## CELEBRATIONS

- Baptism figures are not a good indicator of the life of a parish. Families often come for baptism but then do not practice their faith.
- Numbers at children's liturgy might provide valuable insight. Agreed to count numbers attending children's liturgy at the four Sunday Masses between now (17 Jan) and next meeting (21 Feb).
- What is the percentage of Catholics at the Catholic schools?
- Numbers for first Holy Communion and Confirmation to be added.
- Marriage figures include visitors. Also note that some couples from the parishes, especially Polish, marry abroad.
- Some Mass attendance figures look odd, eg, Galashiels 2013 (Fr Murray to check). Agreed to count numbers attending Mass at the four Sunday Masses between now (17 Jan) and next meeting (21 Feb).

## FINANCE

- Operating income and expenditure figures to be obtained from 2016 financial report. To be circulated.

## CONSENSUS

- Borders is different to an urban setting where clustering might work better.
- Need to present a positive, optimistic vision of the future to the Archbishop with solutions, not just problems.
- Each community needs to keep its church as these are centres that sustain community strength and identity.
- Each community needs weekly Mass.