

North Wallasey Catholic Community

[SERVING THE PARISHES OF OUR LADY OF LOURDES, LEASOWE,
ENGLISH MARTYRS, WALLASEY VILLAGE & SS PETER & PAUL, NEW BRIGHTON]



The Consultation

1,000 copies of the first Newsletter were distributed at all the Masses in the cluster over the weekend the 15/16 July. Copies of the Newsletter were also sent home with the children at the OLOL and SSPP Primary Schools to reach the widest audience possible. The Newsletter was also published on the Website.

Further to that, a meeting was arranged by the parishioners at SSPP to discuss the Newsletter.

It did become apparent during the consultation that a second suggestion for Weekend Mass times might be feasible and that was brought to the attention of congregations at the Masses over the weekend 22/23 July.

As the biggest impact would be felt in SSPP, each individual attending the Masses in New Brighton was handed a note containing the detail of the second suggestions for Mass times and asked to make their feelings known to the Steering Group Members at the Masses that weekend.

All the responses received were considered by the Steering Group at a meeting in EM on the 27 July.

While there were varying views offered in the responses received by email, post and verbally, there was, on the whole, a common sense of willingness to be positive and to try to make the new arrangements workable for both priest and people.

Weekend Mass times

In the first Newsletter, the guiding principles suggested were that there should be three Masses celebrated over the weekend, one in each Church, and that there should be a minimum of an hour and a half between Masses celebrated on the same day.

The thrust of the response to the consultation contained five main elements:

- There was a real consensus that it would be regrettable if any of the churches were to find themselves without a Sunday morning Mass
- There was concern expressed by those with no access to transport, particularly the elderly, that they would have difficulty getting to Mass and if the only option in any of the Churches was the Saturday evening Mass a number expressed concern about the dark winter evenings
- The importance of making the Mass available to young people was highlighted particularly the valued work of the Children's Liturgy groups in the three parishes. The importance of sustaining that work within the new arrangements was seen as a priority
- Allowing people to exercise their ministries in the Church was raised and how the new Mass times might affect the ability to provide music for the liturgy, whether Ministers of Welcome, the Word and Eucharist would be able to minister at other churches in the cluster if the Mass in their own Parish became inconvenient
- Finally, and a point that I found quite moving, concern that, in trying to accommodate the needs of all, the priest might be taking on too big a workload

There were a number of other points raised which were either not in the remit of the priest or the Steering Group and some which were about just how the day to day life in the Parishes would be in the future, points that will be addressed as the cluster develops.

5 August 2006

For ease and to save space throughout this newsletter the three parishes will be referred to as:

- OLOL
- EM
- SSPP

The Steering Group:

John G Feeney

OLOL:
John Ellison
Maureen Hibbs
Katharine Joynson
Alison Mawdsley

EM:
Val Burns
Tony Mossman
Rachel O'Sullivan
Paula Wherly

SSPP:
Marina Ashton
Aine Kelly
Paloma McSorley
Ann Muller

Ann Melville
OLOL School

Ann Sharp
SSPP School

Parish	Time	Numbers
OLOL	0945 Sun	80
EM	1830 Sat	71
	1100 Sun	167
SSPP	1800 Sat	160
	0900 Sun	90
	1030 Sun	140

The reasoning for the alternative Weekend Mass times was prompted by a positive email sent to the Group and the thought that by moving the least number of people from their current arrangement, there would be the least disruption.

That became a major factor in moving forward and coming to a decision. If 160 people were regularly celebrating Mass at SSPP on a Saturday evening, one of the biggest congregations over the weekend, then that is where the Saturday evening Mass should be celebrated in the new arrangement.

Taking on board the feeling from the response that each of the three churches should have a Sunday morning Mass, all that had to be achieved, then, was to fit three more Masses in.

Over the past five years, in all the discussions about the reduction of Masses between EM and OLOL, the biggest sticking point was the late morning Mass. Put this too late and families do not have the time they need to enjoy the Sunday!

So the decision to opt for the early 8.30am Mass at SSPP, which would provide an early Sunday Mass across the cluster but also accommodate those who currently celebrate in SSPP at 9.00am. This then would enable the 9.45am OLOL Mass and the 11.00am EM Mass to continue, a resolution for at least four out of the six congregations currently celebrating over the Weekend.

I hope the gentleman who sent the email to the Steering Group will forgive me quoting from his conclusion. It is so very relevant:

“Finally I would like to say that while there is, as Cardinal Newman observes, “loss and gain in all things”, we should not lament what we may have lost in the new arrangements, but gladly embrace the greater opportunities that we are gaining for co-operation, community, pastoral work and evangelism - in short, to build up the Church, the body of Christ, throughout North Wallasey”.

The two weekend congregations that we are disrupting the most are those currently celebrating at 6.30pm EM on a Saturday night and 10.30am SSPP on a Sunday morning. You above all will be the most disappointed and possibly hurt. I can only say that I am sorry for that hurt.

But please do try to be patient with us. As you will read further on in this newsletter, we will be doing all that we can to assist those who might find getting to one of the other Masses in the cluster difficult. We will also be trying to ensure that families with children have access to a liturgy suitable for the children to grow and develop wherever they worship.

As Julian of Norwich reveals in her writings:

“That which is impossible for you, is not impossible for me.

I will preserve my word in all things,

And I will make all things well”.

Weekend Mass Arrangements from September 2006

The Bishop has been asked to approve the following Weekend Mass times with effect from the Weekend 2/3 September 2006:

SSPP	1830 Sat
SSPP	0830 Sun
OLOL	0945 Sun
EM	1100 Sun

What next?

The first thing that we need to do is address the concerns raised in the consultation:

A Sunday Mass in each of the three Parishes:

That has been achieved in this new arrangement. It breaches the principles set out at the beginning of the consultation and does make Sunday “focused” for the priest, but with help and co-operation from each of the Parishes, it can be managed. While there isn’t an hour and a half between the Masses on the Sunday there will still be time to see people and travel between the churches.

Transport for those who will need help to get to Mass

The first thing we need to do is to ask people, particularly at the 6.30pm Mass at EM and the 10.30am Mass at SSPP to let us know if they will need any help in getting to another Mass at the Weekend. Once we have an idea of the extent of the problem we can find solutions. It might be that we set up a pool of people willing to offer lifts, we might need to hire a bus to run between churches, whatever we need to do, we will do it.

First we need to know the extent of the problems people will be experiencing and we will start that process this week.

Children’s Liturgy

I suppose until people come back from holiday it will be difficult to put meat on the bones of this one.

The first and obvious thing to say is that at both the Mass in OLOL at 9.45am and at the 11.00am in EM there is a children’s Liturgy on a weekly basis. Children, their families and those who have been working with Children’s Liturgy are welcome to join in with either group.

But we had been working on plans to invite the young people recently involved in preparing for Confirmation to help us build a human resource for Children’s Liturgy, to support the work in the Parishes. Those who have ever worked in this area will know how difficult it is to offer a rich and meaningful experience in the short time available while the Liturgy of the Word is celebrated in the Parish Mass.

One option open to us is to extend the work we do with children and develop a cross Cluster Children’s Sunday Club that would meet as regularly as possible and help the children to enjoy their Sunday celebration.

There is also no reason why there shouldn’t be a Children’s Liturgy celebrated at SSPP, maybe not every Sunday, supported by adults and children across the Cluster, but at a time after the 8.30am Mass has finished. After all, the existing Children’s Liturgies take place without a priest, in the present set up! While I enjoy supporting the work, it is others who put ideas into effect.

It goes without saying, the children already benefit from the rich spiritual experience offered to our children by the staff in OLOL and SSPP Primary Schools.

A meeting will be arranged for those working with Children’s Liturgy as soon as is practical.

Those who minister in our churches and those who help with Catechesis and Formation

As soon as people make choices about where they wish to worship at the Weekend and get into a pattern they will be more than welcome to minister either as a reader, welcoming people, supporting the liturgy with music or ministering the Eucharist at the altar or to those at home in any of the three Parishes.

The new Cluster will also provide an opportunity for us to look at the current practice in the Parishes to help families when they celebrate Baptism, Confirmation or Marriage, when there is sickness or bereavement. It will also allow us to look at areas where we might want to grow in faith as in the RCIA programme and programmes of formation.

It will provide an opportunity to offer our young people the chance to use their gifts and talents in helping to build a better world. Exciting times ahead!



The Steering Group

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WE ARE ON THE WEB
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Our Priorities

1. The first priority will be to make the Cluster workable at Weekends and to be open to the "newness" that God is offering in our Cluster of Parishes, a time of renewal
2. To open our Community to the call of the Spirit by setting aside a Monthly time of prayer, rotating round the Parishes, beginning in New Brighton on the first Wednesday in September
3. To make preparation for a joint Parishes' celebration to inaugurate the Cluster and formally Induct its Parish Priest
4. To spend time together learning about each other so that we can find ways of moving forward together building the Kingdom up in North Wallasey.



Lord
Let your will
Be done

**LORD, WE TURN TO YOU,
KNOWING THAT YOU ARE CLOSE
AND ALWAYS CARE FOR OUR
EVERY NEED.**

**BLESS OUR THREE PARISHES IN
NORTH WALLASEY IN THIS TIME
OF RENEWAL.**

**HELP US TO BE OPEN TO WHAT-
EVER YOU WANT US TO DO, OR
BE OR BECOME.**

**GIVE US A SPIRIT OF TRUST
THAT IS WILLING, A SPIRIT OF
HOPE THAT IS WELCOMING AND
A SPIRIT OF LOVE THAT IS AC-
CEPTING.**

LET YOUR WILL BE DONE.

**WE ASK THIS THROUGH CHRIST
OUR LORD. AMEN**