

Message from Bishop Brian to Accompany the Bishops' Conference Update

Consultation on Diocesan Boundaries

You will have read the update from the recent Bishops' Conference deliberations regarding the future of our Scottish Diocesan structures. You will notice that Argyll and the Isles is party to three proposals:

- (i) That the eight dioceses remain with greater collaboration and sharing of resources
- (ii) That the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles and the Archdiocese of Glasgow merge
- (iii) That the Diocese of Argyll and the Isles and the Diocese of Paisley merge

Packs will be distributed providing detailed information about each diocese as well as the concrete suggestions about how the sharing of resources would look if all eight dioceses remained. Each diocese involved in a particular proposal can then study it in depth and make its response by Easter 2027.

I will discuss with the College of Consultors and the Diocesan Pastoral Council the best form of consultation for our diocese. All clergy and laity will be able to contribute. There will be full transparency. Our response is not needed until Easter so there is no rush.

It is possible that, from the various responses submitted from across the country, alternative proposals could emerge that the bishops have not thought of.

We will proceed with our own planned diocesan consultation on mission throughout October and November. Any changes to the dioceses could take several years and we know that our local mission, and the structures necessary for it, urgently need attention. I also believe that we who live and minister in Argyll and the Isles are best placed to make such decisions.

Let me assure you that absolutely no decisions for merging have yet been made. The bishops are aware of the magnitude of these discussions and want to proceed in a synodal manner. Let us prayerfully enter into the process determined to ensure that the best diocesan structures for the proclamation of the Good News across Scotland will be chosen.

It is also worth remembering that while the bishops will present proposals regarding our diocesan structures to the Dicastery of Bishops it will be the Dicastery which makes the decisions. The Dicastery of Bishops is based at the Vatican and, among other duties, is tasked by the Pope for overseeing diocesan structures.

+ Brian McGee

Right Reverend Brian McGee
Bishop of Argyll and the Isles