

**Pastoral Letter to the Parishes of Aberystwyth and Lampeter,
announcing a Parish Consultation in both parishes.**

12th April 2026

As we continue to celebrate the resurrection of the Lord in this Easter Season, now is an opportunity for us to reflect on the future of our parishes. The parish of Aberystwyth, and the parish of Lampeter, are places where we come to pray, to celebrate the sacraments, to share fraternity and grow in our relationship with God and with each other. There are many positive elements in both parishes, but there are also areas of concern - and these will need addressing if our parish communities are going to not only survive, but flourish.

The diocese has asked us to undertake a consultation with a view to uniting the parish of Aberystwyth and the parish of Lampeter to form one single parish. This would mean that the three churches of Welsh Martyrs Aberystwyth, Holy Cross Aberaeron and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Lampeter, would come together into one parish unit, with a single administration. The diocese feels this will best serve the pastoral needs of the Catholic Community here in mid, west Wales.

Currently, each parish is responsible for its own resources, estate and record keeping; all finances and sacramental registers, safeguarding training, GDPR information and so on, are separate to each parish. If the proposal goes ahead, all the resourcing and administrative functions would be combined.

But this proposal needs to be discussed: you may have questions, suggestions or concerns. The diocese wants to know your opinion so that it can be more fully informed, prior to the diocese making a final decision. In the near future, a public meeting will be held in each parish. This will be your opportunity to ask questions, to provide feedback and to vote as to whether or not you agree with the proposal. You will be given the opportunity to make written submissions too, if you are not able to attend the meeting.

The feedback from the two parishes will form the basis of a report, which will be presented to the Council of Priests. The Council of Priests is an organ of governance within the diocese which the bishop uses to help him in his administration. The Council of Priests will review the report and they too can ask questions and raise issues. The Council of Priests will also be asked to vote. All of this information, from both of the Parishes and the Council of Priests, will be presented to the Archbishop for a decision to be made.

While this proposal may seem to be purely administrative, it is nevertheless being proposed to best support the pastoral and spiritual needs of the people in both areas. The proposed union of the two parishes will result in financial assets being combined, along with the responsibility for providing

buildings which best serve the mission of the Catholic Church in Ceredigion. The future of our parishes must be a future that is self-sustaining, enabling all three churches to remain open and so that each place can be adequately resourced in providing for the needs of the resident clergy, support chaplaincy provision to university students and Bronglais Hospital, as well as ensuring that St Padarn's Catholic Primary School continues to be a provider of first class Catholic education to our Children, with facilities that are fit for purpose.

Now is the time for us to reflect on what we think the needs of our parish are, and how we can best look towards meeting those needs. It's a time for us to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide us towards making a mature decision which safeguards the future of our churches.

Fr Liam Bradley VF