



**Pastoral Message of the Bishop of Nottingham
appointed to be read at all Masses
on the Third Sunday of Lent,
Saturday 2 / Sunday 3 March 2013**

My dear friends in Christ,

The Second Vatican Council called for a renewal of the diocesan structure of the Church because ‘the welfare of the People of God must be served as perfectly as possible’. In order that we can continue to provide for the pastoral care of the faithful and the celebration of Sunday Mass throughout the Diocese, we have been undertaking a diocesan-wide consultation on our parochial structure – *You are Living Stones*.

Last Advent, I provided an update on the consultation, and I promised that I would do the same this Lent. That update is being distributed at Mass this weekend, so that you will be able to read for yourselves what progress has been made. In addition, my presentation and supporting documentation from the meeting of all our priests on Monday 18th February are available for you to download from the diocesan website – www.nottingham-diocese.org.uk. Your parish priest will be able to provide copies for you if you do not have internet access.

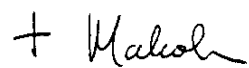
Over the next few weeks, you will have the opportunity to comment on the proposals which have been suggested, and your parish priest will be able to tell you what form this will take. You will also be invited to an open meeting in your deanery, and your parish priest will be able to give you details about this.

I cannot emphasise enough that the proposed linking of parishes does not imply the closure of churches, and that absolutely no decisions have been taken whatsoever regarding the linking of parishes. These proposals are the next stage of a long period of discernment.

All parishes will have to change, even if they retain their current boundaries and a resident parish priest. There will always be a priest appointed to look after your parish and to care for you. The times that we are living in call for us all, priests and people, to be generous, faith-filled and outward-looking.

I hope and pray that all of us will give these proposals considered and prayerful reflection as we seek to discern God's will for his Church in our Diocese.

With my prayers and every good wish for you and your families,



Right Reverend Malcolm McMahon OP
Bishop of Nottingham



WOMAN OF FAITH ²⁰¹²₂₀₁₃

**Bishop's House
Nottingham**

February 2013