

# **Proposal for Parish Sisters: Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

## **Joint PPC discussion paper**

### **Background.**

Since coming to the Diocese Bishop Nolan has been approached by a number of Religious Congregations about establishing Communities in our Diocese. There are 2 orders presently waiting to hear from him: Sisters of St Paul of Chartres and The Holy Family Sisters of the Needy.

### **The Proposal.**

Bishop Nolan is proposing that this latter group come and set-up a Community in Dumfries to serve the pastoral areas covered by the 2 Dumfries based priests.

The Sisters will be located in Dumfries-at St Teresa's Presbytery where Fr Jim currently resides. Fr Jim will take up residence in the Parish House, 1, Sherwood Crescent, Lockerbie where we currently let out that property (Notice period at least 6 months). The Parish Office will remain in Dumfries it is only his residence that will move. There will be no change to the current parish schedules covered by Fr Jim. If accepted the Sisters may not arrive till this time in 2019.

### **The Holy Family Sisters of the Needy**

The Congregation was founded in 1983 by Fr Denis Mary Joseph Ononuju Obiaga C.S.Sp (A Holy Ghost or Spiritan Father) in Nigeria, Africa. The congregation has missions in 8 different countries: Nigeria, France, Italy, USA, Congo, Benin, Burkino Faso and UK. They presently have about 200 members with many postulants (1<sup>st</sup> years) and Novices (2<sup>nd</sup> years).

In 2007 the Holy Family Sisters of the Needy founded their first UK mission in St Ann's Parish in East London. In 2016 they established a second UK community in Aberdeen.

They have a particular charism for working with families, young parents, children and Pro-Life support, the homeless and the vulnerable. Their congregational motto is "I shall gladly spend and be spent for the poor" from II Corinthians 12:15 having the Carmelite spirituality of St Teresa of Lisieux-doing ordinary things extraordinary well.

### **Questions for discussion:**

#### **Pastoral Responsibilities**

What pastoral work can they co-operate with us in and what new initiatives would you suggest. See over/ for suggestions from Fr Jim and Fr Gerald.

#### **Financial Implications**

It is estimated that it costs approximately £30,000 per annum to run a convent of 3 to 4 Sisters. Because of their Immigration status from the UK government the Sisters cannot be involved in any paid employment (ie: nursing/teaching etc) for at least 5 years-and then with rules attached.

Traditionally this kind of employment has supported the Sisters we have had in the town historically. These Sisters would be entirely reliant on the financial support of the parishes. Over a 5 year period this works out that we would need to commit to approximately £150,000. This is a monthly amount of £2,500.00 or weekly just under £580.00.

Are we able and willing to commit to this outlay? If so how will we raise this?

One suggestion is to have individual parishioners commit to a monthly SO/DD of say £10 per month. This would require 250 individuals per month across the 5 communities taking out a SO/DD for the next 5 years (and beyond should Sisters be moved before their 5 year period is reached).

### **Further questions.....**

# Parish Sisters: Ministry Guide

Personal witness and Religious presence in those Parishes under the care of the Parish Priest including the following areas:

Participation/leadership in the spiritual/liturgical life of the parishes

Officiating at Religious Services that do not require an Ordained Minister

Care for the Sick at home, in Care and/or in Hospital

Seniors Ministry

Hospital Ministry (General and Psychiatric)

Prison Ministry

Parish schools (Primary and Secondary)

Care for young parents/children

RCIC

Young People's ministry (local, deanery, diocesan)

RCIA

Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) membership

Parish Finance Committee (PFC) membership

Administration/Stewardship

Deanery involvement

Diocesan involvement

Development with the Parish Priest (Bishop/Dean) of any other appropriate ministry as the need, skill and resources are identified