



Diocese of Limerick
Our Catholic Community

Letter to be read out at Masses this weekend, 4-5 October 2025

2nd October 2025

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

With the new school and parish year now well advanced, I write to you about a consultation process that I am launching for every parish. The consultation sessions will take place in the coming weeks and will gather as many people in the parish as possible to explore how best to sustain the local faith community and how to shape the future of our parishes.

I was struck by something Pope Leo said a few months ago: "In our life as disciples, we can always risk falling into a rut, a routine, a tendency to follow the same old pastoral plans without experiencing interior renewal and a willingness to respond to new challenges". He went on to refer to the two great Apostles, Peter and Paul, who give us such a great example of openness to change, and a readiness to consider new approaches to evangelization in response to the problems and difficulties that arise for us today.

Many of the features of parish life in our Diocese and in Ireland that so many of us grew up with, and have become so familiar with, are of the past and we need to have the courage and vision to imagine new ways, new structures, new models suggested to us by the Holy Spirit. While we are grateful for all that has gone before us, I am very conscious that the profile of our clergy and of laity going to church is changing radically and rapidly.

We are now the people who have to make wise and practical decisions about the future of our parish in terms of buildings, financial arrangements and the pooling of personnel and resources across parishes. We need to be mindful that many parishes will not have resident priests or, in very large parishes, at best one priest. Indeed, we need to be open to the idea that perhaps we should amalgamate some of our parishes.

I have organised for a meeting to take place in each parish. I have prepared a team of facilitators who will help to guide the conversations. While no decisions will be taken on the night, the feed-back will be extremely important in shaping the future of our diocese.

This is an opportunity to hear the voice of each parishioner on how best to proceed so that our faith community will be best fit for mission in the future. I invite you to spread the word and encourage others to take part, including those who might not regularly come to church. We want as many as possible, especially those who are younger or parents with young or teenage children, to get involved.

Above all, let us pray to the Holy Spirit and ask Our Lady's help as we carry out this consultation throughout the Diocese.

With kind regards,



✠ Brendan Leahy,
Bishop of Limerick.