

**“Go and make  
disciples of all  
nations”** Matthew 28:19

**Dioceses of Leeds  
and Middlesbrough**

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# Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father,

Pour out your Holy Spirit upon the people of the  
Diocese of Middlesbrough and the Diocese of Leeds.

Where there is uncertainty, give trust.

Where there is fear, give hope.

Where there are differences, give charity and mutual  
understanding.

Teach us to listen deeply,  
to speak with wisdom and humility,  
and to seek not our own will, but your will for your  
Church.

May any steps we take be rooted in prayer,  
guided by your Spirit,  
and directed always toward the building up of your  
Body  
and the proclamation of your Gospel.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.



# Prayer of Intercessions

## **We pray for greater communion in the Church.**

That through our conversations, and through our relationship with You and with one another, we may be united and strengthened as the Body of Christ. May our dialogue be guided by Your Spirit, and may any divisions or misunderstandings be transformed into understanding, respect, and love.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

## **We pray for continued participation in the life of the Church.**

That each of us may be willing to offer the gifts You have entrusted to us — our time, talents, and hearts — in service to You, our local communities, and the wider world. Inspire us to act with humility, generosity, and joy, so that our service bears witness to Your love.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

## **We pray for the mission of the Church.**

That, united in Christ, we may always keep in mind our common call to build up Your kingdom. Guide our work and our decisions, so that all we do may proclaim Your truth, nurture justice, and bring Your peace.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

## **We pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our meeting.**

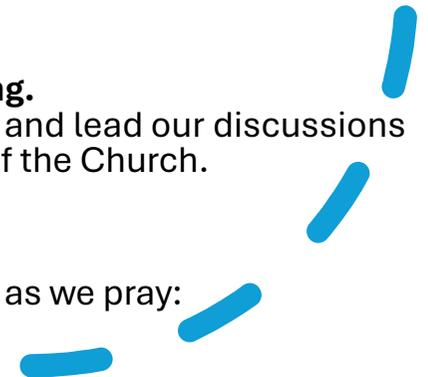
That the Spirit may enlighten our minds, soften our hearts, and lead our discussions so that our deliberations may bear lasting fruit for the life of the Church.

Lord, in your mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

We ask the intercession of Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, as we pray:

**Hail Mary...**



# The Story to Date

The Recommendations of Bishop Draine's *Ad Limina* Report of 2018

Announcement of Bishop Marcus as the Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Middlesbrough

Meeting with the Prefect of the Congregation of the Dicastery of Bishops in Rome

The Task at Hand

Consultation

# Historical Context

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## Diocese of Beverley (1850–1878)

- Established in 1850 following the restoration of the Catholic hierarchy in England and Wales, the Diocese of Beverley encompassed the whole of Yorkshire.
- Catholic life flourished, with growing numbers of Clergy, parishes, and faithful.
- In 1878, the Diocese of Beverley was divided into the Dioceses of Leeds and Middlesbrough.



# Parishes and Clergy

	Leeds	Middlesbrough
Parishes	73	69
Diocesan Priests in active ministry	62	29
- Of whom are under 60	24	9
- Of whom are 60 - 75	43	17
- Of whom are over 75	2	3
- Of whom have incardinated	0	2
Missionary Priests/Religious	13	25
Priests in active ministry from other Dioceses	2	2
Retired Priests	43	21
Permanent Deacons	23	10

# Our Mission & Vision

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- Our 'Mission' is very simple; it has been given to us by Jesus Christ.  
*"Go and make disciples of all nations"*  
*Matthew 28:19*
- Our 'Vision' too has been given to us by Jesus Christ.  
*"That they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."* *John 17:21 (Ut Unum Sint).*



# What is Consultation?

In the Catholic Church, the art of consultation in uniting two dioceses under one Bishop is a pastoral and canonical process rooted in communion, discernment, and shared responsibility. It involves listening carefully to Clergy, Religious, and lay faithful from both Dioceses to understand their histories, cultures, pastoral needs, and concerns. In this Synodal process, through prayerful dialogue, transparency, and respect for subsidiarity, the Bishop and Church leaders seek to foster trust and unity while honouring each Diocese's identity. The goal of consultation is not merely administrative efficiency, but a Spirit-led discernment that promotes the good of souls, strengthens ecclesial communion, and enables the local Church to move forward together under one shepherd.



# Our Consultation Process

- There will be seven consultation meetings across both Dioceses in Middlesbrough, York, Hull, Huddersfield, Bradford, and two in Leeds.
- If, after consultation, we are to move forward towards amalgamation, this process will take some years to complete.
- Bishop Marcus is also specifically required to make key decisions in consultation with:
  - The Clergy and Parish Representatives
  - Members of the Diocesan Curia
  - The College of Consultors
  - The Diocesan Trustee Boards
  - The Council of Priests in Leeds Diocese
  - Religious Communities
  - Multi-Academy Trust Boards
  - Wider online consultation with the People of God
- The feedback from these seven consultation gatherings is crucial to that process.
- A report will be sent to Rome so the Holy Father can decide what to do next.

# Question 1 – Mission and Pastoral Vision

**How could bringing the Dioceses of Leeds and Middlesbrough under one Bishop strengthen or challenge our shared mission and pastoral care across the region?**

Questions for Thought:

- Will the amalgamation of the two Dioceses affect the identity and heritage of my Parish?
- Will amalgamation create opportunities for evangelisation, youth ministry, vocations and outreach to the poor?

# Question 2 – Communion and Participation

**What practical, spiritual and structural implications would working under one Bishop have for the Clergy, parishes, schools, and diocesan services?**

Questions for Thought:

- How might decision-making and communication change?
- How could resources (financial, administrative, safeguarding and education) be shared more effectively?
- What aspects might need careful planning to avoid over-centralisation?

# Closing Prayer and Blessing

O God,  
who have gathered us to listen, reflect, and discern together,  
we give You thanks for the gifts shared among us this day.

As we bring this consultation gathering to its close,  
send forth Your Holy Spirit upon the work begun,  
that what has been spoken and heard  
may bear fruit in wisdom, unity, and peace.

Entrusting our way forward to the care of Mary,  
Our Lady of Perpetual Succour,  
and the intercession of Saint Wilfrid,  
keep us faithful to Your will  
and generous in service to Your Church.

Through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

Our Lady of Perpetual Succour, *pray for us*  
Saint Wilfrid, *pray for us*

