



ARCHDIOCESE *of* KINGSTON

DECREE IMPLEMENTING NEW PASTORAL CARE FOR THE PARISH OF ST. PATRICK, RAILTON AND THE MISSION OF ST. MARY, ODESSA

January 26, 2022

Canon 383 §1 enjoins on the diocesan bishop that he is solicitous to the faithful entrusted to him. He is to ensure that they are taken care of pastorally. This pastoral concern extends also to the priests of his diocese, as is clear in the following canon (c.384).

Ideally, this would find expression in the principle of 'one parish, one parish priest', expressed in c.526 §); yet the very same canon recognises that this ideal cannot always be sustained and allows for the care of a number of parishes by one parish priest. Much of our archdiocese is rural and many of our parishes and missions are small: a number of them have previously been grouped together in this way. Moreover, it has been some time since the archdiocese enjoyed a large number of vocations to the priesthood and this has led to a presbyterate that is not large in number. The challenge faced by our archdiocese has grown in recent years.

Rather than simply increase the number and size of the clusters of parishes and missions entrusted to our parish priests, loading them with ever-greater responsibilities, I have determined to look for alternate solutions. For this reason, I have turned to the provision of canon 517 §2, which allows that when there is a shortage of priests, a Diocesan Bishop, after prudent consideration and according to the established norms of universal law, can entrust a share in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish (certain roles and responsibilities, connected with the pastoral care of a parish, which do not require a priestly character) to a deacon or member(s) of the laity, under the direction of a priest.

St John Paul II in the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Christifideles Laici*, reminds us that the legitimacy of their actions lies in their being exercised under the guidance of ecclesiastical authority and in the the lay faithful's participation in the priestly, prophetic and kingly mission of Christ (23).

Elaborating further upon how the deacon or lay person shares in the pastoral care of a parish, the instruction from the Congregation for Clergy, *The priest, pastor and leader of the parish community*, states that the deacon, lay religious or other member of the laity, "may exercise administrative functions, as well as that of promoting spiritual formation" even while, "They may not... exercise functions which belong fully to the care of souls since such requires priestly character" (24).

Given the newness of the provisions of canon 517 §2 to the archdiocese, I have decided to retain to myself the role of the priest entrusted with directing the pastoral care in the parish, even while I establish the following, effective 1 February 2022:

In the **Parish of St Patrick, Railton**, and the **Mission of St Mary, Odessa**, **Reverend Roberto Wojcik**. is delegated the responsibilities of a pastor outlined in canons 528 §1 & 529 §§1-2. In addition, he is delegated with the task of administering the temporal affairs and goods of the parish “with the diligence of a good householder”, according to the norms of canons 1283-1289.

I have asked **Reverend Sebastian Amato**. to ensure that the sacramental care of **St Patrick, Railton**, particularly those responsibilities of a pastor outlined in canon 528 §2, are maintained.

I have also asked **Reverend Paul Mawalla** to ensure that the sacramental care of **St Mary, Odessa**, particularly those responsibilities of a pastor outlined in canon 528 §2, are maintained.

These provisions remain valid until revoked by me or by any of my successors (cc.572, 563).

They have all been asked to cooperate and work closely together so that the people of **St Patrick, Railton**, and **St Mary, Odessa**, can be confident that their pastoral needs will be taken care of and that their parish will continue to run smoothly. The success of these provisions will rest on the charity, patience and good-will of us all, in addition to a shared willingness to respond and adapt to the challenges that we might face in this new arrangement.



+Michael Mulhall
Archbishop of Kingston



Rev. James Quirk
Chancellor of Spiritual Affairs