

## Led by the Spirit Phase 3

### St Maolrubha's Wed 18th Sept 2023

#### **Convergences**

- Unanimous feeling that St Maolrubha's even though it is a chapel of ease should **NOT** be closed. Parishioners worked hard to raise funds to renovate the building and did so without borrowed funds. This was all brought about through faith, hard work and commitment. It was pointed out that if the church were to close ownership would revert back to the Estate.
- Although everyone would like Mass every week, it was accepted that this may not be possible going forward with the available clerical resources in the Diocese and a service of Word and Communion would be acceptable to most when a priest is not available.
- There was a general willingness by all to help out with the administration of the parish, especially looking after fabric maintenance, finance -including gift aid- and parish visiting. There is also a willingness from a few people to serve as Eucharistic ministers, although having a permanent deacon will moderate this requirement. In all these areas it was felt that where necessary appropriate training should be available for lay people.
- One person expressed a desire to take part in or lead parish devotions.
- There was strong agreement that the situation with Dornie needs to be sorted out. While it is fine for our priest to say Mass on a Sunday he should not have to bear the admin responsibility for that parish reporting to a different Diocese. This should fall to Aberdeen to sort out someone to do this.
- All agreed that given the shortage of priests and we have a permanent deacon, we may have to share Fr Ronald with another parish, but we would still want him as our parish priest.
- There was a general consensus that we are a young parish with good growth potential and Bishop Brian should take cognisance of this in his deliberations.

- One person suggested that given the number of churches and declining priest numbers there needs to be some rationalisation here, taking cognisance of numbers attending, financial burden, maintenance costs and proximity of other churches.
- One person also suggested that every parish should have an active parish council to help with the admin of the Parish- this to include sub committees to look after finance, gift aid, fabric and parish visiting.

### **Divergences**

- Although most people were happy to have a Service of Word and Communion one person felt that it was important that full Mass should be available every week

### **Questions**

- Is there scope for house churches to help address the costs of maintaining church buildings when only a few people attend?
- Is it possible for the Diocese to have a Rota/List of priests who could be called upon when no parish priest is available? Could this be dealt with by the Diocese? Would save parish priests having to spend time trying to find someone for cover.
- Will a priest always be available for parish funerals?