



DIOCESE OF Hexham & Newcastle

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VICARIATE FOR FAITH & MISSION

RCIA and new Enquirers

Dear Friends,

As you know, many people across the diocese were expecting to be received into the Church at Easter and have been unable to do so. While lockdown continues, we are all keen to reassure those following our RCIA programmes that the Church is waiting with them.

It is clear that in the meantime pastoral care of the candidates has been offered widely by priests and catechists who have kept in touch by various means. A recent consultation with some of those involved in RCIA shows that the following methods have been used:

- Catechists contacting candidates to continue accompaniment via a phone or online meeting.
- Including them in bidding prayers at live streamed Masses.
- Giving a message of support to them at the end of live stream Mass.
- Offering them daily reflection sites locally or nationally.

We are also aware that online Masses have in many places seen a big increase of participants. It may be that people in times of distress are turning to faith. Clearly it is important that potential enquiries have somewhere to go if people wish to take things further. This applies both to making contact in our present situation and in times when we are less restricted

The natural place for a person who is returning to the faith or taking initial steps is the local parish. Aware that some individuals look in on Masses and other online information from various places it seems wise to have a coordinated approach.

To that end we will be making available a contact number for the Vicariate for Faith & Mission, 07375 934713, that offers people the option of being directed to their local parish or to joining a diocesan group. The diocesan group would allow for a person to make first contact and encourage a person in their journey; its underlying purpose would be to help put them in touch with a local parish.

It would be very useful for this purpose, to know the parishes and Partnerships that intend to offer something so that we can ensure local accompaniment is the first and prime offer. Please email adminfaith.mission@diocesehn.org.uk if you are able to offer local accompaniment within your parish or Partnership.

Kind regards

A Dixon

Adrian Dixon

Liturgy and Divine Worship