



Diocesan Centre  
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**Rt Rev. Joseph Toal** STB KC\*HS  
**Bishop of Motherwell**

26<sup>th</sup> September 2020

Dear Parishioners of St John Bosco's Parish,

I write to explain the difficult situation we now face in regard to your parish.

When St Benedict's and St Clare's formed the one parish of St John Bosco's, we kept both churches open, providing the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy and other services and social events in both locations. This has become increasingly difficult, particularly in regard to St Clare's, where a number of significant repairs are necessary, most notably the replacement of the heating system in the church as it has been condemned as unsafe for further use. The parish does not have the financial resources to carry out these repairs and I have reached the conclusion that the decision be made to close St Clare's and concentrate on maintaining St Benedict's, which benefitted from a full and costly renovation in more recent times. Since the colder weather is approaching and St Clare's will not be heated through the winter, the closure will take effect from this weekend. I cannot see a benefit in delaying the closure, so from next Sunday October 5<sup>th</sup> the 10am Mass will be celebrated in St Benedict's.

I realise this is sad news for many people and I have been reluctant to take this step, but it has to be faced and our present difficulties with fewer people attending Mass and the subsequent loss of income made any possibility of carrying out the necessary repairs in St Clare's untenable. I seek your understanding over this and I encourage those who have faithfully attended Mass in St Clare's to continue to do so in St Benedict's and to be given every opportunity to continue to offer their services there as in St Clare's. It has been the intention to foster a spirit of unity and friendship among all the parishioners and the new circumstance of worshipping in the one church will offer further opportunity for this to be realised.

I thank all who have been part of St Clare's community over the years for the outstanding service offered in the parish and into the wider community. An opportunity will be offered to gather in thanksgiving once we recover from the pandemic and are free and safe to gather again in greater number. In the meantime I offer my gratitude as Bishop of the Diocese for your faith and commitment to Our Lord and his Church. I ask the Lord's blessing upon you all and all your loved ones in these difficult times. I remember also those who have gone before us, whose faith and good works built up and sustained St Clare's – may they rest in peace.

With my prayers and best wishes,

Yours in Christ,

**+ Joseph Toal**

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