

What options would you like considered as we look to reduce the number of churches and presbyteries across our Parish.

1. The location and gather data of number of parishioners per parish.
2. We seem to have a surplus of land and buildings, and I think we need to shed redundant properties
3. Looking at the mass count of St Martin de Porres, the structural health of the building, the fact that it does not have a resident priest and it is not an active church for most of the week, I suggest this building and presbytery is marked for downgrading.
4. We should have one new cathedral built at a suitable location in the Hutt Valley.
5. Consider consolidation of resources with Holy Spirit; Waiwhetu is after all a near neighbour of Te Awakairangi's St Peter & Paul; plus, Stokes Valley, allowing Upper Hutt to consolidate too. Churches are probably needed in (1) the southern valley (e.g. Petone), (2) central Hutt and possibly (3) northern Lower Hutt (incorporating Stokes Valley). Don't just hunker-down and remove existing churches & presbyteries; consider wholesale closures and rebuild to modern standards with facilities that reflect the cardinal's call. Don't be guided just by mass counts - that formula results in the simple closure of Taita and Avalon and retention of inadequate Naenae and Lower Hutt that (together with the school) does not need to be in a prime commercial area.
6. In reducing the number of churches and Presbyteries in our parish, I would like that the sociology economic status of the people in the area be taken into consideration. For example, if a church is slightly away from the other churches and people are not financially well off, they would find it difficult to travel to church. Also consider, the strength of the building. If it is earthquake prone and requires a lot of money to fix, it might be good stewardship to close the church. Also consider the Mass count in deciding.
7. Look at selling off churches and presbyteries and centralise in one area perhaps Avalon.
8. Keeping St. Michael's, St. Bernadette and Sts. Peter and Paul Churches only
9. I believe Sts Peter and Paul's is the best location for our Church. Our congregation is now largely Grey haired and of other cultures e.g. Pilipino, Indian. I would like to see some exciting groups formed for young people to keep them in the Church once they reach teenage years. Maybe check out some other new vibrant churches and see how they attract their youth.
10. Making sure that there is still a church in the northern end of the parish. Maybe retaining St Michael's alongside Ss Peter & Paul as the two churches in the parish and offering more Sunday Mass times to accommodate parishioners coming from the other two churches.
11. While fully appreciating the financial problems associated with retaining all current churches and presbyteries, plus the problems of priest numbers, we accept the obvious need to dispose of some of the current sites. However, without some leadership on planning for ongoing Mass timetables it is very difficult to make an informed suggestion. Currently the closing of St Martin de Porres seems sensible though personally upsetting after 55 years in this church.
12. Mass roll, age demographics in each existing parish, value and costs in maintaining existing assets, and viability of using current assets for other social purposes: example, emergency accommodation, soup kitchens.
13. Reduction in churches would appear to be necessary but as we do this, we must make sure that there are transport systems in place to ensure that all parishioners can actively participate in all parish activities.
14. What facilities and where should we be to best service the disadvantaged and marginalised in our community (i.e. is wider than Catholic community). Also how do we best position ourselves to service the needs of our schools and young families - our future.

15. SS Peter and Paul's is the mainstay of Lower Hutt and should be the principal focus of our parish. Wainuiomata would be a mistake to close down due to its geographical location and therefore should remain open. Avalon could be refurbished and serve both Naenae and Taita.
16. Centralisation in one building but masses at various times on a Sunday to make it easier for anyone to attend. Perhaps different churches leading each week, so we get some variety in service/musicians?
17. Three or Four Churches in the Lower Valley Flats instead of Presbyteries
18. Provision for all four church communities to be able to gather together to worship and celebrate Mass and continue with other pastoral activities without undue hardship. If a church is to close, it should not be presumed that people, especially the elderly, travel to another church. Mass on Sunday could be celebrated in another building rented for the purpose or we could share with another Christian church in the locality. At present there is a good Mass count in every Church. Even if we closed down all the churches, we could still maintain four church communities. Church is not about buildings, but people. I would like to see all presbyteries closed and sold. All of them would make good family homes. Priests could be accommodated in rental property/ies. Some have their own homes already. With regard to scarcity of priests, I observe that in this case we are always using the scarcity model. This is because we are reluctant to bring priests to NZ from other countries where there is an abundance. From earliest times the NZ Church has brought in priests firstly from France and then Ireland. The comment that these priests would not be of our culture is not relevant today as the world and NZ is becoming so multi-cultural. Bring in priests from other countries and let the old priests retire. We need younger, hard-working, prayerful, pastoral priests in our parishes to say Mass, administer the sacraments and to be with us in our times of need and to inspire other young men to answer the call.
19. Close and Sell St. Martin de Porres and St. Bernadette's Churches and land, together with their Presbyteries. Retain and upgrade/modernise/enlarge Sts. Peter and Paul Presbytery to accommodate more priests, staff and core functions.
20. I would suggest closing Avalon, Naenae and Taita Churches and having six or seven Masses at Sts Peter and Paul Church. Buses could be chartered on Sunday to bring people in from the other three areas. The presbyteries of Avalon, Naenae and Taita could be sold and the remaining one which has seven bedrooms could be renovated into apartment style living for priests to reside together. Each apartment would have its own bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and lounge. There could still be provision for a meeting room, office and downstairs lounge. The elderly priests could retire and if more priests or married deacons were brought in from overseas, they could visit in the parish, hospital and in the schools and provide programmes for youth, people who have left school and young married couples.
21. The number of churches is not something I wish to comment on. However, the Presbytery in Knights Rd should be demolished and replaced with an office block which will contain rooms for Parish use. Whether the development is done by Archdiocesan resources or an outside party is another matter. The house behind St Martin de Porres could be redeveloped as accommodation for Priests. Note the St Columban's Redevelopment
22. Start with prayer, prayerful discernment within the steering group, within the parish council, within each and every church in the Hutt Valley, at every Mass, at every occasion. Prayer, prayer and more prayer. Very important to have a forward-thinking independent facilitator, who is soaked in prayer and can offer an understanding of prayerful discernment, suggest someone like Mary Jackson Kaye rc, Fr Tom Rousse SSC - there are others. Begin with a wide ranging - nothing is wrong - brain storm in a non-linear fashion i.e. use a large white board and add all thoughts all over the space, the grouping of similar points can be done later. Take a whole of Hutt Valley approach, not just within parishes as delineated at this point of time. It may well be more positive, life giving and practical not to use the current parochial divisions. Use census figures and other data to ascertain things such as socio-economic status, ethnic diversity, social service providers so that we can work with others not re-invent the wheel.

23. "My house shall be a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isaiah 56:7, Mark 11:17, Matthew 21:13, Luke 19:45) May this underpin all the decisions to be made about the future of the catholic church and places of worship in Lower Hutt. • Maintain faith, holiness and traditions of the Catholic church and make it attractive to all ages and all ethnicities. All are welcome in our churches. (Ezekiel 18:31) • Ensure that the developing faith and spirituality of the children in the Parish are not endangered or downgraded in any way. (Mark 10:14) • Ensure there is adequate availability of daily Mass, all Sacraments, Eucharistic Adoration. • Knowledge and study of the Bible to be encouraged and available in the Parish. (Psalm 119:105) • Compassion towards everyone we meet, seeing Jesus in all. (Zechariah 7:9) • Actively promote and pray for vocations to priesthood with priests available and willing to counsel anyone interested and advise on discernment. • Support priests with adequate admin, technology, lay ministers, volunteers and space and privacy to interview people. • Address the apathy to the Catholic faith in NZ. Have we watered down our faith and traditions so much that it is no longer attractive or offering any hope of salvation? • Encourage group prayer, adoration, novenas, specially praying for the growth of the Catholic Church in Lower Hutt (Matthew 18:20) • Trust in God that he will steer us out of stormy waters if we keep our gaze fixed on Him and Him alone, with the sole intention of establishing His kingdom in Lower Hutt. (Romans 8:28)
24. Reduce to two churches/presbyteries, one in south of Parish, one in north of Parish.
25. In our church community there are a number of elderly parishioners many of which come from the local Shona Mcpharlane rest home and retirement village There is also a thriving multi-cultural community with a vast mix of ethnic races and cultures. Many of which come to our church for the friendly and loving community spirit that is found in our church. Although our numbers are small at present the heart of the community is large. God lives within our small community in the lives that attend our masses and gatherings.
26. Important option to consider the condition of the buildings & especially the presbyteries. They should be warm, comfortable & well looked after so the priests continue to stay well & healthy They (the priests) should have a good cook & housekeeper & all the modern technology available to help them So one of the churches needs to be sold & the money should go to making a nice new large presbytery for all the priests so they have plenty of back up (most priests drive) They need to set up a duty roster. We all come from families so we are used to living together & having the companionship of our diverse families so I think this would work
27. Closing and disposing of Avalon church, presbytery and land as this is the only church community without an adjoining school.
28. I would like to see a church at both ends of the parish as Taita has the land to grow or a new church be built on the land. Naenae is out of the way and needs to be look at and what can be done for them.
29. Perhaps you could consider a large purpose-built parish church and disposing of each of the current churches.
30. Two churches and one presbytery
31. Retaining only the churches that are in the best state in terms of maintenance and earthquake remediation (Ss Peter & Paul's and St Michael's I understand?). Sale of all presbyteries and the building of a modern community house for the parish's priests and a parish centre near Ss Peter and Paul's for parish staff office space. Retaining of the St Bernadette's hall and consideration of enlarging the Ss Peter and Paul's hall. Whichever churches are retained, consideration of modest alterations to encourage more utility for the local community (beyond Sunday and weekday Masses).
32. Mass count. The age of the church. The earthquake rating. The cost of repairs required for earthquake strengthening. Use of the church outside of regular church services. Accessibility of the church to the parishioners.
33. I agree we must live within our financial means, therefore reduce number of churches and presbyteries. Churches with lowest Mass count and without a school could be considered first for closure.

34. If we are to reduce the number of buildings that provide Mass and other liturgies for parishioners, it is necessary to carefully decide where the churches are located, and that they large enough to accommodate those attending. The last thing we want to do is to make the churches too far from the parishioners many of whom do not have cars and rely on public transport. There are four churches adjacent to Te Awakairangi: Our Lady of the Rosary, Eastbourne, Petone and Stokes Valley, that have older priests and declining mass-goers. Perhaps the review should be widened to include plans for their future too? I have been most impressed with the organisation of the St John the Baptist Parish at Woywoy on the NSW Central coast where multiple beach side parishes were closed for the same reasons that we have and over a larger area than our parish covers. Our churches were originally built to cater for immediate mass communities and at a time when family worship was the main focus. We need to re-ignite the interest and we should consider not just using existing buildings but siting our churches where they can best serve the whole community.
35. I think it is important that the Parish has a presence in the central city e.g. St Peter and Pauls as it is a place for workers and the general public to pray or just have a peaceful time. Taita is at the opposite end of the parish and should be considered for retention. There must be some arrangement for those who do not have transport to get to mass at weekends.
36. Keep the churches and make one or two presbyteries
37. Suggest we consider renting space for Mass/devotional activities rather than owning buildings for this. This would reduce insurance costs apart from contents insurance, and maintenance costs. Priests could share accommodation in fewer buildings.
38. It is a very difficult decision to make. I have a thought that we need to look at each of the properties. A focal point - place to meet is important to maintain the communities in each of our Church areas. None of the Parish Centres are designed to serve the whole Parish. Perhaps it is time to look at having a new Parish Church and centre where we could all gather together for Sunday Liturgies. Taking into account that we will need a few Masses. If we looked at the land we have in each area, the opportunities for parking and public transport so that all parishioners could have a way to get to Sunday Mass even if they don't have a licence or a car. The only Church Centre that does not have a school is Avalon - I do not see this a reason to close the Church . Before we close any Church and sell off the land, we need to look at what we really want to look like in the future. Maybe we keep a property at the Northern and Southern ends of the Parish. That would mean we keep St Peter and Pauls and St Michaels - while St Michaels is small it has plenty of ground and is up to Earthquake Standards (minimum) I think both Naenae and Avalon would need upgrading. If we should decide to close Naenae Church and Presbytery we should keep the hall. It is in good condition and could be used for as a community centre for St Bernadette's. If we should decide to close Avalon and sell the property, the community of Avalon would have no place to have a centre. Whatever decision we make will have pros and cons and I will be praying for us all as we work to discern the best way forward at this time. As I have to make a choice, I would say either St Bernadette's or St Martin de Porres
39. 1. The degree of each church and presbytery's safety rating and requirements in terms of earthquake repair costings; 2. Whether a church has a school as part of its community; 3. Each church's numerical attendance rates
40. Consider the closure and sale of St Peter and Paul's presbytery. This would allow the parish to fulfil the mandate of Pope Francis in 'taking on the smell of the sheep'. Most parishioners of St Peter and Paul's are affluent and own vehicles and can access the internet so if they need to see a priest for some reason, they can easily arrange that. Parishioners in Taita and Naenae in particular don't always have cars or connectivity and if they do, they have limited money for petrol and limited time due to work commitments. Closure of either Naenae or Taita's churches would be a 'kick in the guts' for these people from which they may never recover. They can go elsewhere for material support and assistance but that is their home for spiritual support and the sacraments.

41. Avalon Church should be sold for development or developed by the church into affordable housing.
42. Keep them all.
43. Shouldn't we be discussing how we can encourage vocations rather than closing up shop?
44. Abandon Lay Pastoral Leadership as a Diocesan strategy that has failed. This way we can save money which can be used for the maintenance of our existing buildings. Lay volunteers can step up (as before) to fill the role of administering the parish and ensuring it runs smoothly.
45. Close Avalon and St Peter and Paul's churches because Mass counts have been declining steadily since 2000. Mass counts show that Naenae and Taita have been steady or increasing since then. Then our priests can move into the presbyteries and live in community they serve.

How do we ensure our recommendation to the Cardinal is life giving for our parish and ensures we provide pastoral care for all people who make up Te Awakairangi?

1. Retain the church where there are the most parishioners who can attend. If reducing the number of churches. The mass schedule should be at least 3 times on a Sunday to cater to parishioners who have work on Sundays
2. Capital wrapped up in real estate should be realised and invested to provide funds to work of the church
3. Most parishioners of St Martin de Porres have already started attending mass at Sts Peter & Paul. This occurred after the Saturday evening mass was stopped at Avalon. Merging the two choirs, musicians, altar servers, readers etc would add more strength to the parish community of Te Awakairangi. I haven't been to St Michael's church or St Bernadette's church hence I am hesitant to comment.
4. It would gather all Te Awakairangi community together in one place for the whole of the Hutt Valley. One church, one presbytery requiring maintenance and expensive running expenses.
5. Consider the extent our current and say the next 10 years parish numbers are a cultural legacy verses the future needs of an active committed Christian / Catholic community of diverse heritage.
6. As above.
7. Central for Taita Naenae and Lower Hutt...frees up capital.
8. Focus the resources of the Parish to Churches and Presbyteries with links to school. Pastoral care for parishioners normally associated with the St. Martin de Porres Church can still be maintained from these three Churches and Presbyteries.
9. We need to capture the imagination of our young people so that our Church lives on. We can't change the Mass of course. As you said our priests are aged with the exception of Patrick Bridgman, who brings energy and is very current. Our young priests of other cultures are beautiful but hard to understand sometimes. Perhaps engage lay people who are lively to speak sometimes in the homily. Pay lay people a good wage to work for the Church? I am old now but still am involved with business and I see the whole world changing not just our Church, especially in the way we do business. Is there a way to embrace Social media?
10. As a resident of Taita, I can clearly see that the cultural and socio-economic makeup of Taita and Naenae is vastly different to the cultural and socio-economic make up of central Lower Hutt. I suspect the community of this area would like to retain a church up this end of the valley for practical reasons like ease of access to the local church and to also stay in the community that they feel comfortable in. I don't want two separate churches with two separate communities, but I do know that people want to go where they feel comfortable and understood. I do think that more pastoral care is needed in the areas of Naenae and Taita. Poverty is commonplace and help with this and the associated issues of mental health problems and the breakdown of the family unit needs to be addressed by pastoral care.
11. The financial gain from selling off this site should assist in future work in the parish and community.
12. Greatly increased lay involvement, including youth. Will require an adequately resourced hub to identify the needs and provide the necessary response and services. Also, a need for greater coordination with other denominations within the Valley
13. Less churches but greater congregations at all our services should be very beneficial, but we must ensure that all who want to attend can.
14. Life giving to me is very much about opening our doors and hearts and serving those that are disadvantaged in our community - e.g. helping with the housing crisis many face in our community. Also helping/supporting our schools/young families as the struggle to give our children a great Christian start in life
15. Centralising the churches and presbyteries would release funds for other purposes
16. It will keep us together as a parish community & inject some differences into celebrations.

17. [Blank]
18. I think that if each Church Community has somewhere to attend Mass in their own locality with a young, vibrant, prayerful, pastoral priest from whatever country, they will be happy. Then we can focus attention and resources on attracting the young to be involved in our parish. Some people I have spoken to, see the Church as closing down and losing hope for the future. The young are our future.
19. It should enable us to concentrate our assets and resources to improve our oldest, largest, and most vibrant Church community.
20. We would be catering for everyone and saving a lot of money that could go to youth and young couple's education and development. The only drawback is that, I know from my cousins overseas, that with closure of churches, the community is dispersed and the Mass count declines. The buses work for summer, but a lot of elderly don't take them in the winter.
21. The economies are one thing but the modernisation of will better provide for the future
22. Working together rather than in isolated silos which often replicate each other allows for: greater diversity, sharing of gifts across the whole area, support for each other and will avoid stress and strain on the Priests who are available for sacramental services. This Easter we have; 4 Masses of the Last Supper, 4 Venerations of the Cross, 4 Easter vigils + 5 Easter Sunday Masses - how does this build community when according to the Mass count there are approximately only 1500 parishioners, and across the whole Hutt Valley there are under 4000. The total population of the Hutt Valley is approximately 143,000 providing pastoral care for all will need a leap of faith and trust, but if we enter into this discernment prayerfully and with open minds and hearts we can change.
23. Life giving • Only if love of God, holiness and of each other is maintained (Beatitudes are fulfilled) • Recruitment of good Shepherds with a skill mix of seniority and adequate numbers. If left with a few they will burn out quickly. • Bringing people together in large enough venues, under 1 roof, will bring about more unity and togetherness in the Parishes. Long term plan for a large church in Lower Hutt with adequate parking and conference facilities for a 1,000 people. In the meantime, have gatherings in a suitable venue at least 3 times a year. • Size and cost of maintenance of buildings alone should not be the only determining factors. The holiness and sacred economy of a church in leading people to God and eternal salvation is the only thing that matters. Finances and church closures will be addressed by parish and archdiocesan committees and decisions made irrespective of this consultation. Let's hope that Goliath is not given preference to David.
24. Need to consider availability of public transport, area to cover effectively, socio-economic of each current Parish, growth of population in future, other?
25. I feel if we were to lose our church then the heart of the local communities will also be lost. A since of belonging to a small caring and loving community is what attracts many of the Parishioners to our church. This will be lost in a much larger community as many may feel alienated and lost among the crowd. Does it not say where 1 or 2 are gathered in my name I am there. Is it not in the smaller groups one can find true spirit of our lord Jesus Christ. Is this not what pastoral care is about after all. God bless and guide you in your decision making on this difficult task.
26. If the health & welfare of the priests is not a priority the church will die
27. If the land could be sold with a mandate for social housing this will be life giving for all the community.
28. I think my idea would be of help to the parish and a van be of help to transfer people who are unable to get to mass each week who need transport
29. This would enable us to truly become one parish.
30. A small bus could provide transport for people who don't drive.
31. If we simply reduce buildings and continue as before, then I believe we will miss the opportunity to be more life giving. Adaptation of the retained buildings in order to facilitate greater numbers and additional and creative use of the plant is essential to providing hubs for pastoral care. Personal pastoral needs at home or nearer homes will be challenging but I

cannot see how more smaller hubs could be feasible. The parish's people will need to learn to respond better to each other's needs rather than leaving this to staff. Creative adaptation and use should also take strongly into account the perspective of young Catholics who have known the parish in some fashion but who may have found regular 'attendance' too much to ask.

32. As long as all parishioners can easily attend the available church that can be accessed reasonably.(transport to and from). The existing parishioners must be welcoming to the new parishioners.
33. For smaller congregations, it could reduce stress and spread the workload when working with a bigger community by joining to another congregation. Several priests living together in a presbytery could be more life giving, supportive and less lonely. Accommodation should be appropriate, accessible with handrails, wet area shower.... for elderly priests Parishioners need to be aware and consider taking others to church in their car
34. By nurturing the feeling of identity and sense of community we should see a strengthening in faith and support for the message that Pope Francis wants us to present and demonstrate to the world.
35. Somehow, we have to break down the invisible walls around our current churches and become one Parish.
36. Different mass timings are really helpful for those who work weekends. If we reduce this there will be more people not coming to church as they cannot make it from work. Instead of growing our Christian faith there will be large decline in this in the community.
37. This would reduce church wealth demonstrating a poorer church. Money from sale of church property could provide a fund for community charitable purposes, maybe using just interest income. Vulnerability to climate issues in surrounding areas e.g. Petone, Eastbourne, Waiwhetu, and Alicetown, Hutt Central could be reduced. Encourage tithing when this is possible; other churches often do this.
38. I think that we need to take care that the people of Avalon, many who are elderly or getting older don't feel isolated from the Parish. Whatever we do we need to be aware of the people on the fringes, the vulnerable and poorer members of our Parish Community and see structures are put in place to reach out to them and provide places and opportunities for them to meet together.
39. [Blank]
40. The spiritual life is very important to our poorer communities. They lean on God heavily and have a very deep faith. We cannot abandon them. They are the heart of our parish and we stand on their shoulders.
41. Avalon's church is in the middle of two other churches, Naenae and Taita. They are both accessible by public transport for Avalon residents.
42. Throughout the parish we have people who are elderly or without a car/licence who want to attend Mass on Sundays. Some have decided to retire near to a Catholic Church so they can walk to Mass when they are no longer able to drive. It is not fair to discard these people - we will be judged on how we look after our most vulnerable.
43. New vocations should be a priority otherwise we will just continue to close down churches when people really need the sacraments. Having newly ordained priests in our parish is a beacon of light and hope to parishioners - and can be models for our young men who God might be calling to the priesthood.
44. Many lay parishioners do not feel comfortable with LPLs and they feel that their talents and abilities are not valued or utilised. If lay pastoral leadership was exercised more as service rather than power this would be helpful and ironically more collaborative.
45. More funds for church upgrades, community living, less focus on the rich and comfortable parishioners.