

GENERAL SYNOD 2018

Standing Committee Report Seconder: The Ven Simon Lumby

Embargoed Against Delivery
Check Against Delivery

In seconding this motion I wish to draw the attention of Synod to five particular sections: the report of the Central Communications Board; the Social Media and Digital Communications Guidelines; the Facilitation Committee; the Parish Development Working Group; and the Working Group for Refugees.

The Central Communications Board item is at paragraph 7 of the Standing Committee report, on page 184, and their report is at Appendix D on page 209. The report refers to the *Daily Prayer* app – launched at this gathering – that contains a simple office with readings for personal reflection. It should be noted that the charge of a nominal €1.09/99p is unavoidably necessitated by copyright issues.

The Broadcasting Committee's work is reflected in this annex because the work of both committees has coalesced. I draw Synod's attention to the request, on page 211, from RTÉ and Jacqueline Mullen seeking suggestions and contributions from parishes. I think Synod would want to join with me in thanking Peter Cheney for his extensive and incisive work in indexing a vast array of documentation relating to the statements, statutes and resolutions of this body but more notably the parish-linked deprivation index he has produced for use by dioceses and our grant-making institutions.

The report draws Synod's attention to the need, continually, to ensure that parishes do not fall foul of copyright law in respect of the reproduction for worship of the text and music of hymns and songs. The *Social Media and Digital Communications Guidelines* item is at paragraph 11 on page 185, and also available on the Church of Ireland website and mentioned in the Central Communications Board report. These are pre-eminently a source of best practice and clarification on how to engage in digital communication and not just within the realm of social media. It is now incumbent upon all in the Church to be aware of and adopt best practice recommended in these guidelines. They are not only about ways of

communicating on social media but also about dignity, about safeguarding, about adult protection, and, now, about the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The Facilitation Committee item is at paragraph 18 of the Standing Committee report, on page 186, and their report is at Appendix H on page 230. It reports a series of meetings with bishops and diocesan secretaries as it seeks to ‘facilitate’ conversations. It is to be noted with affirmation that this ‘light touch’ gives much more scope for locally recognised initiatives to flourish. In witness of this is the ongoing and developing dialogue between the United Diocese of Limerick and Killaloe and the United Diocese of Tuam, Killala and Achonry.

The Parish Development Working Group item is at paragraph 25 of the Standing Committee report, on page 188, and their report is at Appendix K on page 237. It should be noted by this Synod with great gratitude that the working of this group has enriched the Church for so long. The group has bravely and with self-awareness come to the conclusion that its work is complete. It is now the duty and calling of parishes and dioceses to continue the work this group has so ably fostered and pioneered. With the permission of the Chair, may I invite Synod to show its appreciation of this group and its work?

The Working Group for Refugees item is at paragraph 32 of the Standing Committee report, on page 194, and their report is at Appendix Q, on page 265. I draw Synod’s attention to the ‘topics for discussion’ box at the head of their report. Whilst the report focuses on some key and significant Church projects and activities regarding the care and reception of refugees, it alludes to the positive way in which the Church at a local level has responded to secular and civil outreach projects. I invite Synod to be mindful of an implication here; that unless the whole community – of which we are a part – responds with love and generosity to those in need, then that need is unfulfilled. I draw Synod’s attention to the Bonhoeffer quotation in the box at the head of the Bishops’ Appeal Advisory Committee. Let us continue to stand alongside those who are poor or marginalised, and bring the wider community with us.

I second the motion.