

GENERAL SYNOD 2008

CHURCH OF IRELAND YOUTH DEPARTMENT REPORT

Proposed by Revd Robert Miller (Derry)

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to propose the 2008 report of the Church of Ireland Youth department. The youth department continues to be encouraged by Christ's work amongst our young people at all levels of church. Indeed as our report indicates much that would encourage is happening, not only in the range of programmes delivered by CIYD, but also in the range of programmes in operation across our dioceses.

We have an able and committed staff who work wholeheartedly in fulfilling the mission and vision of the department *'...being responsible for the development and co-ordination of Church of Ireland youth ministry.'* This work is facilitated by the commitment of the volunteers who serve on the Central Board and Executive committee and by the practical and financial support of the RCB, and the Youth Affairs Section. We could not do what we do without your commitment to our ministry, so "Thank-you," from myself and the team in CIYD.

You will see from the report that we have many programmes running, and that equally diocesan and parish youth ministry is developing apace. I shall attempt to touch on some of these encouraging elements.

Our Youth Ministry Development Worker in the Republic of Ireland (Shane Tucker) has continued to develop and equip locally-based youth work. Two key elements within this are the *Mobilize* course (a youth leadership course at foundation level) and our annual

youth camp ANOIS. Shane has also just completed the *INSPIRE* resource from CIYD for parishes engaging in youth work.

Our Youth Ministry Development Worker in Northern Ireland (Sharon Hamill) continues to resource Youth workers in the North through providing training and retreat opportunities. The numbers of employed youth workers has grown significantly with our March residential hosting 50 from across the island, and with Church of Ireland parishes employing around 70 youth workers.

Whilst this is a great encouragement to see the church at local and diocesan levels engaging in resourcing youth ministry, it brings some challenges around employment and management of youth workers. CIYD would plan to bring some proposals to General Synod in 2009 to give guidance on the employment, training, and management of youth workers.

As we all agree; ministry amongst and to young people is not always straightforward. Some of the more difficult issues, such as issues around mental health in adolescence, suicide, sex and sexuality, have been issues addressed by CIYD. An example being the two-day residential *Celebrate Sex* hosting 25 youth leaders who addressed issues around young people and sexuality.

In September 2007 with the support of The Church of Ireland Priorities, and the RCB, CIYD moved forward in employing Ms Catherine Little as our Year Out Team Co-ordinator in the JUMP Programme. This is a new venture for CIYD and we are very excited about the progress we are making in this important area of ministry.

Central in the positive development of ministry in CIYD is the Youth Officer (David Brown.) Some aspects of the youth officer's role have developed from programme delivery to the support and management of the department's ministry. One area that has seen particular emphasis is an increased input in supporting diocesan strategic initiatives.

Mrs Barbara Swann works to ensure the significant burden of administration is efficiently managed; she is often a very important first point of contact for those approaching CIYD. Mrs Claire Geoghegan fulfils the essential role of co-ordinating the Child protection checks for N. Ireland. I would like to record my, and hopefully our, appreciation to all the CIYD staff and volunteers.

As our mission field becomes more complex and diverse we have seen that it was important to be focussed and clear about our priorities in delivering ministry. As a result the Central Board and executive of the CIYD prepared and launched our strategic plan 2007-2010 on 17th April 2007. This was exciting in the scope and vision that it encapsulates. The Strategic Plan also works as a useful checklist to monitor our range of activity and performance. One of the aspects of our ministry is in the programmes we deliver, do read through the report and see what your youth department is delivering.

I hope that this report will be a catalyst to some lively and informed debate on the floor of this synod. The youth of our Church are committed and we all have the privilege of being able to minister to and alongside them. Allow CIYD the privilege of accompanying you as you reach out to the young people in your care. We welcome your prayerful consideration of this report and I commend it to you.