

APPENDIX K
PARISH DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP
REPORT 2009

MEMBERSHIP

Mr D Bain	Mrs C O’Laoire
Rev WKM Brew	Rev PL Storey
Rt Rev KH Clarke	Mr J Tyrrell
Mr P Hamill	Rev AM Wilkinson
Rev DP Hoey	Rev ECJ Woods
Mr AC McElhinney	

Following a review of the pilot programme of parish development for the Church of Ireland, *Church21*, which commenced in early 2006 and drew to a conclusion at the end of 2007, the Standing Committee authorized the Parish Development Working Group, with some change of membership, to run a second programme.

Invitations to apply were sent out to every parish in Ireland at the start of September 2008. Applications were prioritised by the bishops according to specific criteria.

An information day was held at the start of November. Twenty nine parishes from all over Ireland attended.

Twenty-five parishes, of all shapes and sizes, have now been accepted to be part of the programme and have formed Parish Teams who will represent their parishes at the various stages of the two-year process.

The first event, a *Team Together Day*, was held on 14 February at All Hallows College, Dublin, to spell out the process and to offer motivation for the next stage.

The programme involves:

- A six-session preparation course designed to help the parishes identify their key areas of development;
- A three-day conference offering parishes help to shape and share their vision;
- A year-long period of facilitation with external support and accountability;
- A Follow-up Day for parishes to share their stories and to identify what will help them keep motivated for development.

In addition, other key parts of the programme have been established:

1. A Church21 administrator, Mrs Annette McGrath has been appointed and this new arrangement is working well.
2. Facilitators have been recruited and trained.
3. Facilitators have made their initial links with the parishes.
4. The Church21 website (www.church21.ie) has been set up and is being added to regularly.
5. Rev Ian Coffey has been engaged as the Church21 guide and speaker.
6. The parishes are now commencing the first stage of the process, the preparation course.

The next stage, after the parishes have a chance to process the findings of the preparation course, is the Church21 conference in September 2009.