

## **GENERAL SYNOD 2012**

### **THE CHURCH OF IRELAND YOUTH DEPARTMENT REPORT**

**Proposed by The Revd Adrian Dorrian, Diocese of Down**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Archbishops, Members of Synod:

2011 was a year of some change for CIYD. Staffing changes, developmental changes and changes as a result of external circumstances have ensured the Department has had to work hard, to keep on top of things. I am pleased to report that in the midst of these changes, CIYD delivered frontline work for youth workers, youth leaders and young people at a consistently high standard throughout the year – through Connect Youth Leader Days, the Connect Venue at Summer Madness, Reflect Retreats and the Anois youth camp, to name but a few – while at the same time ensuring representation for the COI at national level both north and south of the border through the National Youth Council of Ireland, Youthnet and Youth Link among others.

The delivery of these services, during a period of change, is a testimony to the team staff team. We note that Mrs Sharon Hamill's period of maternity leave has not impacted the Connect Leader days, and we welcome at the end of 2011 the appointment of Ms Jude Trenier as The ROI Youth Ministry Development Worker.

The shape of youth work in Ireland and Youth Ministry in the Church of Ireland continues to develop, and events of the past year have raised a number of key questions for us as a department and as a wider Church. CIYD, like other departments, has not been immune to the financial situation and the staff and board have recognised the need to cut cloth where possible. This is one of the reasons for the cessation during 2011 of the Jump Programme in its original form. However, after a hiatus, work is now well

underway to explore the options for intern and young adult leader support through the Department without a dedicated paid post.

The question of support for youth workers and youth leaders across the Church will become increasingly pertinent for two reasons. Firstly, 2011 and indeed the early part of 2012 has seen the departure of a number of valued colleagues at Diocesan Level. The affected dioceses will know best the way forward for youth ministry but given the current financial situation it cannot be assumed that appointment of new DYOs will automatically follow. CIYD will be seeking to find ways to augment its support for the excellent work that goes on in the Dioceses. Secondly, as Youth Work takes on an increasingly professional demeanour (we note as one example the growth of the Centre for Youth Ministry Ireland, in Belfast Bible College), questions of Continuing Professional Development for Youth Workers and support for volunteers will arise. CIYD in 2011 piloted the Manus human resources training programme.

The Church of Ireland is, we believe, well placed to respond to the increasing emphasis on ongoing support, and indeed is to be one of the first agencies to be assessed under the new National Quality Standards Framework through the Department of Children and Youth Affairs in the Republic.

Other broader questions about the future of youth work continue to present themselves. CIYD looks forward to ongoing co-operation and communication with the Children's Ministry Network as the Church asks how Youth and Children's Ministry can best relate to each other. This is of course against the backdrop of ongoing co-operation with analogous groups in other denominations, particularly the Department of Youth and Children's Work in the Methodist Church.

I am delighted to note that the General Synod 2012 sees/has seen the official launch of the CIYD strategic plan 2012-2015. The implementation of this strategy will better enable CIYD to equip and empower the church and it continues to engage with youth ministry across the Dioceses.

As noted, 2011 was a transitional year for CIYD. That transition has continued into 2012, but not at the expense of delivering services. The Church of Ireland is rightly indebted the CIYD team, Director David Brown, Secretary Barbara Swann, Northern Development Worker Sharon Hamill and for part of 2011 JUMP worker Catherine Little, for all they have delivered. We look forward to reporting next year more fully on the work of Jude Trenier, Southern Development Worker. We are also indebted to the host of supporters and volunteers who help deliver programmes throughout the year.

It is my expectation that the busyness of 2011 will be echoed and indeed built upon in our report for 2012.

Members of General Synod, it is therefore with great pleasure that I propose for your consideration the Report of the Church of Ireland Youth Department.