

## **GENERAL SYNOD 2013**

### **Church of Ireland Youth Department**

**Proposed by Mr Edward Hardy, Diocese of Limerick & Killaloe**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

2012 was a challenging and difficult year for Church of Ireland Youth Department.

The three main challenges were

1. The exit of a number of Diocesan Youth Officers from posts in a number of Dioceses.
2. Funding reductions from key funders.
3. The departure of a number of staff from central C.I.Y.D.

The exit of a number of Diocesan Youth Officers was something that could not have been predicted with Dioceses in Southern Province having greatest number of departures. Following Mr. Mike Edwards retirement from Kilmore Diocese, Mr. Mark Dunwoody left Cork Diocese, Mr. Dave Cavan from Derry & Raphoe, Rev. Vicki Lynch from Limerick, Mr. Scott Evans from Cashel and finally with the contract of M/s Alison Jones due to terminate at the end of June 2013. It is without doubt that there will be a challenge to secure suitable dynamic replacements to replace these individuals. The appointment of Mr. Martin Montgomery to the Diocese of Derry & Raphoe is a positive development to note that the position in Cork Diocese is advertised. The funding for these positions remains a challenge for Dioceses but as a church without doubt can we afford NOT to replace these positions?

The main funding sources for Church of Ireland Youth Department continue to be from our Central Church resources via Allocations Committee and Department of Children & Youth Affairs in South of Ireland. All present are aware the funding pressures within our Church resulting in reductions on Central Church funding. C.I.Y.D records with thanks the support of the Central Church, both financially and strategically. The other main C.I.Y.D funding body, the Department of Education and Science was also forced to cut funding due to economic pressures however this body continues to be maintaining a very important role in the finances of C.I.Y.D. In 2012 the income from young people, parents, guardians and youth leaders also displayed a reduction.

As mentioned earlier the third challenge that evolved for Church of Ireland Youth Department was the recent departure of no less than three of four central staff members- Mr. David Brown, M/s Sharon Hamill and M/s. Jude Trenier. M/s Barbara Swann continues in her position as Office Administrator in Belfast Office.

The Central Board and Executive of Church of Ireland Youth Department remain committed despite the above challenges to the delivery of the 2012- 2015 Strategic Plan launched at General Synod 2012. An operational plan has been created in light of recent challenges this includes key objectives for both the Northern and Southern Province. This plan also includes a revised staffing structure and it is hoped to very shortly advertise for two Youth Ministry Development Officers to support the implementation of the strategic and operational plans. The Northern based Youth Ministry Development Officer will support the Diocese of Down & Dromore, Connor, Armagh, Derry & Raphoe and Clogher. The Southern Based Youth Ministry Development Officer will support the Diocese of Cork, Cloyne & Ross, Limerick & Killaloe, Cashel & Ossory, Meath & Kildare, Tuam, Killala & Achonry, Dublin & Glendalough and finally Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh. An important aspect of the work for the two new workers will be to work alongside personnel in Diocese to ensure the delivery of effective Ministry to the young people of our Church. M/s. Barbara Swann will continue to support CIYD as office administrator.

C.I.Y.D. continued to support each Diocese via devolved funding programme. This programme has allowed Dioceses funding to support youth Ministry in many forms at Diocesan and Parochial level. The feedback from Dioceses is that this funding is integral to supporting youth programmes, staffing and services in many Dioceses. The reports from the many Dioceses included in book of reports displays the wide and varied ways in which this substantial financial support is expended.

C.I.Y.D continued during the year to deliver a wide and varied number of training and central programme events:

1. The “Connect” training events continued throughout the year mainly using parish facilities in Northern Ireland.
2. A Reflect Youth Leaders training event in Tullamore, Co. Offaly in partnership with Meath & Kildare Diocese.
3. An important event for many Youth Leaders was retreat to Berlin where the teaching programme was facilitated by Bishop Ken Clarke.
4. The training programme and café venue at Summer Madness is deemed important to many leaders and young adults attending this excellent event.
5. The Church of Ireland Youth Department in partnership with many Diocesan volunteers and youth workers planned and delivered its annual “Anois” event at Kilkenny College for over 150 young people and leaders over the October bank holiday weekend.
6. Youth Link in Northern Ireland provides important support in the Training of both volunteer and paid youth workers.
7. C.I.Y.D. supported many Diocese and parishes countrywide with training and programme events during 2012.

As C.I.Y.D. enters a new phase for the development of Youth Ministry in our Church with challenges in terms of funding the importance of role of Volunteers throughout our church cannot be underestimated. The tireless hours by numerous youth worker

volunteers at all parish, diocesan and central church continues to be extremely important for continuity of Youth Ministry.

The relational encouragement by all adults throughout our church of these many volunteers and many young people will be critical to the future of our church. This is not a difficult task and can be as simple as a simple recognition of mere existence.

Over the years I have noted a number of relational practitioners in operation probably at times without knowing the important role they have fulfilled.

Each Sunday one elderly parishioner in my parish spends 5/10 minutes simply talking to the small number of young people and hearing about their week's events.

A youth leader from our Diocese spoke about the conversations, encouragement and pots of jam that he received when in early teens from another elderly lady in his parish and claimed that his current church involvement could be strongly linked to this lady parishioner.

Over the years I noted a cleric who also had been exceptionally successful in the encouragement of young people in the parishes that he served. From observations it would appear that the only ingredient that this cleric used the odd pizza or Chinese take away and spending time encouraging and listening to each and every young person in the parishes he served as curate and rector.

In conclusion, in my opinion the importance of RELATIONAL MINISTRY to the encouragement and support to young people and volunteer leaders by every adult will be critical to the future of our Church in these challenging times where the financial resources may not exist to pay full time youth leaders across our church.

It gives me great pleasure to formally propose the Report of the Church of Ireland Youth Department as presented in the book of reports.