

## **GENERAL SYNOD 2014**

### **C.I.C.E. MOTION**

**Proposed by Mr Adrian Oughton, Diocese of Meath**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

Archbishop, Members of Synod

Last year Synod adopted two motions regarding the Church of Ireland College of Education, C.I.C.E. Motions 17 and 18 of 2013 can be read on page 325 of the Reports.

As a result of these motions the General Synod Board of Education Executive asked Dr Dympna Glendenning, B.L., an expert in education law, and Mr Thomas Flanagan, a former schools' Inspector in Northern Ireland, to investigate and report. Their report is found on pages 312 – 329 of the Book of Reports. It is my calling to bring you through some aspects of that report, while the Bishop of Clogher will deal with other parts.

The background to this report was the decision of the Minister of Education to implement the National Strategy for Higher Education Report. This stressed the need for smaller publicly funded institutions, of which C.I.C.E. is one, to be incorporated into existing Universities. Future funding for such bodies would depend on the satisfaction of the Higher Education Authority (H.E.A.) with progress towards such goals. The time frame for such progress was just six months. C.I.C.E. had to find a home within a University, or lose its essential public funding.

Discussions began with Trinity, which many, including myself, thought of as the natural and ideal home, because of a perception that Trinity was “the Protestant University”. Such thinking is out-of-date. It was impossible to agree C.I.C.E.’s adoption by Trinity. A joint statement by the Archbishop of Dublin and the Provost of Trinity, reproduced on page 327, makes this clear. I quote “despite the best efforts of both sides, agreement was

not reached”. The words “inclusivity” and “diversity” figure prominently. C.I.C.E. is inclusive in that it accepts students from Church of Ireland backgrounds, but also from other Reformed Christian traditions. Diversity is present in the many different second-level schools represented among the undergraduates, including many from non-S.E.C. Protestant managed schools. The students are diverse too, in their socio-economic origins and their geographical locations. But words can mean different things to different people !

The authorities of C.I.C.E. kept the Board of Education informed; meetings were held at eight venues nationwide with Church of Ireland Primary schools; Patrons were informed of negotiations.

Eventually discussions began with Dublin City University in Glasnevin, a University which, incidentally figures in the top 100 of new Universities worldwide. D.C.U. has indicated its willingness to accept the ethos of C.I.C.E., its restricted intake and its four core principles of Motion 18 of General Synod 2013.

The Report, on page 324, recommends that legally binding agreement be entered into if C.I.C.E. becomes part of D.C.U.

On behalf of the Board of Education I want to thank Dr Glendenning and Mr Flanagan for their work; I want to thank Dr Anne Lodge for her leadership of C.I.C.E., frequently in the face of hostile reaction; I want to wish well to C.I.C.E. in its new habitat, where far from being an endangered species, it will display its true plumage for all to see.

**A Ard Easpaig, go raibh maith agat. I wish to propose the motion.**