

GENERAL SYNOD 2007

CHURCH IN SOCIETY COMMITTEE REPORT

Seconded by the Very Revd Gordon Wynne (Cashel & Ossory)

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

The Synod has heard the scope of the Church in Society Committee's work, and also that the ground is worked over carefully, to produce results plot by plot rather than aimlessly scratching many acres with one hoe.

There is no need for me to repeat these general matters but rather to shine light on the Committee's work from a particular angle that could help.

We are often enjoined to think globally and to act locally. The Committee aims to help church people to do that. In our world many things are moving away from the purview and competence of the single nation and becoming refocussed locally, with a horizon that is not national but global. Obvious examples are care for our planet, the fight against poverty and the approach to globalization. The Church in Society Committee is not only responding to the new focus but is trying to be proactive. Please interpret the committee's report in that way. If we consider the situation of the elderly, of the embryonic stem cell, of the church in the institutions of the EU, of the farmer in modern Ireland, we need at once to be global and local. The researchers of California, the drought of Australia and the thirst for opportunity in Latvia are as significant as the quality of decision-making and volunteer support that is available in Carlow and Coleraine.

I have some pride, I confess, in my own work as chairperson of the Church in Society Committee's group on theology and social justice in the Republic of Ireland. My pride comes not from my own efforts but from the fact that much of the inspiration, the

expertise and the sheer energy for my group's work comes from the very fields and landscape that you see out the window today. I find nothing but enthusiasm and cooperation in what I do from the schools, the voluntary groups, the farmers, the professionals, the Garda Siochana, and many others in their life and work here in rural Leinster, where I work also. It is good to be here in Kilkenny now, because it is in ordinary life around here that a good bit of our thinking and working is rooted.

I second the Committee's Report