the church of ireland - apologetic for mission?

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THE
mission
TO END LEPROSY

contents

"Mission is at the core of what we believe about ourselves in the Church of Ireland"

foreword

The Archbishop of Armagh has invited a conversation to take place within the Church of Ireland.

In his Presidential address to the 2016 General Synod he suggested that commemorating 150 years since Disestablishment was an opportunity to have "a comprehensive, objective and external review" of ourselves as a Church community.

This is a courageous and helpful invitation to "lovingly but also critically, to tell us where we as a Christian tradition on this island need to strike out in new directions, while also valuing what we have received though succeeding generations".

Archbishop Clarke said that the "Church of Ireland must look beyond its own self-interest and its own survival ... (to) look beyond the present into the future to which we believe God is calling us". In saying this he was affirming that mission is at the core of what we believe about ourselves in the Church of Ireland.

In speaking of the mission of the Church of Ireland the Archbishop reminded us that "mission is almost always in a local context - whether diocese, parish or other local community ... How this will happen will inevitably be different according to place and context". The role of the central Church is to give "as much support and structural shape as it can achieve, in order to serve local communities in their mission and service to the world".

Under the theme of 'Shaping to Serve' the Primate recognised the efforts and work of so many over generations, to this present day.

He also noted the challenge to "reshape some of our structures so that they may more effectively serve the wider life, outreach and witness of the Church into the long-term".

In late 2015 The Mission to End Leprosy, formerly known as The Leprosy Mission Ireland commissioned a research paper, now entitled *The Church of Ireland - Apologetic for Mission*. It asked what the Church of Ireland believed about mission, what affected its ability to deliver on this and what changes might encourage its effectiveness?

This paper includes the findings of this research. It can be freely downloaded at http://missionreport.leprosy.ie/

We are grateful for the commitment of generations within the Church of Ireland to the mission of Christ in our world. Our simple desire is for the wellbeing of the Church and to the furtherance of its mission.

We offer this paper as a contribution to the conversation initiated by the Archbishop of Armagh.

Ken Gibson

CEO The Mission to End Leprosy

"Global mission – a commitment to take the message to every part of the globe, including home – was born in that moment. The existence of the Church of Ireland is evidence that those first Middle Eastern disciples acted upon that commission."

executive summary

this paper asks:

1. Does the Church of Ireland have an apologetic for mission, including global mission?

2. If such an apologetic exists does the Church of Ireland demonstrate it in action?

3. What factors affect the ability of the Church of Ireland to deliver on any major stated priority, including mission?

4. Are there key changes the Church of Ireland can make to increase its effectiveness in mission?

■ chapter one
a church of ireland apologetic for mission?

There are two ways of finding out whether a denomination can demonstrate an apologetic for mission. One is to look at what it says in its most important documents. The other is to observe what is demonstrated in action.

1. Texts in seminal documents in the Church of Ireland suggest that mission is by no means peripheral to what it believes to be important. These include:

   a. Service of Ordination for Priests

   b. Service of Ordination or Consecrating of a Bishop

   c. Mission Statement from the House of Bishops[1]

   d. Vision Statement of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute

   e. Statements made and priorities demonstrated by the work of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland

   f. APCK (Association for Promoting Christian Knowledge), which is linked to the Church of Ireland but independent from it. It acts as a publisher for the Church of Ireland.

2. Key texts from the wider Anglican Communion, including:

   a. Five Marks of Mission[2]

   b. Towards Dynamic Mission: Renewing the Church for Mission[3]

   c. Anglicans In Mission: A Transforming Journey[4]

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1   http://meathandkildare.org/resources

2   http://www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/marks-of-mission.aspx

3   Anglican Consultative Council Mission Issues and Strategy Advisory Group

4   Mission Commission of the Anglican Communion

■ chapter two
mission: more than apologetic?

Peter Drucker says there are two crucial questions any organisation should ask itself. What's your business ... *and ... how's business?*

Can the Church of Ireland point to significant evidence to support its stated commitment to mission, both locally and globally? Whilst difficult to accurately quantify there is evidence of work going on at all levels to make good on that commitment.

1. Stated Diocesan Mission Initiatives.

2. Long Term Church: In line with the vision of the Archbishop of Armagh for the future of the Church, Long Term Church combines a number of strategic projects which will develop and re-organise the central Church in order that it can better support the missional and pastoral strategy of the whole Church of Ireland.

3. Bishops' Appeal - the Church of Ireland World Aid and Development Programme.

4. The Priorities Fund was established in 1980. It supports projects within the Church of Ireland, including the following categories: community, areas of need and outreach initiatives.

5. Diocesan Link Projects: A number of dioceses in the Church of Ireland run significant mission projects with link dioceses or organisations.

6. Mission Links: According to a 2007 Survey some 99 parishes had links using the mission agencies and 54 parishes had more than one link.

7. There are a range of bodies, run by the Church of Ireland, with the purpose of meeting practical need. These range from Boards of Social Action, retirement homes and other initiatives. The Church also run a large number of schools, particularly in the Republic of Ireland, as well as chaplaincies in various institutions. The Church of Ireland Directory lists over forty national organisations. There are also many diocesan and local bodies.

8. There are high levels of volunteering amongst members of the Church of Ireland, contributing to local communities and meeting practical need.

9. Mission Agencies: As noted in the 2015 Church of Ireland Directory there are 14 constituent members (Mission Agencies) of AMS (Association of Mission Societies). These agencies promote mission in many manifestations in a variety of global locations.

10. Short-term Mission Trips: These provide opportunities for groups or individuals from the Church of Ireland to visit a partner location in another part of the world.

11. Use of clergy from overseas.

12. The Mothers Union is one of the most significant organisations in the Church of Ireland, being represented in every diocese and the majority of parishes across the denomination. The vision of the Mothers' Union is 'a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful, and flourishing relationships'.[5] From this flows the mission of the organisation 'to show our Christian faith by the transformation of communities ... worldwide'.

13. Boards and Committees of General Synod: The existence of a variety of bodies established by the General Synod suggests a stated commitment to mission, both locally and globally, within the Church of Ireland. In recent years the Church of Ireland has established mechanisms, including several Committees of the General Synod, to address significant social issues. These have included:
    a. The Hard Gospel process and Project
    b. The Church and Society Commission
    c. The Select Committee on Human Sexuality in the Context of Christian Belief

14. Eco-Congregations: These take an eco-approach to worship, lifestyle, property and finance management, community outreach and contact with the developing world.

15. Challenges of recession: Anecdotal evidence suggests many local actions by parishes to help alleviate need. Comments from interviewees also suggest a frustration with the Church of Ireland regarding what it has been able to speak into this context.

5   http://www.dublin.mothersunion.ie/who-we-are.html

16. Although difficult to accurately quantify there is evidence of significant mission taking place in parishes at local level..

chapter three
implementation deficit disorder

Implementation Deficit Disorder is a term used by Irish Management Consultant, Eddie Molloy.[6] It describes the struggles that any organisation seeking to deliver on a priority can face. Molloy uses the image of an iceberg when describing the challenges that cause Implementation Deficit Disorder:[7]

- The visible part of the iceberg as representing visible challenges that can include structures, core processes, funding and skills.

- The invisible or hidden part of the iceberg as representing the cultural challenges such as values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudice and mindset.

This model is used to illustrate the possible obstacles facing the Church of Ireland in its commitment to mission.

1. **The Visible Iceberg**
   a. *Process becomes the thing*: The danger that having the correct process becomes the measure of success rather than achieving actual outcomes.

   b. *Execution:* The capacity to complete assigned tasks and responsibilities to customary or specified standards within a certain timeframe. Does the Church of Ireland have the machinery to drive a mission agenda forward?

   c. *Beyond a Mission Statement:* The failure to create a mechanism or process for allowing the House of Bishop's Mission Statement[8] to inform the priorities or actions of dioceses, parishes or key bodies within the Church of Ireland means it is an aspiration that few are aware of or guided by.

   d. *Accountability:* This is the simple process of reporting on whether one took the action one committed to. Reporting in the Church of Ireland is usually retrospective without an emphasis on planned action for the future. Success is rarely defined and if delivery does not happen there is no consequence.

   e. *One size doesn't fit all:* The desire to have representation on boards and committees needs to be balanced with ensuring appropriate competencies for the task in hand.

   f. *Energy reserves:* When one interviewee mused that *"We are a well-resourced heritage society with a modest religious affairs department"* he / she was referring to the large legacy of buildings that the Church of Ireland must maintain, with the impact this has on energy and resources.

2. **The Invisible Iceberg**
   a. *Organisational culture:* "People within an organisational culture share a tacit understanding of the way the world works, their place in it, the informal and formal dimensions of their workplace, and the value of their actions. It controls the way their people act and behave, how they talk and inter-relate, how long it takes to make decisions, how trusting they are and, most importantly, how effective they are at delivering results".[9] How might we describe our organisational culture and is there anything in it that can inhibit mission?

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6   Presentation to Social Workers Adult Mental Health Conference (25/04/14)

7   Ibid

8   http://meathandkildare.org/resources/

9   http://www.europeanbusinessreview.com/?p=6529

b. *History, psyche and identity*: Has history helped create a psyche described by one interviewee as being about "... keeping ourselves safe, secure and maintaining the status quo", or the temptation to keep the 'head below the parapet'. Has it also contributed to a fear of diluting cultural identity as well as fear of being perceived to be 'sheep stealing'?

c. *Passing it on to the next generation:* Maintaining the church and passing it on to the next generation was a strong characteristic noted by one interviewee. They commented "Locally we see mission (in the same way) as transmission of the land. We want to pass it on as good, or better, than we got it. Transmission of faith and land (can be) mutually interpretative in rural minority communities".

3. **Theological struggles with mission**

   a. Lesser motives of mission as practiced in the past can discourage current involvement.

   b. Evangelism is something that the Church of Ireland can struggle with. The struggle is both theological and in the practice of it. By virtue of its own cultural instincts and because it now finds itself in a more pluralist society the Church of Ireland faces the challenge of understanding and articulating what it means by evangelism.

   c. The struggle with evangelism is sometimes not just theological but with those methods that seem culturally alien.

   d. Evangelism can be regarded as an unspoken marker to demarcate contrasting camps of churchmanship and theological outlook within the Church of Ireland?

   e. How is it possible to keep in mind the heart and theological imperative that motivates us to acts of service?

4. **The sea upon which the iceberg floats**

   The Church of Ireland does not exist in a cultural, economic or political vacuum. There are external influences that come to bear on its ability or disposition to be missional, either at home or globally.

   a. Distrust of institutions.

   b. Postmodern culture.

   c. The changing nature of Irish society and the place of the Church within it means that the Church has less influence on culture and society.

   d. The development of rapidly changing and increasingly multi-cultural and multi-faith societies in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

   e. The Church of Ireland is not immune from changing patterns of church attendance on this island.

   f. Unrelenting financial pressure may leave little energy for thinking missionally, either at home or abroad.

5. **Leadership challenges**

   a. For any organisation to make good on what it chooses to make a priority it will require leadership. It is obvious that clergy have a key role in this regard.

   b. In times of uncertainty or in a risk averse organisation people don't want questions they want answers. They want to be told that they will be protected from the pain of change.

   c. Are clergy sufficiently skilled or do they have the necessary temperament to fulfill the expected job requirements, particularly those involving inter-personal contact with people who may feel discomfited?

   d. There is a danger of training clergy for a world that no longer exists.

■ chapter four
lessons for the church of ireland

What are some of the crucial lessons for the Church of Ireland if mission is to be as much in the DNA of what it does as what it says?

1. *Stirring of the waters:* There are serious stirrings of commitment to the Church of Ireland being a missional organisation and a gradual wrestling with how this aspiration can become reality.

2. Spiritual renewal at local level has been identified as key to the mission of the Church. "We cannot give away what we do not have".[10]

3. *Structures fit for purpose:* There is an underlying mood for General Synod and denominational structures to be more focused, efficient and goal-driven. "One of the characteristic and fundamental missionary tasks of the Church is to examine and review its structures to see that they continue to remain suitable for mission".[11]

4. *The diocese is a key unit for mission development.*

5. *Leading in mission:* For mission, or indeed any other priority in the Church of Ireland, to become more than aspiration requires leadership. That leadership involves two processes - diagnosis and action.

6. Effective leadership at any level in the Church of Ireland is about interventions that mobilise people to address worthy challenges. Adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilising people to tackle tough challenges and to thrive.

7. *Episcopal leadership:* Mission should be central to what the Church of Ireland does and bishops have a key role in this as 'brokers' of mission in their own dioceses.

8. *Clergy:* Within the Church of Ireland if something is not happening at parish level then it is not happening. Clergy are, and have been, trained to be pastors. They also need to be equipped with the skills and expertise to be adaptive leaders.

9. *Resourcing leaders:* Ministry and vocation are not unique to clergy. They are to be exercised by every member of the church. The model of *every member* ministry is both biblical and Anglican.

10. *Agents for mission:* The changed financial circumstances of recent years force every mission agency to constantly refresh a sense of purpose. Survival for its own sake is not enough.

11. *Made on purpose:* What is the most effective body or mechanism to promote mission within the Church of Ireland?

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10   Comment from Council for Mission Breakout Group: 2014 General Synod
11   p 9 Towards Dynamic Mission: Renewing the Church for mission (Jaci Maraschin)

"... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Acts 1:8 NIV

introduction

A small group of people had just lived through traumatic circumstances that would have shaken their confidence to the core. Some of them were city dwellers but many of them were born and brought up in the country.

It was to such a collection of people that Christ spoke a matter of weeks after His crucifixion and resurrection. The disciples did not always fully understand what their master taught them. He also had a habit of presenting them with tasks beyond what they believed they were capable of.

Shortly before leaving His disciples and ascending into heaven Christ gave His disciples a promise and a commission. "… you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."[12]

From this small ordinary group of people grew one of the most mission-oriented organisations the world has ever known. Somehow the message they were entrusted with went from Jerusalem to every corner of the earth. Global mission – a commitment to take the message to every part of the globe – was born in that moment.

The fact that the Church exists in Ireland today shows that the commission given to those first Middle Eastern disciples was carried out. By its very existence the Church of Ireland is part of the fruits of that global mission.

In a speech in Cape Town Robert Kennedy said,

> *There is a Chinese curse that says, 'May he live in interesting times.' Like it or not we live in interesting times. They are times of danger and uncertainty;*

> *but they are also more open to the creative energy of men (sic) than any other time in history.*

Through the significant moments of its history the Church of Ireland has shown its resilience and ability to adapt to new circumstances. It has certainly lived in *interesting times* in its history. From the upheaval of Disestablishment in 1871 it navigated through the shifting ground of Irish society and politics to the present day. It now shares the challenge of the rest of the Christian Church on this island – of finding its place in a very different Irish society. In an age of economic challenge it must also find new ways to make itself sustainable.

The Irish Church owes its very existence to the DNA of global mission that grew from those first disciples that Christ commissioned. It has famously reproduced that DNA throughout its history as Christians from these shores set out into the unknown with the same message.

This paper asks whether the Church of Ireland shares that same commitment to mission – to carry the message out beyond the confines of itself? It does so by asking four questions:

1. Does the Church of Ireland have an apologetic for mission, including global mission?
2. If such an apologetic exists does the Church of Ireland demonstrate it in action?
3. What factors affect the ability of the Church of Ireland to deliver on any major stated priority, including mission?
4. Are there key changes the Church of Ireland can make to increase its effectiveness in mission?

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12   Acts 1:8 New International Version

The Church is the only society on earth that exists for the benefit of non-members"

William Temple - Archbishop of Canterbury

chapter one

a church of ireland apologetic for mission?

How do we articulate the mission of the Church of Ireland in a way that can be embraced and supported by all?[13]

Mission is about the 'other'.

To engage in Christian apologetics is to present a rational basis for the Christian faith. With regards to mission, either at home or globally, is there a Church of Ireland apologetic for the same? In other words, can rational evidence be presented to identify the level of importance of mission to the Church of Ireland?

There are two ways of finding out whether a denomination can demonstrate an apologetic for mission. One is to look at what the denomination has to say about it in its most important documents. The other is to observe how this is demonstrated in action.

1. **Key texts within the Church of Ireland**

    Texts in seminal documents in the Church of Ireland suggest that mission is not peripheral to what it believes to be important.

    a. Service of Ordination for Priests

    Ordination Services in the 2004 Book of Common Prayer contain clear emphases on mission, in its various manifestations, for those seeking to be ordained into leadership in the Church of Ireland.

    In Ordination Service One the charge to those to be ordained is specified:

    … to be messengers, watchmen, and stewards of the Lord; to teach and to admonish, to feed and provide for

the Lord's family; to seek for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for his children who are in the midst of this naughty world, that they may be saved through Christ forever".[14]

In rather more contemporary language Ordination Service 2 states:

Priests (or presbyters) in the Church of God are called to work with the bishop and with other priests as servants and shepherds among the people to whom they are sent.

They are to proclaim the Word of the Lord, to call those who hear to repentance, and in Christ's name to pronounce absolution and declare the forgiveness of sins … They are to baptise, and to catechize.

They are to minister to the sick and to prepare the dying for their death. They must always set the Good Shepherd before them as the pattern of their calling, caring for the people committed to their charge, and joining with them in a common witness, that the world may come to know God's glory and love.[15]

As the bishop and priest lay hands on each candidate they pray "Give them wisdom and discipline to work faithfully with all their fellow servants in Christ that the world may come to know your glory and your love … Set them among your people to proclaim boldly the word of

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13   Question to be addressed by the 2014 Network Conference

14   p532 2004 Book of Common Prayer

15   p565 2004 Book of Common Prayer

salvation, and to share in Christ's work of reconciliation".[16]

b. Service of Ordination or Consecrating of a Bishop

The Service for those being ordained as bishop includes the following charges:

Bishops are called to lead in serving and caring for the people of God and to work with them in the oversight of the Church. As chief pastors they share with their fellow bishops a special responsibility to maintain and further the unity of the Church, to uphold its discipline, to guard its faith and to promote its mission throughout the world.[17]

Will you then be a faithful witness to Christ to those among whom you live, and lead your people to obey our Saviour's command to make disciples of all nations?[18]

Give to this your servant grace and power which you gave to your apostles, to lead those committed to his / her charge in proclaiming the gospel of salvation.[19]

Hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again the outcasts, seek the lost.[20]

It is clear that the duties a bishop is being consecrated for include building up the body of Christ. That the charges include being a leader in mission is unmistakable.

c. Mission Statement from the House of Bishops

In 2007 the House of Bishops issued a Mission Statement for the Church of Ireland. It has three main emphases: 'Growth – Unity – Service'. It states,[21]

The Church of Ireland, as an authentic part of the universal church of God, is called to develop growing communities of faith, in and through which the Kingdom of God is made known, and in which the whole people serve together as followers of Jesus Christ for the good of the world to the Glory of God.

In the power of the Spirit, our mission requires us to order our contemporary worship and life in a manner that nurtures **growth***, promotes* **unity** *and liberates us for* **service** *in the world that is God's.*

The Church is called to be an agent of God's purpose to bring all things together in Christ; to be the sign, instrument and first-fruits of that oneness in Christ that is God's gift and God's will.

In living God's kingdom and serving the Mission Statement makes a commitment to:

- Engage compassionately with the world and society in all its rich variety of need and opportunity

- Be both disciple and discipling; perpetual learners in the school of Christ as we ourselves strive to teach and serve others

- Daily and energetically embody and proclaim the values of the kingdom for whose coming we long.

Contained in this statement is a clear commitment to:

- Growth

- Making the Kingdom of God known

- Service for the good of the world

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16   p570 2004 Book of Common Prayer

17   p 575 Ordination Service 2 (Book of Common Prayer 20014)

18   p 578 Ibid

19   p 581 Ibid

20   p548

21   http://meathandkildare.org/resources/

- Being an agent and instrument of God's purpose

- Engagement with the world and it's needs

- Energetically embodying and proclaiming the values of the Kingdom of God

Together these commitments present a clear case for the Church of Ireland to be mission orientated.

d. Theological Training for Clergy

The emphases on training for future clergy is clearly laid out by the Church of Ireland Theological Institute. It states its purpose as being to equip "professional ministers (lay and ordained) for their role in contemporary society by developing key competencies in the areas of mission and ministry, through appropriate engagement with theology and biblical studies".[22]

The Institute Vision Statement declares,

We are called to be a community of faith that integrates living worship with academic excellence for the benefit of all traditions within Irish Anglicanism, the resourcing of ministry, the development of existing and new patterns of church, and the building of bridges between diverse partner agencies. For the sake of His mission in the world, God is calling us to be a model of grace, welcome and integrity.[23]

e. Statements made and priorities demonstrated by the work of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland

The General Synod meets annually for 3 days. Membership includes the House of Bishops as well as 216 clerical and 432 lay members. These are elected by the Diocesan Synods and members hold office for a three–year period.

The primary purpose of the Synod is to enact legislation for the whole Church of Ireland. The Standing Committee carries out the work of the General Synod during the year.

The General Synod receives reports from various Boards that have responsibility for key areas of church life. The business of General Synod will give a reasonable indication of what the priorities are within the Church of Ireland.

A commitment to mission, both local and global, is demonstrated by the establishment of the Church of Ireland Council for Mission in 2004. It's objectives, as amended by the 2011 General Synod, include:

a. To stimulate within the Church of Ireland a sense of the priority and urgency of mission;

b. To advocate the complementary nature of mission globally and locally;

c. To maintain close relationships with other bodies concerned with mission in particular with Diocesan Boards of Mission, the Association of Mission Societies and mission and overseas development agencies;

d. To promote effective models of mission and evangelism;

e. To encourage reflection on the theology of mission;

Membership of the Council is elected triennially and consists of:

- One member nominated by the House of Bishops, elected triennially;

- Six members nominated by General Synod, elected triennially;

- Four members nominated (on a rotation basis) from within the Association of Mission Societies;

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22   http://www.theologicalinstitute.ie/
23   http://www.theologicalinstitute.ie/

"The church is the church only when it exists for others"

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

- One member nominated by the Covenant partners in the Methodist Church in Ireland;

- One member nominated from among the students of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute;

- Up to four members co-opted.

An examination of the Council of Mission Reports, as received by General Synod, shows unambiguous reference to the place of mission within the Church of Ireland.

In the 2010 Book of Reports the Council notes the challenge of keeping a healthy balance between local and world mission issues. To that end the Council then began the process of devising a three-year theme based plan to include:

a. Rediscovering the Mission of God: a theological reflection on biblical principles relevant to world mission.

b. Relief, Development, Evangelism and Church Growth; presenting God's call to holistic mission.

c. Educating the local church to help it become mission-minded.

d. Persecuted People: developing a Christian response to religious persecution across the world.

e. Developing the content of worship in the life of a local church to reflect the world church.

f. Effective Mission Agency-Parish relationships: supporting and being supported by the local church.

g. Linking parish organisations to mission: at home and abroad.[24]

The Council also suggested a need for a joined-up view of mission in the Church, with "mission agencies, the Theological Institute and the dioceses having a key role in training and communication".[25]

In the 2012 Book of Reports the Council states that "God's mission is out of an overflow of love. Our part in it is in making that radical love known. It involves seeing God in the other and recognising that sometimes "I" am the "other".[26]

The 2014 Book of Reports includes a Joint Statement from The Council for Mission, The Commission on Ministry as well as The Commission on Episcopal Ministry and Structures. It states "... the desire to see the structures, administration and finances of the church shaped by a clear understanding of the mission of the church, particularly as it is expressed in the statement from the House of Bishops in 2008 which set the aims of Growth, Unity and Service".[27]

In the same year The Council for Mission, in reviewing its role, gave consideration to key themes within the areas of global mission, local mission and communication. It declared:

- The Great Commission involves a challenge to the Church at large and to each individual parish to be involved in mission at both local and global levels.

- We live in an increasingly global and changing world ...

- The global should impact the local and vice versa. The commitment ought not to be just to projects but to relationships. At the same time it's not just about those who go on such (META) trips – they need to be the eyes into the culture so that the Church at home can learn.[28]

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24   p435 2010 General Synod Book of Reports
25   p436 Ibid
26   p342 2012 General Synod Book of Reports
27   p361 2014 General Synod Book of Reports
28   p 366 2014 Book of Reports

The 2014 General Synod gave permission for the Council for Mission to hold a number of Mission Breakout Groups during its business. Feedback from Synod members who participated offers some interesting observations including:

- 55% of participants said there needed to be a greater focus outwards towards the community in which they live through social action and faith sharing.

- Spiritual renewal *and* deeper engagement with Mission involves change were identified as main priorities. These key areas need to be central to any parochial or diocesan mission strategy.

- Spiritual renewal at local level was identified as key to the mission of the Church. "We cannot give away what we do not have" was the comment from one group member.

The Commission on Episcopal Ministry & Structures, in its report to the 2014 General Synod stated that it was "mindful of the "requirement in the 2012 Statute that the mission of the Church should be the focus of its work".[29]

f. APCK

APCK (Association for Promoting Christian Knowledge) has been active in Ireland since 1792. It is linked to the Church of Ireland but independent from it.

APCK acts as a publisher for the Church of Ireland, and produces a small number of new books and pamphlets each year as well as the Church's Book of Common Prayer, the Church Hymnal and other liturgical publications. It also acts as publisher for SEARCH, an academic journal of the Church of Ireland. As noted on the Church of Ireland website, "Detailed information about the Church of Ireland is available from the following Association for Promoting Christian Knowledge (APCK) Study leaflets"[30],

suggesting that whilst it is independent it expresses something of the mind of the Church of Ireland.

The 2015 APCK document entitled *Sharing the Faith* is featured on the 'What We Believe' page of the Church of Ireland website. It notes the following:

... (Mission) derives from the very nature of God. God's life is a dynamic, creative and eternal movement of self–giving love. As Christians we believe that this boundless life and perfect love can be most clearly seen in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. As the Anglican Communion document, Generous Love puts it: "He [Jesus Christ] opens for us the way to the Father and we wish others to walk that way with us; he teaches us the truth which sets us free, and we wish to commend that truth to others; he shares with us his risen life, and we wish to communicate that life to others."

Mission can never be an optional extra for a Christian. It is a God–given task and part of being a disciple. In this regard, we can learn from St Paul, who after his conversion embarked on three missionary journeys before travelling to Rome, where he was martyred. St Paul's missionary zeal is grounded in the fact that he felt compelled to share his faith. This to him is what it means to be a follower of Christ (1 Cor 9:16). He goes to the end of the world because of his overwhelming experience of God's love. He is driven by gratitude and wonder at his sense of Christ's presence in his life. (Gal 2:20).

Mission can never be an isolated activity. It is a way of being that is integral to the Christian life. Mission, being sent, is our response to Christ's commission and his love as we experience it.[31]

29   p 385 Ibid

30   https://www.ireland.anglican.org/our-faith/apck/

31   https://www.ireland.anglican.org/our-faith/apck/sharing-the-faith

Sharing the Faith cites the importance of recognising the missionary emphasis in the New Testament, from Jesus' sending out his disciples two by two to teach and heal (Luke 10) to his post– resurrection command recorded in the Gospel according to Matthew, known as the Great Commission (Matt 28:18–20).

The APCK document also quotes Christ's words to the disciples in Matthew 28:18-20 where he says "*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age*". It suggests that these words of Jesus fall into three parts: a statement, a command, and a promise.

The statement deals with the authority of Jesus – all authority has been given to him. It is a universal authority of truth and love, effected and revealed through his life, death and resurrection. It is through Jesus that God's kingdom, the reign of justice and peace, has been inaugurated.

The word "Go" introduces the threefold command to Jesus' followers: to make disciples, baptise them, and teach them. The word "Go" is crucial; it makes plain that the outward direction of mission has no limitations, it is to make disciples of all nations, all ethnic groups, tribes and peoples. It is all–inclusive. Baptism, in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, celebrates the start of a new relationship with God. Teaching then enables the new disciples to grow in their knowledge and love of God throughout their lives.

As to the promise, the Great Commission ends with some comfortable words about mission:

Jesus is with his people until the end of time as together we work to realise God's kingdom. Jesus will be with his messengers, as they are engaged in obeying his commission, each and every day. They will never be left to depend on their own limited abilities.[32]

2. Key texts from the wider Anglican Communion

The Church of Ireland is part of the wider Anglican Communion, consisting of some 85 million members. These are part of national or regional Churches that call themselves Anglican (or Episcopal in some countries) and are collectively known as the Anglican Communion.

Anglicans share aspects of their history, tradition and ways of worshipping. But no two churches are exactly alike even within a diocese, let alone a province or between countries. This unity in diversity is a key characteristic of Anglicanism.

There are thirty-eight autonomous national and regional Churches, along with six Extra Provincial Churches and dioceses all of which are in Communion - in a reciprocal relationship - with the Archbishop of Canterbury, who is the Communion's spiritual head.

There is no Anglican central authority. Each Church makes its own decisions in its own ways, guided by recommendations from the Lambeth Conference, Anglican Consultative Council, the Primates' Meeting and the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) exists to facilitate the co-operative work of the churches of the Anglican Communion between the Provinces and churches, and to help co-ordinate common action. It advises on the organisation and structures of the Communion, and seeks to develop common policies with respect to the world mission of the Church, including ecumenical matters[33].

The ACC has produced several key policy documents on the Anglican Communion's common commitment to, and understanding of, God's holistic mission

32   https://www.ireland.anglican.org/our-faith/apck/sharing-the-faith

33   http//www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/about.aspx

These highlight the place of mission within Anglicanism and articulate the themes that mission encompasses.

a. Five Marks of Mission[34]

The Anglican Consultative Council suggest five marks of mission to remind Anglicans of what mission includes:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers

3. To respond to human need by loving service

4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation

5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth

b. Towards Dynamic Mission: Renewing the Church for Mission

In this document, the final Report of the ACC Mission Issues and Strategy Advisory Group, it noted:

God continues to work redemptively … bringing order out of chaos, good out of evil, hope from despair and light in darkness. God has not left human beings in the misery of their sin but has revealed his will for them in mighty acts in history and through prophets inspired by the Holy Spirit. Such redemptive involvement in human history has come to a climax (though not to an end) in Jesus of Nazareth, where the divine is not only present, not only revealed, but where the divine becomes human (John 1:14).[35]

c. Anglicans In Mission: A Transforming Journey

This report by the Mission Commission of the Anglican Communion states "The church (ekklesia) is the community called out of the world to be the instrument of God's mission".[36]

It highlights three convictions:

1. We are united by our commitment to serving the transforming mission of God.

2. Mission is the bedrock of all we are, do and say as the people of God.

3. Our faithfulness in mission will be expressed in a great diversity of mission models, strategies and practices.

The report highlights the all-encompassing nature of mission for the church:

The transforming gospel addresses both personal and structural sin. We cannot reduce evangelism to the transmission of a set of articles of faith without any sense of urgency to incarnate that faith in a world beset by injustice and oppression. Salvation, the biblical idea of wholeness or health, is too often reduced to the saving of souls rather than the whole person; and sin is seen as exclusively moralistic and individualistic, needing absolution from personal guilt.[37]

The church will demonstrate the reality of this mission as it:[38]

1. Offers life, not death.

2. Includes rather than excludes.

3. Aims for wholeness and health.

4. Lives by values that are different from those of "the world".

5. Emphasises service rather than domination.

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34   http://www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/marks-of-mission.aspx

35   http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/108031/MISAG-II-Towards-Dynamic-Mission-1992.pdf   p 5

36   http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/108028/MISSIO-Anglicans-in-Mission-1999.pdf   p 5

37   http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/108028/MISSIO-Anglicans-in-Mission-1999.pdf   p 5

38   http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/108028/MISSIO-Anglicans-in-Mission-1999.pdf   p 6

chapter two
mission: more than apologetic?

The APCK *Sharing the Faith* pamphlet provides a helpful vignette of the evolution of mission:

> It has been said that the church exists by mission as fire does by burning. Mission was commanded by Jesus himself and he assured his followers that the Holy Spirit would equip them for this task. According to the Fourth Gospel account of his first resurrection appearance to the disciples, Jesus said, "As the Father sent me, so I send you". When he had said this, he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit". (John 20:21b–22.) Thus inspired, the Church expanded hugely during the first Christian millennium, as far as Norway and Ethiopia, Ireland and China. From our own country, Irish monastic missions to continental Europe were particularly effective in the 6th and 7th centuries. However it was not until the 16th century that intercontinental missionary activity took off, with Roman Catholic missions to Central and South America, Africa and Asia. Then, in the 18th century the newly confident Protestant churches began seriously to engage in mission, in the South Pacific, India and Africa, with a further intensification of activity in the early 20th century, when the vision was to Christianise the world in one generation. The missionaries frequently went out in the wake of the European traders and colonising powers, and that awkward relationship has only recently begun to be transcended, making the former mission territories truly independent. Indeed the majority of Christians now live in Africa, Asia, Latin America, or the Pacific region.[39]

Peter Drucker says there are two crucial questions any organisation should ask itself. What's your business ... *and* ... how's business? As demonstrated, the Church of Ireland has clearly articulated what its 'business' is - it has an unambiguous apologetic for global and local mission. How deeply this is in the consciousness or psyche of every level of the Church is hard to quantify. Yet the apologetic is there.

Commercial enterprise can tell you how business is. It simply points to the bottom line. This will tell the enquirer whether a profit is being made. For a business success is easy to define. The Church of Ireland will find answering the question *How's business* more problematic.

To answer the question requires some agreement on how success may be defined, how it might be measured and how it can be evaluated. Not only that but there will also be some resistance to even thinking in such terms. Nevertheless, having answered the question 'Does the Church of Ireland have an apologetic for mission?' it seems reasonable to ask another: How well is it doing in making good on that commitment?

So, can the Church of Ireland point to significant evidence to support its stated commitment to mission, both locally and globally? Whilst difficult to accurately quantify there is evidence of work going on at all levels to make good on that commitment.

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39   https://www.ireland.anglican.org/our-faith/apck/sharing-the-faith

1. **Stated Diocesan Mission Initiatives**

A number of dioceses are currently engaged in initiatives that strategically place mission at the centre of their activity for a designated period of time. Examples of these include:

Down and Dromore – Year of Mission 2015. The diocese states the purpose of this special Year of Mission as being:

- To see spiritual fruit – lives changed by an encounter with Jesus Christ and communities transformed as the people of God live in the realities and power of the Kingdom of God.

- To be "turned inside–out," meaning that, together, the diocese should face outwards, rather than being consumed by its own parochial needs and preoccupations.

- To encourage parishes to begin to see everything through a "missional filter" – questioning all their activities, use of money, worship and welcome.

- To move from plateau to growth and, indeed, to believe that growth was possible.

Derry and Raphoe's Mission Statement is *Transforming Community Radiating Christ*. It sees this being worked out in three key ways:

- Growing Deeper in relationship to God

- Growing Closer in relationships and fellowship with one another

- Growing Wider by sharing the Good News of the Kingdom of God with everyone, by word and deed

Connor has the following Mission Statement - *Engaging culture, equipping ministry, effecting change. The diocesan website states*:[40]

> *Our 'vision' is nothing more than an articulation in our own diocesan context of what it means to love God, one another and our neighbour. Through listening to churches across the diocese we have discerned some key areas that cause us to struggle in carrying out the mission of God in our*

city, towns and villages. As a church we are not as engaged in our local communities as we should be. We are not equipped to carry out God's mission as we should be. Even when we long to see change, we are often at something of a loss to understand how to make the changes necessary within ourselves, to be agents of change in the world around us.

Our own vision therefore is to help churches and communities to grow in three key areas:

- *Engaging culture* – knowing how to read and understand the world we live in, and then to live in it

    To do this we need to be a church that

    - *Equips ministry* – helping the people of God, ordained and lay, to grow as the body of Christ

    With the hope of …

    - *Effecting change* – seeing the transforming work of God work in us and then through us

Under the oversight of our Bishop, and through the work of the Diocesan Development Officer and his development team, this diocese seeks to

- Grow new communities of faith in areas of opportunity and need

- Grow and care for leaders in existing and new ministries

- Reach the missing generations in our culture, those disconnected or disaffected with church or faith

- Resource churches to bless, serve and challenge its local community

- Encourage every member of the church to see themselves as part of the mission of God

- Ensure that we retain and grow a global vision, partnering with agencies and churches across the world

40   http://connor.anglican.org/about-us/our-vision/

The diocese of Clogher 'seeks to promote and nurture a living faith in Jesus Christ among those who themselves seek to serve God in serving their neighbour in parish and community'.[41]

The dioceses of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh state their mission as 'The Church of Ireland, as an authentic part of the universal church of God, is called to develop growing communities of faith, in and through which the Kingdom of God is made known, and in which the whole people serve together as followers of Jesus Christ for the good of the world to the Glory of God'.[42] Their diocesan website notes, 'In the Diocese of Kilmore Elphin and Ardagh we have set a 20/20 Vision of what we should be like in the next five years to 2020:

•   Each local church should be a community which nourishes growth through worship, the Scriptures and prayer.

•   Each local church should be welcoming, caring and generous in raising and resourcing ministry and mission.

•   Each local church should be a place were ministry and mission is for all: clerical and lay, young and old. People should be trusted and trained for service within and outside the church.

•   Each local church should be world looking, visible and active in the community and beyond.

•   Each local church should be connected in prayer and partnership with each other and the worldwide church.

•   Each local church should prioritize children, from pre-school to third level, passing on the faith to successive generations.

•   Diocesan administration and structures should be relevant, accountable, representative and supportive of the local church. Diocesan resources should be released to this end.

The dioceses of Meath and Kildare state

their mission as being *Together in God's Love Transforming Lives*. Arising from this three priorities have been identified:

a. To develop discipleship.

b. To develop different models of ministry.

c. To deliver practical action in our local communities delivered across the diocese.

The diocese of Cashel and Ossory have a *Green Charter* which notes:[43]

As Christians and members of the Anglican Communion, we have an obligation to protect God's creation, not only nationally but globally. The Diocese of Cashel & Ossory affirms its commitment to Environmental Awareness and Protection by:

• Identifying areas of waste and excess.

• Encouraging environmental consciousness in every parish.

• Promoting environmental responsibility in the broader community.

• Spiritually and financially supporting third world development, supporting fair trade and addressing the effects of climate change.

• Advocating policy change at local and national level that is environmentally beneficial.

The dioceses of Cork, Cloyne and Ross states on its website that 'Mission takes place primarily in a local context – congregation, parish, diocese and province – it is the responsibility of every baptised Christian; young and old, male and female, lay and ordained'.[44] It then references *The Five Marks of Mission* (The Anglican Consultative Council – ACC-6 and ACC-8).[45]

a. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom

41   http://clogher.anglican.org/

42   http://www.dkea.ie/

43   http://cashel.anglican.org/?page_id=1465

44   http://cork.anglican.org/welcome/mission-statement/

45   http://www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/marks-of-mission.aspx

b. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers

c. To respond to human need by loving service

d. To seek to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and to pursue peace and reconciliation

e. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation and sustain and renew the life of the earth

In addition it notes the Mission Statement devised by the Church of Ireland House of Bishops.

2016 is the year of Come & C in Dublin and Glendalough. The initiative is designed to equip people for discipleship and deepen their understanding of their own faith. Come&C is centred around the Five Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion which have been distilled to the Five Ts: TELL – To proclaim God's Kingdom; TEACH – To teach, baptise and nurture; TEND – To respond to human need; TRANSFORM – To transform unjust structures; and TREASURE – To safeguard creation.[46]

The dioceses of Tuam, Killala and Achonry notes on its website that it is *an apostolic church, maintaining an unbroken link with the early apostles and drawing on the apostolic faith in its teaching and worship.*[47]

On its website the Diocese of Armagh states that *it is not about a great inheritance or even a vibrant present. It sets its face to the future also. One of the great challenges we now must face with energy is the equipping of all the people of the Church to be evangelists for the faith. All Christian disciples must be enabled to account to others for the faith they claim for themselves. In the secularised culture of Ireland, north and south, east and west, the great commission of the Church is to equip all the people of God to speak persuasively with both confidence and clarity of the Gospel that is theirs to share with the world.*[48]

The dioceses of Limerick and Killaloe states on its website that *it is an Anglican community, bearing witness to the one God, Father Son and Holy Spirit, who creates and redeems all things.* It also says it has *a common purpose – to share the Good News of Jesus Christ in our local area. We believe that our faith can transform lives and that God continues to be at work in the world through his Spirit.*[49]

No central record exists of all funds given by dioceses or parishes to mission, either in Ireland or globally. However, examples available as a matter of public record, suggest that significant sums are given to mission:

Contributions (from the Annual Report) of a specimen diocese in the Republic of Ireland) to Missions and Charities 2013 give an indication of support for mission.

Overseas Missions	€41,558
Home/ General Missions	€33,031
Charities & Miscellaneous	€33,215

2. Long Term Church

The Church of Ireland's Long Term Church initiative seeks to equip and support those serving the Church as it readies itself for a challenging future.

In line with the vision of the Archbishop of Armagh for the future of the Church, Long Term Church combines a number of strategic projects which will develop and re-organise the central Church in order that it can better support the missional and pastoral strategy of the whole Church of Ireland.

The objective is not that the Representative Church Body (RCB) would prescribe mission but rather that it will better support the initiatives coming from the House of Bishops, General Synod, Committees, dioceses and parishes. It should be emphasised that the RCB is not seeking to "do mission" but rather to facilitate, support and encourage the real mission of the

46   http://dublin.anglican.org/Come-and-C
47   http://www.tuam.anglican.org/what-we-believe/
48   http://armagh.anglican.org/AboutUs.html
49   http://www.limerick.anglican.org/

Church which will, in almost every respect, be the task of the local Church, whether in dioceses, parishes or chaplaincies.

The centrally developed projects fall within a framework which reflects four broad strategic objectives:

- Church in the Community and the World

- Outreach and presence

- Accountability and professionalism

- Resources and resource utilisation

Examples of projects in progress to date include supporting select vestries with regulatory and compliance obligations, making the *Constitution of the Church of Ireland* more accessible to today's members, providing parishes with the tools and teaching to link generosity with mission, producing a Handbook to guide parish administration and bringing clarity to funding opportunities within the Church.

The steering group which guides the project work consists of the two Archbishops, the Chairperson of the RCB Executive Committee, an Honorary Secretary of the General Synod, and senior staff representing the RCB and Synod Services.

3. Bishops' Appeal

Bishops' Appeal is the Church of Ireland World Aid and Development Programme. Its work falls into the following categories:

- To educate the Church at home about the needs and concerns of people in the less developed world and the causes of poverty;

- To encourage Church members to examine the reasons for the problems facing the less fortunate in the world and to consider what we can do to change conditions;

- To reach out in God's name to those who need our help;

- To encourage informed prayer and prayerful action aimed at strengthening the poor;

- To raise the funds needed to allow

Bishops' Appeal to support development projects and alleviate the suffering caused by disasters, both natural and man-made.

Bishops' Appeal does not engage directly in development work itself, but channels funds through development agencies and partner churches who are already in place in areas of need. It contributes to relief of suffering in time of emergencies whether natural or man-made. However, the main concern is to support ongoing development in the fields of sustainable agriculture, health, including HIV/AIDS, and education in many parts of the world. It aims to enable people to have more control over their own lives and futures so that they are less dependent on others than they are today.

One bishop says that the importance of Bishops' Appeal is not only in the amounts of money raised but in the fact that 'the Bishops take it seriously'.

2012   Total income from all dioceses
€458,671

2012/13 Contribution (from a specimen diocese)
€131,387[50]

4. Priorities Fund

The General Synod Priorities Fund (generally known as the Priorities Fund) was established in 1980. It has supported projects within the Church of Ireland.

Every parish is asked to contribute to the Fund and the amount raised is allocated to the following categories:

- Ministry

- Retirement

- Education

- Community

- Areas of Need

- Outreach Initiatives

From time to time, to respond to a particular need, a new category is introduced for a specified number of years.

The Priorities Fund Committee recommends allocations to the Standing Committee for

approval. The commitment to Growth, Unity and Mission are reflected when applications are assessed. There is an emphasis on:

- People rather than buildings

- New projects rather than recurrent expenditure

- Mission and Outreach rather than maintenance

- Projects and programmes rather than structures

Total Contributions to Fund 1980 – 2015: €17,140,365

Total Contributions to Fund in 2014: €548,471

5. Diocesan Link Projects

A number of dioceses in the Church of Ireland run significant mission projects with link dioceses or organisations. Examples of the same indicate a significant global perspective as illustrated by:

- Derry and Raphoe Diocese: From late 2012 to early 2014 the diocese worked in partnership with Bishops' Appeal and Christian Aid to raise awareness and funds for their *Nets Work Appeal* which supported the training of people around the challenge of malaria and the distribution of approximately 25,000 malaria nets. The project raised over £117,000 for people in malaria prone areas in Nigeria.

- Tuam, Killala and Achonry dioceses are running a project over three years that supports a girls' Masai secondary school in Southern Kenya. The Diocese has raised over €20,000 that has gone to provide a proper septic tank and a new classroom for the students.

- Dublin and Glendalough dioceses have run an Advent Appeal for a hospital in the Diocese of Jerusalem called *Prepare a Place for Gaza this Advent*. Parishes throughout the diocese have been encouraging their congregations to 'make room at their tables' by donating the price of a meal or a gift for a loved one to the hospital. The Al-Ahli hospital responds to all those who need its services regardless of their religion, nationality or ability to pay. Indeed, the hospital has mobile clinics that seeks out the most vulnerable people in a community of predominantly displaced people and offers free services for those who have been injured from recent conflict, as well as trauma counselling and food packages. The Diocese hopes to form a longer-term partnership with the diocese of Jerusalem over the coming years.

- Meath and Kildare dioceses are currently partnering with The Mission to End Leprosy and Bishops' Appeal in the *Good for the Sole* project that provides fitted sandals for people living with leprosy. In 2015 in excess of €40,000 was raised.

- Cork, Cloyne and Ross dioceses are running a *Houses for Haiti* diocesan project which has to date raised nearly €25,000 and given five families the security of a decent home. The focus on housing for those in need in Haiti is a statement of solidarity with those who are still trying to rebuild their lives since the 2010 earthquake.

- Cashel, Ferns and Ossory diocese have raised €60,000 for children in Swaziland and farmers in Rwanda. They also have a link with the Isle of Man.

- The Diocese of Connor and the Diocese of Yei in South Sudan, the world's newest country, have been in partnership since 2007. Bishop Alan Abernethy and Bishop Hilary Luate Adeba of Yei signed a second five-year partnership agreement when Bishop Alan made his first visit to Yei in January 2013. Since 2007 a number of Connor teams have travelled to Yei and Bishop Hilary and his wife Mama Joyce have visited Connor on several occasions. The Diocese of Connor has donated more than £110,000 towards the building of a new primary school in the rural village of Mongo.

- The Diocese of Down and Dromore is linked with three other dioceses, each very different in character, to share experiences and resources. These include Maridi Diocese in South Sudan, the Diocese of Northern Argentina (taking in seven

federal states in the northwestern region of Argentina) and Albany diocese in the USA.

- The United dioceses of Limerick, Ardfert, Aghadoe, Killaloe, Kilfenora, Clonfert, Kilmacduagh and Emly have a current commitment to Swaziland. They are seeking to provide clothing, educational materials and agricultural machinery to Anglican parishioners in Swaziland. It also has relationships with what it describes as two 'Companion' dioceses. The Unhalt Protestant Church (Evangelische Landeskirche Anhalts) covers more or less all of the old Duchy of Anhalt. Anhalt was formerly an independent Duchy, now part of the Federal State of Sachsen-Anhalt in Eastern Germany. The diocese of Saldhahna Bay is part of the Church Province of Southern Africa. It serves a variety of urban, rural, and fishing communities in Western Cape. The area has high levels of poverty and HIV/AIDS infection.

6. Mission Links

In 2007 the Church of Ireland Council for Mission sent out a Mission Questionnaire to every parish. The purpose was to find out how many parishes support a mission link, how those links operated and to assess the value of the links:

30% (181) of those who received a Questionnaire replied. The results noted:

- 99 parishes had links using the mission agencies

- 54 parishes had more than one link

- In terms of the global regions covered by link most were African, then Asian

- 46 parishes had made visits to their links

- 61 parishes had received visits from their links

- Most mission links were based on a development principle, especially education and children's work

- 75 parishes had a person other than Rector responsible for the development of the link

- Many Mothers Union branches have links that are not included on this list

- Mission links are not always 'owned' by parishioners

7. Mission Agencies

The Association of Missionary Societies (AMS) is an informal forum for representatives of those mission agencies which have an ongoing relationship with the Church of Ireland. It meets regularly to discuss issues of mutual concern and to inform and be informed by the wider Church on important mission concerns and initiatives.

As noted in the 2015 Church of Ireland Directory there were 14 constituent members (Mission Agencies) of AMS. These agencies promote mission in many manifestations in a variety of global locations.

8. Short-term Mission Trips

Short term mission trips provide opportunities for groups or individuals from the Church of Ireland to visit a partner location in another part of the world. This allows for an experience of life and work there and to sample something of a different culture.

Such visits and exchanges are seen as crucial to the development of meaningful relationships. They make mission more personal, they help the Partnership Links go wider and deeper, impacting more people, and they ensure that these links last even longer. These trips are usually self-funded by the participants.

For mission agencies that facilitate such trips the desire is to achieve:

- Increased sharing

- Enhanced prayer support and

- More meaningful and effective financial support.

- To bring 'partnership' alive for a parish. Sending a few parishioners on a team offers an opportunity to involve the whole parish – and the wider community – in the experience, through prayer, preparation,

fundraising events and by hosting sharing events after the visit.

- Personal impact on individuals who participate in terms of their faith, perspectives on God, on Church and on Mission as well as the choices they make about their own lives and vocation.

A selection from the following agencies demonstrate current options for short-term mission trips:

- CMS Ireland planned to facilitate 10 such trips in 2015. Groups from different parts of Ireland planned to visit nine different Global Partners.

- South American Mission Society (SAMS) Ireland enables individuals and churches to visit and participate within a church community in South America, with the objective of:

- Affirming the work of the church in South America.

- Creating new experiences, new opportunities and new friendships.

- Developing effective working relationships between the churches in Ireland and South America.

- United Society (Us) *Journey with Us* programme provides an opportunity to experience the life and mission of the church in another culture, for volunteers from 18 to 80 years. Placements are tailor-made to meet individual preferences, including location. All placements are with Us partners, in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean.

- Crosslinks offer the possibility of being part of a summer team, typically lasting between two and four weeks. The emphasis of the teams is on evangelism, practical service, meeting new people and experiencing a different culture. Teams in the past have been involved with holiday bible clubs, schools, children's camps, teaching English, student evangelism, bible teaching and helping with practical tasks.

- Tear Fund Ireland offer week-long trips

that are suitable for business people, retirees, church leaders or mothers. Participants have the opportunity to meet local churches and find out how they help vulnerable children, trafficked women and people living with HIV.

9. Use of clergy from overseas

An interesting development in recent years has been the number of clergy coming from overseas to work in the Church of Ireland. For instance the diocese of Clogher can point to three of its parochial clergy who have come from other parts of the global Anglican Communion.

Reflecting on the contribution that such clergy can make one interviewee noted that "they bring enthusiasm (and) authentic commitment to the values of the gospel that is not modified by our politics and culture".

10. The Mothers' Union

The Mothers' Union was established in Ireland in 1888. There are more than four million members of Mothers' Union today in 83 countries around the world. It is one of the most significant organisations in the Church of Ireland, being represented in every diocese and the majority of parishes across the denomination.

The vision of the Mothers' Union is 'a world where God's love is shown through loving, respectful, and flourishing relationships'.[51] From this flows the mission of the organisation 'to show our Christian faith by the transformation of communities worldwide. We can do this through the promotion of stable marriage, family life and the protection of children'.

Activities of the Mothers' Union include:

- Promoting Christian marriage; Marriage preparation: Encouraging parents and careers through Mothers' Union Parenting Groups: Running Parent and Toddler Groups; Volunteering in Child Contact Centres: Helping children and families feel welcome in Church.

- Providing practical care; Caring for families in need; Working in partnership to support

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51   http://www.dublin.mothersunion.ie/who-we-are.html

victims of domestic abuse, refugees, asylum, seekers and the homeless; Offering holidays to needy families; Befriending families of those in Prison.

- Worldwide activities; Training Mothers' Union Workers in their local communities; Promoting Parenting and Literacy and Development; Initiating Family Life Programmes; Supporting Mothers' Union Overseas and Relief Funds.

- Campaigning for a just society; Drawing attention to social concern issues; Supporting gender equality; Lobbying Governments; Contributing to programmes at the United Nations; Promoting Fair Trade.

- Parenting; In 2010 Mothers' Union will celebrate 10 years of the Parenting Programme. Mothers' Union has trained almost 40 Parenting Group Facilitators in Ireland to help parents reap the rewards and face the challenges of the most important job they'll ever do.

- Prayer

- Campaigning;

11. The General Synod

The existence of a variety of bodies established by the General Synod suggests a stated commitment to mission, both locally and globally, within the Church of Ireland.

Whilst noting their existence it is not always possible to quantify the effectiveness of each body in achieving the purposes suggested in their respective titles. Nevertheless, it is useful to record those bodies whose titles suggest some sort of missional emphasis - a denomination reaching out beyond itself.

Sub-Committees of the General Synod[52]

- Central Communications Board

- Church of Ireland Church and Society Commission

- Disability Working Group

- Historical Commemorations Working Group

- Priorities Fund

- World Development – The Bishops' Appeal Committee

Committees of the General Synod [53]

Some of the Committees as noted below have Terms of reference that are clearly focused on internal matters to the Church of Ireland. However, they also include an emphasis on important social issues and areas of human need.

- **Board of Education**

    a. (To) Define the policy of the Church in education, both religious and secular and, in promotion of this policy, to take such steps as may be deemed necessary to co-ordinate activities in all fields of education affecting the interests of the Church of Ireland.

    b. (To) Maintain close contact with Government, the Department of Education and Skills, Diocesan Boards of Education, and other educational and school authorities with a view to ascertaining the most efficient and economical use of resources including funds, transport facilities and teachers.

    c. (To) Study any legislation or proposed legislation likely to affect the educational interests of the Church of Ireland and take such action with respect thereto as it may deem necessary.

    d. (To) Deliberate and confer on all educational matters affecting the interests of the Church.

    e. (To) Make such enquiries as it shall deem to be requisite and communicate with government authorities and all such bodies and persons as it shall consider necessary.

- **Church of Ireland Commission for Christian Unity and Dialogue**

    The Commission on Church Unity and Dialogue (CCUD) is the Church

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52   p 233 Church of Ireland Directory 2015

53   Church of Ireland General Synod Book of Reports 2015 and The Church of Ireland Directory 2015

of Ireland's principal organ for relating nationally and internationally both to other Christian traditions and to national ecumenical instruments.

The Commission continues to carry out its work through long term working groups, on Anglican, European and Inter-Faith matters.

- **Church of Ireland Youth Department (CIYD)**

   CIYD undertakes, for efficiency reasons, operational plans for two regions of Ireland, a southern and northern region. The northern region comprises of the northernmost 5 dioceses and the southern region the other 7 dioceses. These operational plans fulfill an all-Ireland strategy but on a regional basis. They exist in parallel to each other and continue to operate under an all-Ireland structure and governance but may fulfill the strategic objectives differently according to their region's context and needs. Both regions are supported by a national office based in Belfast (although there is a base for the southern officer in Church House, Dublin) and collaborate on national programmes.

- **Commission on Ministry**

   The Commission on Ministry was established by the General Synod in 1996. In accordance with its terms of reference, the Commission makes recommendations concerning Christian Ministry, both lay and ordained. This includes the deployment of stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy appropriate to the requirements of the Church of Ireland in the future. Matters relating to ministry may be referred to the Commission by the archbishops and bishops, the Standing Committee and the Representative Church Body.

- **Commission on Episcopal Ministry and Structures**

   The Commission (CEMS) has been considering the wide range of issues within its remit since 2012 and was due to submit its final recommendations to the General Synod in 2016. With the mission of the Church as the focus of its work, CEMS recognizes current strengths but argues in this Report for significant visionary and principled change in some aspects of episcopal ministry and structures.[54]

- **Church 21**: The Parish Development Working Group is a sub-committee of Standing Committee of the General Synod of the Church of Ireland. It runs the Church 21 initiative within the Church of Ireland.

   Parish Development is about enabling parishes to have

   - A clearer sense of direction

   - A clarity of focus on priorities

   - A commitment to leadership as something that is shared

   - A deeper sense of ownership and more involvement from parishioners

   - A greater motivation to persevere

   - And hope for the future!

   Parish development in the Church of Ireland is an intentional process designed to enable parishes to both define themselves in relation to their heritage and to adapt to the new challenges and opportunities that are emerging in society

   Church 21 promotes parish development by:

   - Envisioning parish teams at regular Parish Development Conferences

   - Motivating parishes to take the next natural step on their own journey of development

   - Equipping them with resources that will help them in the process of transitioning

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54   p 347 Church of Ireland General Synod Book of Reports 2015

- Select Committee on Human Sexuality in the Context of Christian Belief
- Covenant Council
- Church of Ireland Council for Mission
- Church of Ireland Marriage Council
- Church's Ministry of Healing

12. Miscellaneous Church of Ireland organisations with charitable purposes

There are a range of bodies, run by the Church of Ireland, with the purpose of meeting practical need. These include charitable foundations such as Protestant Aid, Boards of Social Action, retirement homes and other initiatives. The Church of Ireland Directory lists over forty national organisations. There are also many diocesan and local bodies.

The Church also run a large number of schools (National and Secondary level), particularly in the Republic of Ireland. There are also chaplaincies in various institutions in a wide range of institutions.

Enabling the above to function effectively involves significant financial commitment as well as volunteering of time and expertise.

The Church of Ireland Directory 2015 lists a wide range of organisations associated with the Church of Ireland, at least 20 of which have clear objectives of service, outreach or that address important social issues.[55]

13. There are high levels of volunteering amongst members of the Church of Ireland, contributing to local communities, meeting practical need and contributing to mission initiatives beyond the Church of Ireland.

14. Addressing contemporary social issues

In recent years the Church of Ireland has established mechanisms to address significant social issues, including:

Hard Gospel Process

The *Hard Gospel* process was established by the Church of Ireland to address issues of sectarianism and living constructively with difference. It began in the tense atmosphere of Drumcree and a general context across the island of Ireland where it was very difficult to talk about sectarianism. The process included:

- The establishment of a Church of Ireland Sectarianism Working Party in 1997.
- The setting up of the Sectarianism Education Project in 2001.
- The commissioning of the Hard Gospel Report (received by General Synod in 2003) to ascertain the attitudes, needs and experiences of clergy and lay people regarding sectarianism and living with difference.
- The establishment of the Hard Gospel Project in 2005.

An independent Evaluation noted:[56]
- The Hard Gospel Project initiated, developed, supported and coordinated a wide range of activities involving more than 7,500 people across every diocese in Ireland … This is the most substantial denominational church initiative of its kind to have taken place in Ireland.
- The Church of Ireland demonstrated its commitment to the development and implementation of the Hard Gospel Project through the level of time and resources invested in ensuring it made a difference. The project was managed effectively through the Hard Gospel Committee and a high level of activity was stimulated and delivered by the small project staff team.
- Discussion of 'Hard Gospel issues' has become normative within the Church of Ireland. The issues and approaches of the Hard Gospel are becoming mainstreamed into the Church and there has been a degree of culture change towards more open discussion of diversity issues. This enabled the Church to take a series of new initiatives and some of these had an impact in the wider community.
- The project enhanced the overall capability of the Church of Ireland to take initiatives to build peace and transform

55   p 249
56   p 3-4 Hard Gospel Project Evaluation Report

communities by providing training and support at parish and diocesan levels and by supporting the development of a series of diocesan and parish level initiatives. The outcome is new initiatives by churches actively contributing to community development and peacebuilding, including youth initiatives, in a breadth of locations and levels.

- The project developed demonstration projects that addressed key strategic issues in relation to the legacy of conflict and an increasingly multi-cultural Ireland. The projects on immigration and Loyalist communities were at the 'cutting edge' of contemporary diversity and inclusion issues in Ireland during the past three years. They engaged the Church of Ireland in these issues at a level and depth that had previously not been possible.

The external Evaluation points to significant learning for the Church of Ireland:[57]

- The pace of organisational change as a result of the project has been slow. It has taken three years for the beginnings of change in structures, policies and practices to become apparent. In spite of substantial time and resources being invested in research, discussion, committees and publications, this has produced limited change to date. Success can only be measured in terms of any change that actually takes place in the future.

- The project faced challenges including the scale of the task, different expectations, barriers to change within the 'culture' of the Church and the danger of being reduced to the status of a marginal short-term project.

- A major challenge was to both stimulate and support activities to demonstrate new approaches and build capacity while at the same time influence organisational culture, policies, practices and structures so that the Hard Gospel would become a mainstream and embedded long-term process within the Church.

- The evaluation has one major recommendation that the Church of Ireland should put in place the necessary structures, strategies and resources to continue its Hard Gospel process as a long-term mainstream initiative within the Church that will create both internal change and practical action in local communities on diversity issues.

The most recent phase of the *Hard Gospel* process was the establishment of a Hard Gospel Implementation Group. The purpose was to continue with the mainstreaming process of attendant issues. Comments in the Church of Ireland Gazette highlighted the challenge that would always be faced when moving from a funded and staffed project to reliance on volunteers, however gifted and committed:

When the Hard Gospel Project came to an end, the Church was left with the challenge of actually implementing the priorities that had emerged. Yet, the transition from a well-funded project, with staff, to a committee of volunteers with responsibility for the causes which the Hard Gospel had espoused has shown that a momentum is lost when there are no designated staff. The current Hard Gospel Implementation Group is made up of good people and what has just been said is no reflection on their efforts and commitment. It is really all about time and resources — or, rather, the lack of both.[58]

Even in 2005 the Hard Gospel Report noted, "Respondents are pessimistic about the credibility and effectiveness of the church in contemporary society, but maintain a belief that there is a vital role for the Church to play".[59]

Board for Social Responsibility (NI)

This is a Board set up by the General Synod. It is made up of clergy and laity from across Northern Ireland, who also represent different interests within the church e.g.

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57   p 3-4 Hard Gospel Project Evaluation Report

58   https://gazette.ireland.anglican.org/coi-gazette-1st-november-2013/

59   p 12 Hard Gospel Report

Mothers' Union, Church Army. The services are available to all Parishes in Northern Ireland.

The Board undertakes the following actions:

- Comments on social issues and legislation affecting Northern Ireland.

- Gives practical help to assist the pastoral work of the Church.

- Employs professional Social Work Staff.

Board for Social Theology and Action

The Church of Ireland recently piloted a new model when it established the Board for Social Theology and Action. It intentionally sought membership with appropriate skills and motivation.

This board has now been renamed the Church and Society Commission.

Given that this was such a new model of organising a central committee it is worth asking how well it worked and what the learning has been from this pilot?

The Select Committee on Human Sexuality in The Context of Christian Belief

This is a 16-person group set up by the 2013 Church of Ireland General Synod. Membership was drawn from "a broad range of human sympathy, life experience and geographical belonging in the complex organism that is the Church of Ireland today".[60] The remit of the Select Committee is to enable the listening, dialogue and learning process on all issues concerning human sexuality in the context of Christian belief to continue.

The Select Committee was empowered to bring whatever motions it deems appropriate via Standing Committee to the General Synod and to consult as widely as possible.

A planning paper divided the work into two phases:

- During the first phase a framework will be developed and a Guide to the Debate on Human Sexuality in the Context of Christian Belief will be produced. Within

this framework issues relating to human sexuality will be addressed.

- Phase 2 will explore in depth specific issues in human sexuality in which questions relating to the place of LGBT persons in the life of the Church would be addressed as a priority, but other issues may also be included concerning relationships and marriage and also some features in society such as domestic abuse, human trafficking, child sexual abuse.

At the time of writing the work of this Select Committee is ongoing so it is not yet possible to comment on its effectiveness.

An initial timeframe of two years was extended at the 2015 General Synod. The Report of the Select Committee to the 2015 General Synod outlined its work going forward to:

(i) complete production on a Guide for the assistance of the Church;

(ii) produce a Study Guide with modules and suggested questions for use in diocesan or parish groups.[61]

15. Eco-Congregations

Individuals, parishes and at least one diocese are involved in Eco-Congregation Ireland (ECI). ECI is a project initiated by the Church in Society Forum – a standing committee of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting. The Roman Catholic, Church of Ireland, Presbyterian and Methodist churches are involved as well as the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

ECI encourages churches of all denominations to take an eco-approach to worship, lifestyle, property and finance management, community outreach and contact with the developing world.

The vision is to see churches of all denominations throughout Ireland celebrate the gift of God's creation, recognise the inter-dependence of all creation and care for it in their life and mission and through members' personal lifestyles.

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60   Speech by Archbishop Michael Jackson to General Synod (proposing Motion to establish the Select Committee – 9 May 2013)
61   p 376

The initiative asks Christians to reflect on the beauty of God's world and to consider what practical steps can be taken to prevent further damage to the environment. Also, to pray for the planet, for people in the developing world already affected by climate change and for future generations.

significant mission taking place in parishes at local level. This encompasses all dioceses and theological perspectives.

16. Challenges of Recession

The post 2008 economic downturn in Ireland has been one of the most severe in recent history. It followed the unprecedented growth of the *Celtic Tiger* period. It also coincided with a series of banking crises and the bursting of a property bubble. All of this led to great economic hardship for many, emigration, a bailout for Ireland and a punishing Bank Guarantee scheme in Ireland.

Anecdotal evidence suggests local action by parishes to help alleviate need. As often as not this has involved cooperating with organisations such as Christians Against Poverty and participating in food bank initiatives. However, there is much debate as to the causes of the economic downturn and to how evenly its effects have been carried across the population.

Comments from interviewees, as noted below, suggest a frustration with the Church of Ireland, in what it has been able to speak into this context.

The Church is silent about what it is for – a just society – but loud about what we are against.

We are not taken seriously as a church in Ireland because we are not speaking into the economic situation and justice issues.

(we are) afraid to be more vocal and have a prophetic voice because we are afraid our own inconsistencies will be highlighted … busy and scared of the scrutiny.

Where is the church in justice?
This is important … do we have the mechanisms to translate into action?
We can't subcontract the prophetic.

17. Parish Level

Assessing all mission activity in parishes across the Church of Ireland would be a major study in itself. Although difficult to accurately quantify there is evidence of

chapter three
implementation deficit disorder

The Commission on Ministry gets things done because people are interested and motivated. It sets out tasks.

I value tradition ... it gives me comfort.

I don't engage with (the organisation) because it is not relevant to what I do.

Diocesan meetings are a barren experience.

The Church of Ireland prefers to tweak things rather than going for the big decisions.

Church of Ireland systems are cumbersome and are mostly about buildings.

When identity is built around status, structures and roles then changes to these are deeply unsettling ... people don't like change.

We are a well-resourced heritage society with a modest religious affairs department.

Protestants have prided themselves on keeping their heads down and are happy there.

The Church has painted itself into a corner of failure and is happy there.

The Church of Ireland is funny in what it values and is enthrall to.

Culture has changed and the church didn't speak into it.[62]

Implementation Deficit Disorder is a term used by well-known Irish Management Consultant, Eddie Molloy.[63] It describes the struggles that any organisation seeking to deliver on a priority can face. Identifying obstacles is not simply offering cynicism, which is as easy to do as it is de-motivating.

Entrepreneur Jerry Greenfield (Co-founder of *Ben & Jerry's*) says, "One of the key roles of leadership is to tell your own people the truth about the way things really are on the ground".[64]

Naming an obstacle gives the opportunity to address it. Richard Rohr says, "I am not saying there is no place for criticism, but there is the kind that opens possibility and the kind that merely spews and increases negative energy".[65]

What are the obstacles that the Church of Ireland will face as it seeks to make good on a commitment to mission, or indeed any other major priority? In other words what are the potential causes of Implementation Deficit Disorder?

Molloy uses the image of an iceberg when describing the challenges that cause Implementation Deficit Disorder.[66] He talks of the visible part of the iceberg as representing visible challenges that can include structures, core processes, funding and skills. The invisible or hidden part of the iceberg represents the cultural challenges such as values, beliefs, attitudes, prejudice and mindset.

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62   Comments from miscellaneous interviewees
63   Presentation to Social Workers Adult Mental Health Conference (25/04/14)
64   Church of Ireland Gazette (24/11/07)
65   p 168 Hope Against Darkness
66   Ibid

We will use Molloy's image of an iceberg, representing visible and invisible obstacles. He suggests that the visible part of the iceberg is easier to address.

1. **The Visible Iceberg**

   a. **Process becomes the thing:** Any large organisation, including the Church of Ireland, will always have to balance maintaining coherence of values and practice as against organisational anarchy / anything goes. In the convoluted process of developing or approving something the Church of Ireland tends to be more structure and process orientated. The danger is that having the correct process becomes the measure of success rather than achieving actual outcomes.

   b. **Execution:** In business terms execution is the capacity to complete assigned tasks and responsibilities to customary or specified standards within a certain timeframe. It is one thing to decide that something ought to be a priority. It is another to ensure that appropriate resources, financially, structurally and in terms of personnel, are invested so as to ensure a reasonable prospect of success.

   Deciding on a priority is one thing. Having the structures and resources in place to execute it is another. One of the advantages of a prolonged process of developing a new priority is that it will tend to be well thought out and theologically appropriate. In the Church of Ireland, the 'how' and 'why' of whatever priority is under discussion will likely have been thoroughly considered.

   Yet, having decided on a priority requires provision of the means to deliver it. This requires appropriate structures, finance, personnel and whatever else is required. If these mechanisms are absent any priority set will remain as no more than a good intention or wishful thinking. A board or committee without appropriate resources is being given a nigh on undoable job.

One interviewee highlighted the fact that it was not just a matter of resourcing for its own sake. They observed "When the Church of Ireland puts in support structures they are (usually) for administrative support ... just talking and recording the talk" rather than being mechanisms for the delivery of vision. They continued "The Church of Ireland does not have the machinery for driving a mission agenda forward".

A good intention without the means to deliver it will usually remain just that – a good intention.

   c. **Beyond a Mission Statement:** It is always helpful for an organisation to remind itself of why it exists. The corporate style of either a Vision or Mission Statement does not always sit easily with the Church. Yet there is value in an organisation having a simple form of words that reminds it of why it exists or that describes the sort of world it is working to produce.

   These sorts of statements work better when they are succinct and free of jargon. Oxfam says its purpose is "to help create lasting solutions to the injustice of poverty. We are part of a global movement for change, empowering people to create a future that is secure, just, and free from poverty".[67] The vision that inspires Habitat for Humanity is "A world where everyone has a decent place to live". On this basis "Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope".[68] The power of these statements lies in the fact they are concise, readily understandable and make sense. There is also congruence between what they say and what we already know of the work of those organisations.

   It would be an interesting exercise to ask how many members of the Church of Ireland are aware of the Mission Statement produced by the House of Bishops? Perhaps more specifically to ask how many clergy and key diocesan

67   https://www.oxfam.org/en/our-purpose-and-beliefs
68   http://www.habitat.org/how/mission_statement.aspx

bodies across the island are aware of its existence, or whether it informs the Mission Statements or work of many of the dioceses that make up the Church of Ireland?

The Church of Ireland Mission Statement exists. This Mission Statement was used to good effect to undergird the transition process leading to the formation of the Church of Ireland Theological Institute. This shows that it is possible for the Church of Ireland to use a Mission Statement to make strategic change.

However, since that process it has been poorly communicated, if at all, and it is not apparent that it has been used in any way to guide or effect other strategic change. The Church of Ireland Mission Statement is missional in aspiration. Yet the failure to create a mechanism or process for allowing the Mission Statement to inform the priorities or actions of dioceses, parishes or key bodies within the Church of Ireland means it is an aspiration that few are aware of or guided by.

d. **Accountability:** Accountability is the simple process of reporting on whether one took the action one committed to. It is not just about reporting on activity. It is about reporting on results and outcomes – on the difference actions have made.

Reporting in the Church of Ireland is usually retrospective without an emphasis on planned action for the future. Success is rarely defined. If delivery does not happen there is no consequence. The process within the Church of Ireland, as described by one interviewee, is often about "talking and recording our talking" rather than having an emphasis on outcomes. This is often reflected in the nature of reports to synods at all levels, where the emphasis is on activity rather than intended objectives or outcomes – that would answer the question 'What difference have we made?'

Boards and committees could bring significant difference if they changed their method of reporting:

- To clearly articulate their Terms of Reference

- To identify their objectives and goals within specific time frames.

- To identify outcomes from their work, over and above recording their activity or discussion.

- To measure impact rather than activity.

One interviewee commented, "Our Constitution, canons and diocesan reports are about maintaining things" suggesting they didn't communicate vision of what we are doing, or aspire to do, but are rather reactive.

e. **One size doesn't fit all**: Membership of Church of Ireland boards and committees are often chosen on the basis of representation. The desire to have representation is admirable but needs to be balanced with ensuring appropriate competencies for the task in hand

f. **All church is local:** The Church of Ireland is an all-Ireland body with a synodical system of governance. However, if priorities are not being worked out at parish level then they are not being worked out. The challenge will always be to connect what is happening at Synod level with the local parish. One interviewee suggested that, "Parishes have lost touch with what is happening in the wider Church" and were becoming more insular and parochial.

g. **Energy reserves:** When one interviewee mused that *"We are a well-resourced heritage society with a modest religious affairs department"* he / she was referring to the large legacy of buildings that the Church of Ireland has to maintain.

Ancient church buildings are a rich heritage and give a sense of place and belonging to many people. However, when the Church of Ireland was disestablished it lost a significant amount of its income. When added to recent demographic changes, challenges of current economic circumstances and changing patterns

of church commitment then you have a community that often faces significant challenges in maintaining ancient buildings.

To illustrate the challenge the dioceses of Cashel Ferns and Ossory has responsibility for 148 church buildings with an average of 20 people for every church on a Sunday. The responsibility of maintaining a proportionately large number of old buildings per head of the Church of Ireland population places inevitable drains on available energy and creativity.

2. The Invisible Iceberg

a. **Organisational Culture:** The Ford Motor Company has a quote hanging in one of its offices "Culture eats strategy for breakfast". Attributed to management expert Peter Drucker it is not suggesting that strategy is unimportant. Rather it is to point out the crucial effect that organisational culture has on its effectiveness.

The European Business Review has this to say about organisational culture:

Every organisation has its own unique culture; defined as the set of deeply embedded, self-reinforcing behaviours, beliefs, and mindset that determine 'the way we do things around here.' People within an organisational culture share a tacit understanding of the way the world works, their place in it, the informal and formal dimensions of their workplace, and the value of their actions. It controls the way their people act and behave, how they talk and inter-relate, how long it takes to make decisions, how trusting they are and, most importantly, how effective they are at delivering results.[69]

The European Business Review continues: "Culture isn't defined by … mission statements posted on

the wall or website – it is defined by the behaviours and principles being practiced every day, from the Boardroom to the shop floor"[70].

So how might we note the aspects of organisational culture within the Church of Ireland that will affect delivery on any priority, including mission?

The story is told of a speaker at a General Synod some years ago. In his speech he is reported as having uttered the following words, "The Church of Ireland is like an organisation waiting for nothing to happen!" When these words were uttered the laughter was not just at the wit of the speaker. It suggested that a profound and uncomfortable truth had just been spoken.

There is the temptation to an overriding 'steady as she goes' approach . Infused in this is a belief – that what is most important is that the 'boat' of the denomination should not be rocked, where it becomes the thing rather than its mission. Where this permeates church life, or indeed any organisation, what then becomes crucial is not innovation or risk taking but the preservation of the ethos of the institution.

The European Business Review reflects on the dangers arising if any organisation loses the sense of its mission being the driving purpose.

From the leaders down, people go through the process but demonstrate little emotional connection to the success of the organisation, only to their own success and security within the organisation. Whilst not malicious in intent, it is obvious to an outsider that their agenda is more important than the overall company's agenda. When a whole organisation works like this, we find that levels of activity are high, but levels of achievement are low.[71]

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69   http://www.europeanbusinessreview.com/?p=6529
70   http://www.europeanbusinessreview.com/?p=6529
71   http://www.europeanbusinessreview.com/?p=6529

The temptation is for smoothing over to become more important than honest frank discussion. It resembles the family priding itself on not arguing in public, but where the effort of keeping up appearances becomes exhausting.

These pressures lead to a paralysis of thinking and risk taking at every level. This is likely to manifest itself in any of a number of ways, at every level of Church life:

- To be risk averse.

- To be more maintenance focused rather than being instinctively entrepreneurial. This loses the full advantage of the creative and entrepreneurial skills that members have in their everyday lives.

- To develop a tradition of not saying anything controversial or challenging - the 'don't rock the boat' syndrome.

- To obfuscate and use 'holy language' to give the appearance of saying something but actually saying little.

- To use language that does not communicate or engage with the world outside of the institution.

- To talk so formally that meaningful engagement with difficult or underlying issues all but ceases.

- To act in such a way where structure becomes more important than the goal. Process becomes more important than achieving that goal.

- To focus on outward appearance. Public image matters as it enhances authority. Yet excessive concern for public image creates a culture of denial.

- To live by the norm that the safe conventions are the ones that are protected and nurtured.

- To put 'good taste' before telling the truth.

One interviewee captured a dilemma when he said, "The Church of Ireland silences our strident voices to generate consensus. We need more space for our people to be prophetic."

b. **History, psyche and identity:** One can only speculate on how history has helped shaped psyche, identity and organisational culture within the Church of Ireland. A sense of identity is a knowledge of who one is, where one has come from, and how one is placed in the world. It is not only individuals who need a sense of identity. Communities and churches have similar needs!

Identity is something that is shaped not just by the present, but also by the past. It is found not only within the reaches of oneself but is also negotiated in relationship to others.

To examine the human psyche is to look at how one tends to use personality traits to think about and evaluate what is going on in the world or the immediate environment. It is to ask how a person thinks, learns, solves problems, remembers or is able to forget. The psyche is not just a collection of problem solving or analytical mechanisms within an individual. It includes their motives and desires – the things they aspire to, desire, fear and believe are necessary for life.

One wonders how much of the concentration on process goes back to the shock of disestablishment of the Church of Ireland in 1871? The Irish Church Act ended the role of the Church of Ireland as a state church. It also terminated state support and took into government ownership much church property. Having to redefine not only its identity the Church of Ireland also had to ensure its financial viability.

The development of the Church of Ireland from 1871 onwards also took place in the context of turbulent political events on this island. It has been a context where religion has often been a tribal marker,

both politically and socially. The emerging Home Rule movement, the 1916 Rising, civil war and partition provided the backdrop against which the Church of Ireland had to develop. In the process the Protestant community moved from a place of political power and dominance to being a minority in the Republic of Ireland, with greatly diminished religious power relative to the Roman Catholic Church.

Negotiating identity and a way of working in the context of such unsettling times will have inevitably helped to shape the psyche of the Church of Ireland. It may also help to understand how its structures and way of being often seem geared for the preservation of the organisation rather than embodying the dynamic that is necessary for mission. One wonders how its history, rightly or wrongly, has helped create a psyche as described by one interviewee as being about "… keeping ourselves safe, secure and maintaining the status quo"? One might add to the psyche a temptation to keep the 'head below the parapet', fear of diluting our cultural identity as well as fear of being perceived to be 'sheep stealing'.

There is always the temptation to idealise history. It is also possible to have a deep understanding of how history helps create the present whilst still recognizing the challenges it has created. As one interviewee observed, "If our perception of history imposes a sense of sclerosis or inertia it becomes (our) master and a tyranny".

c. **Passing it on to the next generation:** Maintaining the church and passing it on to the next generation was a strong characteristic noted by one interviewee. They commented "Locally we see mission (in the same way) as transmission of the land. We want to pass it on as good, or better, than we got it. Transmission of faith and land (can be) mutually interpretative in rural minority communities".

3. Theological struggles with mission

72   Moltmann 1993

a. Some of the struggle with the concept of mission, from within and outside the Church arises from what are perceived to have been lesser motives which saw global mission as:

- Imperialist – turning people into docile subjects

- Cultural – transfer of superior culture

- Romantic – an opportunity to get away to exotic places

- Ecclesiastical colonialism – exporting our confession / church order

b. Is mission primarily about evangelism or is it meeting human need, however manifested? Gathering together all the material that comprises a Church of Ireland apologetic for mission suggests it is not a matter of 'either / or' - there is no dichotomy between work to meet need and evangelism. Whilst this may be the case there are still obstacles in how this is worked out in practice.

Evangelism is something that the Church of Ireland can sometimes struggle with. The struggle is both theological and in the practice of it. Moltmann reminds us that "Evangelisation is mission, but mission is not merely evangelisation."[72]

The essence of the theological struggle is captured in the words of one interviewee who said, "Global mission is easier than local because the issue is understanding lostness here. If I don't see people as lost what have I to bring them? … People don't know what it is they bring".

By virtue of its own cultural instincts and because it now finds itself in a more pluralist society the Church of Ireland faces the challenge of understanding what it means by evangelism.

Is the difficulty that the Church of Ireland sometimes has with evangelism rooted in a reluctance to grasp a nettle - of articulating a theological understanding of the human condition and the remedy

that one offers through evangelism? Or as our interviewee put it more succinctly, "understanding lostness here".

Whether the difficulties with evangelism are theological or practical the end result is as one interviewee says, "There is no galvanizing of the issue locally, and global poverty (becomes) an easier galvanizing issue".

One interviewee commented, "The danger is to get lost in foreign mission so that we are relieved of any obligation to do something at home".

c. Is evangelism a churchmanship marker? The struggle with evangelism is sometimes not just theological but with those methods that seem culturally alien. It is also true that an emphasis, or not, on evangelism can be seen as an unspoken marker to demarcate differing camps of churchmanship and theological outlook within the Church of Ireland? One interviewee posed the question as to whether evangelicalism was "more just low church style than winning society for Christ?"

d. One interviewee also identified a familiar challenge for any church involved with meeting need. He asked the question "Is our action distinctively Christian or is it ridiculed and seen as overly pious? If we don't start with the incarnation and redemption ... (or) forget why we are doing it in the first place we end up with a shell of a thing with the heart and purpose lost". This is not to suggest that every act of meeting need is suffused with evangelism. It is rather to keep in mind the heart and theological imperative that motivates us to do it.

4. The sea upon which the iceberg floats

If organisations can be likened to an iceberg, with visible and invisible aspects, it is worth reflecting on something else – the nature of the water upon which it floats. David Bosch suggests there are certain presuppositions within Christian mission, including:

- A sender
- A sender who has authority to do so – God / Church / agency
- Person/persons sent by sender
- Those to whom one is sent
- An assignment

David Bosch also contends that from without and within its own ranks "more than ever before in its history the Christian mission is in the firing line".[73]

The Church of Ireland is like any other body on this island in that it does not exist in a cultural, economic or political vacuum. There are external influences that come to bear on its ability or disposition to be missional, either at home or globally?

a. We live in a time of distrust of institutions. A wide variety of scandals along with the financial collapse mean that large organisations, including the Church, are often viewed with cynicism. Human leadership has been shown to be flawed.

b. *Postmodern culture*: We now live in a postmodern culture. Postmodernism stems from a recognition that reality is not simply mirrored in human understanding of it, but rather, is constructed as the mind tries to understand its own and personal reality. Postmodernism is highly skeptical of explanations which claim to be valid for all groups, cultures, traditions, or races, and instead focuses on the relative truths of each person.

In the postmodern understanding, interpretation is everything; reality only comes into being through our interpretations of what the world means to us individually. Postmodernism relies on concrete experience over abstract principles, knowing always that the outcome of one's own experience will necessarily be fallible and relative, rather than certain and universal.

Popular postmodern culture has a number of manifestations:

73   p 2 Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission

- There is less inclination to think of a power beyond ourselves

- The concept of 'revealed truth' is not accepted

- Mere restatement of 'truth' is increasingly regarded as fundamentalism or as being the adopting of an absolutist mentality

- A lack of absolutes within a market place of ideas

- Society becomes more pluralist

- Society becomes more secular

- Ethics become more intuitive

- Unjust structures of oppression and exploitation are being challenged as never before with authority and institutions being questioned

Postmodernism makes it more challenging to suggest a faith that believes in a divinity outside of ourselves, or in any concept of revealed truth. It also adds to the global pressures on the concept of mission, as illustrated by:

- The advance of science and technology, along with secularisation, that offers to make faith redundant. The underlying theme is 'Why turn to religion if we can sort things ourselves?'.

- The West, for 1000 years the home of Christianity, has lost its dominant position in the world. It is slowly being de-christianised, with a rise in atheism, neo-paganism, secularism and unbelief. As far back as 1982 David Barrett estimated that 53000 people were leaving church every week in north America and Europe.

- For years we took Christianity as being the one true and only saving religion. We now live in a religiously pluralist world. Freedom of religion forces us to reevaluate our understanding of other faiths.

- The guilt sometimes felt by those nations that have a colonial past.

- The anxiety that arises from the fact we have a shrinking globe and finite resources, with the capability of destroying the earth.

- The profound uncertainty felt in parts of the Western Church about even the validity of Christian mission.

c. Society in Ireland has changed enormously over the past 20 years meaning that the Church bears witness in a profoundly different context.

d. The changing nature of Irish society and the place of the Church within it means that culture and society is less and less shaped by the Christian Church. One interviewee commented "Ireland is now a vastly more secular community but also with a spiritual challenge, especially within the context of disappointment and anxiety at the failure of the promises of the Celtic Tiger".

e. Recent years have seen the development of rapidly changing and increasingly multi-cultural and multi-faith societies in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. A Hard Gospel publication noted:

Historically, throughout Ireland "the others" have been seen in the context of Catholics and Protestants and religious and political differences. However, there have for many years been settled minority ethnic groups with different cultures and traditions whose needs and rights must not be overlooked. These groups include Travellers and Indian, Pakistani and Chinese immigrants. Furthermore, in recent years in Ireland, north and south, there has been a significant change in demographic trends with many people coming from other countries of Europe and beyond to find work or seek asylum. There is a growing diversity of cultures, traditions and nationalities which has presented challenges far beyond the traditional divide between Catholics

and Protestants with racism now raising issues like those faced through sectarianism. Furthermore, the number and variety of faith groups throughout the island of Ireland is growing rapidly bringing a whole new dimension to the concept of understanding diversity and religious tolerance.[74]

f. The Church of Ireland is not immune from changing patterns of church attendance on this island. Figures from the most recent Church of Ireland census in both jurisdictions on the island show that the average attendance over three Sundays in November 2013 was 15%, 58,000 in all. Analysis reveals that of those attending, only 13% were between the ages of twelve and thirty.

Archbishop Richard Clarke, in his Presidential Address to the 2015 General Synod, said "... the statistics present the scale of the missional challenge ahead of us as a Church, but nevertheless it is one that if we cannot embrace with confidence and with hope in Jesus Christ we may as well close the doors of our churches now. We must relate to reality, and we must also relate to the future ahead of us, a future towards which God is always calling us." As one interviewee said, "We simply can't guarantee that there will be future generations of conventional Christians".

g. If parishes are inclined to be more insular and parochial, as has previously been suggested, the reason may well be financial. One interviewee said, "It's a financial thing to keep your small corner, (to be) content when the assessment is paid, and more than that then we're just not interested". Energy and resources are having to be husbanded, especially during the years of a recession. The unrelenting pressure may leave little energy for thinking missionally, either at home or abroad.

h. The wider cultural milieu, as well as the specifics of the Irish context, have

rightly forced the Church to face its own shortcomings. These have clearly undermined its moral authority. Bosch says "Looking at itself through the eyes of the world, the church realises that it is disreputable and shabby, susceptible to all human frailties: looking at itself through the eyes of believers, it perceives itself as a mystery, as the incorruptible Body of Christ on earth. We can be utterly disgusted, at times, with the earthliness of the church, yet we can also be transformed, at times with the awareness of the divine in the church".[75]

5. **Leadership Challenges**

Charles Handy believes there are three different types of organisation, falling broadly under the headings of those that exist for purposes of:

- Mutual interest

- Self-help

- Campaigning

The Church exists for the benefit, encouragement and pastoral support of its own membership. Archbishop Temple has also reminded us that, "The Church is the only cooperative society in the world that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members." This suggests that the Church in some way falls into all three of Handy's categories.

Handy observes that each type of organisation needs a different form of leadership, suggesting that Church leadership can be a complex business.

Peter Drucker says, "Management is doing things right; leadership is doing the right things." In the Church of Ireland clergy fulfill key roles of leadership at all levels. Given the nature of their vocation clergy are likely to be instinctively pastoral and the role of being a leader may not always be one they feel comfortable in accepting. However, for any organisation to make good on what it chooses to make a priority it will require leadership. It is obvious that clergy have a key role in this regard.

74   p 11 Life Beyond Boundaries: A Theology of the Hard Gospel
75   p 389 Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission

In *Leadership Without Easy Answers* Ron Heifetz says:

In a crisis we tend to look for the wrong kind of leadership. We call for someone with answers, decision, strength and a map of the future, someone who knows where we ought to be going – in short, someone who can make hard problems simple … we should be calling for leadership that will challenge us to face problems for which there are no simple painless solutions – problems that require us to learn new ways … Making progress on these problems demands not just someone who provides answers from on high but changes in our attitudes, behaviour and values.[76]

The environment in which church leadership is worked out has changed. This means that the skills needed for leadership have also changed. They are more complex and adaptive thinking skills are needed.

In times of uncertainty or in a risk-averse organisation people don't want questions they want answers. They want to be told that they will be protected from the pain of change. The pressures on leadership become obvious.

Ronald Heifetz clearly recognises the emotional pressures on leadership.

We see leadership too rarely exercised from high office, and the constraints that come with authority go far to explain why. In public life, people generally look to their authorities to solve problems with a minimum of pain, and where pain must be endured, they often expect their officials to find somebody else to bear the costs … When we do elect activists, we want them to change the thinking and behaviour of other people, rarely our own. We can hardly blame our public officials for giving us what we ask for. [77]

The internal (iceberg) and external (societal) challenges of leadership in the Church of Ireland suggest pressures on those who hold such a role. These may include:

a. People feeling discomfited when challenged to rethink entrenched norms, values and beliefs.

b. People feeling discomfited when challenged about things held dear and handed down from previous generations.

c. People feeling discomfited when challenged to go beyond the boundaries of their own constituency and comfort.

d. People feeling discomfited when being exposed to the risk of instability, conflict and resentment arising from the above.

e. Ministering in an increasingly secular society where the place of Church in the community is changing.

f. Moral failures that have taken the once assumed automatic authority of clergy away.

g. Showing people the possibilities for the future when all they feel is fear of loss.

h. Fear of being bullied if they cross a line with their people.

The skill set required to pastor is complementary but not identical to that required for leading an organisation to act on what it declares to be a priority.

Are clergy sufficiently skilled or do they have the necessary temperament to fulfill the expected job requirements, particularly those involving inter-personal contact with people who may feel discomfited?

The temptation to 'leave well alone' or 'it will do me my day', motivated by fear, is understandable. Yet, difficult as it may be, the challenge is still to provide effective leadership and witness to fundamental

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76   p 2 Heifetz, R, Leadership Without Easy Answers, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts , 1994

77   p 183 Ibid

values of the faith along with the call to mission that it involves.

But, unless one is convinced of the reason for doing something it is always more difficult to do it with any degree of conviction or effectiveness.

"We can not give away what we do not have".

chapter four
lessons for the church of ireland

We return to Jerry Greenfield's analysis of leadership when he said, "One of the key roles of leadership is to tell your own people the truth about the way things really are on the ground".[78] Helping an organisation to look at reality is possibly the most challenging aspect of leadership. It is an aspect that many leaders shy away from. But once you collectively begin the journey of looking at how things really are it throws up the next challenge – knowing what to do about it.

Comments from a range of interviewees, as well as feedback from a Council for Mission conference, suggest strong opinions of how things are and how they might change for the better.

We have lost the capacity to take God out of the sanctuary or the tribal shrine or the ability to converse with the outside world.

As we become a less Christian society we need to up our game.

Stop thinking everything was always better in the past.

Stop worrying about the ancestors or the days of bigger numbers or power.

If our perception of history imposes a sense of sclerosis or inertia it becomes (our) master and a tyranny.

We think we are so weak that we can only survive or maintain.

Our culture changed and the Church did not speak into it.

… many, but not all, churches are experiencing a falloff in numbers, aging congregations and weakening community links.

… have a divine discontent about the way things are.

Halfhearted efforts – not resourced by budget or personnel …

What is leadership bringing as tools of renewal … Where do they stand in their passion and drive?

How do you resource leadership in a very complex context … of consumerism?

What does church bring to the party? … it needs to be built on biblical scaffolding.

What does 'Mission' mean in the life of the Church of Ireland today. For many, it only refers to the overseas efforts we make to support those who work in global mission to help those who are in developing countries …[79]

The Church of Ireland has an unmistakable apologetic for mission. In so many ways it is in the DNA of what it says about itself. It is also an organisation made up of human beings. Like any organisation it faces the struggle of living up to its ideals. We have used Molloy's image of the iceberg as representing both visible and invisible obstacles that stand in the way.

Whatever the Church of Ireland may say about itself the Great Commission involves a challenge to the Church at large and to each individual parish to be involved in mission at both local and global levels. This challenge comes at a time,

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78   Church of Ireland Gazette (24/11/07)
79   Church of Ireland Council for Mission Conference (Dromantine 2014)

described by one interviewee, when there is "an underlying sense that the place of the Church in society is changing and that the missiological and sociological context in Ireland is changing. This change varies in North/South and urban/rural contexts".

Having a holistic view of mission means finding ways of serving the spiritual and practical needs of people. This means evanglising in a pluralist society. It also requires recognition that there are many other organisations doing the work of service and acting as value shapers in our society. One interviewee posed the question "What does church bring to the party? ... (whatever we do) needs to be built on a biblical scaffold".

So, what are some of the crucial lessons for the Church of Ireland if mission is to be as much in the DNA of what it does as what it says?

1. Stirring of the waters

Is there something stirring in the waters?

"Embrace missional challenge or close church doors Archbishop of Armagh tells General Synod" was the front-page headline in the Church of Ireland Gazette on 15 May 2015. In his presidential address at the previous week's General Synod the Archbishop reflected on the statistics from the most recent Church of Ireland census. The 2012 census showed that average attendance over three Sundays in both jurisdictions was 15%. Further analysis showed that of those attending, only 13% were between the ages of 12 and 30.

The Archbishop said, "Although there were few shocks in what we have learnt, it was by any standards a necessary reality check". He said that the statistics presented "the scale of the missional challenge ahead of us as a Church". Continuing this theme the Archbishop said that if the Church of Ireland could not embrace the challenge with confidence and with hope in Jesus Christ "we may as well close the doors of our churches now". The same General Synod concluded with an energetic discussion on mission on the final day.

Even a cursory observation of Council for Mission reports to General Synod from its

establishment in 2004 suggests two things. Firstly, that there are serious stirrings of commitment to the Church of Ireland being a missional organisation. Thanks to the work of the Council for Mission we have more than anecdotal evidence of a growing interest in mission. Secondly, there is a gradual wrestling with how this aspiration can become reality.

In February 2014 the Council gathered delegates from across the Church of Ireland to a special conference on mission, held at Dromantine. The purpose of the conference was to examine how to articulate mission in the range of contexts that exist across Ireland so that all church traditions could embrace, support and enact and bring it to life.

To help delegates in their thinking, the Bishop of London, the Rt Rev Dr Richard Chartres, and the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, the Rev Dr Heather Morris, were key contributors to the event. Their comments make for interesting reading.

Bishop Chartres made the following observations:

a. After the 1960s and 70s the Church of England had become "bewildered, confused and fragmented", resulting in churches being abandoned and a prevailing sense that decline was the Church's destiny.

b. At the core of change is the vital prioritising of a fresh engagement with "the symphony of Holy Scripture" – saying, "there can be no renewal without that"—and developing a "deep and profound life of prayer".

c. Engagement and action planning locally are also essential – effective leadership in mission must be relational.

d. Rather than produce large complex programmes, he said, "simplicity releases energy"; leaders must point people on a clear direction of travel while at the same time being "opportunistic ... open to what God might be putting in front of us".

e. Being "utterly serious about our foundation" – a "diversity of styles can be tolerated" ('generous orthodoxy') but "whatever happens it is based on our fundamental identity ... the Church as part of the holy Catholic Church worshipping the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, proclaiming afresh". In short, the task was "to reduce clutter and create an educational framework for common action where all can work together".

f. Today's task of mission is huge, and the bishop spoke of "the need to face up honestly to what's happening otherwise reality overtakes us".

g. Be "Christ centred and outward looking", distilled into three conversations: Confident (in the Gospel of Jesus Christ); Compassionate (tested by the quality of prayer life and knowledge of the Scriptures) and Creative.

h. "... in our axial age where politicians find it hard to create a narrative of hope" that those Christians "who have escaped in–house issues" can be "visionary and enlivening in our own time ... We need a deeper sense of now".

Dr Morris added her own observations:

a. She suspected that God's people "are a little scared of this new world" and that "in the context of decline it's difficult to ask the missional questions".

b. The essential first–step discipline of "standing back in order to put aside our many ideas and our many frustrations and dare to ask for eyes to see what God is doing".

c. We will never be able to encapsulate it in an easy list. "There will always be an element of mystery, let's rejoice in that. There is going to be variety. God is going to be up to different things in different places and different things in different people in the same place; there is no competition in that".

The two–day conference allowed for preparation before further discussions on

these matters took place at the General Synod in May of that year. At the 2014 General Synod the Council was given permission to run a 'breakout' session. Coming at the end of a long day of synod business the statistics were nevertheless encouraging. 31 discussion groups consisting of 192 (45% out of a possible 432) synod members took part.

Some of the points of interest arising from the groups included:

- An expression of hunger for spiritual renewal.

- 'Good to see money and mission coming together in the RCB report'.

- Low level of awareness of the Bishop's Mission Statement.

- Bishops were asked to give a positive lead to empower the church.

- Acknowledgement that engagement with mission involves change.

There was an emphatic response to the question 'What do you think the Spirit is saying to the Church of Ireland as regards our mission and purpose?' The response was that we need to focus outwards towards the community in which we live through social action and faith sharing.

'Spiritual renewal *and* deeper engagement with Mission involves change' were identified as the main priorities from the groups. They also highlighted that these key areas need to be central to any parochial or diocesan mission strategy.

The 'breakout' groups gave specific feedback to the Bishops:

- (There is a need for) spiritual leadership at national, provincial and diocesan level.

- (Their) role is that of being a catalyst for mission, setting the vision for the diocese and encouraging parishes to develop their own vision and strategies for their churches and communities

The 'breakout' groups gave specific feedback to the Mission Council regarding its perceived role as being that of:

- Support in mission by way of examples, resources and encouragement.
- Equipping and encouraging.

Spiritual renewal at local level was identified as key to the mission of the Church. One comment from the groups put this very simply, "We cannot give away what we do not have".

2. Structures fit for purpose

The comment of one interviewee suggested "... an underlying mood for General Synod and denominational structures to be more focused, efficient and goal-driven".

Jaci Maraschin, a Brazilian theologian, says, "one of the characteristic and fundamental missionary tasks of the Church is to examine and review its structures to see that they continue to remain suitable for mission".[80] The same Anglican Consultative Council report that cites him goes on to say:

> The 1988 Lambeth Conference continues a process of self-criticism begun in the Mission Issues and Strategy Advisory Group, when it called on the Communion to "shift to a dynamic missionary emphasis going beyond care and nurture to proclamation and service". The Conference went on to acknowledge that such a call presents a challenge to congregational and diocesan structures and to existing patterns of worship and ministry. In other words, if the Church is to fulfill the missionary mandate, it must make sure that its structures and procedures are not inimical to mission.[81]

One interviewee also suggested that for structural change to happen "... (there) needs to be enough senior leaders saying our systems are not fit for purpose". Reports from key bodies within the Church of Ireland are certainly suggesting change is needed.

In its report to the 2013 General Synod the Council for Mission stated, "The Council is keen to explore ways that those central Church committees relating to mission can more effectively and imaginatively work together and is encouraged that the matter is under consideration by the Honorary Secretaries".[82]

At the 2014 General Synod a Joint Statement from The Council for Mission, The Commission on Ministry and The Commission on Episcopal Ministry and Structures noted "... the desire to see the structures, administration and finances of the church shaped by a clear understanding of the mission of the church, particularly as it is expressed in the statement from the House of Bishops in 2008 which set the aims of Growth, Unity and Service".[83]

Some challenges for the Church of Ireland to address include:

a. To move away from Boards and Committees being representative bodies to being active ones, balancing this with the need for appropriate competencies and skills to be present.

b. To ensure that boards and committees have a clear remit and a system of reporting that is not only based on recording talk, but based on articulating:

- Objectives
- Action against objectives
- Outcomes

c. To acknowledge that if bodies are given a clear remit, and are expected to report on their success in achieving it, then they need to be properly resourced. This is done in the recognition that:

- Serious pieces of work need to be resourced.
- For significant issues to be progressed they need to be championed.

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80   p 9 Towards Dynamic Mission: Renewing the Church for mission

81   p 10 Towards Dynamic Mission: Renewing the Church for Mission

82   p 351 General Synod of the Church of Ireland: Book of Reports: 2013

83   p 361 General Synod of the Church of Ireland: Book of Reports: 2013

- "Volunteers may be deeply committed to an issue but time constraints mean they cannot do everything".[84]

  This is an instance where the need to properly resource something meets budget constraints. Being cognisant of this reality prompted one interviewee to comment, "It is rare for leadership to say this is so important that we will allocate money or someone to do something ... the temptation is that this matters as long as someone else pays for it. We need to move beyond a *wing and a prayer* approach".

  In the absence of an appropriate budget, designated person or structure to make things happen then action on stated priorities is unlikely to happen.

3. Dioceses

One of the most interesting observations, made by several interviewees, was that the diocesan unit is a key agent for mission development. One person highlighted the possible frustrations of trying to bring change at the level of the institution and that working at a diocesan level was possibly more fruitful.

Interviewees highlighted that working at a diocesan level allowed for a process to take place whereby the diocese could coalesce around a specific vision and then act strategically to see it realized.

In this regard, the diocese is a key unit for achieving significant change within the Church of Ireland.

4. Leading in Mission

One interviewee described mission in these terms, "Like everything in the DNA it needs something to activate it". For mission, or indeed any other priority in the Church of Ireland, to become more than aspiration requires leadership. That leadership involves two processes - diagnosis and action.

Intentional people, willing to take risks and willing to invent the necessary structures are key leadership skills. To this may be added another - adaptive leadership. "Adaptive leadership is the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive", says Ron Heifetz.[85]

Such a model of leadership will recognise:

a. That the Church of Ireland is like any organisation in that recognition of the need for development or change is not always thought necessary. This is well illustrated by a reflection on the work of Heifetz, Grashow and Linsky:

It is a fallacy to think that we need to change organisations because they are "dysfunctional." In reality, human systems are the way they are because the people in the system want them to operate that way. Recognizing this will shift how you approach the problem. If you understand that an organisation that appears to be broken is working for many of its members, then you will choose different methods and approaches. In particular, rather than try to convince people that your view of the organisation is right, you will learn to focus on how to mobilise and support them through a change that will appear risky and frightening.[86]

b. That rising to new challenges will require new learning and can only be tackled by changing people's assumptions, beliefs, habits, and allegiances. In this process "the most critical work is to mobilise and guide people through a period of discovery which leads to a renewed capacity to flourish".[87]

c. That adaptive leadership is concerned with change that enables people, organisations and societies to flourish or thrive.

d. That successful adaptive change does not ignore the past, but builds on it. It is

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84   Interviewee

85   p 14 The Practice of Adaptive Leadership

86   p 1 Book Summary: The Practice of Adaptive Leadership

87   p 2 Ibid

not only about change, but also about what needs to continue. "People and human systems resist loss, not change. Adaptive challenges are complex because the change will inevitably involve a sense of losing something. Leadership requires an ability to diagnose what losses will be experienced in any change initiative".[88]

e. That the ability of an organisation to adapt is enhanced by diversity and occurs as a result of experimentation.

f. That the process of leadership begins with an understanding of your own organisation's culture, structures, and ways of thinking.

g. That it is important to understand that the "status quo can be seen as solutions that were put in place to solve yesterday's problems",[89] with familiar and comfortable behaviors, ways of thinking and acting which rest on beliefs and assumptions that may have been useful for solving problems in the past. These may or may not be useful for the challenges of the present.

h. That the Church of Ireland is like any organisation, with its own distinctive mindset and characteristics that can limit its ability to adapt to new realities.

i. That it is important to identify any contradictions between strategy, mission, goals and the values and mission of the Church of Ireland?

j. That the intuitive skill described by Heifetz as being able to *listen to the song beneath the words* is important. Essentially it is being able to look beyond what people say by their body language, energy and emotion, paying attention to what is not being said.

Effective leadership at any level in the Church of Ireland is about interventions that mobilise people to address worthy challenges. It is about keeping this work at the centre of attention. Mostly out of fear of loss the difficulty arises because it is human to avoid the discomfort of challenging questions such as:

- Where is it that we truly want to be?

- Are there gaps between where we are and where we say we want to be?

- How will we know that we are successful?

- What challenge might just be on the horizon?

It is a type of leadership that "requires new skills and competencies, including spirit, guts, heart and head. It requires the courage to bring your whole self to the engagement. It requires that you connect to a compelling larger sense of purpose".[90]

This leadership is required at denominational, diocesan and parish level. Elements are required in every part of the structure of the Church of Ireland. If this is the case then comments, directly quoting a range of interviewees encapsulate challenges that immediately arise:

Where does the spark come from?

How do you fan that flame?

Help people to be hopeful – rekindle hope

(What is needed is) Mission orientated leadership

Can the Church equip leadership to create a mission focus?

5. Episcopal Leadership

The Commission on Episcopal Ministry & Structures report to the 2014 General Synod stated:

The Commission is mindful of two priorities: firstly, the requirement in the 2012 Statute that the mission of the Church should be the focus of its work, and secondly, the emphasis placed by General Synod members taking part in the break-out session last year on episcopal leadership. Here in the Commission's Vision those two

88   p 2 Ibid
89   p 4 Ibid
90   p 4 Book Summary: The Practice of Adaptive Leadership

elements come together: mission and leadership.[91]

The Commission was saying something very simple: mission should be central to what the Church of Ireland does, and that bishops have a key role in this. This is borne out by the promises made at each Service of Consecration, as already noted. In the words of one interviewee "Bishops should take a lead as the brokers of mission in the dioceses".

In the same report the Commission noted a significant obstacle lying in the way of this, "Episcopal ministry has become overloaded with extraneous functions that must be carried out but not necessarily by bishops".[92] In other words bishops were loaded with so many other functions, inevitably draining time or energy for leading in mission.

There are echoes of Stephen Covey's maxim, "The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities … The main thing is to keep the main thing the main thing". If, as the Commission suggests, the overload of "extraneous functions" stands in the way of this we look forward to how its future work will unfold.

How can bishops be 'brokers' of mission in the Church of Ireland and in their own dioceses? They can do so:

a. By being a catalyst for the promotion of mission in all its facets within the Church of Ireland.

   The *Hard Gospel* process, addressing sectarianism and living constructively with difference, has an important lesson in this regard. What is important to note from that process is that an imprimatur that came at institutional level from the Church of Ireland changed things profoundly: it became safe and legitimate to discuss the painful issues of sectarianism and living with difference. When there is such an institutional endorsement of a priority within the Church of Ireland then all sorts of possibilities appear.

b. By embracing Jerry Greenfield's contention that the key role of leadership is to tell your own people the truth about the ways things are on the ground, thus recognising reality as it is and not as we would wish it, or imagine it used to be.

c. By facilitating a conversation and promoting mission in their own dioceses.

d. By ensuring that mission priorities set by their dioceses have appropriate structures and resources to allow them to move beyond mere aspiration.

e. By facilitating mission-minded churches in their own dioceses.

f. By being clear as to where they stand on mission, regarding their own passion and drive. As suggested by one interviewee it is about "fleshing out what is God's perspective … if you don't bring God's perspective with passion you just bring your own or culture's".

Ultimately bishops are responsible for their own dioceses. This suggests that facilitating a conversation and promoting mission in that context will be their most effective role. However, the House of Bishops also has an undeniable role at a denominational level.

Perhaps there is something to be learnt from the process around the Church of Ireland Mission Statement in 2007, namely:

a. That being able to articulate and coalesce around a Mission Statement for the Church of Ireland was a significant success.

b. That the Mission Statement was used effectively in the process of transition of what has now become the Church of Ireland Theological Institute. In other words, it was helpful in setting a context for effective action in the crucial area of ministerial training.

c. That the subsequent failure of the Mission Statement to noticeably shape other action illustrates the need for stated priorities to be accompanied

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91   p 386
92   p 388

by structures and a process that are adequately resourced, otherwise nothing happens.

6. Clergy

Clergy meet the challenge of leadership in a remarkably changed context. In doing so they often display remarkable resilience, courage and compassion.

The challenges of providing adaptive leadership are for anyone in leadership within the Church of Ireland. This includes clergy and those training in the Church of Ireland Theological Institute.

If the ability to provide adaptive leadership is vital for Episcopal leadership it is no less so for clergy at parish level. Within the Church of Ireland if something is not happening at parish level then it is not happening. Clergy are, and have been, trained to be pastors. But are they equipped with the skills and expertise to be adaptive leaders?

To be a pastor or to provide adaptive leadership requires quite different skills and competencies. This suggests that training and serious support mechanisms to enhance skills for adaptive leadership should be a given:

- For those going through the Church of Ireland Theological Institute.

- For clergy who are now in parish ministry by a serious process of Continuing Professional Development. This may be provided at denominational level. It should certainly be included at diocesan level.

7. Resourcing leaders

Changing economic fortunes and patterns of church attendance, as demonstrated in the 2012 census, suggest a need for the Church of Ireland to think creatively about how it is to provide sustainable models of parish ministry in the future. It also serves as a reminder that ministry and vocation are not unique to stipendiary clergy. They are to be exercised by every member of the church. The model of *every member* ministry is both biblical and Anglican.

As new models of parish ministry develop the same skills of adaptive leadership will be required in those who exercise it, along with the need to train and equip them. The Council for Mission observed this when it identified "... the need for a joined-up view of mission in the Church, with the mission agencies, the Theological Institute and the dioceses having a key role in training and communication".[93]

8. Agents for mission

There are a range of agencies within the Church of Ireland that seek to promote mission, both local and global. These include:

a. Mission societies that provide resources and support to parishes in the outworking of their involvement in mission and encourage parishes to be strategic.

b. The Council for Mission, which has a clear and unambiguous remit:

  - To stimulate within the Church of Ireland a sense of the priority and urgency of mission;

  - To advocate the complementary nature of mission globally and locally

  - To maintain close relationships with other bodies concerned with mission, in particular Diocesan Boards of Mission, the Association of Missionary Societies, mission and overseas development agencies

  - To promote effective models of mission and evangelism

  - To encourage reflection on the theology of mission

c. The Association of Mission Societies (AMS) is an informal forum for representatives of mission agencies.

The changed financial circumstances of recent years have been challenging to boards, mission agencies as well as every other part of the Church. They force every organisation to go back to the fundamental question: What are we for / Why do we exist?

93   p 436 Report to General Synod 2010

For a board or agency to ask how it now fits in to the mission of the Church is to undertake the same exercise as the rest of the Church. It is to constantly refresh a sense of purpose rather than being content with 'existing because we have always existed'. Survival for the sake of it is not enough.

It is also worth assessing what might be the most effective body or mechanism to promote mission within the Church of Ireland (Council for Mission, Association of Missionary Societies, Diocesan Boards of Mission, Mission Agencies).

conclusion

Our interviewees had varied reflections on what is needed to make the Church of Ireland more effective in mission.

It is no man's vision. It is the work of God.

A key task is to challenge inertia and show that mission is do-able in any parish no matter how small.

… to see the Church of Ireland Mission Statement revisited and manifested in action.

… to see the culture of the Church of Ireland more closely aligned with the sentiments of the quote by Archbishop Temple: "The Church is the only cooperative society in the world that exists for the benefit of those who are not its members.

… the need to see not only a change of management style within the Church but also, more importantly, a change of … culture.

Churchmanship is now irrelevant.

Go back to the Missio Deo[94]

God has to allow a crisis to bring us short to get us to listen again.

As a member of the worldwide Anglican Communion the Church of Ireland can find its apologetic for mission within the Anglican Consultative Council's *Five Marks of Mission*:[95]

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom.
2. To teach, baptise and nurture new believers.
3. To respond to human need by loving service.
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

"It's only when the tide goes out that you learn who's been swimming naked". Warren Buffett is famously one of the world's most successful investors. In these words he is expressing a powerful truth. Anyone can give the illusion of success, or indeed of just being busy. Whether that success or busyness has any substance will be seen when the testing times come – when the tide goes out.

Buffett has put his finger on something – that there comes a time when the substance of what we build is tested. He might be surprised to see his observation echoed in the Bible.

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames.[96]

It is the same principle. We can work with great enthusiasm at something. It can have all the appearance of success and busyness. Yet the time always comes when the true worth of what we are building is tested. In Buffett's principle, it is the workings of the market that bring the reckoning. The broader Christian principle is that God himself assesses the true value of what we work to create. Apparently He is considerably more astute than even the markets![97]

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94   Latin Christian theological term that can be translated as the "mission of God," or the "sending of God."
95   http://www.anglicancommunion.org/identity/marks-of-mission.aspx
96   I Corinthians 3:11-15
97   The Extra Mile

We could continue to note all sorts of management language – about the need for churches to make sure they are doing the right things for the right reasons, and doing them in the right way. Some of that language is indeed helpful in pointing us back to the heart of something:

> *Be both realistic and optimistic even though some people would like you to choose one or the other. Continue to remember your commitment to a better organisation, community and world; be disciplined in reflecting on the outcome of your efforts; forgive yourself for your mistakes and enjoy the process of learning in action. Finally, stay in touch with your deep desire to contribute to the lives of other people."*[98]

Whilst this is true it is also worth noting the comment of one interviewee who talked of how "God drives us out into the wilderness so that we can re-envision the future" It is a reminder that living out an apologetic for mission is a profoundly spiritual journey – a willingness to allow the Holy Spirit to recapture our hearts with old truths. It is about the Church looking for new ways to do something old – to fulfill the mission of serving suffering humanity and bringing it a message of hope.

In that sense nothing about the ministry of Jesus has changed. '*And a leper came to Him and bowed down before Him, and said, "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean."* Jesus stretched out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.'[99]

The phrase 'searching for the silver bullet' comes from folklore. Legend had it that the only way to kill a werewolf was with a silver bullet. Finding the silver bullet became a way of describing a specific, fail-safe, even magic solution to a problem.

There are rarely 'silver bullet' solutions to any important challenge. But significant action and change is usually possible! This is no less so as the Church of Ireland works to match its apologetic for mission to reality.

The report of the Council for Mission to the 2012 General Synod suggests that the journey to effectiveness in mission by the Church of Ireland will be taken at many levels:

> *… there can be a leaning towards spiritual consumerism which places personal spiritual preferences above the life of the Christian community. There may also be a deep-seated desire to preserve what we have and who we are rather than face change and growth … there is a need to exercise trust and recognize that visionaries need to be heard and their visions discerned and then acted upon. But national gatherings and voices are needed to keep the mission central and to share the stories.*[100]

At whatever level work takes place the key processes are still diagnosis and action. As one person commented, "The commitment to execution is a spiritual issue".

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98   p 23 Book Summary: The Practice of Adaptive Leadership
99   Matthew 8:2-3
100   p 340

questions for reflection

Whether personally or in a group you may find the following questions helpful as you reflect on this paper.

■ introduction & chapter one

> *'A small group of people had just lived through traumatic circumstances that would have shaken their confidence to the core. Some of them were city dwellers but many of them were born and brought up in the country.*
>
> *It was to such a collection of people that Christ spoke a matter of weeks after His crucifixion and resurrection. The disciples did not always fully understand what their master taught them. He also had a habit of presenting them with tasks beyond what they believed were their capabilities.*
>
> *Shortly before leaving His disciples and ascending into heaven Christ gave His disciples a promise and a commission (Acts 1:8). "… you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."'*[101]

1. Put yourself in the place of those early disciples – can you describe how you would have been feeling when Christ gave you the Great Commission (Acts 1:8)?

2. Do you recognise any of the feelings you have just described when we discuss the Church of Ireland and mission?

3. Do you agree with the '5 Marks of Mission' as a description of Christian Mission? (See Page 19)

4. Can you describe examples of each of the '5 Marks of Mission' that you see being worked out somewhere in the Church of Ireland?

   a. What encourages you when you describe them?

   b. What is to be learnt from each of your examples?

   c. Is there something you could replicate in your own parish?

5. Is there a temptation to choose one or two of the 'Five Marks of Mission' and ignore others?

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101   p 17

■ chapter two & three

'Peter Drucker says there are two crucial questions any organisation should ask itself. What's your business … and … how's business? As demonstrated, the Church of Ireland has clearly articulated what its 'business' is - it has an unambiguous apologetic for global and local mission'.[102]

'Implementation Deficit Disorder is a term used by well-known Irish Management Consultant, Eddie Molloy. It describes the struggles that any organisation seeking to deliver on a priority can face. Identifying obstacles is not simply offering cynicism, which is as easy to do as it is de-motivating.

Entrepreneur Jerry Greenfield (Co-founder of Ben & Jerry's) says, "One of the key roles of leadership is to tell your own people the truth about the way things really are on the ground".

Naming an obstacle gives the opportunity to address it. Richard Rohr says, "I am not saying there is no place for criticism, but there is the kind that opens possibility and the kind that merely spews and increases negative energy". '[103]

1. What are we doing well in the Church of Ireland, regarding mission, that we could do more of?

2. What caught your attention most readily in the items described in 'The Visible Iceberg'?[104]

   a. Describe one thing that you personally, or your parish, can do to positively change this?

3. 'Culture isn't defined by … mission statements posted on the wall or website – it is defined by the behaviours and principles being practiced every day …'[105] In what ways can organisational culture affect our ability to be effective in mission:

   a. In our parish?

   b. In our dioceses?

4. Is there anything in our history as a Church that makes us more risk averse?

   a. What are the possibilities and dangers of addressing this?

5. What do you think of when you think of evangelism?

   a. What do you think is in the mind of Christ when He thinks of evangelism?

6. What challenges does the Church face today when committing itself to mission?

   a. How has the world changed for the Church in Ireland?

   b. What local challenges does your parish face when thinking about mission?

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102   p 27
103   p 43
104   p 44
105   p 46

■ chapter three, four & conclusion

'Spiritual renewal at local level has been identified as key to the mission of the Church. "We cannot give away what we do not have".'[106]

'There are rarely 'silver bullet' solutions to any important challenge. But significant action and change is usually possible! This is no less so as the Church of Ireland works to match its apologetic for mission to reality.

The report of the Council for Mission to the 2012 General Synod suggests that the journey to effectiveness in mission by the Church of Ireland will be taken at many levels:

… there can be a leaning towards spiritual consumerism which places personal spiritual preferences above the life of the Christian community. There may also be a deep-seated desire to preserve what we have and who we are rather than face change and growth … there is a need to exercise trust and recognize that visionaries need to be heard and their visions discerned and then acted upon. But national gatherings and voices are needed to keep the mission central and to share the stories.[107]

At whatever level work takes place the key processes are still diagnosis and action. As one person commented, "The commitment to execution is a spiritual issue".'[108]

1. What 3 things encourage you or give you hope regarding our ability to be effective in mission?

2. When thinking about spiritual renewal:

   a. Describe what it might look and feel like in your own life?

   b. Describe what it might look and feel like in your parish life?

   c. Is there anything that disturbs you or is off-putting about the concept?

3. What 3 practical actions could your parish take to encourage spiritual renewal?

4. Put yourself in the place of being a leader in the Church and describe some of what your biggest challenges might be? How might you most helpfully respond to them?

5. What three positive changes could you make in the way you do things in your parish to make you more effective in mission?

6. What next steps are you planning to take to increase your effectiveness in mission?

The Church of Ireland website has some helpful resources at
www.ireland.anglican.org/parish-resources

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106   Comment from Council for Mission Breakout Group: 2014 General Synod

107   p 340

108   p 66

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Other Sources

21 interviews, including:

- 4 Church of Ireland lay people

- 2 non-Church of Ireland lay people

- 10 Church of Ireland clergy

- 3 Church of Ireland bishops

- 2 non-Church of Ireland clergy

Focus Group consisting of Church of Ireland / non-Church of Ireland members

Material from previously held groups of clergy (totaling up to 50 clergy) and lay consultations (totaling up to 250 people)

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