

GENERAL SYNOD 2018

Council for Mission Report Proposer: The Revd Adam Pullen

**Embargoed Against Delivery
Check Against Delivery**

Archbishop, it gives me great pleasure to present the report of the Council of Mission for 2018. You will find it in the Book of Reports, pages 357-361. It is especially appropriate that we consider this report and the work of the Council for Mission today as today is Ascension Thursday. I call to mind the words of our Lord before He ascended. He said to them: “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the Earth. After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight” (Acts 1.8-9). And we are also commanded and encouraged in Matthew 28.19 to “go and make disciples”.

This Bible passage reminds us that we are part of a bigger worldwide church. As part of this wider Church, I would like to say thank you for the privilege and opportunity to represent the Church of Ireland at the World Council of Churches’ Conference on Mission and Evangelism ‘Moving in the Spirit called to Transforming Discipleship’ in Arusha, Tanzania, between 8th-13th March. It was good and challenging to hear the stories of our brothers and sisters in Christ from Aleppo to the Pacific islands. Also to hear stories in a postcolonial context and gender justice issues faced by many in Africa and other places on the margins. It is a call and challenge that we need to hear, and in the light of this speak out and challenge the unjust structures in society.

I now wish to share with you some of the highlights from the report of our work over the last year. As a council, we took a time of reflection and re-envisioning brilliantly enabled by Earl Storey last September in CITI. This challenged and drew us as a council back to our core commission, to stimulate within the Church of Ireland a sense of the priority and urgency of mission, to advocate the equality and complementary nature of mission at home and throughout the world. And, in future, to look at the resources available to us, both personal and financial, in response to this and seeking an integrated and holistic model of mission. We looked to the Five Marks of Mission given to us by the Anglican Communion and mentioned,

Your Grace, in your Presidential Address to the Armagh Synod in 2016. To remind you of the Five Marks, they are:

- *Tell* – to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom;
- *Teach* – to teach, baptise and nurture new believers;
- *Tend* – to respond to human need by loving service;
- *Transform* – to transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation; and
- *Treasure* – to strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the Earth.

In particular, we decided that we needed to begin initially by focusing on the first two: *Tell* and *Teach*. Further, to live up to our commission to stimulate and encourage mission within and from the Church of Ireland, we have collected good news stories of mission and discipleship right across Ireland.

Therefore it gives me great pleasure to present to you and to launch *Radiant Faith: Living out the Five Marks of Mission*. This booklet includes stories from all 12 dioceses, for example an Eco-Congregation in Cork, Cloyne and Ross, Tuam, Killala and Achonry's fresh water project in Kenya, *The Bible Comes Alive* in Clogher, and healing rooms in Redcross (Dublin and Glendalough). I have only mentioned some of the many stories demonstrating the living out of the many Marks of Mission, seen in each of these examples. Can I encourage you to read, share, be encouraged, and engage in mission? We would love to hear and know of many more stores of missions and discipleship.

I would like to say a big thank on behalf of the Council for Mission for all who have contributed to this booklet. Thank you to Bishop Ferran and the members of the Council and to Ruth Garvey-Williams and Jonny Lindsay for a job so well done.

Thank you especially to Biblical Association for the Church of Ireland for sharing with us a biblical and helpful understanding of the Five Marks. This is also an example of how we as a council wish and intend to work collaboratively with other councils, committees and bodies of the Church of Ireland in this common task of living out our part in building the Kingdom of God.

Continuing in this model of partnership we are also co-sponsoring a motion with Bishops' Appeal to carry out a scoping study into the potential for greater collaboration (i) between existing Church of Ireland committees, and (ii) between the Church of Ireland and groups associated with it, so that the Church can better engage and respond to global justice issues

such as (but not limited to) hunger, displacement, homelessness, poverty, wealth inequality, unfair tax and trade, climate change and gender-based violence.

Therefore, Your Grace, in conclusion it gives me great pleasure in commend the report of the Council of Mission to Synod and ask that it be adopted.