

Motion No.14

Secunder: The Revd Peter Jones

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Archbishop, Members of Synod.

It is fair and accurate to say that the past twelve months have certainly been historic. As Rev Mark has indicated in his proposal of this motion, last June there was great excitement in many parishes as we prepared to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. The longevity of her reign was only surpassed in the pages of history by King Louis XIV of France who reigned for 72 years and 110 days. During her reign, which lasted 70 years and 214 days, Elizabeth II brought continuity and consistency on the national and international stages. She was admired by so many people and this accelerated the sense of celebration that was experienced last June.

From that joyous occasion, we were all too quickly united in grief. Just three months later, on Thursday 8th September, television programmes were interrupted as the world was told that Queen Elizabeth II had passed away. In the days that followed, people united in their grief. A period of national mourning was observed. Parishes were opened for times of prayer. Services of Reflection for the life of Her Majesty were held – including one in St Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast, on Tuesday 13th September.

These were two massive events which had profound impacts on many of our parishes and their parishioners. Then, just last weekend, we were able to unite in celebration once again – this time for the Coronation of King Charles III. Many parishes held lunches, afternoon teas, community celebrations, and a range of other events. It really was encouraging to see all the photos on websites and Facebook pages during the past week, and to see our parishes connecting so well with their local communities.

Given the positivity of last weekend’s celebrations, I am only too delighted to second this motion, “That the General Synod of the Church of Ireland asks the Honorary Secretaries to send warmest congratulations from this (synod) house to King Charles III on his accession to the throne and on his recent coronation, and extend prayerful good wishes to both he and the Queen.”