



**Vatican finds  
hundreds of millions  
of euros 'tucked  
away': cardinal**

## **Statistics and Mission focus for special Down and Dromore Synod**

On 1 December the Diocese of Down and Dromore held a special Synod meeting, chiefly to hear an analysis of diocesan statistics and to consider how they might inform mission in 2015 and beyond.



***Dr Bev Botting***

Bishop Harold Miller invited Dr Bev Botting as an expert and objective observer to analyse data collected by the diocese from 2005 onwards. Dr Botting has been Head of Research and Statistics for the Archbishop's Council, Church of England, for 3 years and before that worked for the Office of National Statistics.

The data analysed included National State Census figures, annual and triennial data provided by parishes, finance data provided by parishes and the 2013 Church of Ireland Census. Dr Botting has prepared a 'statistical dashboard' for each parish so that they can better understand their community and respond to it more effectively in mission. On the evening, however, she spoke in more general terms, highlighting overall patterns in the diocese.

### **Key points -**

- 16.5% of the Church of Ireland population in Down and Dromore attend church weekly. 15% attend each 'normal' Sunday. There has been a small but sustained increase in attendance at midweek services.
- Of those attending church, 58% are women – a much higher proportion than is represented in the population (51%).
- Our congregations are disproportionately old. 50% of those attending in Down and Dromore are aged 60 plus but fewer than 1 in 5 of the population in the diocese is in this age group. Furthermore, the 15–30s make up less than 5% of our attendees.
- There has been a 40% fall in the numbers of children attending Sunday School in the past 2 decades.
- Even through recession, there has been a small but sustained increase in the giving in the diocese although it has not kept pace with inflation.
- Overall in the diocese in the last few years we have been experiencing a decline in attendance of around 1% per annum. This is similar to that experienced by the Church of England.

## Observations

Dr Botting began by remarking upon the similarities between the trends she observed in the diocese and those well documented in the Church of England, albeit on a larger scale.

“Statistics,’ she said, ‘should support the work of the church, providing a picture of reality and a baseline from which to measure success. Compared to the Church of England you have a higher starting point in terms of attendance, but there are sober messages here and many parallels to be drawn.”

Dr Botting described the ageing congregations as a ‘demographic time–bomb’ noting that as people age the church will shrink dramatically in the next 20–30 years.

Children, she said, are important for growth. In the Church of England where a parish has facilities for children there is an association with growth. Put another way, those churches which are growing recognise the importance of their children and young people and usually have an overall service pattern that meets their needs.

Whilst the increase in giving has compensated for falling numbers, Dr Botting warned of the danger of complacency within congregations as they age. New members, she said, are vital to survival.

## Mission opportunities

The number of people who self-identified as Church of Ireland in the State Census is much larger than the number on our parish registers. Dr Botting asked who and where they were. “They could represent some of the ‘open doors’ in your parishes,” she said.

Church of England research would indicate that people want the church to be part of their lives during the Christmas season, but not necessarily on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. “They come in large numbers in Advent to Christingle Services, Nativity plays and Carol Services, said Dr Botting. “What are we doing to capitalise upon these mission opportunities?”

Each year the Church of Ireland is in contact with thousands of families at key moments in their lives through baptisms, confirmations, weddings and funerals. Dr Botting remarked upon the mission opportunities of these Occasional Offices citing research for the Church of England. For example, in the case of couples who married in church but did not attend, they discovered that 60% of couples would have welcomed contact from the church following their wedding.

## Bishop Harold Miller

Bishop Harold thanked Dr Botting for her presentation and insights, especially related to the Year of Mission. He also thanked the parish mission teams for all their work in preparing for 2015.



The Bishop reminded the Synod of the three images of the Year of Mission, which he presented to them in June 2013:

- a) *A group of people holding hands and looking inwards being transformed into a group of people holding hands and looking outwards (being turned inside out!).*
- b) *The application of a ‘Mission filter’ where we challenge ourselves relentlessly to see everything we do through the lens of mission and in fact drop it if it’s not helpful.*

c) *Moving from a plateau to growth*, including numerical growth, and the basis that the church is an organism rather than an organization.

Underlining their importance again he concluded: "It's not a plateau any more but a slow decline. We're not in the 'last chance saloon' but decline can speed up and we do not want to be there! We must be intentional about reversing the trend."

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The Vatican's economy minister has said hundreds of millions of euros were found "tucked away" in accounts of various Holy See departments without having appeared in the city-state's balance sheets.

In an article for the Catholic Herald to be published on Friday, Australian Cardinal George Pell wrote that the discovery meant overall Vatican finances were in better shape than previously believed.

"In fact, we have discovered that the situation is much healthier than it seemed, because some hundreds of millions of euros were tucked away in particular sectional accounts and did not appear on the balance sheet," he wrote.

"It is important to point out that the Vatican is not broke ... the Holy See is paying its way, while possessing substantial assets and investments," Pell said, according to an advance text made available on Thursday.

Pell did not suggest any wrongdoing but said Vatican departments had long had "an almost free hand" with their finances and followed "long-established patterns" in managing their affairs.

"Very few were tempted to tell the outside world what was happening, except when they needed extra help," he said, singling out the once-powerful Secretariat of State as one department that had especially jealously guarded its independence.

"It was impossible for anyone to know accurately what was going on overall," said Pell, head of the new Secretariat for the Economy that is independent of the now downgraded Secretariat of State.

Pell is an outsider from the English-speaking world transferred by Pope Francis from Sydney to Rome to oversee the Vatican's often muddled finances after decades of control by Italians.

Pell's office sent a letter to all Vatican departments last month about changes in economic ethics and accountability.

As of January 1, each department will have to enact "sound and efficient financial management policies" and prepare financial information and reports that meet international accounting standards.

Each department's financial statements will be reviewed by a major international auditing firm, the letter said.

Since the pope's election in March, 2013, the Vatican has enacted major reforms to adhere to international financial standards and prevent money laundering. It has closed many suspicious accounts at its scandal-rocked bank.

In his article, Pell said the reforms were "well under way and already past the point where the Vatican could return to the 'bad old days'."

## **DUP's Givan expresses sympathy for Catholic bishops over adoption law**

News Letter - A decision by the Catholic Church to end its relationship with an adoption services provider is further proof of the need for a "conscience clause" in equality legislation, Paul Givan has said.

The DUP MLA was commenting after the Catholic Bishops of Northern Ireland announced that, following the failure to overturn a court ruling, the church could no longer work with the Family Care Society (NI).



The bishops have been unable to support a new law which allows unmarried couples and same-sex couples to adopt children.

In a statement released yesterday, they said: “It is unreasonable for legislators to oblige faith-based organisations to act against their fundamental and



*Paul Givan*

reasonable religious beliefs in the provision of services that contribute to the common good.”

The statement goes on to say: “We believe equality would be best served by support for a diversity of adoption providers, with reasonable accommodation in law for those adoptive parents who value the support of an agency with a particular religious ethos.

“We are concerned that many Christians and others will see this development as a further erosion of their fundamental right to exercise freedom of conscience and religion in the public square.”

Mr Givan said politicians must respond to the development and he is launching a Private Members Bill on Monday.

“This decision by the Catholic Church is another reminder that our laws do not make provision for those with perfectly legitimate religious beliefs. The Catholic Church wished to continue its relationship with the Family Care Society but a High Court judgment on adoption provision in Northern Ireland essentially forced this relationship to come to an end.

“The ramifications of this judgment have been far reaching. I trust the judiciary will carefully reflect on their judgment and the consequences it has had on adoption agencies.

“The challenge is now with politicians to respond to this development. I am firmly of the belief that reasonable accommodation should be made that would allow the Catholic Church to continue providing a service that has been of great value to our society over many years.”

Mr Givan added: "Equality of opportunity for Catholics to access adoption services from their own church is being denied as a result of our laws. Just as with Ashers Bakery, the Catholic Church should not have to act in violation of its deeply held religious beliefs. A truly tolerant society should be capable of making space to accommodate difference in our community."

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/givan-expresses-sympathy-for-catholic-bishops-over-adoption-law-1-6457789>

## **Minister Alan Kelly pledges beds for all Dublin homeless by Christmas**

Irish Times - All homeless people sleeping on Dublin's streets will be offered beds by Christmas, Minister for the Environment [Alan Kelly](#) has said. He was speaking after meeting more than 50 delegates involved in the sector to explore measures to alleviate the Dublin homelessness crisis.

The meeting was convened following the death of homeless man Jonathan Corrie (43), a short distance from Leinster House earlier this week.

The number of emergency beds allocated for rough sleepers in the city would be immediately increased by 220 a night, Mr Kelly said.

He also said the four local authorities in Dublin are being directed to give 50 per cent of their accommodation allocation over the next six months to people who are vulnerable or homeless.

"In the city of Dublin by Christmas there should be no reason for anybody to sleep rough," Mr Kelly said.

"If they want a bed, if they want accommodation, it'll be there for them if they so choose."

However, Lord Mayor of Dublin Christy Burke, who attended the meeting, said he believed it possible to get rough sleepers off the city's streets in the next seven to 10 days.

### **'Procrastination is over'**

"The day of procrastination is over, the day of talking is over," he said. "It's a day of action, and let's hope action takes place."

More at - <http://www.irishtimes.com/news/social-affairs/alan-kelly-pledges-beds-for-all-dublin-homeless-by-christmas-1.2025733>



## **Dublin and Glendalough Mothers' Union Autumn Council Meeting Highlights Members' Work and Witness**

Mother's Union branch members from all over Dublin and Glendalough gathered in St Brigid's Parish Centre in Stillorgan for the organisation's Autumn Diocesan Council.

Reports were delivered from each MU

diocesan section and diocesan President, Joy Gordon, urged council members to spread the news of what they had learned with their branches.

"It always surprises and saddens me when I meet members and they don't know what's going on in the diocese or in Mothers Union in general. Our All Ireland Mothers Union President, Phyllis Grothier at the All Ireland Council meeting last Saturday described, Mothers' Union as a 'Best kept secret', so please don't let our work and witness be a secret, please disseminate and share what you hear tonight," she stated.

As an active campaigning organisation, Joy said that Mothers' Union would be speaking out against gender based violence by joining in the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence which continues until December 10. In Dublin and Glendalough, she stated, Mothers' Union offers practical support to women experiencing violence by providing food, toiletries and clothes for local women's shelters.

Social policy representative, Sylvia Graham had organised short reflections and arrow prayers to be read at various stages throughout the evening to mark the *16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence*.



***Dublin and Glendalough Diocesan Mothers' Union President, Joy Gordon, gives her address at Autumn Council.***





Reporting on the Action and Outreach Unit, Daphne Townsend, said knitting for the maternity hospitals continued to be very popular and their work continued for

***Fiddle Muffs knitted by MU members for use by people with dementia.***

Crumlin Hospital with Freddie Bags and Take Home Bags. Members are also supporting Darndale Children's Project Christmas Boxes.

At Spring Council members were introduced to the concept of Fiddle Blankets for people with dementia and Daphne said that the Greystones branch had received terrific feedback and requests for blankets from a local nursing home, Wicklow Dementia Support and individuals. She introduced a variation on the theme – Fiddle Muffs and said that the pattern would be available on the website soon (<http://www.dublin.mothersunion.ie/>).

Daphne highlighted a number of projects being undertaken by local branches. In Tallaght, St Maelruain's Branch supports SAOIRSE women's refuge. Skerries Branch is organising a six week hand craft course. Raheny with Coolock Branch supports the women's refuge in Coolock. Castleknock and Consilla Branch supports the Older Persons Unit in Connolly Hospital and the women's refuge in Blanchardstown. Arklow/Inch/Kilbride Branch held a Beetle Drive for 8 – 80's for the community. Christchurch Cathedral Branch knit hats, gloves, scarves and mittens the Simon Community. Athy Branch went carol singing in their local nursing home.

These are just some of the ways MU members show their love, care and support for others in their Parishes and communities... thank you all for

keeping the spirit of Mother's Union alive in your parishes and locally," she said.

Delivering the marketing report, Sandra Knaggs, gave an account of the Mothers' Union General Meeting which took place in Belfast in the summer. She said the Mums in May would be running again in 2015 and would take a similar format to 2012. The monies raised will again be used to give grants to the dioceses to help fund new projects.

She urged members to use the Dublin & Glendalough Mothers' Union website (<http://www.dublin.mothersunion.ie/>) and use the "contact us" section to send photos and information on future events which can be advertised on the site.

Sandra also highlighted the forthcoming women's breakfast which will be held on Saturday February 28 2015 in Springfield Hotel, Leixlip with motivational speaker, Jacqui Armstrong. It will run from 9.30 am to 11.30 am and will cost €5 for scones/pastries tea and coffee. You don't have to be a member to attend.

Sylvia Graham turned the spotlight on Social Policy with her report and spoke of the range of local, national and international social policies on which Mothers' Union was lobbying. Issues include gender equality, gender based violence and domestic abuse and the exploitation and commercialisation of children, for example, with child beauty pageants.

Jean Thompson delivered the finance report and outlined the changes brought about by the Charities Law and insurance issues. She said there would be a small increase in subscriptions for 2015 and each member would be asked to pay €24. Of the subscription, €19.50 is sent to All Ireland with the remaining €4.50 being used to run the diocesan organisation.

She also said that Joy's term of office as President would come to an end on December 31 2015 with a new President taking over on January 1 2016.

The MU theme for 2015 will be 'United in Prayer' which continues from this year's theme of 'Sowing the Future Together'.

## **Dangerous Women and Violent Confucians: - public lecture at Trinity Centre for Asian Studies**

The Trinity Centre for Asian Studies hosts the third public lecture in its Inaugural Asian Studies Series 2014/15. The lecture is entitled 'Dangerous Women and Violent Confucians: The Early Catholic Church in Korea', and will be delivered by Dr Kevin N. Cawley, Director of the Irish Institute of Korean Studies, School of Asian Studies, University College Cork.

In East Asia, the religious and intellectual history of women has been less seriously dealt with compared to that of men. This talk outlines how Confucian constructions of 'good' women subjugated and delimited their possibilities vis-à-vis men, while demonstrating how 'dangerous' women spread the Catholic faith. Dr Cawley's talk will focus on Kang Wansuk (1760-1801) and Yi Suni (1781?-1802), who show us various ways in which Catholicism was transforming the lives of women, dissolving rigid binary notions of gender as well as developing a new religious modus vivendi for women and men.

Event details:

Date: Monday 8 December

Time: 6.30pm - 8.30pm

Venue: Neill/Hoey Theatre, Trinity Long Room Hub

All are welcome, and admission is free.

For further information on this lecture series please visit [www.tcd.ie/Asian/events](http://www.tcd.ie/Asian/events).



## **Church of England to appoint first 'headship' bishop**

The Church of England is to appoint its first bishop explicitly chosen because of his conservative evangelical stance against the consecration of women.

The "headship" bishop will fill the suffragan see of Maidstone, which has been vacant since 2009, but will have a national remit.

The decision follows a proposal from the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby to the dioceses commission which met this week.

The Church's bishops committed themselves to making episcopal provision for conservative evangelicals as well as traditionalists as the legislation to

consecrate women bishops progressed successfully through General Synod and Parliament earlier this year.

The headship argument is a Bible-based teaching from the writings of St Paul who stated that the man should be the "head" of the woman. Many conservative evangelicals believe that men have different but complementary roles to women.

The Church said: "In agreeing with the proposal to fill the see, the commission was conscious of the needs of the national church for a member of the college of bishops to be able to act as an advocate for those who hold a conservative position on headship."

The new bishop will foster vocations among conservative evangelicals and, with the agreement of the diocesan bishop, will pastor in parishes across the provinces of Canterbury and York that cannot accept the ministry of a woman bishop.

Rev Rod Thomas, chairman of the conservative evangelical group Reform, said: "We are very glad to that the creation of such a post has been approved. It is very good news. Once acted upon, it will provide reassurance both for conservative evangelicals and for those who have been keen to see women bishops."

## Anglican Communion's Standing Committee reviews wide range of work and concerns

The Anglican Communion's Standing Committee has released a summary of its meeting in London that comprises the second, third, and fourth days of discussions.

### Day 2

**Anglican Consultative Council:** Stephen Lyon discussed preliminary plans for the ACC's 16th meeting, scheduled for May 2016 in Lusaka, Zambia. He said planners want to assure that every participant, regardless of background, gains a common understanding of what ACC's identity and purpose.

This prompted a discussion among committee members about the future of the Instruments of Communion in relation to other Anglican Communion

gatherings that might be more relational, conversational, and perhaps missional in nature.

Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori mentioned that at a recent meeting between Episcopal Church leaders and several senior bishops from across Africa [[ACNS coverage](#)], there was “significant energy” behind the idea of an Anglican gathering of some kind, above and beyond the Instruments of Communion.

“The Toronto Congress [of 1963] created the language of mutual responsibility and interdependence,” Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi said. “Now there’s a feeling that again we need that: a wider gathering of Christians — Anglicans and Episcopalians, lay and ordained — coming together to see and discuss and share and build relationships.”

He added: “The Instruments of Communion, they have a 10-year schedule or three-year schedule. In the present world of instant communications, that’s becoming a long time. What happens between those meetings? If communion is really communion then we want something new.”

The Rt. Rev. James Tengatenga, chairman of the Anglican Consultative Council, said ACC-16 could be a kairos moment for the Communion. “The idea of a ‘gathering’ has been hanging over our head for a long time,” he said. “Each generation has been crying for one and we’ve never quite birthed it.”

**Bible in the Life of the Church:** Stephen Lyon told the standing committee that the [Bible in the Life of the Church’s](#) project stage will conclude in 2016. Lyon said he hoped the project would leave the Communion “a toolkit to do the Bible better.”

“As Anglicans and Episcopalians we’ve no doubt that the Bible has a central part of our life,” he said, “but whether people coming to our churches would know that is another thing.”

Lyon proposed four resources to enhance the project:

- A booklet showing where all the resources can be found
- A book about different pathways for deeper engagement with Scripture
- A longer book outlining the resources and guiding readers to more information
- A transcript of email conversations on the Bible from leading thinkers around the Anglican Communion

Archbishop Bernard Ntahoturi mentioned his concern that such material might not consider the needs of Anglicans in the Global South. Lyon asked for more communication from Global South provinces.



**Knowledge and Information Management:** Stephanie Taylor, manager of information and knowledge, told committee members about her work, which is a new realm for the Anglican Communion Office.

“Right from its very inception, information and communication has been at the heart of the mandate of the Anglican Consultative Council,” she said. “The functions of the ACC as outlined in Resolution 69 of the 1968 Lambeth Conference instruct the mandate to share information; to advise; to develop; to encourage; to help in the dissemination of information; to keep in review; to promote inquiry and research. Information and knowledge are at the very heart of these functions. They are the foundation and building blocks.”

Taylor said the vision for her work is “To harness the power of the Communion’s information and knowledge, to serve the Communion and work together to the Glory of God.” She identified several objectives:

- Harnessing and exploiting the ACO’s knowledge and information
- Fostering a culture of information and knowledge sharing
- Introducing and establishing best practice information management, records management, and knowledge manage policies, processes, procedures, tools and techniques
- Improving the quality of the data on the Anglican Communion Office’s database, working in partnership with provincial secretaries, and promoting its use among ACO colleagues
- Building relationships with professionals in similar and related professional disciplines, particularly those working for Christian organizations

After Taylor’s presentation the standing committee withdrew to a closed session.

### Day 3

**Unity, Faith and Order:** The Rev. Canon Alyson Barnett-Cowan, the departing director for Unity, Faith, and Order, said the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Unity, Faith, and Order (IASCUFO) is studying how member churches make decisions.

“What power do the primates have? What power does the General Synod have?” she asked. “Not every province makes decisions in the same way.”

The goal is to help provinces better understand why member churches better understand each other’s ways of reaching decisions.

Canon Barnett-Cowan told the standing committee that IASCUFO awaits word from provinces about their decisions regarding the Anglican Communion Covenant. She expected the Covenant to be an agenda item at ACC-16.

She said IASCUFO's Ecumenical Working Group was considering questions from the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia and the Church of Ceylon regarding the recognition of non-Anglican Churches' ministries. The Lutheran World Federation has adopted themes for the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation: a general theme of "Liberated by God's Grace" and subthemes of "Salvation not for Sale," "Creation not for Sale," and "Human Beings not for Sale." IASCUFO has recommended that Anglicans reflect on these themes.

The Anglican Orthodox dialogue working group has been preparing a draft document on theological anthropology, and IASCUFO will review this work.

After Canon Barnett-Cowan's presentation the committee withdrew into closed session.

#### **Day 4**

The standing committee met in closed session for all of its fourth day. Bishop Tenganenga said the committee expects to issue a job description for the Communion's secretary general within a few weeks.