

12 C of I bishops likely to be unsustainable - synod told



Launch of Catholic Schools Week

Bishop of Cashel's concern at direction of education administration

Bishop Michael Burrowes of Cashel and Ossory commented on recent changes in the education system and expressed concern about some of the consequences. The Bishop's comments were made in the diocesan magazine . He writes -

Over this summer, as was required to happen in the aftermath of the recent local elections, successor bodies to the VECs have been put in place by the local authorities. There are fewer of them now, they therefore cover larger areas, and they have been renamed Education and Training Boards (ETBs).

In all of this something of considerable concern to me and indeed to other bishops has taken place. For many years, in a way that would probably now

be considered inappropriate, bishops both Roman Catholic and indeed Church of Ireland had a virtual right to nominate a representative member of their churches to the VECs. They did this in the context of public recognition of the substantial role of the churches in the provision of secondary education in Ireland over the years.

By this means, many educationalists who were also members of the Church of Ireland made a distinguished and valued contribution to wider educational affairs in their areas. Although the VECs were always heavily politically influenced, some of the their Church of Ireland members (whether politically connected themselves or not) came to assume very influential roles and some even served as chair of their county VECs.

More recently, the bishops ceased to be able to appoint members as of right, but they remained in a position to nominate suitable candidates for consideration for appointment by the local authorities. Five years ago at the last VEC elections, I was myself considerably involved in identifying very able candidates and in commending their names to local authority members for appointment. Some were successful, and some were not . . . but our committed engagement with the process was taken seriously and I have been very grateful to members of the diocese who have been involved with VECs in my years here . . . it has been a time-consuming and often unsung role for them.

Good relationships with VECs have also assisted the process of determining patronage arrangements for particular schools at a time of change in that area. For example, in Gorey in recent years the Church of Ireland supported the awarding of the patronage of the new secondary school to the Wexford VEC (with which it has had the most cordial of relationships) and in consequence we were given the opportunity for long-term representation on the school board.

However, and it is a big however, the churches have almost overnight lost their opportunity formally to offer suggestions of suitable people for appointment to the new ETBs. Despite their historic and vast role in the provision of secondary education, the churches are not in themselves among the community groups designated by the Minister for Education and Skills as entitled to enter names into the process following which the local authorities ultimately appoint the ETBs.

This is a very serious matter which we can only hope may be reviewed the next time round, and it has a disproportionate negative effect on the minority churches as, by dint of numerical size, the Roman Catholic church is bound to have its members involved in the boards anyway. (I say this not with any

unecumenical motive, for indeed my Roman Catholic colleagues have already been expressing to me their sadness that the presence of Church of Ireland members seems to be likely to be a rarity in the ETBs).

More at - http://cashel.anglican.org/?page_id=2407

Bishops warn of secularisation of Catholic schools

Irish Times - The educational office of the Catholic Bishops is encouraging its schools to be more assertive in upholding religious values to avoid becoming “secularised from within”.



Executive chairman of the Catholic Schools Partnership Fr Michael Drumm said there was a role for Catholic schools to be ‘relevant as a counter-cultural voice’.

In a document published today on the church’s future in second-level education, the Catholic Schools Partnership (CSP) says religious education should not be reduced to a branch of the “social sciences”.

“To equate all religions is, in a real sense, to empty them of any significance,” it says.

The document also argues that Catholic secondary schools are “severely disadvantaged” in terms of state funding, citing an ESRI report last year which showed the extent to which such schools were dependant on voluntary contributions to remain open.

Fr [Michael Drumm](#), executive chairman of the CSP, said “the argument for more funding is not the key aim [of the document]; the central aim is to awaken consciousness of the significance of the voluntary sector.”

He said it sought to “provide schools with a process to reflect on their identity”, and also to highlight the distinct contribution of voluntary schools to society.

The CSP was founded by the [Irish Bishops' Conference](#) and the Conference of Religious of Ireland in 2010 to foster “coherence in Catholic education” and support its school trustees.

The report “Catholic Education at Second Level: Looking to the Future” notes that over the past 25 years, the number of voluntary secondary schools has fallen from 493 to 374. Some 344 of those remaining are Catholic.

More at -

<http://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/bishops-warn-of-secularisation-of-catholic-schools-1.1961605>

Catholic schools face closure over funding

<http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/catholic-schools-face-closure-over-funding-291135.html>



Inter-party concern at Sinn Fein Education minister's attempted avoidance of scrutiny of new education body

News Letter - There was a radically split reaction to the fact that a bill aiming to set up a single educational body is to be fast-tracked through Stormont.

Danny Kinahan MLA said the draft law to bring it into being has only six clauses and four schedules.

Sinn Fein said that speeding up the efforts to get the law onto the statute books was “a real

opportunity for much needed progress” – although the UUP said it means it will be deprived of the usual scrutiny.

If passed, it would set up one overall administrative support body for the Province's schools.

Danny Kinahan MLA said the draft law to bring it into being has only six clauses and four schedules.

“However, short is not always sweet,” he said.

“We talk of ‘shared education’ and the need to tackle the stubbornly high levels of educational underachievement in some areas.

“However the administrative support for schools must be fit for purpose, focused and equitable.”

Independent unionist MLA John McCallister declared himself “astounded by the disinterested manner in which MLAs agreed to the accelerated passage”.

Sinn Fein said that with the Reform of Public Administration coming into effect on April 1, 2015, “the existing Education & Library Boards would be left in a precarious legal position if subsequent educational administrative reform was not agreed.”

The DUP said the controlled sector had long been left behind in issues such as addressing educational underachievement, and this bill could help right that “grave injustice”.

The Alliance Party said it was concerned the integrated and Irish medium sectors will be under-represented.

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/there-was-a-radically-split-reaction-to-the-fact-that-a-bill-aiming-to-set-up-a-single-educational-body-is-to-be-fast-tracked-through-stormont-1-6357874>

Consecration of Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe

The Service of Ordination and Consecration of the Revd Canon Kenneth Kearon as the new Bishop of Limerick and Killaloe will take place in Christ Church Cathedral Dublin on Saturday 24 January 2015 at 2.30 p.m.

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This year's Limerick diocesan synod was held in Villiers shcool and presided over by Archdeacon Wayne Carney, acting as the Archbishop's Commisary.

It was a busy and business filled event. Synod began with the eucharist and then a presentation from The Ven. Robin Bantry-Whyte and the Ven. Gary Hastings on the current process of exploring the episcopal ministry in the Church of Ireland.

Since the attempt to suspend the process to appoint a new Bishop of Tuam, made on the retirement of the Rt. Rev'd Richard Henderson, was refused by an extraordinary meeting of the General Synod some serious thought has

been given to the future shape of the Church of Ireland. It is clear that sustaining the present arrangement of 12 Bishops is unlikely to be sustainable in the near future, so what do we do? The two Archdeacons had no pre-prepared answers. Instead they encouraged the synod to discuss and answer some questions about the role of Bishop in small groups, and to further take away and complete a short questionnaire. This is probably the most important decision that the Church of Ireland will make in the next two or three years, and carries both great risk and great opportunity. Yet it must be answered, and the more of us participate in the process of answering these questions the better the answer is likely to be.



Andrew Eadie made a presentation to Lorna Gleasure upon her retirement as diocesan treasurer

More synod news at -

http://limerick.anglican.org/news_detail.php?id=184

“Journey of Forgiveness”, a Quiet Day with the Rev. Ruth Patterson

A Quiet Day led by the Rev. Ruth Patterson will take place on Saturday 22nd November 2014 in Raphoe Cathedral.

The organisers - the Church's Ministry of Healing state - "Throughout our day together we will reflect on the process or the journey of forgiveness, enter into some practical exercises and, then, recognising that forgiveness and reconciliation are not the same, we will move into a workshop based on Psalm 85:10 that will help us identify what is necessary in order for reconciliation to take place."

All are welcome to attend, and participants from other dioceses are invited to come too. The day will start at 12 noon and conclude by 3.45pm. Coffee and tea will be provided, but participants need to bring their own lunch.

To register your attendance please contact Dr Iva Beranek at iva@ministryofhealing.ie.

Tuam Quiet Day

Compassion: Seeing with the Heart, a Quiet Day with Dr Iva Beranek, will be held on Saturday, 8th November 2014, in St Mary's Cathedral, Tuam.

Come at 11am for coffee for an 11.15 start. The day will conclude with the Eucharist to finish at 4pm. Coffee, tea and soup will be provided, but participants are encouraged to bring a sandwich to complete their lunch. All are most welcome, and there is no charge to attend.

To enquire further, or to register your attendance, please contact Dean Alistair Grimason (deantuam@gmail.com).

Illumination of church on Derry's Walls

Londonderry Sentinel -The Rev. Malcolm Ferry has applied for permission to illuminate the 'Wee Church on the Walls' as part of a wider city centre flood lighting scheme.

The Church of Ireland Minister has submitted an application for "external facade lighting" at St Augustine's Church, at Palace Street. The application is part of the wider Walled City Lighting project for Londonderry.

Ian Paisley's memorial service to go out on BBC radio and TV

News Letter - Ian Paisley's memorial service on Sunday will be broadcast live on BBC Radio Ulster, as well as being televised live, the corporation has said.

Three senior BBC Northern Ireland broadcasters will front two programmes which will broadcast the service across the Province.

The public service broadcaster said that it would screen "special coverage and analysis" of the service on BBC Two Northern Ireland from 2.15pm to 4.15pm.

That programme will be hosted by political broadcaster Mark Carruthers and the veteran BBC presenter of Radio Ulster's Evening Extra programme, Seamus McKee.

The BBC said that it will also broadcast a slightly longer programme on BBC Radio Ulster's FM channel.

More at -

<http://www.newsletter.co.uk/ian-paisley-s-memorial-service-to-go-out-on-bbc-radio-and-tv-1-6357802>

Archbishop Justin's speech to Lords on Women Bishops

Tel/BBC - Reports that the House of Lords has approved plans for women to become bishops in the Church of England in a historic debate which clears the way for the first female members of the episcopate within months. They state the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby, also disclosed during the debate that all the main Westminster political parties had signalled their support for a plan to fast-track the first women bishops into the Lords. They have agreed to back a change in the law which could be rushed through Parliament before the next election suspending the normal procedures for appointing so-called Lords Spiritual to allow women to join the bishops' bench.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11163105/Women-bishops-approved-by-House-of-Lords.html>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-politics-29618178>

Bishop of Gloucester is to face no further action from police

Tel/Times/BBC - Various reports saying the Bishop of Gloucester, Michael Perham, is to face no further action from police over allegations of indecent assault in the early 1980s. The Church of England confirmed that it had been notified by Scotland Yard and statements from both the diocese and the Bishop of Durham, Paul Butler (Chair of National Safeguarding Group), called for prayer for all involved while the Church carried out its own process to assess whether there are any ongoing safeguarding issues.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/religion/11162982/Bishop-of-Gloucester-facing-no-further-action-over-sexual-assault-claims.html>

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/news/uk/article4237056.ece>

<http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-gloucestershire-29620048>

1,800 Iraqi Christians from Mosul sheltering in Jordan

BBC - Some 1,800 Iraqi Christians from Mosul and surrounding villages are now temporarily sheltering in Jordan with assistance from the Catholic humanitarian aid agency Caritas, according to a report. It states the United Nations reported that Islamic State had committed a "staggering array" of systematic and widespread human rights abuses and "acts of violence of an increasingly sectarian nature" in Iraq. Jordanian Catholic leaders and Muslim officials have expressed concern that this latest wave of displaced Iraqi Christians could lead to more and more of their number forsaking their historic home for the West - a growing trend among Christians across a turbulent Middle East.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29612443>