

# Derry & Raphoe Diocesan Review

## Expressions of interest sought ~ March 2024

At the Diocesan Synod in October 2023 the following resolution was passed:

*The time is right to prayerfully conduct a strategic review of our dioceses. This should include, but not be limited to, a review of the present condition of diocesan and parochial structures and future aspirations. To this end the Diocesan Synod requests the Diocesan Council to establish a Commission with the following remit:*

1. *To lead and resource the Dioceses in prayer to prepare for this season of review;*
2. *To consult with every parish in our dioceses about present and prospective patterns of ministry;*
3. *To engage with Central Church initiatives, e.g. Pioneer Ministry and inform the dioceses at parish level;*
4. *To consider alternative patterns of parochial organisation and innovative forms of ministry, taking into account historical, demographic, spiritual and financial factors;*
5. *To research previous diocesan reviews undertaken and consider their findings;*
6. *To present an interim report to the 2024 Diocesan Synod and agree a timetable for the presentation of the Commission's summary of findings and recommendations;*
7. *To develop a strategic plan for the implementation of the Commission's recommendations; including any proposed new structures and arrangements.*

The first task therefore is to establish a Commission, meaning a group of people who will commence the work outlined in the seven points above.

The work of the Commission, set out above, seems to fall into three distinct stages:

- 1. Research**
- 2. Reflect**
- 3. Recommend**

To fill these out a bit more:

### 1. **Research:**

- Look at the present condition of parishes and their patterns of ministry. (we might call this 'taking the temperature' of the dioceses)
  - specifically this involves consulting with *every parish*.
- Look at previous diocesan reviews.
  - presumably in Derry & Raphoe but maybe elsewhere too?

### 2. **Reflect:**

- Consider alternative patterns of parochial organisation i.e. structures to help 'future-proof' our mission.
- Engage with central church initiatives e.g. Pioneer, OLM, Lay ministries etc.

### 3. **Recommend:**

- Come up with proposals to recommended to the diocese, particularly around (but not limited to):
  - Patterns of parochial organisation.
  - Innovative forms of ministry.
- And a plan for implementing these recommendations (if approved).

There is a fourth task: **Resource** in Prayer! This will need to be worked out e.g. does it involve written resources for individuals/churches, special events, human resources etc.? Unlike the other tasks which follow one another, this precedes and runs alongside the others.

A Commission suited to doing these tasks now needs to be established. At its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> Feb Diocesan Council agreed **to establish a Diocesan Review Commission to consist of the Bishop, the two Archdeacons and up to 8/9 others to be chosen from among those expressing an interest, bearing in mind the desirability of gender, age, geographical, clergy/lay and skills balance. The membership is to be chosen by the Bishop and Archdeacons and ratified by Diocesan Council.**

Expressions of interest are now sought, and are to be sent to by email to Joanne Miller, Bishop's Secretary, [bishopsoffice@derryandraphoe.org](mailto:bishopsoffice@derryandraphoe.org) by 5pm on **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024** and to include:

- ➔ A brief description of role(s) held in parish & diocese.
- ➔ A brief outline of special interests or areas of expertise.

### **Further points:**

- People proposed for consideration are to be members of a parish in the dioceses.
- Diocesan Council will ratify membership at 22<sup>nd</sup> May meeting.
- There will be the possibility of adding to or modifying membership at a later stage.

Thank you very much for giving this matter your prayerful consideration.  
May the Lord continue to guide his Church for his glory.

*The Rt Revd Andrew Forster*  
Bishop of Derry and Raphoe

*The Ven Robert Miller*  
Archdeacon of Derry

*The Ven David Huss*  
Archdeacon of Raphoe