

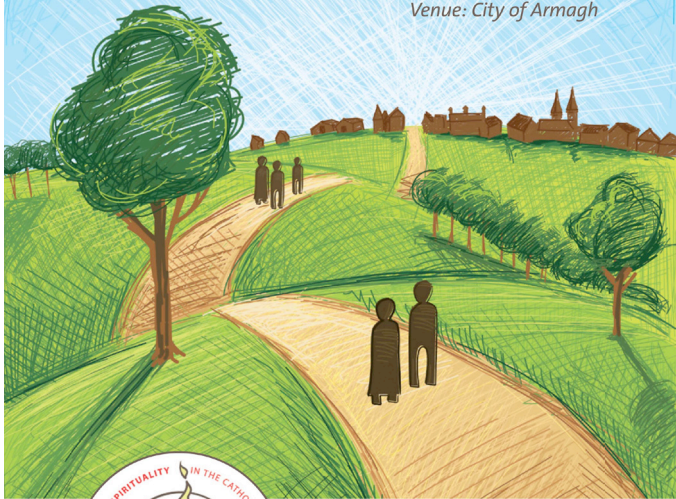
SpiritFest 2011

A Celebration of Prayer and Spirituality
in the Catholic Tradition

1-3 July 2011

Archdiocese of Armagh

Venue: City of Armagh



'Lord, teach us to pray' (Luke 11:3)

For booking information please visit our
website at www.spiritfestarmagh.com

The launch of SpiritFest 2011 in
St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh on
30 June at 7:30 p.m. is open to all.



www.spiritfestarmagh.com

For more information on the Pastoral Plan or other
items included in this leaflet contact

Office of Pastoral Renewal

Armagh Diocesan Pastoral Centre

The Magnet

Dundalk

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Archdiocese of Armagh

As a diocese,
we aim to be the
Body of Christ with
the help of the Holy Spirit
so that we can live like Jesus
in our time and place sharing
his compassionate
love with all.



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Pastoral Plan Update

January 2011

Report on:

Diocesan Pastoral Council

New Pastoral Areas

Commissions

Spiritfest

Feast of the Epiphany 6th January 2011

My Dear People,

A number of years ago we began the process of trying to plan for the future of the diocese in a dramatically changing landscape. I promised to keep you informed of ongoing developments as we try to chart a new way forward. The purpose of this newsletter is to keep you up to date with the main structures of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan as it has unfolded over the last few months.

Pastoral Areas

As you will recall these were established after a two-year consultation process with all parishes. Subsequently, in consultation with my priests, I appointed 18 Vicars Forane to exercise a leadership role in overseeing the development of these new realities. *(A Vicar Forane is a Canon Law term for someone who exercises a specific middle management role in the life of the Church. He is in charge of the Pastoral area and has responsibility to promote and coordinate pastoral action in the vicariate or pastoral area).*

Each Vicar Forane has a lay leader or a small team of lay leaders who are working with him in close collaboration. Bishop Clifford and myself together with Fr. Andrew McNally and Dr. Tony Hanna have met monthly with the Vicars Forane as we try to discern the road ahead. One thing is abundantly clear. The role of laity and religious in full partnership with the clergy will be central in the models that are emerging. We are currently examining ways of introducing leadership training modules for the Vicars Forane and the lay leadership teams to work as co-responsible for the life of the church within these new areas

Significant progress has been made with most Pastoral Areas Resource Teams meeting at least once every six weeks. However, not all Pastoral Areas will develop at the same pace because there

are unique circumstances in each cluster of parishes. In this first year of being together it is important to build relationships and to engage in mutually beneficial projects that are better done together than alone

Some of the joint initiatives that pastoral areas are considering include:

- A Retreat for their Pastoral Area
- 40 hours Adoration spread throughout the churches in the Pastoral Area
- A Passion Play with all the second level schools involved
- Training Courses for Baptismal Teams, Eucharistic Ministers and Ministers of the Word
- Pilgrimages to Knock or Mass Rocks,

More delicate tasks lie ahead when issues of mass times, church openings, rationalisation and best use of resources will have to be confronted

Diocesan Pastoral Council

This new group came into being in June 2010 when I promulgated the constitution. They had their first meeting in Armagh in October 2010 and over 70 people drawn from all the People of God in the Archdiocese attended. They will meet at least three times per year and the Council will be a forum for dialogue and discernment about how best we can work together to realize the diocesan aim which is

“to be the Body of Christ with the help of the Holy Spirit so that we can live like Jesus, in our time and place, sharing his compassionate love with all.”

I believe this group, comprised mostly of laymen and laywomen, will become hugely important for the pastoral life of the archdiocese as we try to live out this aim.

Commissions

It was agreed that we would create eight initial Commissions to be responsible for directing critical pastoral aspects of the life of the Archdiocese. These are, Youth, Liturgy, Prayer & Spirituality, Justice Peace & Development, Faith Formation & Training, Christian Vocation, Mission & Ecumenism and Care for Priests.

Each Commission met before Christmas to draw up terms of reference and to elect a chairperson who will represent the Commission on the Diocesan Pastoral Council. The chairs will meet regularly with Dr. Tony Hanna so that effective communication will be dispersed throughout the diocese on the range of activities and projects that each commission will initiate. The commissions will be in regular dialogue with the pastoral areas and the parishes so that there will be a cohesive approach to all our planning and the initiatives that are implemented.

Spiritfest

On the first week-end of July 2011 we will have a major conference on prayer in St. Catherine's College, Armagh. It will be part of the national preparation for the International Eucharistic Congress which will take place in Dublin in June 2012. I believe it will provide a wonderful opportunity for the diocese to learn from excellent speakers, to engage in dynamic workshops and to celebrate our faith together. I hope it will be a time of renewal and inspiration in these difficult days. More details about this are available at spiritfestarmagh.com.

I pray God's gift of wisdom for all of us on this Feast of the Epiphany.

+ Seán Gard. Brady