



Transforming Clergy Training in Ireland 2006 - 2010

Presentation to the Bishops
of England, Scotland, Wales
and Ireland

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1. Aims and Aspirations

- To equip fully all members of the church, ordained and lay, to fulfill effectively the church's mission in the 21st century in Ireland
- To connect learning and practice in all that we do
- Ensure that the training is enriching for all church traditions
- Ensure training is in line with the stated goals and mission of the church (*Inspection Report*)
- Clearly laid out aims in the fields of:-
 - ▶ Academic Content, Relational Community, Governance, new-style Institute and Finance

Clarity of Aims central to Project Success

2. How did we get it to work

- Central Project Group - 6 People of which 3 Bishops - different church traditions and approaches to theological training
- United agreement of House of Bishops to final plan
- Relationship between Chairman and Project Co-ordinator - modelling and embodying the plan
- Clear Communications Plan
 - ▶ Key central committees - smaller then larger
 - ▶ Public Gatherings and Consultations - then GS
 - ▶ Website and Press Updates
 - ▶ At each stage - present, discuss, listen and consult

Clear Plan, United Agreement, Clearly Communicated

3. What did we do

- Appoint new leadership - Rev. Dr. Maurice Elliott Director of CITI
 - Experience 2 incumbencies - one with significant cross community centre, member of ACC, member of CofI/Methodist Council, Doctoral Research
- Appoint new staff - Concentration of focus to Biblical Studies, Theological Studies and Missiological Possibilities
- New MTh Course replaced old BTh
 - ▶ Course focussed on CITI students avoiding blurred objectives in teaching
 - ▶ Includes Reconciliation and Church Leadership modules
 - ▶ Creative approach for appropriate access
 - ▶ Equipping clergy with same experience of training at IME (***Stipend/NSM***)
 - ▶ NFQ9/Lutheran/Porvoo connection
- New Relationship with University of Dublin
 - ▶ New MTh Course approved by university
 - ▶ Recognition of **partnership** with a faith formation Institute
 - ▶ New governance agreement signed between University and Bishops
 - ▶ Intellectual rigour and faith formation in partnership and tension

4. Conclusion

- The richness of the journey, the relationships built, perhaps even a move beyond ecclesiological silos towards a John 17:21 missional ethos
- Positive response from students - results they are achieving - no disenfranchisement of fishermen
- Major institutional change achieved through focus and mutual co-operation and personal relationship
- Episcopacy and laity working together on a major project (including a €1.5m building renovation) to a positive end result