



# The Ministry Formation Project

Presentation to the Church of Ireland  
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By

The Bishops of the Church of Ireland

- PREPARING THE CHURCH FOR MISSION IN 21ST C IRELAND
- CONNECTING LEARNING WITH PRACTICE

# Agenda

- Background to the Project
- Mission of the Church
- Key Aims of the Project
- Detailed Aspirations and Goals
- Key Actions
- New Curriculum
- New Pathways and Practicalities
- Questions and Answers

# Project Background

- Feedback from the church
  - **Ordinands feedback over years**
  - **Comments from DDO's, Clergy, Ministry on Commission**
  - **General Synod reports and discussion**
- **Theological College Review**
  - **Crystallize and Galvanize strategic thinking**
  - **Asked some key questions**
    - Mission of the church
    - Ordained Characteristics
- **Reflection on above and own pastoral experiences by House of Bishops**

# The Mission of the Church of Ireland

The Church of an Ireland, as an authentic part of the universal church of God, is called to develop growing communities of faith, in and through which the Kingdom of God is made known, and in which the whole people serve together as followers of Jesus Christ for the good of the world

**GROWTH - UNITY - SERVICE**

# Central Aims

- To equip fully all members of the church ordained and lay to fulfill effectively the church's mission in 21<sup>st</sup> century Ireland
- That the methods we use to train people will throughout, effectively connect learning and practice

# Central Aims - Detail

- **Recognize complex clergy role today and equip fully**
- **Reconnect energetic and passionate young who feel disconnected from current training model**
- **Ensure that learning is applied and relevant**
- **Ensure that learning is an enriching experience for all Cofl traditions**
- **Initiate a process of lifelong training**
- **Develop spiritual, holiness, relational, community and pastoral understanding that is consonant with the role of the pastor articulated in the ordinal**

# Ordained Characteristics

- Please see sheets handed out

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Selection</b>	<b>Initial Training</b>	<b>CME</b>
<b>Spirituality</b>	A Disciplined Prayer Life etc	Spiritual Disciplines	Spirituality & Ministry Connection
<b>Theological Reflection</b>			
<b>Pastoral Care</b>			
<b>Vision</b>			

# Goals and Aspirations

**The Major Goals set to ensure that the  
Central Aims of the Project are Met**

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# Community

- Recognises that building community is essential to church – a focussed and purposeful residency is a key element of training
- Family friendly that seeks to integrate adults and children
- Encourages space for differing traditions to be expressed and explored
- That finds ways of connecting with the wider church
- A quality facility that enables these goals to be achieved

# Governance

- Aim for professional Governance standards
- We plan to fully restructure
- Create Single Oversight Body
  - Ensuring aspirations of the project are met
  - Ensuring Institute is operating best of class
  - Ensuring compliance legal, financial, HR etc
  - Ensure feedback and review systems in place
- Separate Oversight and Entity it oversees

# Facility Aspirations

- Provide High Quality Surroundings to meet needs described
- Attractive environment to learn in
- Residential and Dining Environment that helps build community
- Chapel facilities – encourage flexible worship and different worship styles to flourish
- Quality classroom study environments
- Training Centre to enable wide variety of uses

# Finance Aspirations

- Maximise our existing Plant Investment
  - Achieve High Quality Build for New Facility out of existing Investment
  - No additional capital burden on the church
- Optimise current Running Costs
  - Reconfigure existing expenditure on maintenance, staff, academic costs to achieve project aims
  - Not reduction of cost – but more effective result
- Recognise Costs in achieving changeover and invest accordingly

# Other Key Aspirations

- Eliminate Disparities between Stipendiary and Non- Stipendiary
- Ensure that what is learnt in distance learning = residential
- Ensure that Cofl training is an enriching experience for all traditions
- Ensure that it upholds family values
  - Reflected in approach to accomodation
  - Advisory Support in Terms of Transfer of accom/ school/jobs"

# The Principal of the Theological College

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# From Vision to Action

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# Key Actions

1. New Leadership
2. New Curriculum
3. New Facility
4. New Staffing Arrangements
5. New Interaction with Trinity

# New Leadership

- For a new institution
  - Church of Ireland Theological Institute
  - Director
- Advertisements for Vacancy placed in May
  - Locally and Internationally
- Candidates
  - Vision and ability to deliver the plan
  - Theological Competence
  - Wide range of personal, relational and spiritual characteristics
  - Candidates provided with a full list

# New Curriculum

- Moving from BTh to MMin
  - Apply theology to ministry practicalities
  - Connect learning and practice
  - Reflect educational level of ordinands
- Integrated Course
  - Scripture, Theology and Ministry
  - Integrating standard elements into these streams
- Internship
  - Applying learning pastorally
  - Do Dissertation

# The Proposed Curriculum

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# Foundation Access Programme

## Description

- Broadly based introductory course with a mixed mode of learning
- Integral to final selection process

## Content

- 3 weekend residential study periods
- A reflective practicum experience
- A distance learning study in 3 core modules - Scripture, Theology and Ministry

## Aims

- Maturing and deepening of vocation
- Evidence foundational ability in chosen areas of public ministry
- Give attention to personal spiritual growth as part of process.

# Aims of the New Curriculum (1)

- **Knowing the Gospel**
  - To explore the Good News of Jesus Christ and to empower others in its proclamation; to foster the deepening of personal faith and discipleship; and to develop effective ministries of pastoral care to the world
- **Knowing God**
  - To critically engage with the intellectual challenges of ministry through the study of the key themes in theological, biblical and pastoral studies
- **Knowing the World**
  - To identify the sociological and human context of Christian mission and ministry

# Aims of the New Curriculum (2)

- **Knowing the Church**
  - To encourage, understand and strengthen vocation within the denominational context and the ecumenical witness of other traditions
- **Knowing Others**
  - To offer a learning/formation environment which models appropriate forms of community; collaborative learning; worship and spirituality; social justice and the cherishing of difference
- **Knowing Leadership**
  - To foster abilities as a community-enabler where effective leadership is based on collaborative styles of ministry, appropriate boundaries, personal responsibility and accountability
- **Knowing Self**
  - To continue to build foundations of lifelong pastoral and academic development and the identification of individual gifts

# Course Description

- There will be three core areas of study;
  - scripture, theology and ministry
- The course will be a modular form of teaching and learning
- The course will stress the interplay between these core disciplines
- There will be a mixture of taught input and placement experience
- The internship will be interspersed with some residency
- Specialist modules will be encouraged in the internship
- There will be a major integrated project in the internship
- The course will be taught on a full time or part time basis

# Methodology & Assessment

- Methodology
  - Lectures, student led seminars and team teaching
  - There will be learning triads and independent study
  - There will be some specialist modules allowing for personal interests and concerns for ministry
- Assessment
  - Participation in seminars
  - Short pieces of related course work, e.g. for scripture module, bible study notes and sermon
  - An assignment that will be based on integrated learning showing the connection between the three core modules

# Curriculum Targets

- Not just a course of study but a **formational and professional development course**
- Aim for participants to evidence maturing of faith and deepening of vocation through:-
  - **PERSONAL**
    - They will have been enabled to develop a high level of maturity in self-awareness and personal discipline
  - **COMMUNITY**
    - They will have been enabled to develop the skills to relate to people and in ways which are community building and enhancing
  - **MINISTRY**
    - They will have been enabled to negotiate the tension between personal belief and a professional understanding of public ministry in the context of ordained ministry

# Pathways

## Residential

- Year 0  
Foundation  
Access
- Year 1 & 2  
Residential & Practicums
- Year 3  
Internship & Dissertation

Masters in Min

## Non-Residential

- Year 0  
Foundation  
Access
- Years 2 - 5  
Distance Learning  
Residential & Practicums
- Year 6  
Internship & Dissertation

Masters in Min

CME - 3 years curacy - professional qualification

# Work in Progress

- New Facility
- Arrangements with Trinity
- Curricular Staffing Structures

# Conclusion

We hope this will

- Prepare clergy thoroughly for ministry in 21st C Ireland
- Provide a solid foundation for lay ministry training
- Be an effective training ground for all church traditions - something that unites us
- Be an investment in learning that we will reap the benefits of for many years to come
- Be a vision for the future of ministry training that you will endorse and support

# Q&A

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