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Title

The emergence of the Anglican Communion's Fifth Mark of Mission concerning the integrity of creation and the practical outworking of that doctrine in the Church of Ireland.

Abstract

This dissertation sets out to answer two questions as to where the Fifth Mark of Mission came from and what it means for the Church of Ireland.

Finding answers involved research, including interviews with individuals who had experience of the World Council of Churches and the Anglican Consultative Council. This revealed that ecological challenges and missional integrity were both drivers in the emergence of the Fifth Mark. Full interviews, a survey and related matters are reproduced in the appendices.

The work and mission of Eco-Congregation Ireland is also explored as a practical expression of the Fifth Mark, which also integrates its work with the other Marks of Mission. A survey of ecological projects was undertaken to engender debate about how creation care can take place in parishes.

The mission role of the Fifth Mark is also explored. Account is taken of 'piety blocks' which cause people to resist care of creation as a part of Christian discipleship. A remedy to 'piety blocks' is offered.

The Earth Bible Project is evaluated. One insight is that qualities such as humility, awe, compassion, patience and empathy (qualities which Jesus Christ espoused) are highlighted when one reads the Bible from the perspective of the earth. This perspective is explored through the theologies of J. Moltmann, W. Pannenberg, R. Williams and others.

Passages from Isaiah and Luke, which are central to Advent Carol Services are read exegetically in the manner of the Earth Bible Project to show how the Fifth Mark can broaden the scope of mission and deepen human understanding of the Incarnation.

This potential of the Fifth Mark of Mission is then applied to liturgy through the Church year. In prayerful ways the ecological challenges, to which the Fifth Mark alludes, are confronted, neither in despair nor denial, but in hope, to the glory of God.

Trevor Sargent,