

Covid-19

A Mission Perspective

New context for mission

What extraordinary times we live in ! In the course of a month the whole context in which we do our ministry and mission has dramatically changed. Hopefully this will be temporary and we will return to the old normal again, but it is likely that it will not be quite the same when the restrictions are lifted.

For now, isolated in our homes and disconnected from the people among whom we minister (whether we are lay or ordained) we are left wondering what can we do to keep connected within our churches, and what opportunities are there outside our church walls to bring the message of hope in the good news of Jesus to people who are searching for meaning and fearful of the future.

The Church of Ireland Council for Mission has representatives from every diocese. We met via a Video Conference on the 26th of March 2020, and we pooled the ideas, perspectives and resources that we available to us. We offer them to you as encouragement and as a resource for you in these uncertain times.

We recognise that we are living in strange and unsettling times, but we are fortunate to live in a well resourced part of the world. We have excellent healthcare facilities and structures, there is food in our fridges and in the shops, support for those who have lost their jobs and for businesses who have had to close their doors. The Association of Missionary Societies (AMS) has brought to our attention that however difficult we think our circumstances are, imagine what it will be like without these first world supports. As financial pressures come on us as individuals and churches must remember to continue supporting those who will need our prayerful and financial support more than ever in other parts of the world.

What's happening around the church.

Initiatives around the church broadly fall into two main categories:

1. Internet based communications.

There are great efforts being made in our Cathedrals and some churches (and from many rectories) to live stream Sunday and Weekday services. Some churches are streaming services to YouTube and Facebook which can be accessed by anyone who has access to the internet. Most dioceses have

5 MARKS OF MISSION



TELL



TEACH



TEND



TRANSFORM



TREASURE

Council for Mission contacts.

Chairperson: Rev. Adam Pullen
Email: adam.pullen@googlemail.com

Secretary: Rev. Colin McConaghie
Email: revcolinmcc@gmail.com

Treasurer: Derek Neilson
Email: derekneilson@eircom.net

Contacts with (some) experience in live streaming who are willing to answer some basic questions:

Rev. Andrew Quill
(YouTube and Recording)
Email: quills155@btinternet.com
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/holytrinitydromore/>
YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwi585CXlqOq6W6h7_2AiYg/

Rev. Cliff Jeffers
(Facebook and Zoom)
Email: rector@fanlobbus.ie
Facebook page: Fanlobbus
<https://www.facebook.com/fanlobbus/>

services on offer and the main challenge is to get the information out to the people. Some dioceses are providing some on-line training to help get their parishes up to speed with this new way of joining people into our worship.

2. **Resources and initiatives that are not based on technology** - phone and texts are the main means of communication here. Many are phoning around their parishioners, especially the most vulnerable to offer pastoral and practical care. Text messaging (can be set up as groups to make sending them easier) for notices and updates. Others are attempting to get service sheets and notices out to the people, but care is needed to keep within the governments guidelines.

Often people are finding that their parish lists,

phone, mobile, email details are either lacking or out of date. GDPR must be considered, and many are ringing around to improve their contact lists so that information can be circulated electronically by Text, WhatsApp, Email, Messenger, etc.

Both approaches are needed. Technology presents us with the opportunity to connect with the Millennial generations in a new and creative way and who often were not in church before the crises. We also need to keep connected with the mature members of our congregations who often are not as internet enabled, and we need to communicate through more traditional means.

Hospitals and healthcare facilities are mostly closed to visiting, and even a traditional letter or card could mean so much to those who are isolated from the families and church community.

“As we are trying to scramble to put what we did inside the church building, outside the church walls, we realise that have a great opportunity to communicate with those who are on the fringe of the church in new and creative ways through this crisis.”

Resources available.

Sharing of resources that are being developed and mostly are already in place is very important at this time. The following are resources that you might find useful.

HELPFUL VIDEOS AND PAGES ON LIVE STREAMING ETC.

<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/parish-resources> Look under the section ‘Hot Topics’

RESOURCES FOR YOUTH MINISTRY

<https://www.youthscape.co.uk/coronavirus>

RESOURCES FOR SERVICES

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwj585CXlqOq6W6h7_2AiYg/

(This is Rev. Andrew Quill’s Parish YouTube Channel, which will have resources such as hymns and songs that can be inserted into a PowerPoint as they are recorded in the parish and therefore can be used in Live Streaming. Can I ask that if people use any of the resources that they click on ‘Subscribe’ to show that you have visited and appreciate the resources - and it’s free !)

HELPFUL VIDEOS & PAGES ON LIVE STREAMING ETC.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/magnifyonlinechurchideas/?fref=nf>

(Facebook Page – can see the discussions about what you can and can’t do, etc.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=arIDQBALrEw&t=40s>

(Learn How to Use Zoom in 5 Mins for Online Small Groups)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pFg4jLfaVe0&t=12s>

(Lighting for your Live Stream videos)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Co21Gw7zqNY>

(Filming with iPhone – seen many who are having difficulties filming with iPhone, where the video ends up being on the side, etc. Later on (08:12 into the video) he talks about lighting and then (09:35 into the video) about micro-phones.)

NATIONAL BIBLE SOCIETY - ONLINE RESOURCES. www.biblesocietyni.co.uk

Woven - A Holy Week Devotional Plan

Woven is our new, daily devotional plan for the week leading up to Christ's death. Available to download by clicking here: [Find out more about Woven here.](#)

We may not be able to gather in large numbers to celebrate this Easter, but we can still rejoice and study the days that lead up to the most important event in history.

The BIBLE 2020 App

BIBLE 2020 is a smartphone app that allows you to record yourself reading Scripture aloud, then upload it to a global wall where you can watch people read the same passage of Scripture in their heart language!

This is a great app to connect your congregation with the global church, especially in the current situation.

[Find out more about BIBLE 2020 here.](#)

CHURCH OF IRELAND YOUTH DEPARTMENT

New Virtual Reality Resource

Download the new App

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.mintarcade.vrirelandchurchtour>

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/vr-ireland-church-tour/id1489177543>

or Search 'VR Ireland Church Tour' in the Apple App store or Google Play.

A Virtual Tour of Drumcliffe Church and Kildare Cathedral (resources to accompany the App are in production).

AR (augmented Reality) Easter Resource will follow shortly more info on missionalgen.co.uk

CIYD's weekly updated resource on youth ministry during Covid-19 www.facebook.com/COIYD

DIOCESE OF DOWN AND DROMORE.

They have a great website with loads of on-line resources for you to use.

[JIGSAWDDYC](#) Facebook page has some great ideas, resources, videos, etc

[DDYC](#) Facebook page

Other **DIOCESAN WEBSITES** and Facebook pages contain information and links for live and recorded services and reflections etc. from each Diocese as well as Bishops' messages. We are all doing our best to adapt to the changing circumstances. You will find creative ideas in all corners of the country, which might be an inspiration for you in your situation.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

See the Children's Ministry page on the Church of Ireland Website.

<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/children-youth/childrens-ministry>

Weekly children's teaching based on the lectionary gospel, with worksheet : <https://sermons4kids.com/>

<http://www.cm.ireland.anglican.org>

<https://www.ireland.anglican.org/parish-resources/607/covid19-resources-for-family-activities#section-607>

COUNCIL FOR MISSION YOUTUBE CHANNEL

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5D9ktq0OR5g36LUDL8nSkg/>

CMS IRELAND www.cmsireland.org

Free resources available on our website:

‘Discover’ the biblical story of mission from Genesis to Revelation – downloadable videos and study material
Prayer material – In-mission magazine and prayer diary with up to date information from church partners in Africa and Asia.

Children’s packs – available shortly – videos, parental guide and age banded worksheets, focusing on different countries, to help children learn about their place in global family of God.

‘Voices of Hope’ a new blog series – uplifting stories of God at work through His people around the world to inspire prayer and faith.

SCRIPTURE UNION NORTHERN IRELAND - On-line Bible resources and Assemblies.

<https://www.facebook.com/ScriptureUnionNI/photos/a.550671451661074/2820176204710576/?type=3&theater>

PROTESTANT AID are also available to assist with practical support for those in need in the Republic of Ireland.

Contact: geoff.scargill@protestantaid.org

Council for Mission

The Council for Mission is a Committee of General Synod whose role is to highlight the importance of mission in the life of our church.

We aim to stimulate discussion and prompt action around the 5 marks of mission in our church, in our personal lives, parishes, dioceses and in the church as an institution.

We are a small group with limited resources. We bring what we have to encourage you in this time of change and uncertainty, and above all prompt you to pray that the people of Ireland will be drawn closer to God in these days.

What can you do ?

As well as a time change and uncertainty in the life of our church and the challenges to the ways we conduct our ministry and worship, these days of social distancing and restricted movement has most of us spending more time in our homes and with our families.

Why not use this time wisely and creatively to develop your own spiritual journey with God, and as leaders to encourage others to do the same.

Take up a spiritual discipline, read a gospel, spend some time in prayer - including time to listen to what God is saying to you.

PRAY

- We need to pray for our bishops, church leaders, the RCB, our diocesan staff.
- Pray for our healthcare workers, for the effective use of their skills and for their protection.
- For our political leaders, that God will guide them as they make difficult decisions which will affect our society.
- The vulnerable in our society, those who have less resources to see them through these troubled times, and that we might be alert to their needs and respond with loving service.
- For mission agencies and our mission partners who are working with some of the poorest and most vulnerable people in God’s world.
- Use the resources of 24-7 Prayer and SIM International for intercession.

<https://www.facebook.com/247PrayIreland/>

<https://www.facebook.com/siminternational/>