

HEYWOOD & MIDDLETON DEANERY

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DIOCESAN SYNOD MEETING

Diocesan Synod 14th March 2009

At the Diocesan Synod on Saturday 14th March the Bishop of Manchester said that despite falling numbers of clergy, churches should be looking outwards to support our links across the world and with other denominations.

He particularly mentioned our link Dioceses, especially Melbourne after the bush fires and memorial services. Also MU links were part of the backbone of the church. We should offer prayer, friendship and concern and he quoted Temple: We exist for those outside the Church.

The present staffing crisis provides the Church with a great opportunity including the possible appointment of eleven clergy to become Borough Deans to work alongside the councils, kingdom-focused, working among the deprived, charities, other faiths and different groups. Bishops will increasingly be engaged in work that takes them away. This Diocese will not be curved inward but looking outward.

The Diocesan Synod voted in favour of three changes for the Parish Share:

- that the Income Survey should be conducted annually beginning in June this year,
- that an 'encouragement' of 2% off Parish share is offered to parishes that pay in full by regular monthly payment,
- that the Appeals Committee is given an enhanced role to adjudicate.

People will be encouraged to continue to support their local church financially for thanks and for mission, with individual letters and prayer cards from the Bishop of Manchester. Posters will be sent to each parish and copies of resources sheets to encourage legacy campaigns, also on the web page and in Crux.

Maurice Smith, Diocesan Director of Education, spoke on education and Diocesan support for schools, teachers and young people (0161 828 1429).

He said we should follow Bishop Nigel's lead to 'Run the Race' with perseverance, to get young people into church and to pass on the Gospel Message of faith, hope and love, to serve the community and help our children to grow. Young families who come to church, who are interested in church schools are an opportunity for mission.

Maurice has awarded four Child Friendly Church Awards, so far. How about your church?

He introduced Suzie Mapledoram, who was newly appointed to Youth Services and would be happy to work with Youth Groups (0161 828 1435) He said that Steve Dixon Children's Officer will help to invest in links between children and parishes, for example how to structure services by times and activities? (0161 828 1433)

Meanwhile in Church Schools people are needed who have time to sit on Appeals Panels. If you are interested please contact Maurice.