



**DIOCESE OF TRURO**  
**Diocesan House Kenwyn Truro Cornwall TR1 1JQ**

**Diocesan Synod**

## **Item: Giving for Life – Report to Truro Diocesan Synod**

In July 2009 General Synod debated and commended to parishes the first major report on giving and generosity in the church since 2000. In the report called Giving for Life Synod reiterated the call for churchgoers to give 5% of their take home income to and through the church, with a further 5% to fund God's mission in the world through other organisations.

The full report was supported by a range of materials for parish use. The report's recommendations, and the support materials, were introduced by The Rev'd Julie Millar at the Diocesan Roadshows in the autumn of 2009, and parish packs of resources were distributed to every PCC. Deanery Synods were asked to consider the report and discuss how the deanery might encourage and support the use of the Giving for Life materials to promote better stewardship.

Bishop Tim wrote to every PCC Secretary asking them to encourage the discussion of the material at the PCC and to write to let him know what response was being made. The strategy was for the PCC discussions to feed into and inform Deanery discussions, which would then help inform the discussion at Diocesan Synod.

Each Deanery was asked to report on their synod discussion and any action planned in response. These are the responses from deaneries known about as of the date of writing this report:

### **St Austell**

I spoke to the Deanery Synod about Giving for Life on 25th February 2010. In response to this the deanery proposes to ask Parishes to bring reports to the next Deanery Synod on ideas that they have had in relation to Giving for Life so that these ideas may be shared amongst Synod members and then within Parishes so that good ideas may be spread more widely.

### **Carnmarth North**

Camborne, Redruth and Illogan have their own stewardship programs in place. These include a much wider perspective than just money as they are also about stewardship in terms of time for prayer, study and work linked with proportional giving. The smaller parishes struggle financially and find the focus on money in Giving for Life dispiriting.

As a deanery they are conducting an audit of resources and needs which hopefully will lead them to MAPs or each parish, benefice and for the deanery. These MAPs will include elements from the *Giving for Life* material as they will be identifying priorities, reviewing practices, setting new goals and working towards a collaborative way of working.

### **Carnmarth South**

Invited me to speak at the Deanery Synod, but unfortunately it was at the same time and day as the Kerrier meeting which I was already booked to speak at. I provided a powerpoint presentation that could be adapted and used at the meeting.

**Kerrier**

I spoke to the Deanery Synod about Giving for Life on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2010. Copies of the powerpoint slides were distributed with the minutes.

**Penwith**

The Penwith report summarised the responses from the Godrevy Team, Madron/Gulval, Lelant, Carbis Bay, St Ives, Halsetown, Towednack, Zennor, Ludgvan, Marazion, St Hilary, Perranuthnoe, which set out how they were proposing to respond to the Giving for Life material.

**Powder**

The matter of the 'Giving for Life' initiative was raised at the Deanery Synod on 26th January 2010. Most people seemed aware of the material and several of those present said that they were considering the issues raised by it and intended to have some kind of focused discussion on stewardship in the coming year as a result. The matter will remain on the Synod agenda to check further progress.

**Pydar**

Reported that the parishes of St. Mawgan, St. Eval, St. Ervan, St. Columb Major, St. Merryn, St. Issey with St. Petroc Minor and Padstow had discussed the Giving for Life material at PCC. There was a strong feeling that the material did not meet the needs of the small rural church. This will be reported back to the author of the material to help in preparing future stewardship resources.

**East Wivelshire**

I spoke to the Deanery Synod about a Deanery Action Plan and Stewardship on 20<sup>th</sup> February. The meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> April will follow up on this with reports back from parishes about their plans and actions.

**Stratton**

The Deanery Synod has yet to discuss Giving for Life because of the major focus for the last year on Mission and the development of the Bishop's Mission Order proposed for the Deanery.

**Trigg Major**

Rev'd George Darby made a presentation to the Deanery Synod on 10th February. He reports that Giving for Life was discussed at that meeting, but there is much that needs to be done in basic financial planning in the deanery, particularly in the area of budgeting and Gift Aid. He feels that many parishes may have scope for groups to plan more engaging fundraising events and for making people aware of the financial needs of the churches.

**Trigg Minor and Bodmin**

Mike Todd encouraged parishes to share their ideas and initiatives at the Deanery Synod on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2010, and the parishes of St Kew, Wadebridge, Blisland and Bodmin responded with an outline of their plans and actions. On a related matter Mike made information available about grants from the Archbishops' Council for the adaptation of churches for community use.

**West Wivelshire**

Will meet on 26th April and Giving for Life is on the agenda.

**Parish responses to Bishop Tim have been received from:**

**Archdeaconry of Cornwall**

**St Austell**

St Dennis

Golant

Mevagissey

St Mewan

Tywardreath

Withiel

**Carnmarth South**

All Saints Falmouth

Mawnan

Penwerris

**Kerrier**

Mullion

**Penwith**

St Buryan

St Erth

Gwinear

Lelant

Sennen

**Powder**

Gerrans

Tresillian and Lamorran with Merther

**Pydar**

St Eval

St Mawgan

St Wenn

**Archdeaconry of Bodmin**

**Trigg Minor and Bodmin**

St Kew

Lanivet

Lanlivery

St Minver

Wadebridge

**Trigg Major**

Lawhitton

**West Wivelshire**

Cardinham

Duloe

St Ive

Lansallos

**East Wivelshire**

St John in Cornwall

Torpoint

**Conclusion**

The response to Giving for Life has been muted. It is not clear what the majority of churches have done with the material as there has been no response from them either direct to the Bishop or through the Deanery.

Some parishes recognise their need to do some positive thinking about their financial situation and this material has been a catalyst for this, even if they then base their response on another model. Doing something is positive.

A few churches already have good stewardship in place and will not have needed this material to prompt them. Often these churches base their preaching and teaching on the impact of Christian faith on all of life including our financial decisions, and that giving is part of being a Christian. Generosity is taught in all its aspects, not just financial, and this is reflected in the church life and witness.

There is an issue that one size does not fit all, and there are comments that the 5% of take home pay recommended in the General Synod report is unrealistic in many of our rural communities. These comments have been fed back to the National Stewardship and Resources Officer in London who produced the Giving for Life material and was involved in the preparation of the General Synod report. However the four key actions in

the Giving for Life parish material are designed so that they can be applied in any church, adapted as appropriate. If a 5% message is not suitable for the situation of people in a parish is it possible to use a different ask that is.

A distinction needs to be made between stewardship and fundraising, and I feel this is not clearly understood in parishes. The giving of our churchgoers, and support from the local community do have different motivations and need different approaches. We cannot expect our local community to pay for our weekly running costs, but many want to see the church there as part of the community and are quite happy to support appeals to maintain the fabric or provide community facilities. Our churchgoers should be encouraged to give regularly and realistically, so that we sustain the life of our church in its regular worship from our regular giving.

Stewardship responses are complicated by attitudes to the Common Fund and what parishes see they get for their contribution to the Common Fund. If the majority of parishes increased their giving then the proportion of income the Common Fund represents would fall for that majority. But the responses to Giving for Life indicate that this is not likely to happen at present.

I believe there is a real reluctance to talk about money in church. While we don't want to give the impression that we only want people in church for their money, we do have to get over the idea that being a Christian means giving, to the church and other charities. Some people already hear and act on this message, giving generously to both.

The challenge is how encourage those who are not giving regularly or realistically without upsetting those who already give sacrificially, usually our older attenders. Regular reflection on what is appropriate giving in our circumstances to both church and other charities needs to be encouraged, holding in mind the needs of those to whom we give as well as our own needs.

Julie Millar 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2010