

General Synod

Seconder Rev. Canon Paul.R.Draper

Re: Seconding the Church of Ireland Marriage Council Report / text

"The madman shouted in the market- place .No-one stopped to answer him .Thus it was confirmed that his theses were incontrovertible "So wrote Dag Hammarskjold in his book "Markings". In seconding this report a simple request for feedback and effective communication .Thankfully over the years people have stopped to answer Questionnaires, attend excellent conferences ,work in small groups or visit our web-site. Lots of information has been sent out to parishes, though this is harder to gauge if it is getting through. Most recently the leaflet about counselling services and marriage preparation is an excellent initiative that needs to disseminate widely. Mindful of the demographic limitations of conferences the Council has begun work on a video resource to be used locally. In all we do your help in passing on communications, and feeding back to us responses, ideas and yes, even constructive criticism, is essential.

A key communication skill is that of attentive listening ,and surely there can be few more hypocritical sights than a speaker at this podium with a captive audience, on a Thursday afternoon, droning on about attentive listening. My apologies. We as a Council are committed to listening, so that with the parishes we can establish our reference points. Hammarskjold's book was called "Markings", and that is what we need. Jesus seemed to establish a reference point in reality he was faced with and another in the reality of the kingdom. He would come alongside someone where they were, and then listening attentively as on the Emmaus Road, would point to a marking in the kingdom. Things as they are and as they can be.

You are Simon you shall be Peter. Loving the reality we are faced with and being open to what might be. Both are necessary, and your feedback and ideas will help us ground ourselves in the reality and diversity of what constitutes "relationships" today; will help us engage with the dynamics and indeed difficulties of those relationships, and hopefully celebrate the radical nature of marriage & commitment as an arena for self-disclosure and healing, which is so necessary today.

One-liners or papers, letters, or e-mails on our re-vamped web-site ;all will be welcome...and please circulate widely the information that is sent out from the Marriage Council. Many thanks.