

General Synod 2005
Seconding the Council for Mission Report
The Ven. R. Wayne Carney

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

About twenty-five years ago I was involved in a debate: Should the primary concern of the Church be Ministry or Mission? I'm not sure we ever resolved the question – we got bogged down in trying to define what we meant by Ministry and Mission, and what the difference was between them. Most of us said that Ministry was looking after people in the Church, and Mission reaching out to others, but some said our Ministry was to reach out to others, and our Mission to look after them. Sometimes today we can still be uncertain about what those words really mean. But that uncertainty can have a positive side if it helps us make certain that everything we mean by "Ministry" and everything we mean by "Mission" is a part of what we do as the people of God, however we try to categorise them.

The Church of Ireland Council for Mission is not meant to be the body within our church that does mission. It is meant to be a catalyst to make sure that the mission of Christ is at the heart of all we do as a church, both in looking after the people who call themselves members of the Church of Ireland, and reaching out to others, at home and overseas, with the message of Jesus Christ.

Gone are the days when we believed that people in the pew