

Embargoed until Delivery

Representative Body Report 2005 Seconded by Bishop Ken Clarke

Archbishop, Members of Synod,

3 old men who were brothers lived together in the same house. Each was convinced that the other 2 brothers were losing their minds! One decided to go upstairs and have a bath. 10 minutes later the 2 brothers downstairs heard him shout, "Am I getting into the bath or am I getting out?" One brother shouted up the stairs, "I will come up and help you!" As he climbed up the stairs he stopped and shouted, "Am I going up the stairs or am I coming down?"

The remaining brother downstairs then shouted "I will go and help you." As he went to help he said to himself. "It's very sad about the minds of my brothers. I'm so glad that my mind is clear...touch wood!" As he said this he knocked on the wooden door several times. Beginning to move towards his brother who was half way up the stairs he shouted, "Who was that knocking on the door???"

Sometimes in the Church we can be like those 3 old brothers. We don't know who we are. We don't know where we are going. We lack purpose clarity and direction.

As we read the R.B. Report we see clarity purpose and direction. The purpose of the R.B. is clear...

" It's historic and primary mission is to serve and support the Church's ministry..."(Page 13)

There are references in the report to historic churches, old portraits and additions to the archives of the R.B. library. Such references remind us that we have a past. In the Church of Ireland we have centuries of history.

However portraits pictures and photographs are stills...the Church is called to be more like a video or a DVD. They are about movement, life, action, variety and story. They are much more about the present and the future. The Church is called to serve God's purposes in this generation. The Church has a rootedness in the past and is to have a radical relevance in the present, not to mention identifying a roadmap for the future. How we spend our money is to reflect our top priorities. One of the challenges of each generation of a Representative Body and each generation of General Synod is to ask searching questions, define new directions and assess how far our present practice is reflecting our top priority of **"serving and supporting the Church's ministry."**

Wise investments create more income. Releasing such money and using it wisely results in more effective ministry...a more effective ministry of the whole Church not just a more effective ministry of the clergy.

Has the time come to look again at how we do things, who we are and what our ministry is? We live in a rapidly changing Ireland. Do our structures and processes address the new demands and facilitate seizing the new opportunities? Are we serving the purposes of God in this generation?

The Proposer of this Report has referred to the updating of the computer system in Church House. This is both important and necessary. As reported on Page 13 the installation of the new system is well advanced. Such developments are necessary in order to increase efficiency and ensure careful stewardship. (Thankfully you will never see the following in Church House!!...video clip)

In our central computer system we are leaving the past and moving on. However has such forward thinking been applied to, and expressed in, the updating of our structures and committees. In our Church we are blessed with so many gifted and highly committed people who leave their homes early in the morning to attend a Committee meeting in Dublin. On pages 4-12 you will find the names of nearly 100 people who serve on central R.B. committees. (Many more serve on other committees of General Synod) They also serve in sub-committees, write reports, carry out inspections of property, make major decisions regarding allocations, policies and processes. These people serve in a great variety of ways and we say to all of them...**Thank you.**

In the light of such numbers and commitment we have a responsibility to ensure that committees are purposeful productive and a wise use of time. Sometimes committees can be like our 3 brothers ...lacking in common sense, devoid of direction, suspicious of others, failing in action and costly to maintain. People from all parts of this island serve on our committees. Time is precious. Travel is expensive. It is vital that maximum use is made of time together and that we avoid keeping the minutes but wasting the hours! Do we need to revisit how we do our business ask the searching sometimes uncomfortable questions and who will initiate such a process?

From one perspective the Church of Ireland is a huge institution and like many an institution we can be more like an elephant than an athlete. I have been reading a fascinating book entitled "Who says elephants can't dance?" It is written by Louis Gerstner and it is about how he managed the most amazing turnaround in the effectiveness and efficiency of that huge institution IBM.

I wonder do the following quotations ring any bells?

"Successful institutions almost always develop strong cultures...they reflect the environment from which they emerged. When that environment shifts, it is very hard for the culture to change. In fact, it (the culture) becomes an enormous impediment to the institution's ability to adapt." (p.182)

"At (IBM) we had become prisoners of our own traditions. We were unable to do what we knew we had to." (p.321)

"This codification, this rigor mortis, which sets in around values and behaviour is a problem unique to-and often devastating for- successful enterprises. I suspect that many successful companies that have fallen on hard times in the past-including IBM, Sears, GM, Kodak, Xerox etc. saw perhaps quite clearly the change in their environment...what I think hurt most was their inability to change highly structured sophisticated cultures that had been born in a different world." (p.185)

One of the greatest challenges we face in the R.B. and throughout the Church of Ireland is making our structures patterns and processes relevant to each generation of the 21st Century so that our institution continues to be a living organism which reflects in word and deed our historic and primary mission of serving and supporting the Church's ministry. We continually need to ask

ourselves if our administrative structures reflect our changing culture and primary mission? Are structures born in a different world relevant to our present world? We are called to serve the purposes of God in **this generation**. We are wise to avoid the mistake of meeting any new situation by reorganizing for the sake of reorganizing. This can be nothing more than a wonderful method for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralization!

You will notice that the reports of our investments include a consideration of what is happening elsewhere in the world. We truly are a global village. We cannot function in isolation. It is exactly the same in the ministry and mission of the Church. What happens in one part of the body directly affects another part of the body. We cannot divorce ourselves from the affairs of the wider Anglican Communion and the world Church. In the coming years our contact with other churches both within and outside of the Anglican Communion will become even more important. This has implications for the allocation of money.

One of the discoveries we make as we consider the wider Anglican Communion is how blessed we are in having a Representative Body which takes seriously the care of clergy. The Clergy Remuneration and Benefits referred to on Pages 24 following is a blank page in some Provinces. Some Anglican clergy in Africa have not been paid for months, nor do they expect to be. They struggle to survive financially. They grow their own food on a small plot of ground. When weather patterns change and the rain does not come at the right time, with many others, they are in serious crisis. An office allowance is unheard of for they do not have an office. A Locomotory allowance does not apply...they do not have cars. Our clergy have many stresses but in over 30 years of ordained ministry in the Church of Ireland I have never had the stress of wondering if I will be paid at the end of the month. Thank you to the R.B. for the careful stewarding of our resources which has insured the regular payment of clergy and the assurance of a pension. It is all too easy to take such benefits for granted.

For a long time I have been convinced that our greatest resource in the Church of Ireland is our people. The R.B. Report is another example of such a claim. It represents a colossal amount of work in the past 12 months. **Thank you** to the dedicated teams of clergy and lay people, the staff of Church House and many volunteers. We don't wish to turn General Synod into an Oscar Awards ceremony with emotional and lengthy thank-you speeches where those with 2 legs (and even 4!!) are thanked through tears and waterfalls of mascara. (Neither the proposer nor I use mascara!!) However without hesitation I totally endorse the appreciation expressed by the Proposer. We warmly and sincerely thank those who serve this Church so well with competence and cheerfulness. From this Synod we say a very sincere thank you to the Staff of Church House, who are consistently helpful courteous patient and professional.

Archbishop, it gives me great pleasure to second the Representative Body Report.