

## **Diocesan Synod 26.09.20**

### **Feedback from Aidan Group (verbatim comments)**

Questions Posed:

What really matters?

How do we use the budget to best serve God's people everywhere?

How do you feel about this?

It matters that people don't get damaged or embarrassed (esp clergy) by having to admit they are not able to pay parish share. "You feel like a failure as a priest"

There is a tension between our aspirations and the reality on the ground. That is not to say I'm not thrilled and excited by the aspiration – it's fantastic! But I am anxious that in my deanery – 9 parishes – are sinking because they can't pay. Any central funding given doesn't get to support the work in a parish. For example we are now looking at closing a church over winter as we cannot afford to heat it.

We are up for the positive, but we feel exhausted by constant money pressure. Everything we do in the Parish feels like it is geared towards being able to pay the share. It feels dis-spiriting as a minister.

Re:selling properties

Some parishes use rental property income to be able to pay the share – that's a blessing! If we sold it that income stream would end. Is the decision about which properties to sell coming through deaneries/chapters? Worried about too many properties being sold in one deanery area.

The money and time that is left after we have paid our share and bills is so miniscule that I don't even understand the second question? This is the problem – all our focus is on staying above water.

Reconfiguring ministry – How will this work? What happens to the parishes that can't pay? We are increasing numbers in my parish which is wonderful, but because I am in a poor area the giving will not rise in line with this, in the same way it might in a more (relatively) wealthy parish.

We really need to get on with reconfiguring ministry. We've been talking about it for years but we really need it right NOW. When will lay people be trained to start to share ministry? This is esp key in poorer parishes.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Discussion: What is the most important thing?**

Takes a bit of time to see the bigger picture – we have become myopic in our parish settings. I'm just trying to get my head around it.

We aren't an organisation like others – we aren't a chain of shops. We need to FEEL for one another and become less individualistic. It's hard to see the rest of the diocese clearly when we are making decisions at parish level but we really need to.