



ARCHBISHOP OF GLASGOW

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My Dear People,

Looking to the future in the Archdiocese we must first of all look to the past. In particular, to the commission that Jesus Christ gave to the Church when at the end of the gospel he says: Go out to the whole world and proclaim the good news.

That is why the Church exists, that is what the Church has been asked to do by God: to spread the good news to others, to everyone, both by word and by action. Not just by telling others about Jesus but also by proclaiming his message through putting his teachings into practice.

Even those of us who are committed need to be continually re-evangelised to stay committed. And of course we are concerned for family members, especially the young who no longer practise. But Pope Francis reminds us that “evangelisation is first and foremost about preaching the Gospel to those who do not know Jesus Christ or who have always rejected him”¹. The great commission is to evangelise them.

As we look to the future it means that the Archdiocese must be outward looking. Any decisions about how to use our resources, including people – whether clergy or lay - and property – whether money or buildings - must be determined by how they can best serve the mission Christ has given the Church.

To take this forward, I have asked the Deans to set up Deanery Councils. There will be five of these Councils, with the membership formed by the parish priests along with a lay representative from each parish. The Dean and a lay person will co-chair the Council since this is an exercise in synodality.

Inspired by the gospel message to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and to share the joy of the gospel, each Council will look at how best this might be done in their area. The Council is not to be an endless talking shop but will advise the Archdiocese by making concrete practical proposals.

At the same time the Archdiocese is establishing an Evangelisation Fund of £1,000,000 which will be available to support new evangelisation initiatives. It is hoped that this fund will inspire parishes and deaneries to come up with new ideas of how to reach out to others.

We need to remember, of course, that what we are preaching is not the Catholic Church, what we are preaching is Jesus Christ. Our aim is to bring people to Jesus and bring Jesus to the people, so that that encounter will change their lives. Sometimes the Church and its members have been a counter sign, discouraging others from coming to Christ. That is why it is so important that we don't just talk about Jesus but that we put his teachings into practice.

¹ Evangelii Gaudium 15

ARCHDIOCESE OF GLASGOW

We look to the future with faith, knowing that God is with us even though we don't know what lies ahead.

We look to the future with hope, knowing that with God's help we can face up to the hard decisions that need to be made.

We look to the future with love, knowing that others will be greatly blessed by our actions as we share with them the joy of the gospel.

With my prayers and best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read '+William Nolan'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

+William Nolan

Archbishop of Glasgow