



To work with, and on behalf of, the Bishop, to strengthen and deepen the spirituality of the churches in the diocese.

Report to Synod 2016 and Self-Review 2012 - 2016

Introduction

The following Self-Review of the Spirituality Development Team (SDT) is offered as both an introduction, to those new to Diocesan Synod, and as an assessment of its work over the past four years, to all members of Synod.

Beginnings

The SDT came into being by decision of Synod in February 2012, following a review of the Retreats Ministry, with the intention to build on the excellent work of Maggie Le-Roy and Katafiyio, the Diocesan Retreat House.

Membership

The membership of the team brought together people, lay and ordained, from across the diocese with the Bishop as an ex-officio member, to whom the team reported and the Spirituality Coordinator as Executive Officer (from February 2014 also coordinator of the team). Membership of the SDT has developed during the period under review with some members leaving and new members joining. The current membership is: Ex-officio - The Bishop, Appointed Members - The Ven John Holdsworth, Canon John Banfield, Canon Paul Maybury (Spirituality Coordinator), Maggie Le-Roy (Retreats Facilitator), Tricia Butt, the Revd Jebaraj Devasagayam, Sarel du Plessis, the Revd Wilf Gowing, the Revd Gill Nisbett.

Meetings

The Team meets twice a year and during the review period has met on eight occasions. Skype meetings in December 2015 and January 2016 has pioneered a new, and effective way of "meeting".

Role of the SDT as agreed in February 2014

"The role of the SDT is to encourage and support the deepening and strengthening of spirituality at the heart of church and diocesan life; spirituality which engages with the diversity of contexts in the diocese and enriches the discipleship of church members and leads to effective witness and mission. The Diocesan Spirituality Coordinator works alongside the SDT to resource this aim and the Retreats Facilitator oversees the ministry offered at Katafiyio, the Diocesan Retreat House, and, by invitation, in churches and to individuals."

Focus and priorities of the team

The focus is described as: "To encourage the development of the experience of spirituality generally and to enable this to be at the core of Diocesan and church life."

The priorities have developed, and are reviewed at each meeting, and are currently stated as:

1. To encourage and support opportunities for Spiritual Direction for both Clergy and Laity.
2. To provide creative resources for liturgical use.
3. To offer an annual Lent course, and other courses, for use across the diocese.
4. To develop web-based spirituality resources.
5. To support and develop the ministry offered through Katafiyio, the Diocesan Retreat House.
6. To develop opportunities for pilgrimage, retreat and spiritual development.
7. To provide input to diocesan training programmes for Laity and Clergy.

Synod's support for the SDT

In addition to funding the part-time post of Spirituality Coordinator, for an initial period of 3 years, Synod have approved an annual budget of €10,000 in 2015 and 2016 and committed their support to the above focus of activity.

Achievements during the review period

- The review and affirmation of the work of the Retreats Facilitator.
- The creation of the Spirituality Coordinator's post and appointment of Canon Paul Maybury.
- Research among Synod members revealed priorities for spirituality development.
- The ongoing development of Katafiyio and its financial viability.
- The implementation of a Diocesan Lent Course - Soul Spark in 2014.
- The continuing delivery of Retreat in Daily Life (RDL) in 9 churches (4 in the gulf and 5 in Cyprus) with ongoing group meetings. The Retreats Facilitator also delivered RDL opportunities in other dioceses of the Province.
- The offering of regular Retreat Days for both Clergy and Laity.
- Spiritual Direction (SD) offered and taken up by about 30 people, using both visiting Directors and our own people.
- Regular Spirituality Days and worship workshop days in Cyprus.
- Developments to the Synod programme - Night Prayer and Prayer Partners.
- The production and publication of the six-monthly Diocesan Prayer Guide.
- The production and publication of the Diocesan Lectionary.
- The offering of Liturgical resources to all Clergy and Readers through Visual Liturgy.

- Training input for both Clergy and Readers in Cyprus.
- The production and publication of an Ecumenical Directory of English-speaking churches in Cyprus.
- The appraisal of offering training for Spiritual Directors.
- The delivery of a Spirituality Day in Jebel Ali with most members of the SDT.
- The development of creative “meetings” using Skype.

INTERNAL STRENGTHS

- The diverse and representative SDT membership is passionately committed to fulfilling its role within the diocese, united by its vision and purpose.
- The pioneering work and priorities of the SDT are increasingly understood and agreed by the team.
- The members of the team work together to discover and discern consensus in its priorities.

INTERNAL WEAKNESS

- It is difficult to build a strong team and to maintain momentum in the development of initiatives.
- The very broad role of the SDT means that discussion and activity can be quite disjointed and, with a wonderful vision and focus, the focussing of energies is a challenge.
- The work of the Spirituality Coordinator is constrained by the part-time role, his location in a part of the diocese and the limited budget.

EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

- The opportunities to develop and initiate activity within the diocese are numerous.
- The encouragement, support and vision of the Bishop is a significant benefit in maximising effectiveness.
- The patient support of Synod, in this pioneering initiative, is a great encouragement.

EXTERNAL THREATS

- The three year funding commitment of Synod to the role of the Spirituality Coordinator post makes long-term planning insecure.
- The non-structural relationship between the SDT and Synod can impede collaboration which is essential for the work of the SDT to flourish.
- The very limited number of invitations to work in the Gulf Archdeaconry mean that, to date, the SDT has better served the Cyprus Archdeaconry.

Provisional Planned Activities in 2016

13 - 27 January	RDL in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain
Lent and Easter	Ray Simpson, working with churches in Cyprus
29 Jan - 14 Feb	Wilf Gowing offering SD in Cyprus
13 February	Spirituality Day - Celtic Christianity - Larnaca
27 February	Leading Intercessions training Day- Nicosia
5 March	Cyprus RDL follow-up day - Limassol
16 April	Spirituality Day - Using our bodies in prayer
3 - 13 May	Sue Hope offering SD in Cyprus
7 May	Spirituality Day - How to pray in the power of the Spirit
28 May	Spirituality Day - The Orthodox Tradition - Deryneia
20 - 30 June	Wilf Gowing offering SD in Cyprus
September & October	10 week Bible-study course on Barnabas
19 - 30 September	Wilf Gowing offering SD in Cyprus
24 September	Spirituality Day - Contemplation, Meditation & Mindfulness
8 October	Spirituality Day - Ways of praying in a group context
12 - 20 October	Spirituality Conference in Thika Diocese
18 - 30 November	Wilf Gowing offering SD in Cyprus
26 November	Spirituality Day - <i>topic yet to be agreed</i>
2 - 9 December	RDL in Doha