


Diocese of
Ardagh 
&
Clonmacnois



Pastoral Letter July 2024

So then, now that we have been justified by faith, we are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is through him, by faith, that we have been admitted into God's favour in which we are living, and look forward exultantly to God's glory. (Romans 5: 1-2)

Since my appointment as your Bishop last year I have been travelling around the diocese visiting parishes, churches and schools, and celebrating Confirmation and other ceremonies. I have been struck by the beauty of the countryside, towns and villages in our diocese and I am deeply grateful for the hospitality and welcome you have given me in every corner of the diocese. Thank you so much.

As I reflect over the last year, I am very conscious that we need to plan and prepare for the future of the church in our diocese. As I remarked during my Ordination ceremony, the model of church we have at present cannot continue. We simply do not have the numbers of priests and religious necessary to sustain it. There has been and will be a continual decline in the number of our full time priests and religious. In March 2017, Bishop Francis wrote a pastoral letter to you which outlined this reality. He pointed out that by 2030 there would be at best twenty five full time priests ministering in our forty one parishes. Everything that has happened since has re-enforced and confirmed that trend.