

MISSION, FORMATION & PRAYER

Bishop Richard's Key Priorities

MISSION - TASK OR PROCESS?

- ◉ Our tendency is to focus on what we have to do **BUT** ... Mission is firstly a *process / energy / dynamism*
- ◉ Mission is chiefly about who and how we are being asked to be, not about a '*To Do List*'
- ◉ Awareness of being personally called and sent is the primary meaning and nature of mission, because being sent / given is the nature of God's life and love
- ◉ God's Self-Revelation becomes our calling

GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD HE
SENT HIS ONLY SON (JN 3.16-17)



CALLING & SENDING

- “He now went up onto the mountain and summoned those he wanted. So they came to him, and he appointed twelve; they were ***to be his companions and to be sent out*** to proclaim the message, with power to drive out devils. And so he appointed the Twelve ...”

(Mk 3.13-16)

SENDING - INDIVIDUAL/COMMUNAL

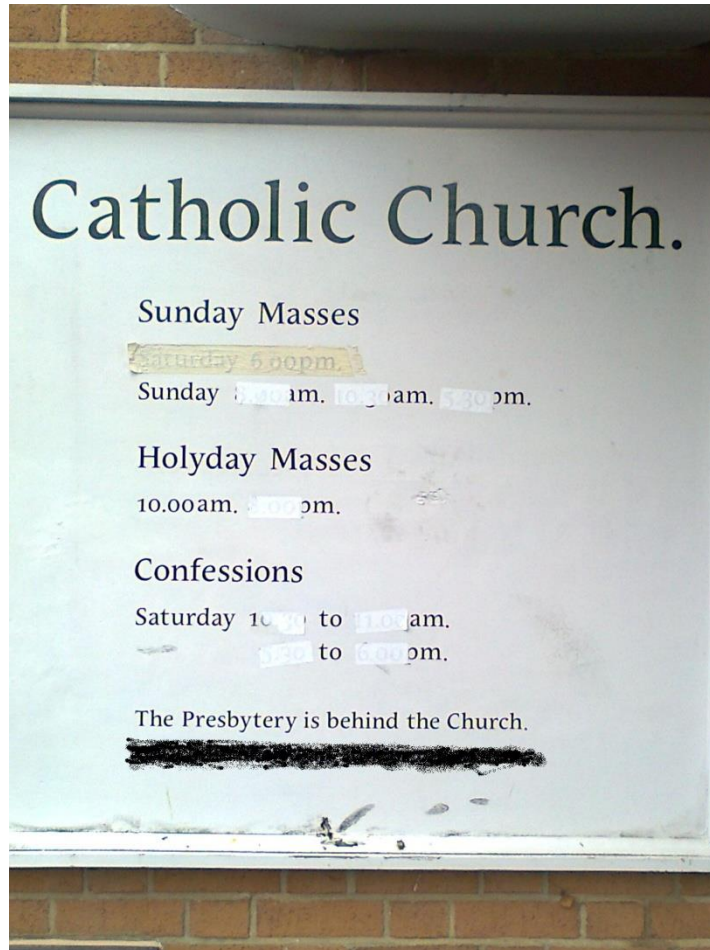
“WHOM SHALL I SEND?” (ISA 6.8)

- ◉ The Priest
- ◉ The Missionary
- ◉ The Religious
- ◉ The Deacon
- ◉ Someone Else
- ◉ All Of Us

MISSION AND MINISTRY

- ◉ With assumption either that everyone is already Christian (*Christendom* model) or that the world is a nasty, threatening place from which believers must be protected (*Sectarian* model), the inevitable tendency is to settle for *looking after our own* (*Maintenance* model).
- ◉ When these models of faith-transmission break down, the Church finds itself ill-equipped to share faith with new generations or new groups

THE END OF OLD WAYS OF BEING CHURCH?



THE GOOD NEWS

- ⦿ A pluralistic, confused society with no consensus about what is the good life
- ⦿ Political and religious institutions in crisis
- ⦿ Needing to find a new language of faith
- ⦿ Building a community of hope among the excluded and the marginalised
- ⦿ ... That's where St Paul began!

FORMATION FOR MISSION

- “You need to know what you believe. You need to know your faith with that same precision with which an IT specialist knows the inner workings of a computer ... Yes, you need to be more deeply rooted in the faith than the generation of your parents so that you can engage the challenges and temptations of this time with strength and determination ...”

(Benedict XVI, Foreword to *YouCat*)

WHAT DO WE NEED TO KNOW & FEEL?

- ◉ We are children of God
- ◉ We live in God's world
- ◉ We have Good News to share
- ◉ Christ is Risen
- ◉ He has called us by name through our baptism
- ◉ The Spirit is at work among us and around us
- ◉ God's love and mercy are infinite - and they are entrusted to us

PRAYER FOR MISSION

- ⊙ *“Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain” (Ps 127.1)*
- ⊙ Faith is always a response to a divine calling
- ⊙ Faith has the nature of encounter and relationship; not a list of (correct) beliefs
- ⊙ *“I do not call you servants but friends ... I commissioned you to go out and to bear fruit” (Jn 15.15-16)*

WHAT SORT OF PRAYER?

- ◉ Contemplate the face of Christ
- ◉ Renewed listening to the Word of God
- ◉ *Lectio Divina* and/or other forms of Prayer
- ◉ A training in holiness: “*Christian communities must become genuine ‘schools’ of prayer ... Intense prayer, yes, but it does not distract us from our commitment to ... shaping history according to God’s plan*”
(John Paul II, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, n.33)
- ◉ Sharing in the Sunday Eucharist ...