

DIOCESE OF KILMORE

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15th April 2013

Dear Parishioner,

I write concerning the annual Diocesan Vocations and Support Services Collection, which takes place on 27th 28th of April this year. I wish to express my gratitude to you for your generosity in supporting the collection over the past number of years. In particular I appreciate support at this time when so many are under financial pressure.

The services provided by the diocese, through your support, are there to assist individuals, families, schools and parishes in a variety of ways. They are also part of our mission in spreading the 'Good News'. I would like to highlight some of these services.

The diocese hopes to have three candidates who will begin their studies for the priesthood in September. Three years ago we took the initiative of inviting applications for the permanent diaconate. Currently we have three candidates in the third year of their preparation.

Safeguarding Children is of paramount concern to the Catholic Church. I am grateful to the many people who work voluntarily in all our parishes as Safeguarding Representatives and help ensure that our practices are of the highest standard. In order to support their work the Safeguarding Children Office employs one permanent officer and provides courses to parishes and priests in safeguarding children and monitors practice in parishes to ensure that the highest standards are maintained. The diocese contributes to 'Towards Healing', a support service for those who have been abused in the Church.

Education is a topic that is very much in the news. The diocese employs an Education Secretary to provide advice and administrative services to primary school principals and boards of management in every parish throughout the diocese. This initiative is in response to the increasing complexity of educational management and administration

The Adult Faith Formation team provides courses in the Diocesan Pastoral Centre and in parishes and pastoral areas to various groups involved in pastoral activities such as: pastoral councils, pastoral areas, readers, Eucharistic Ministers. The diocese has a Full-time director of Faith Formation who co-ordinates all these activities that are central to the enrichment of faith. His role is even more important in this Year of Faith.

Provision for our youth is an ongoing and exciting part of the diocesan mission. Our part time youth officer is engaged in providing training for parish groups and continuing the successful Pope John Paul II Award programme.

The Marriage Tribunal Service is based in the Diocesan Pastoral Centre. This service is available for parishioners who require marriage annulments.

In an era of increasing financial accountability and the diocese has engaged the services of an accountant who is available to parish finance committees for advice and support. Currently finance committees are being assisted to maintain high standards of openness and accountability for compliance with charity legislation.

The diocesan office provides administrative services relating to property and finance, marriage dispensations and marriages abroad, communications and website, circulars, pastoral letters and archives.

It is important for a diocese to provide for professional support and for priests. This includes retreats, spiritual direction, theology course, and further studies.

Kilmore is one of twenty-six dioceses and so has a role in shaping and contributing to national initiatives. This includes support for the various agencies of the Catholic Bishops' Conference including **Accord**, which provides marriage preparation courses and counselling, **Cúra**, which provides support for those who have crisis pregnancies. Other initiatives include services for emigrants and for research and development.

The collection to support these and many other diocesan services will take place on the 27th /28th April. I thank you again for your encouragement and generosity and I ask you to contribute generously so that these and other important works can continue.

Yours sincerely,

Leo O'Reilly
Bishop of Kilmore