

Explanation and summary of 'Towards a Vision for the Diocese' for young people

What is 'Towards a Vision for the Diocese'?

The Archbishop of Southwark, Kevin McDonald has written a document for all people to discuss in groups throughout the Archdiocese of Southwark (the areas of Kent and South London). This document is his reflection on what the Catholic Church means, when it uses the word 'church', and is to be used to think about how we are going plan together for the future of the diocese.

What's the point?

The Archbishop writes that *'we live in times of change which present new opportunities and new difficulties for the Church.'* He wants people in the Catholic Church of this area (diocese) to express their ideas how they think we should move forward together to be the Church in the future. How can the Catholic Church best serve our needs in the future? How can we work together in parishes with a lessening number of priests? He wants to hear what **YOU** think about your experience of the Catholic Church today, and what you would like to see in the future.

What does the document say? The 2 Minute Guide

- ❑ The Catholic Church teaches that the Church should be **at the heart of the world. We do not live in a different world from that of other people.**
- ❑ The Church is a **living sign (sacrament) of God's continuing presence amongst all people and the way in which it is possible for all people to come into a relationship with God at both a personal and community level.**
- ❑ **The mission of the Church is to communicate the message that Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life, since it is the Truth for the whole of humanity.**
- ❑ **The Church is the people united together in its faith in Jesus Christ. We are called to live as one family, in communion with one another. The Holy Spirit unites us in faith in Christ, and love for one another.**
- ❑ **At the centre of the life of Christian communities has to be prayer. Prayer opens our heart to the love of God and also opens it to the love of our brothers and sisters. The celebration of the Eucharist (Mass) is the centre and summit of the Christian life.**
- ❑ **Being a Christian is not a private affair. We are called to share our faith with others, and reach out to those who do not know Christ. As a Christian, we also share our faith by showing the love of Jesus to all we meet in the way we live our lives. This is especially true in our concern for the poor, the neglected and those many people affected by war and violence. We also should do our best to meet, speak to, and work alongside our fellow Christians of other denominations (i.e. Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists etc.) We need to be united as Christians in witnessing to the message of Jesus in our world.**
- ❑ **Part of our mission as a Church is in reaching out to people of other faiths, and other cultures. Our local Church of Southwark is particularly blessed with people from a variety of different cultural backgrounds. We need to celebrate on the one hand the specific gifts of different groups and on the other hand draw people together. All people should feel welcome and included by the Christian community.**
- ❑ **This document asks us how we can live what it means to be Church in the future. How can we do all the above, and continue to live out our mission to bring the Gospel to all people.**