

Early in 2013 there will be opportunities to hear about the radically different way in which parishes will be invited to share in the funding of this mission from 2014 onwards. Instead of the Diocese telling each Deanery how much its churches should give in parish share, each parish or benefice will be invited to offer a sum of money that it will give towards the Common Fund. It will enable us to be more responsive to changing circumstances but will also require greater mutual responsibility from all of us.

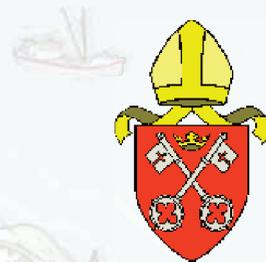
What does our church need to do now?

The first step is to think about the Five Marks of Growing, and ask:

- What positive signs of these Five Marks can we see in our parish, benefice and deanery?
- How are others in the diocesan family helping growth to happen where we are?
- How are we helping growth to happen elsewhere in the diocese or in the Body of Christ further afield?

As Archbishop I invite everyone involved in leadership and ministry in the Diocese to share with me in building up a sense of how important it is for us to work together as a diocesan family, in order to make the Five Marks of Growing a reality everywhere. We are stronger when we work together. Making this a common focus over the coming months will help all of us in setting our mission priorities as we plan to re-shape our resourcing, including our finances.

There is some material to help you reflect on these areas of growth and whether the decisions that you make about your gifts and resources reflect this shared Diocesan vision. You can find them on the Diocesan website at www.dioceseofyork.org.uk/diocesan-info/generous-churches



Generous Churches Making & Nurturing Disciples

Autumn 2012 update

I'm giving you this leaflet because as a Diocese we are coming to an important stage in our thinking about Generous Churches Making and Nurturing Disciples.

In November 2010, we held Mutual Support consultations across the Diocese. People said they wanted our churches to grow, and that they wanted to have a clear vision for the Diocese to sum up what we're all working towards.

This is what our vision for Generous Churches Making and Nurturing Disciples is all about. It's not a new initiative or programme – it's a focus on how we work out God's mission in our Diocese. It's about growing, and working together. Growth is about the quality of our commitment and mission as well as about increasing numbers. And working on our mission priorities is a vital foundation for planning the future finances of the diocesan family.

So let's think about our Five Marks of Growing. How are they being lived out in the Diocese and in local church communities?

+ *Sentamu*

Mutually Resourcing to build up the Body of Christ, to grow into Christ-likeness, Commitment, Partnership, Influence and Numbers.



What are we about as churches, schools and Diocese?

There's the opportunity for growth everywhere! Here are the Five Marks of Growing we have agreed to help shape our vision.

Christ-likeness

Being a disciple means first of all being like Jesus – centred on God, shaping our whole lives in line with faith in him, being generous and loving even when it is costly.

Commitment

Taking faith seriously involves deepening our commitment – to Christ, to Christ's body the Church, to seeking God's kingdom. Among the ways through which we can build our commitment are regular participation in worship, generous stewardship, and letting God's gifts grow in ourselves and others.

Partnership

Partnership is about working with other churches, locally and globally, schools, community groups, people, organisations for the common good. It brings with it opportunities for the whole Church of God to grow in influence and numbers, as well as often making better use of scarce resources.

Influence

As disciples we are called to be salt and light to the whole world, and to work for peace and justice. A key part of our calling is to influence attitudes and behaviours in our communities and wider society.

Numbers

Jesus' last recorded command was to make disciples. We must be bold in our aim to increase the number of people associated with our churches, as worshippers and disciples. If a church is growing in numbers, it is often because it is focusing on other Marks of Growing. Increasing numbers is often a sign of spiritual health and certainly increases the Church's potential and capacity to do God's work.

What's been happening so far?

Diocesan Synod set four priorities – here are some examples of what is happening already.

- **Deepening lay and ordained discipleship.**

Equipping God's People courses continue to offer hundreds of people a way of developing their discipleship.

- **Nurturing lay and ordained vocations.**

New Vocations Advisors have been appointed to help support people in exploring ministry. There are 22 ordinands currently in training and the Advisors are supporting a further 50 who are actively exploring ordained vocations. 33 lay people have participated on the Recognised Parish Assistants' courses, equipping them to take part in leading worship and pastoral work. Almost as many others have been through the Reader selection process during the past year.

- **Equipping and liberating lay and ordained leadership.**

Since it started in 2010, about 70 clergy have been on the York Leadership Programme, which is an intensive programme helping clergy to renew their own discipleship and grow in confidence as leaders of God's people. And there is a range of training events for actual and potential lay leaders.

- **A common, coherent and mutual commitment to share in the cost and delivery of ministry.**

The Diocesan Board of Finance is working to get the best possible return from our assets and ethical investments. And it is planning a radically new freewill financing system to take the place of Parish Share.

What's going to happen next?

The only way that that we will see the growth that we seek is if we work together and share our resources – “Mutual Resourcing”.

Mutual resourcing is not all about finance, but investing for growth does unashamedly involve generous giving in terms of money. As a diocesan family we have to address this need with confidence.