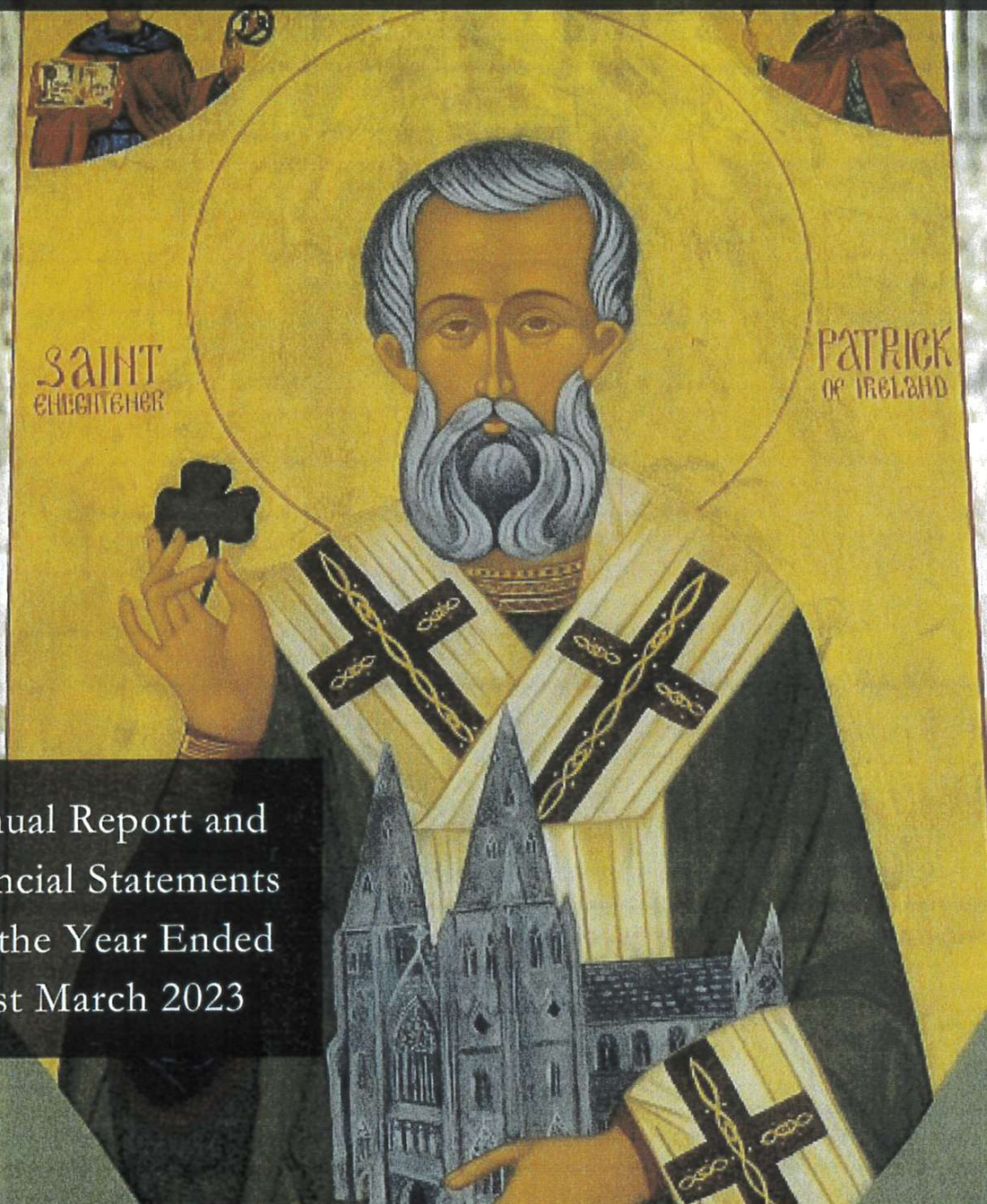


St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Company registered number: NI015284
Charity registered number: NIC 106767



Annual Report and
Financial Statements
For the Year Ended
31st March 2023

Archdiocese of Armagh

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited



Picture on Cover Page

Icon of St. Patrick

Written by the Redemptoristine

*Sisters of Drumcondra in Dublin to
mark the 150th Anniversary of the
Dedication of St Patrick's
Cathedral, Armagh*

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

<i>Contents</i>	<i>Page</i>
Legal and administrative information	3
Strategic Report	4 - 23
Report of the Directors	24 - 25
Independent auditor's report	26 - 29
Statement of financial activities	30
Balance sheet	31
Statement of cash flow	32
Notes on and forming part of the financial statements	33 - 53

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Name

The name of the Charity is St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited
The name of the Corporate Trustee is St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited
Company registration number: NI015284
Charity Registration number: 106767

Directors and Officers of St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

(also referred to as the Council of the Trust)

Most Reverend Eamon Martin (Archbishop of Armagh)
Most Reverend Michael Router
Monsignor Colum Curry
Dean Kevin Donaghy
Anne Garvey
Very Reverend Peter McAnenly
Enda McLernon
Very Reverend Mark O'Hagan
Canon Peter Murphy
Rhona Quinn
Canon Eugene Sweeney

Registered Office

Archdiocese of Armagh, Ara Coeli, Cathedral Road, Armagh, BT61 7QY

Company Secretary

Reverend Colm Hagan

Auditor

CavanaghKelly, 36-38 Northland Row, Dungannon BT71 6AP

Primary Bankers

Bank of Ireland, 11 Upper English St, Armagh BT61 7BH

Investment Managers

IQ-EQ Fund Management (Ireland) Limited, 5th floor, 76 Sir John Rogerson's Quay, Grand Canal Dock, Dublin, D02 C9D0, Ireland

Solicitors

Lennon Toner O'Neill, 54 Upper English St, Armagh BT61 7DU
Napier & Sons, 1-9 Castle Arcade, Belfast BT1 5DF

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited is the Corporate Trustee (the Trustee) for the Parishes, the Curia and other associated charitable bodies which constitute the Archdiocese of Armagh. The Council of St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited presents the Strategic Report, the Directors' Report and the audited financial statements of the Charity, St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited, for the year ended 31 March 2023. The Council has adopted the provisions of the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and 2022, and the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities finalising their financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and the Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), in preparing the annual report and financial statements of the charitable company.

HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE

The Church of Armagh was founded by St Patrick in the middle of the fifth century. It soon became a noted ecclesiastical centre with many churches and a monastic school, which attracted students from all over Ireland and abroad.

The Diocese has been blessed with many saints through the centuries, not least the 'Apostle of Ireland', St Patrick, but also St Brigid, St Malachy, St Oliver Plunkett and many more.

It is one of the larger dioceses in Ireland covering almost all of Counties Armagh and Louth, approximately half of County Tyrone and a part of County Derry, as well as some townlands in County Meath. The Diocese is made up of sixty-one parishes of which thirty-seven are in Northern Ireland and twenty-four in the Republic of Ireland. The seat of administration is located in the city of Armagh.

CONSTITUTION AND AIMS

In Northern Ireland, St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited (the Trust), a charitable trust, is a company limited by guarantee and was registered on 14 December 1981, registration number NI015284. On 20 June 2018, St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited was registered as a Charity with the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland and given the registration number 106767. For tax purposes, St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited is also registered with HM Revenue and Customs – Reference XN76368. On 26 January 2015 the Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland authorised St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited to act in any Charitable or Ecclesiastical Trust as a Trust Corporation. St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited became active on 1 April 2018 when the charitable activities of the Archdiocese of Armagh became subject to the oversight of the Council of St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited.

In the Republic of Ireland, St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Company Limited by Guarantee, a bare trust, is a company limited by guarantee and was registered on 29 November 1993, with registration company number 210040. On 4 December 2020, St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited was registered as a Charity with the Charity Regulator in Ireland and given the registered charity number 20029104. For tax purposes, St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Company Limited by Guarantee is also registered with the Irish Revenue Commissioner – CHY (Revenue) Number 10987.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The principal objectives of the Charity are:

- the advancement of the Roman Catholic religion in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Armagh subject to any future curtailment or addition made in accordance with the laws and regulations of the Roman Catholic Church;
- the advancement of any charitable purpose supported by the Roman Catholic Church throughout Ireland or in any part of the world.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

The Church in the Archdiocese of Armagh, in union with the Catholic Church worldwide, seeks to achieve its objectives through activities including the following:

- Proclamation of the Gospel
- Worship of God
- Provision of Clergy and pastoral personnel
- Support for families
- Formation and development of parish communities
- Provision of educational, pastoral and youth ministries
- Provision and maintenance of places of worship
- Aid for impoverished and needy communities worldwide

The means used to fulfil the purposes of the Trust are constantly monitored and reviewed to ensure that the principal aims and objectives of the Charity are adhered to.

STATEMENT THAT THE TRUST HAS HAD REGARD TO THE CHARITY COMMISSION FOR NORTHERN IRELAND PUBLIC BENEFIT REQUIREMENT STATUTORY GUIDANCE

The Trust confirms that it has complied with the requirements of Section 4 (6) of the Charities Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 to have due regard to the public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland in determining the activities undertaken by the Charity. Throughout this Annual Report, the Trust seeks to demonstrate that the Charity's aims and objectives are for the public benefit.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW

The Diocese consists of sixty-one parishes predominantly in Counties Armagh and Louth and in parts of Counties Tyrone, Derry and Meath. The parishes are clustered into seventeen Pastoral Areas. Each Pastoral Area consists of a number of adjoining parishes united in promoting and realising the objects and the mission of the Church in the Archdiocese of Armagh within their local communities.

Reflecting Canon Law (the Universal Law of the Catholic Church), the activities of the Charity are separated in this report into Parish and Curia functions.

Parishes

The Diocese is divided into parish communities. Parish Priests/ Administrators and Curates are appointed by the Archbishop to provide pastoral care for Parish communities and to manage parishes in all juridical affairs, thus ensuring parishes are administered in accordance with the norms of Canon and Civil Law, while also fulfilling the aims of the Charity. A major function of parishes is the celebration of the liturgy and the provision of spiritual and pastoral care. However, much other unseen and unheralded charitable work also occurs, greatly enriching the local communities which they serve.

Each parish is required by Canon Law to have a Parish Finance Committee to assist the Parish Priest/ Administrator in the governance of the parish. Parish Finance Committees include parishioners with knowledge and experience in finance, property management, personnel and administration. Additionally, each Parish Priest/ Administrator in his own parish, with his Parish Finance Committee, and in accordance with the norms and guidelines of St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited, is entrusted with the responsibility of conserving and maintaining items and articles of artistic and historical value, as well as keeping an inventory of such objects. Priests have been diligent in this task, often employing the services of experts to assist them. Parish employees include secretaries, newsletter writers, choir directors, organists, bookkeepers, financial administrators, cleaners, grounds people, and parish centre managers. In some instances, people offer their services on an entirely voluntary basis.

Parishes are central to fulfilling the Charity's mission. They are communities whose daily activities contribute, both directly and indirectly, to the spiritual and moral well-being of everyone living and working within them. They are the places where local communities come together to worship, where sacraments are administered, where children are educated in the faith, and where social outreach programmes are developed which allow communities to care for those in need and work for the common good of society.

Curia

The Diocesan Curia consists of those institutions and persons which furnish assistance to the Archbishop in the governance of the entire Diocese, especially in directing pastoral activity, in providing for the administration of the Diocese, and in exercising juridical governance. It also includes all who participate in the overall administration of the Diocese, particularly those who direct diocesan activities such as pastoral support, youth work, education, family life, liturgy, lay voluntary involvement and other facets of the local Church's life. Its central base is Armagh City.

The Council of the Trust delegates oversight of the Diocese's day-to-day finances, property, investments and administration to the Diocesan Financial Administrator, the Diocesan Secretary and other staff within the Curia. All personnel in the service of the Diocese undergo continuous professional development training.

As a registered charity, it is imperative that the Diocese continues to ensure good practice legally and financially in all areas, including health and safety, data protection, insurance, and the maintenance of property, while also conforming to the prescripts of Canon Law and best ecclesiastical practice.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

Proclamation of the Gospel, Worship of God and other Ministries

Within the Diocese religion is advanced through the provision of places of worship, the facilitation of religious practice and, particularly, through community celebration of Mass. Normally there is a public celebration of Mass or other liturgy every day in the majority of parishes, and on every weekend several public Masses are offered in each parish. All such liturgies are open to the public without any restrictions.

Other activities of the Charity include conducting religious ceremonies (such as baptisms, weddings and funerals); presenting programmes pertaining to spiritual formation and development; encouraging and supporting ecumenical relationships; and maintaining places of worship, many of which are listed and contain religious works of art and other artefacts, all of which form part of our national heritage. All these places of worship are open to the general public including people of all faiths and none. They provide a public benefit for the whole community and for many people they are spaces which offer the opportunity for quiet reflection and for spiritual contemplation.

It is primarily within parishes that people experience what it is to be a member of the Catholic Church. They are the settings where faith is nurtured and given expression. Parishes, through various means, provide for the spiritual and moral well-being of parishioners, young and old. Practical expressions of faith are manifested by means of parish-organised pastoral, social and educational activities many of which rely on the voluntary involvement of parishioners. During the reporting period a total of 3,493 baptisms took place within the Diocese. First Holy Communion was administered to 3,726 young people and the Sacrament of Confirmation was conferred on 4,075 individuals. In the same period 787 marriages were celebrated and some 2,190 funerals conducted.

The Diocese has engaged with social and digital media platforms for some time through its website, Facebook and Twitter sites. The www.armaghprays.com website, dedicated to disseminating diocesan pastoral resources, continued to be widely used. Webcams for the live streaming of Mass and other liturgies have become an invaluable element in the pastoral outreach of parishes. Parishes in the Archdiocese also contributed to the celebration of liturgies on the network channel RTÉ News which transmits Mass every morning for the housebound, sick and elderly. Christmas Midnight Mass from St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh was broadcast live by RTÉ and the European Broadcasting Union.

As well as pastoral care and the provision of the sacraments to the faithful, the Diocese offers chaplaincy services to those who cannot be part of a regular parish community. Hospital Chaplains and lay pastoral visitors are available at all major hospitals within the Archdiocese of Armagh. The Chaplains are regularly at the disposal of patients, their relatives and staff, as well as being on call to attend in emergencies. Other clergy and lay pastoral visitors regularly visit hospitals and nursing homes in the area frequented by members of the Diocese. Moreover, the Diocese assists with the provision of chaplaincy services to those in penal institutions located outside its territory.

Each year the clergy and people of the Archdiocese of Armagh journey to ancient pilgrimage sites within the Diocese and beyond. The yearly diocesan pilgrimage to Lourdes, France took place in September 2022 and the annual day pilgrimage to Knock, Co. Mayo occurred in May 2022. Other pilgrimages, for example to Lough Derg or to Croagh Patrick, resumed during the year. Organised pilgrimages provide much valued support for the sick who participate as well as for all the volunteers who give so much of their time and energy. They become model experiences of the Church as the pilgrim People of God.

The important role played by volunteers who participate in the various activities of their parish cannot be overstated and their contribution is vital in enabling the Diocese to continue to fulfil and develop its stated objectives. Many people play a key role in our parishes, offering their services as volunteers. They include those involved in various aspects of parish life: those who help with the sacred liturgy - Readers and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, members of altar societies, altar serving coordinators, choirs and music groups, organists, instrumentalists, and stewards; people who assist with finance, church collectors, counters, envelope distributors and dues collectors; and other assorted roles including cemetery

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

upkeep; various apostolic and charitable groups too numerous to mention as well as prayer and perpetual adoration groups. Volunteers generously give of their time serving in various ministries, caring for and visiting the sick, the housebound, and those on the margins of society. They play a significant role in helping to maintain parish property and assisting in financial and other administrative duties, including membership of Parish Pastoral, Finance and Safeguarding Committees. Such parishioners are the lifeblood of their communities, and their contributions are significant. It has not been possible to quantify the number of volunteers active throughout the Diocese, nor is it possible to estimate the financial value of their involvement.

Although the Charity relies principally on donations from parishioners for its funding, access to religious services is never restricted on the grounds of ability to contribute financially. In addition, members of the Catholic community are encouraged to contribute towards creating a more just society by becoming active volunteers for the Common Good within their local area through membership of charities, local societies, community groups, and by volunteering in all sorts of other ways to the benefit of society in general.

Besides the work accomplished at parish level, the Curia coordinates and carries out a number of functions necessary to the advancement of the Catholic religion at local, national and international level. To this end, the Curia operates by way of diocesan commissions, committees and through various personnel charged with specific responsibilities.

The Diocesan commissions include a Vocations Commission, a Liturgical and Sacred Music Commission, the Diocesan Clerical Benefit Society, the Diocesan Education Committee, Armagh Diocesan Youth Commission, a Diocesan Pastoral Plan, a Justice, Peace and Development Commission, the Prayer and Spirituality Commission, Adult Faith Formation and a Diocesan Safeguarding Committee. Personnel with specific responsibilities include Diocesan Pastoral Workers, the Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Director, the Diocesan Knock Pilgrimage Director, the Diocesan Pontifical Mission Societies Director, the Diocesan Safeguarding Director, the Diocesan Advisory Team on Religious Education, and the Diocesan Vocations Director. Mention also needs to be made of those who work in the administration of Catholic education.

Provision of Clergy and Pastoral Personnel

Central to Parish life is the relationship between the clergy and parishioners. Clergy are not employees of the Diocese. However, in Canon Law the care and welfare of incardinated priests of the Diocese is mandatory and therefore form part of the Charity's ongoing commitments.

It is the priests ministering in parishes who, working in collaboration with their parishioners, are charged in a special way with organising, animating and motivating the local faith communities. They constantly strive to be witnesses of hope and authentic shepherds for their people. The provision of dedicated, well qualified and competent clergy to serve in parishes and other ministries is a priority for the Diocese. Through the means of regular conferences, retreats, courses, workshops and sabbaticals, the priests of the Diocese are updated on current issues, developments and best practice in respect of all aspects of ministry and mission.

In the reporting period the Diocese had eighteen students for the priesthood, either in full-time study or on pastoral placement. They attended respectively St Patrick's College, Maynooth, the Pontifical Beda College, Rome, and the Redemptoris Mater Archdiocesan Missionary Seminary, based in Dundalk, Co. Louth. During the year, the Diocese had three candidates ordained for the priesthood and one candidate ordained as a transitional deacon. The costs of this seminary formation are supported by the Diocesan Education Fund. As part of its missionary outreach, the Diocese also part sponsored the theology programme for a number of seminarians attached to the seminary of the Missionaries of St Paul in Abuja, Nigeria and that of a student completing his Licentiate in Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. The Diocese also had one man in his final year of formation for the ministry of Permanent Diaconate. His training and formation has been financed from the Diocesan Education Fund.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

A key to sustaining the advancement of Catholicism is the promotion and support of vocations to the Priesthood, Consecrated Life, Diaconate and of the wider apostolate of the lay faithful. The Diocese continues to engage with those people who wish to undertake discernment in connection with vocations to the Priesthood, the Permanent Diaconate or the Religious and Consecrated Life. The Diocesan Vocations Director, along with the Diocesan Vocations Commission, coordinates this essential mission mostly through the means of discernment groups, prayer vigils, retreats and chaplaincy work in post-primary schools and colleges throughout the Diocese.

The general well-being and care of clergy in active ministry is coordinated by the Diocesan Curia, Vicar Generals, Episcopal Vicars and Vicars Forane. Priests' stipends and related matters are overseen and regulated by the Archbishop with the Council of Priests and the Council of the Trust. Equally important is the welfare of priests who are sick or retired from active ministry. Many of the priests no longer in active ministry have served in parishes and local communities for over sixty years. Their welfare is the responsibility of a committee which administers the Armagh Diocesan Clerical Benefit Society Fund. During the reporting year, thirty-one priests received assistance from the fund which necessitated a total spend of approximately £454,224.

The objectives of the Charity are greatly supported, and the life of the Diocese enriched, by the contribution made by the many members of Religious Institutions, Secular Institutions and/ or Societies of Apostolic Life serving in the Diocese. The Archdiocese of Armagh expresses its sincere gratitude to these men and women of faith for their ministries of generosity and sacrifice.

Support for Families

Family Ministry within the Diocese is dedicated to strengthening marriage and families by coordinating pastoral programmes and ministries that have faith as their foundation and Christ as their goal. By responding to the needs of families, as they strive to live in a very challenging culture and a rapidly changing world, Family Ministry serves as a resource for families, clergy and parish communities.

In collaboration with other agencies, Family Ministry also offers services and practical resources to assist people at all stages of life in order to help them experience, more fully, the love and compassion of God in the ordinary events of life.

There are three Accord Marriage Preparation and Counselling centres in the Diocese - Drogheda, Dundalk and Portadown. These centres provide regular courses throughout the year for those preparing for marriage. Couples are encouraged to attend an accredited pre-marriage course as soon as they contact the parish to make arrangements for their marriage. Accord continues to provide face-to-face and online counselling for couples.

The Rainbows programme enables children and young people, who have experienced a significant loss in their lives, to access peer support and counselling. This service is offered through St Patrick's Parish, Dundalk and is available to all who seek it regardless of faith or church affiliation.

The Diocese also promotes the work of the Family Addiction Support Network (F.A.S.N.) based in Dundalk. The Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese is the Patron and a board member of the organisation which supports families who are dealing with the drug addiction of a loved one. Often these families are desperate for help but have no one to turn to because of stigma and intimidation. The F.A.S.N provides a safe place for families to find support and guidance to overcome their difficulties.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

Provision of Educational, Pastoral and Youth Ministries

Armagh Diocesan Youth Commission (ADYC)

Established in 2000 by the Archdiocese of Armagh, the Armagh Diocesan Youth Commission (ADYC) remains steadfast in its commitment to facilitating effective activities, events, and programmes for young people within the Archdiocese of Armagh. With a core objective of inspiring the growth of faith, confidence, and self-esteem among young people, the Commission, comprising laity, professionals, clergy, and religious, plays a pivotal role in strategically developing youth ministry in the Archdiocese. The term ending March 31, 2023, has been marked by resilience, adaptability, and a steadfast commitment to youth ministry in the face of ongoing challenges posed after the Covid 19 pandemic.

ADYC offers faith encounters for those from post-Confirmation age to young adulthood. The Pope John Paul II and Muiredach Cross Awards form an integral part of youth ministry in the Archdiocese of Armagh. The Covid-19 pandemic brought unprecedented challenges, but ADYC responded by accompanying young people participating in the Pope John Paul II and Muiredach Cross awards. Support and advice were extended to leaders, and the awards were modified to incorporate catechetical elements suited for pandemic times. This strategy during the pandemic has paid dividends and in September 2022, a joyous gathering celebrated the achievements of 156 young participants of the Pope John Paul II and Muiredach Cross faith awards in the Archdiocese of Armagh. Despite challenges, registration for the awards increased in September 2022 with 300 applications being received from young people across the Archdiocese of Armagh.

ADYC partnered with St. Patrick's Pontifical College, Maynooth and online learning platform Aspal, to develop an interactive digital formation programme "Foundations in Youth". Initiatives like "Apprenticed in Faith," Parish youth ministry moments, and the screening of "The Letter" in January 2023 enriched the youth experience. Preparation for travel to World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon formed much of the work of ADYC during the reporting year along with pastoral visits to schools and liaison with parishes.

Easter 2022 saw retreats in Collon and Cookstown, themed "Jesus Ever Young" which focused on faith and the role of young people in the Church. Additionally, a retreat on St. Ignatius of Loyola and Spirituality examined Gift and Vocation in the context of a Leavers' Retreat with Kilkenny National School. In respect of pilgrimages, Lourdes and Knock were part of the youth programme during 2022/2023 and ADYC worked towards grounding pilgrimage in vocation and the life of the Church in the Archdiocese of Armagh. A focus was placed on encouraging renewal and the recruitment of young people in diocesan pilgrimage programmes.

A new office in Donaghmore was established, reflecting ADYC's commitment to expanding its outreach. Synodal gatherings for Youth, liaison on digital media with the "Sing a New Song" team from the Archdiocese, and work with the parish team in Armagh for the visit of the Relics of Blessed Carlos Acutis to St. Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh were notable highlights.

The stated mission of ADYC is to work in partnership with young people, the Church and interested agencies to ensure that young people are encouraged and affirmed on their journey of faith. The vision is for young people to experience the love of God and to inspire them to engage in the life and mission of the Catholic Church, in social outreach, and in initiatives for the benefit of the wider community.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

Catholic Schools within the Diocese

A key aspect of the contribution of the Diocese to the local community is the large network of Catholic schools. There are 150 primary schools and 27 post primary schools in the Diocese with a total enrolment of approximately 50,900 pupils. The Diocese celebrates this contribution by taking part in Catholic Schools Week, an event held throughout Ireland in January for the last ten years. This annual celebration calls on Catholic schools to give expression, in a special way, to a particular aspect of Catholic Education. Catholic Schools Week 2023 took place from 22 January to 29 January on the theme of Catholic Schools as communities of service.

In Catholic schools we look to Jesus as our Redeemer, role model and teacher as we come to a greater understanding of the depth of Christian service. Our Lord instructed us that love of God also entails love of one's neighbour. During Catholic Schools Week, there was reflection on our schools as communities of service with pupils encouraged to focus on how they can aid their friends, their family members and those who live in their locality.

In our schools we are called to support each other and to have faith in the promise of the Good News. Catholic schools are inspired by the belief that God has created each one of us with a capacity to give and receive love. Every Catholic school seeks to be such a community by fostering the integral development of its students through the promotion of their spiritual and moral well-being as well as helping them to cultivate a deeper, loving relationship with God. Jesus teaches us to love one another as He has loved us. During Catholic Schools Week we celebrated the gifts and talents which enable us to follow Christ's teachings.

The Archdiocese of Armagh remains fully committed through its Catholic schools to maintaining, by way of a holistic methodology, the highest standards in learning and thus continuing to offer academic excellence and faith-filled education to all young people. Many non-Catholic parents choose to educate their children in Catholic schools, not least because of the high-quality education on offer, but also due to the identifiable ethos of trust, mutual respect and recognition of responsibility to those in need. The Diocese appoints personnel to act as the Diocesan Advisory Team for Religious Education in both the primary and post-primary sectors. These teams visit Catholic schools and offer guidance and assistance to teachers.

Each school enjoys an annual visit from its appointed Diocesan adviser. The adviser is an established link between the school and the Church and visits of a pastoral nature help to strengthen this connection. All advisers report very positive engagement with principals and school staff. Further, they recognise that principals will avail of the opportunity to address, on an informal basis, the challenges they face both financially and spiritually. The advisers also offer practical help by providing a range of online resources for use alongside the 'Children of God' series as well as supports for children preparing to receive the sacraments.

In respect of Relationships and Sexuality Education (RSE), many schools are striving to adopt a policy and programme that meets the requirements of the respective Departments of Education and which faithfully reflects Catholic ethos. Schools are also concerned to promote authentic spiritual development in the midst of an ever-increasing secular culture. The Diocesan Advisory Team will continue to work alongside schools to help meet these challenges.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

Formation and Development of Parish Communities

Diocesan Pastoral Plan

The Diocesan Pastoral Plan provides guidance and direction for priests, deacons and pastoral councils to enable them to further the mission of Christ in the Archdiocese of Armagh. The present plan was published in 2015 after an eighteen-month period of consultation and refinement. As the Diocesan Plan approached the end of 2020 it was decided to engage in a Year of Reflection and Prayer before beginning the process of working towards a Diocesan Assembly and formulating a new Pastoral Plan. The launch of a National Synodal process in early 2021 and a Universal Synodal process entitled *Towards a Synodal Church: Communion, Mission and Participation* changed the priorities, and it was decided to fit the process of formulating an updated Diocesan Pastoral Plan into the new timeframe for the National Synod.

This international synodal process is still ongoing and the Archdiocese has continued to follow the current plan, which will remain in operation until a new one is formulated. The Diocesan Pastoral Plan covers three main areas of pastoral life in the Diocese – 'Mission and Outreach', 'Spirit Filled Worship' and 'Understanding Our Faith'. The Diocesan Pastoral Team use the plan as the basis for their work as they reach out to parishes and groups across the Diocese. They facilitate and provide training for the lay faithful to become more actively involved in the ongoing life of the Church in their local area.

During the reporting period, the Pastoral Team continued to operate from the Parochial House in Holy Family Parish. The house provides office space for the Pastoral Team and the Auxiliary Bishop as well as the Accord Office, Rainbows Counselling and some limited meeting areas. The Pastoral Team directs the implementation of the Pastoral Plan from this office.

The legacy of Covid-19 has continued to affect all projects and initiatives designed to meet the requirements of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan during 2022/2023 and efforts to recover from this period still present significant challenges to the Archdiocese of Armagh.

The section of the Pastoral Plan relating to 'Understanding Our Faith' encompasses a number of Adult Faith Formation courses. The Diocesan Theology Programme, which is accredited and supervised by the Pontifical University in Maynooth, Co. Kildare, had 12 students enrolled in 2022. Classes returned to in person modality during 2022/2023.

The promotion of the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) which prepares adults for baptism and reception into the Church, along with the training of teams to facilitate the programme, is also an important component in the work of evangelisation. April 2022 saw the conclusion of a nine-week training course, eight of which were delivered on Zoom to 40 participants from across the Archdiocese of Armagh. The final session of two-and-a-half-hours was delivered in person and looked at new centres and venues where OCIA can be offered. The course was delivered by Mary Clavin from the Dublin Diocese. The aim of the course was to give participants an understanding of the processes and rites involved in delivering OCIA within the Diocese. As a result, new groups were established in Dungannon, Dundalk and Armagh. The hope is that by Autumn 2024 five centres across the Archdiocese will be available to those seeking to enter the Catholic Church.

'Spirit-filled Worship' is an essential element of the Pastoral Plan as the Sunday Mass is the point of contact for most people with the Church. Workshops were offered online to support priests and parish liturgy groups to enhance the liturgy. Significant moments in the liturgical year, such as Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter are also supported with resources and information for parishes.

'Mission and Outreach' is essentially the fundamental work of the Church. The plan promotes the

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

provision of visitation teams in parishes, assistance to the disadvantaged, support for those suffering from addiction, and the promotion of vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

The Diocesan Pastoral Workers continued to provide a multitude of online resources to support religious education and prayer in family homes, schools, hospitals, nursing homes and other settings. These resources are accessed through the www.armaghprays.com website which they maintain. The Diocesan Pastoral Workers also collaborate closely with other colleagues across the northern dioceses in the Northern Pastoral Network to share resources and strategies in the areas of adult faith formation, pastoral development and youth ministry.

Care for the environment is central to the pastoral work of the Diocese in this present age. 'Laudato Si', subtitled 'On Care for Our Common Home', the second encyclical of Pope Francis provides the basis for the Season of Creation which is celebrated by the Church throughout the month of September. The theme for the 2022 season was 'Listen to the Voice of Creation'. Resources provided by the Holy See were disseminated throughout the Diocese and many parishes used them during their Sunday liturgies so that parishioners could focus on their Christian duty of protecting the planet from the negative effects of climate change.

The Diocese encourages each of its parishes to reach out to the marginalised and the disadvantaged. Such action includes the pastoral care of immigrants and asylum seekers, and the promotion of a culture of welcome, gathering, unifying, and working together. Regular Masses for immigrants from East Timor, Poland, and India (Malayalam speaking) are offered in their own language. This care is provided by priest chaplains from their own countries, by arrangement with the respective episcopal conferences and diocesan and religious authorities. Increasingly in the Diocese there are celebrations and liturgies of an international character.

Special attention is given to baptisms, marriages and deaths of migrants, and their language and cultural traditions are catered for as much as possible. They also receive a welcome and assurances of support through pastoral visitation by the clergy or members of the parish community. The World Day of Migrants and Refugees is celebrated with enthusiasm in the Diocese, and the Holy Father's Message for this Day is noted with care each year and circulated among the clergy and laity. The title of the Pope's message for 2022 was "Building the Future with Migrants and Refugees".

The Diocese also supports the work of the 'The Oasis of Peace' in Collon, Co. Louth, which is a centre for evangelisation and outreach to all. The centre provides opportunities for visitors to encounter the love of God. It is a place of prayer, teaching and healing as well as providing for the pastoral care and support of those in need.

The Diocesan Pastoral Workers attended conferences and courses throughout the year as part of their ongoing training and development. This will be of benefit for future pastoral planning and training in the Diocese.

An essential element in pastoral planning for the future is the Diocesan Pastoral Council and Parish Pastoral Councils. The Archbishop strives to govern the Diocese in consultation with the Diocesan Pastoral Council and other bodies. In so doing, the Archdiocese operates a form of governance that emphasises the participation and shared responsibility of all Christian people for the life of the local Church. The Diocesan Pastoral Council seeks to discern the pastoral needs of the people of the Diocese and propose adequate responses. The Diocesan Pastoral Council helps to establish priorities, plan pastoral initiatives, and devise appropriate strategies for the implementation of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan. The members are representative of the Diocese at large and not of any specific group. At all times the function of the Diocesan Pastoral Council is exercised in accordance with the teachings of Sacred Scripture, Canon Law, and the norms of the Irish Episcopal Conference. The role of the Diocesan Pastoral Council is

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

constantly reviewed in the context of the Diocesan Pastoral Plan and is updated accordingly.

At the parish level Pastoral Councils respond to the need for co-responsible leadership of clergy and people in fulfilling the mission of the Church. They are structures of participation that can provide new impetus to the life of a parish. Clergy and lay faithful work together in the power of the Holy Spirit to reinvigorate the Church by co-ordinating and harnessing the efforts of parishioners who live and share the Good News of Christ in the local community. As part of the ongoing planning and development process in the Diocese, parishes are encouraged to refresh their Pastoral Council every 4-5 years. Training for these new councils is provided in regional areas by the Diocesan Pastoral Team. In the reporting year the team engaged with Parish Pastoral Councils and provided training in three parishes, namely: Killeeshil, Dromintee and Termonmaguirc as well as across the Our Lady Queen of Peace Pastoral Area. Each council engaged in a process of renewing its membership leaving more room for a broader engagement from the parish community.

New leaflets were produced by the Diocesan Pastoral Workers promoting Parish Pastoral Councils and these were distributed to all priests who attended the April 2022 Clergy Conference. Additional leaflets were made available to priests unable to attend.

The Diocesan Pastoral Workers delivered training for Readers and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion in the Parish of Ardee & Collon and the Our Lady Queen of Peace Pastoral Area. Many participants assisted at both venues.

The Parish of Haggardstown and Blackrock held a special liturgy and celebration meal, in thanksgiving for all who are involved in parish ministry and contribute so generously to the life and mission of the Church. The Diocesan Pastoral Workers were invited to prepare the liturgy of thanksgiving. The celebration took place in October 2022.

The Synodal Journey launched by Pope Francis in October 2021 is a process of engagement with the People of God involving a focus on listening and dialogue in a bid to advance the mission of the Church. The international or universal process is ongoing and during the reporting year the Archdiocese concluded its participation in the diocesan stage of the consultation which culminated in a national gathering in Athlone. Further consultation followed with the aim of contributing to the Synodal continental phase which preceded the XVI Ordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops in Rome.

A deepening of the work with the Diocesan Synodal Core group has realised some notable achievements, most significantly the positive reception of the methodology of the Conversations in the Spirit and the vibrancy and enthusiasm generated amongst participants. The Archdiocese of Armagh's Synodal journey during the reporting year has drawn from the wealth of experience and wisdom that exists in its parish communities. This commitment underscores the Archdiocese's desire to create conditions in which the Church's mission can most effectively be realised.

In the ecclesial landscape of social and digital media, the Archdiocese of Armagh's Pastoral Team has played an important role in fostering evangelisation and community engagement. The team oversaw the creation of the Armagh Prays Website, a vital platform utilised for resource distribution throughout the Archdiocese. The Archdiocesan YouTube Channel, which now boasts an impressive repository of 320 videos, has garnered 132,904 views and interactions to date. The Pastoral Team's multifaceted approach encompasses educational initiatives and collaborative projects thereby reinforcing the Church's relevance in the digital age and demonstrating its commitment to reach diverse and dynamic audiences.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

Ecumenism

The heads of the four main Churches and ecclesial communities in Ireland: the Catholic Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, the Church of Ireland (Anglican) Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and the President of the Methodist Church in Ireland, together with the President of the Irish Council of Churches, meet on a regular basis to discuss issues of religious, social, community and political importance. At a diocesan level ecumenical work is promoted to foster spiritual ecumenism according to the principles laid down in the Decree on Ecumenism about public and private prayer for the unity of Christians. Parishes and clergy are encouraged to promote friendship, cooperation and charity between Catholics and their brothers and sisters from other Christian communities. Ecumenical prayer services, coffee mornings and pilgrimage walks took place in various parts of the Archdiocese on significant moments throughout the year, including around the celebration of Easter. Noteworthy is the work of the Armagh Cathedrals' Partnership which organised a successful pilgrimage peace walk on the vigil of St Patrick's Day.

In August 2022 the Church Leaders' Group issued a statement calling for action on the cost-of-living crisis. They discussed this matter with the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland at a meeting on 26 October 2022 and also raised concerns about political instability, the right to life of the unborn and the UK Government's legacy proposals. Archbishop Martin offered a public statement of condolence following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elisabeth II and was present at the funeral service in Westminster Abbey on 19 September 2022. At Christmas, Archbishop Martin conveyed a joint message with his Church of Ireland counterpart based on a passage from the Gospel of John: "And of his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace" (1:16). The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was observed in the Archdiocese from 18-25 January 2023 using materials prepared by CTBI (Churches Together in Britain and Ireland) and based on the theme "Celebrating our Reconciling Vision of Hope". Archbishop Martin participated in a service at St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast on 22 January 2023 to mark the centenary of the Irish Council of Churches and the fiftieth anniversary of the Ballymascannon Talks which led to the establishment of the Irish Inter-Church Meeting. At the service, Archbishop Martin delivered an address entitled: "Might we in the Churches offer to help develop an agreed truth recovery process to address the legacy of pain and mistrust that continues to hang over us?" On the eve of St Patrick's Day 2023, the two Archbishops in Armagh took part in a public discussion on the Saint's legacy and later led an evening torchlight procession between the cathedrals in the city. On 31 March 2023 and with the approach of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Belfast/ Good Friday Agreement, the Church Leaders' Group issued prayer resources to mark that event.

Safeguarding

The Archdiocese of Armagh is committed morally and legally to upholding the rights of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Diocesan Safeguarding Office continues to co-ordinate and build upon the existing good work of safeguarding throughout the preceding years.

The purpose of the Safeguarding Office is to ensure the Archdiocese of Armagh adheres to the requirements of 'Safeguarding Children Policy and Standards for the Catholic Church in Ireland 2016', (National Board for Safeguarding Children in the Catholic Church in Ireland (NBSCCCI), 2016), and the Diocesan Policy on Adult Safeguarding 2017, as well as the legal requirements to keep children and vulnerable persons safe which is applicable in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

The Safeguarding Office of the Archdiocese consists of one whole time equivalent Director of Safeguarding, one part-time Safeguarding Trainer and one part-time Administrative Officer. Both the Director and the Diocesan Trainer are Designated Liaison Persons (DLPs) and available to receive any

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

complaints in respect of the safeguarding of either children or vulnerable adults. The contact details for the DLPs are publicised through the Safeguarding page of the Diocesan Website(www.armagharchdiocese.org/safeguarding), and also on posters which are displayed in every church and church building throughout the Archdiocese.

The Director and the Diocesan Trainer attend the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee meetings at which they provide updates on work carried out and progress on the delivery of the objectives of the Diocesan Three-Year Strategic Safeguarding Plan. Three meetings were held during the reporting period on 30th June 2022, 8th November 2022 and 28th March 2023.

The Diocesan Safeguarding Committee is responsible for overseeing the work of Safeguarding in the Archdiocese. Membership is for a three-year period with the option to renew for one further period of three years.

The Archdiocese undertook a parish self-audit during the reporting period in line with guidance received from the NBSCCCI. A report of the Audit feedback was compiled and shared with the Diocesan Safeguarding Committee alongside an associated action plan.

The Archdiocese also invited the NBSCCCI to conduct a Review of Safeguarding Arrangements in the Archdiocese and it took place on the 29th, 30th and 31st March 2022. The outcome of this Review can be viewed at: <https://www.armagharchdiocese.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Armagh-Review-Report-05.07.2022-FINAL.pdf>

The Diocesan Advisory Panel continued to meet during the reporting period.

In total 124 participants completed the Safeguarding Children training and 105 completed their Adult Safeguarding training (including Diocesan Lourdes Pilgrimage Volunteers) over the course of the reporting period.

In total 149 people were vetted through Access NI during the reporting period and 527 were vetted through the Garda Vetting Office during the same period.

The Safeguarding Office continues to participate in the Southern Trust Local Adult Safeguarding Partnership (LASP) where the Director is Chair of the Prevention Workstream. The Workstream continued to meet virtually throughout the reporting period.

Provision and Maintenance of Places of Worship

Churches play a central role in the spiritual life of parishioners and along with Parochial Houses and other associated parish buildings they are often significant landmarks within the wider local community. Public benefit is provided through the provision of safe and worthy places of worship and assembly, not only for the Catholic community, but also for those also who wish to make use of them for personal or spiritual contemplation. Many of the churches and associated buildings are listed / protected as being of special or historic architectural interest. The proper care of these buildings can be onerous and costly, but they are essential for the ongoing realisation of the principal object of the Charity, the advancement of the Catholic religion.

General maintenance, minor and major schemes of renewal, and projects of construction in regard to church buildings and properties often require major outlays which are essential if these important structures, which form part of our national heritage, are to be maintained, not just for present use but for future generations. The management of this responsibility is ongoing and is carefully regulated and professionally monitored so that legitimate requests for new works, renovations and adaptations can be readily assessed and progressed by the Diocesan Building and Development Committee.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

During this year there were a number of building projects undertaken throughout the Archdiocese, including: extensive building works at the Redemptoris Mater Archdiocesan Missionary Seminary, Dundalk; redecoration at the Church of Our Lady of the Assumption, Magherafelt; and repairs to the Church of St Colmcille in the Parish of Togher. Various maintenance works continue across the Diocese to help protect and preserve the beauty and integrity of many of our old buildings. The Diocese has in place insurance cover in respect of all its buildings so that public access should not be unduly restricted by lack of funds to repair or restore buildings harmed as a result of accidental or other damage.

Fundraising

The Trust receives a large proportion of its income from donations, bequests and legacies from its supporters who are generally parishioners or those who have close connections to the Church. The Trust also receives support from other various groups such as the Albert Gubay Charitable Foundation, National Churches Trust, All Churches Trust and other funders. Without this valuable support the Trust would not be able to carry out most of its mission. The Council members of the Trust are mindful of their duty of care to those who may support the Trust, including vulnerable people, and therefore ensure that fundraising is carried out in a responsible and caring manner, always bearing in mind that the people themselves are integral to the Church. The Trust does not use external professional fundraisers or require its parishioners to donate in order to share in the generous resources that God has provided for their use. It rather encourages a culture of giving where this is possible and therefore places no pressure on its donors to contribute. The Trust encourages the use of tax relief (Gift Aid and CHY) to maximise giving where this is possible and ensures that donors are fully informed of the scope of tax relief in relation to their tax status so that they can make an informed choice.

Donations

The charity made charitable donations amounting to £70,427 (2022: £71,428) during the financial year. No donations for political purposes were made during this period.

Aid for Impoverished and Needy Communities Worldwide

Trócaire is the official overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland. It was established by the Irish Bishops' Conference in 1973 as a means through which people contribute to overseas emergency relief and development aid programmes. Its dual mandate is to support the most vulnerable people in the developing world, while also raising awareness of injustice and global poverty. The Diocese is a significant contributor to the charitable work of Trócaire and in the year under review contributed over £347,000 (2022: £295,000). Along with the Lenten Collection at Easter, the Diocese also supported special collections in April 2022 and March 2023 in response to the humanitarian crises in Ukraine, Turkey and Syria.

The Archdiocese of Armagh also financially assists, facilitates and works in collaboration with the St Vincent de Paul Society and other charitable groups that look after the poor, the homeless and migrants.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

Management of Resources

Council of the Trust

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited (the Trust) is governed by the Council of the Trust (the Directors) who meet regularly throughout the year to attend to the financial, property, building, personnel, legal and administrative affairs of the Diocese. All Parish Priests and Administrators of the parishes of the Archdiocese of Armagh are members of the Trust and are entitled to attend General Meetings of the Trust, including the Annual General Meeting. Parish Finance Committee members are also invited to these meetings.

There are eleven members of the Council. The Archbishop of Armagh is the Chair of the Council. The Vicars General are ex officio members of the Council. There are three lay and three other priest members of the Council chosen by the Archbishop for their integrity, experience and expertise.

The Secretary for the Trust is appointed by the Archbishop. The Council of the Trust has adopted a three-year development plan with appropriate objectives and targets. During the year, the Council met six times mainly to ensure the plan is continuously monitored, evaluated and reviewed, while also assessing the impact of the pandemic.

The Council has instituted a number of committees to assist and advise in the proper performance of its duties, including the Diocesan Building and Development Committee, the Diocesan Finance Committee, the Diocesan Personnel Committee, and the Diocesan Property Committee.

The Diocesan Building and Development Committee provides oversight and makes recommendations in relation to the area of Building and Building Development as set out in the Diocesan Buildings & Development Manual (October 2017). The membership of the Committee comprises three Directors of the Council of the Trust (one of who is Chair) and such other persons appointed by the Council with integrity and expertise in this field. The Chair of this Committee reports directly to the Council of the Trust. The Committee met six times during the year.

The Diocesan Finance Committee provides oversight and makes recommendations in relation to the area of Finance within the Diocese and parishes as set out in the Finance Manual (October 2017). This includes strategic planning, fundraising, audit and reporting requirements, controls, investments, budgets and the review of financial resources. The membership of the Committee comprises three Directors of the Council of the Trust (one of who is Chair) and such other persons with integrity and relevant financial expertise appointed by the Council. The Chair of this Committee reports directly to the Council of the Trust. The Committee met six times during the year.

The Diocesan Personnel Committee makes strategic recommendations on behalf of and to the Council in relation to the area of Parish and Diocesan Personnel and Human Resource management. It monitors the implementation and effectiveness of all personnel-related policies and ensures that resources are in place for implementation of policies. To this end the Committee has devised a Parish Recruitment and Selection manual, and Staff Handbooks. The membership of the Committee comprises three Directors of the Council of the Trust (one of who is Chair) and such other persons appointed by the Council with integrity and relevant human resources expertise. The Chair of this Committee reports directly to the Council of the Trust. The Committee met six times during the year.

The Diocesan Property Committee provides oversight and makes recommendations in relation to the area of Property as set out in the Property Manual (October 2017). This includes ownership, acquisitions, disposals, letting, leasing, licensing and any other form of alienation which alters the value of a property. The membership of the Committee comprises five Directors of the Council of the Trust (one of who is

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW (CONTINUED)

Chair) and such other persons with integrity and relevant expertise appointed by the Council.

The Chair of this Committee reports directly to the Council of the Trust. The Committee met six times during the year.

Each member of the Council is a member of at least one of the Committees.

Risk Management

The Council of the Trust actively reviews all major strategic and operational risks to which the Charity is exposed. It confirms that these have been reviewed and ensures that strategies and systems are established to manage exposure to these risks. Each Committee is required to monitor changes and to develop systems to manage risk whenever possible. The main areas of risk identified and monitored by the Council of the Trust include:

- Compliance with Health & Safety and listed buildings legislation
- Reduction in active clergy numbers
- Reduction in voluntary income
- Increasing costs for the care of sick and retired clergy
- Operational risks in the areas of finance, personnel and property
- Board failing in its responsibilities
- Funding volatility
- Reduction in central reserves due to capital projects and long-term commitments
- Compliance with data protection regulations
- Compliance with good governance procedures
- Safeguarding

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

REVIEW OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The detailed financial results for the year ended 31 March 2023 are set out in the financial statements that accompany this report.

The table below summarises the financial activities of the Diocese:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Parishes		
Income	11,739	11,036
Expenditure	(11,134)	(10,017)
Net surplus before transfers	605	1,019
Transfer between funds	369	4
Net gains on disposal of assets	303	243
Net (losses) / gains on investments	(29)	(31)
Increase in reserves	1,248	1,235
Curia		
Income	2,948	1,041
Expenditure	(1,648)	(1,936)
Surplus/(Deficit) before transfers and investment gains	1,300	(895)
Transfer between funds	(369)	(4)
Net gains on disposal of assets	101	-
Net (losses)/gains on investment	(549)	331
Increase/(decrease) in reserves	483	(568)
Total increase in Parish and Curia reserves	1,731	667

Complete details of the income and expenditure are shown in the statement of financial activities on page 30 and in the notes to the accounts.

Review of transactions and financial position of the Charity

The reserves of the Charity at 31 March 2023 total £109m (2022 - £106m) and of this total £91.9m (2022-£89.3m) relate solely to the assets and activities of individual Parishes and are not available for the non-parish general purposes of the Charity. Curia reserves total £17.2m at the year-end (2022 £16.7m) of which £0.3m (2022 - £0.7m) is unrestricted with £1.4m (2022 - £1.4m) of this relating to fixed assets.

Most of the income received by Parishes is through the Sunday offertory and other donations. This source of income is 66% of the parish total. Total income was £11.7m (2022 - £11.0m) and total expenditure was £11.1m in 2023 (2022 - £10.0m).

Total Curia income was £2.9m in 2023 (2022 - £1.0m). Total expenditure was £1.6m in 2023 (2022 - £1.9m).

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

REVIEW OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Investment policy

The Memorandum of Association of St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited provides the Trust with the powers to deposit or invest funds in any manner and to delegate the management of investments to a financial expert.

Investment Managers

The Trust has appointed IQ-EQ Fund Management (Ireland) Limited as investment managers who operate a 'total return' policy over the medium to long-term with emphasis on current income with a low-medium risk profile. The managers have full discretion to invest, subject to the parameters laid down by the Trust. There is a review of information from the Investment Managers on a regular basis.

At present the Diocesan Finance Committee liaises with the investment managers, monitors their performance, and reports to the Council of the Trust at each of its meetings. In 2021/2022, the Diocesan Finance Committee, supported by an independent advisor, undertook a project to review the Diocesan Investment Portfolio. The scope of the work included:

1. Documenting a formal Statement of Investment Policy and Principles;
2. Considering what type of implementation guidelines might be appropriate for the portfolio;
3. Reviewing the existing investment manager.

In June 2022 the outcome of the review was presented to the Council of the Trust. The Statement of Investment Policy and Principles was approved. It was also decided that the present investment structure should be maintained with existing managers to remain in place, but to be kept continually under review.

Under Charity Law the Council of the Trust must seek to obtain the best financial return possible consistent with commercial prudence.

The Diocesan Trust Investment Portfolio value is £14,819,421 (2022 - £15,276,000).

Investment Objectives

The Council of the Trust has adopted investment objectives that seek to protect and enhance the real value of the Diocesan Assets over the long term while also achieving agreed rates of income generation.

In fulfilling these objectives, the Council of the Trust adheres to an Ethical Policy that precludes investment in asset classes directly or mainly involved in the manufacture and/or supply of goods and services which are not in accordance with the teachings of the Gospel, the promotion of the dignity and sanctity of human life, and the social teachings of the Catholic Church. Environmental issues are also a significant factor.

Ethical Investment Policy

The agreed Trust's Ethical Investment Policy is as follows:

- Preclusion of investment in companies known to be racist or otherwise exploitative of human rights
- Preclusion of investment in companies which either produce or promote:
 - armaments including biological and chemical weapons, landmines and general weapons and arms of war and mass destruction
 - contraceptives and/or birth control devices
 - offensive written material
 - gambling, tobacco or alcohol

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

REVIEW OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Preclusion of investment in companies involved:

- in the provision of abortion or euthanasia
- in the violation of currently approved environmental conventions.
- directly in fossil fuels

It is understood that a complete control over monies, for instance, those held in Funds, is not possible. The Council of the Trust may, therefore, have indirect exposure to activities which may give rise to ethical concerns where these are considered minimal in relation to the portfolio's overall composition.

Reserves policy

The Trust recognises that its income arises primarily from voluntary donations and that accordingly it is important to seek to carry adequate levels of reserves to ensure its ability to meet future expenditure commitments as they arise. Parishes are encouraged to maintain adequate short-term reserves to ensure that they can meet operating costs in the short-term and to build longer-term reserves that will be available if substantial commitments, such as building refurbishment projects, arise. The Diocese centrally aims to maintain adequate levels of reserves to meet Diocesan operating costs in the short to medium term and to provide for any significant expenditures and contingencies that may arise at future dates. The policy of maintaining significant long-term reserves is considered consistent with the expectation that the Archdiocese of Armagh will continue to exist in perpetuity.

Financial Management and Key Performance Indicators

With the pro-active involvement of the Council Committees, diocesan resources are managed to tightly control all costs, in particular property and human resources/employment costs. The Council Committees pursue a policy of obtaining value for money and protection of diocesan assets. The management of the diocesan property holdings, with input from the Property and Building and Development Committees, is costly (costs amounted to £4.786m in the last financial year - see Pages 42 and 43 of this report under the headings Premises Costs, Repairs and Maintenance, and Rates and Insurance expenditure). Yet, the resource of property is key to engaging with the Charity's stakeholders and essential for the public benefit it provides.

The Personnel Committee focuses on the costs of employment and compensating employees fairly. The Finance Committee monitors general overheads, one-off expenditures and the financial implications of Property and Building and Development decisions, as well as acting in an advisory capacity for all the Council's Committees.

To respond to unexpected calls for financial support whilst funding predictable recurring expenditure, the Charity has a policy of keeping liquid reserves (cash and cash equivalents) at least equal to annual running costs currently estimated at £19m.

Targeted fundraising is employed when major expenditure projects are being planned which would otherwise put too much of a strain on existing resources.

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Strategic report for the year ended 31 March 2023

REVIEW OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Plans for the Future

This brief overlook reflects the work of the Charity in the current year and also indicates its ongoing commitment with regard to fulfilling the principal aims and objectives of the Charitable Trust into the future.

The Archdiocese of Armagh will continue to build upon and develop the initiatives and activities outlined in the narrative above and so continue to advance the primary goals of the Charity. In addition, a particular focus of the Trust is to secure the long-term financial stability of the Archdiocese.

Periodically, the Trust undertakes a review exercise in respect of all aspects of the activities of the Charity through reports from parishes and the various bodies which are constituent parts of the Diocese. Work is continuing towards the organisation of a Diocesan Assembly to reflect on and produce a comprehensive medium- to long-term Diocesan Pastoral Plan and to ensure that resources are focussed on the key themes which have been identified as central to the work of the Archdiocese.

The Council of the Trust continues to monitor the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic and consider the implications for the ongoing resourcing of diocesan and parish activities. Both Curia and parishes are encouraged to review their budgets and plan their expenditure in line with reduced income. It is likely that the impact of the pandemic will be with us for some time to come and the Council of the Trust will continue to work on new and innovative ways to minimise the impact on the ongoing operations of the Charity.

The Strategic Report has been approved by the Trustees on 25 March 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

DocuSigned by:

Archbishop Eamon Martin

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Most Reverend Eamon Martin

Director of St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

DocuSigned by:

Rev Colm Hagan

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Reverend Colm Hagan

Secretary of St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Report of the Directors for the year ended 31 March 2023

Structure, Governance and Management

The operation of the Charity is overseen by the Corporate Trustee. The Directors of the Corporate Trustee (Council of the Trust) are appointed by the Archbishop of Armagh who is the Chair. Recruitment of Directors is based upon their knowledge of the local Church and professional skills and expertise necessary for overseeing the affairs of the Charity by ensuring it is solvent, well run, and that it delivers the outcomes for which it was established.

On appointment, new Directors of the Council of the Trust are introduced to their role by the Archbishop of Armagh, the Diocesan Secretary and the Diocesan Financial Administrator, and are provided with copies of documentation relating to the Trust and the latest financial information and reports. Directors attend formal and informal training sessions as required (see page 3 for legal and administrative details).

In accordance with the Code of Canon Law a Council of Priests, that is a group of priests which represents the Presbyterium, advises the Archbishop according to the norm of law so as to promote, as much as possible, the pastoral good of the People of God entrusted to him. The Archbishop also relies upon the advice and guidance of the Cathedral Chapter, the College of Consultors, the Diocesan Pastoral Council and the Episcopal Vicars, all of whom meet regularly to discuss matters of pastoral concern within the Diocese.

At parish level, the Parish Priest is responsible for all aspects of governing the parish. Parish Priests are not employees but act as agents for the Trust. Each parish is required to have a Finance Committee which meets at least four times per year to support and advise the priest, particularly in the areas of finance, property, buildings and personnel. A comprehensive manual, "Finance Manual – financial controls and related processes within Parishes" is issued by the Diocese to parishes. Letters and updates are issued by the Archbishop regularly through which policies are communicated to parishes covering liturgical, pastoral, financial and administrative matters. Further support is also available from the Curia office.

The Council has instituted a number of committees to assist and advise it in the proper performance of its duties, including the Diocesan Building and Development Committee, the Diocesan Finance Committee, the Diocesan Personnel Committee, and the Diocesan Property Committee (see pages 18 and 19).

Statement of Trustee's responsibilities

The Trustee is responsible for preparing the Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulation.

Company law requires the Trustee to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law the Trustee has prepared the financial statements in accordance with United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland", and applicable law (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Under company law the Trustee must not approve the financial statements unless it is satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustee is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (2015);
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards, comprising FRS 102, have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustee is responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain

St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

Report of the Directors for the year ended 31 March 2023

the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. The Trustee is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustee is responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Future developments

Future developments are set out in the Strategic report and included in this report by cross reference. The plan for future periods is detailed on page 23.

Reference and administrative details

Administrative details are included on page 3.

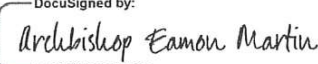
Funds held as a custodian trustee on behalf of others

There are no funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others.

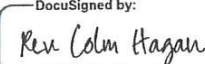
Independent auditor

The auditors, CavanaghKelly, have indicated their willingness to continue in office, and a resolution concerning their reappointment will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

The Trustees' report was approved and authorised for issue by the Directors of the Corporate Trustee and signed on their behalf by:

DocuSigned by:

A193D6F93AD2408...

Most Reverend Eamon Martin
Director of St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited

DocuSigned by:

7A2907C2C1DD4FE...

Reverend Colm Hagan
Secretary of St Patrick's Archdiocesan Trust Limited