

**ST ALBANS DIOCESAN SYNOD**

**16 JUNE 2018**

**QUESTIONS – FIRST NOTICE PAPER**

- 1) Mr Anthony Archer (General Synod) to ask Canon David Nye, the Chairman of the Diocesan Board of Finance:

“What property development is St Albans Diocesan Property Company Limited currently engaged with and what was disclosed in its profit and loss account for the year ended 31 December 2017?”

- 2) The Reverend Dean Henley (Amphill and Shefford Deanery) to ask the Bishop of Bedford, the Chairman of the Board of Education:

“The latest version of *Valuing All God’s Children – Guidance for Church of England schools on challenging homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying*, goes into much more detail about the effect of the bullying of trans children in schools than the previous version of the guidance. It highlights amongst other things that many schools assume that their school community is entirely cis gendered and do not consider that there may be those within their number who identify as being gender fluid, non-binary or simply as trans. This version of the guidance reveals that almost 10% of trans pupils report receiving death threats whilst at school.

What advice has the Board given to its schools about the provision of gender neutral toilet and changing facilities for the benefit of all of their students, staff and visitors; including those of the Body of Christ who identify as being trans?

- 3) The Reverend Dean Henley (Amphill and Shefford Deanery) to ask the Bishop of St. Albans:

“The continued rate of decline in church attendance and in the numbers of baptisms and confirmations revealed by the published Statistics for Mission over successive years, together with the drop in the collection rate of parish share payments and the apparent failure of a series of mission initiatives (*Decade of Evangelism, Vision for Action, Living God’s Love, Thy Kingdom Come*), all serve to highlight the decline of the diocese and must be a cause for concern to the Bishop and his senior staff. The Archbishop of Canterbury has said a number of times recently that being a parish priest was the hardest job he’d done for the Church of England.

Given the disquiet amongst many in the diocese, both amongst the laity and the clergy over the latest mission initiative *Reaching New People in New Ways* and its cost to the Church Commissioners of £1.7m; has the Bishop’s Council considered that a significant pause to hastily conceived top down initiatives might be well received by the already hard-pressed parishes and clergy that His Grace has in mind?

The answers to Questions 1, 2 and 3 will be tabled at Synod in a Second Notice Paper.