

Motion No.7

Seconder: Revd Philip McKinley

Embargo Until Delivery • Check Against Delivery

It gives me great pleasure to second this motion. You will see from this year's Book of Reports that racial justice is an incredibly strong and recurring theme for many church organisations, including the Irish Council of Churches, Churches Together in Britain and Ireland and indeed the World Council of Churches.

There is a real sense that the Holy Spirit is speaking clearly and concisely to many Churches around the world, at a time when the world is sadly becoming polarised.

The motion before you asks each one of our eleven dioceses to take one simple step each year to address this issue.

And that one step marks the first step that any Christian should undertake before any action; that is worship and prayer.

This motion encourages every diocese to organise their own relevant version of Racial Justice Sunday on the second Sunday of February. There are wonderful Racial Justice Sunday liturgical resources available through Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, but there are also new resources being devised specifically for the Church of Ireland by the Liturgical Advisory Committee. I wish to formally thank the LAC for their wonderful support.

These resources provide a very helpful starting point, which dioceses can then build upon. For example, each diocese is free to explore a whole range of possibilities for music, prayer, preaching, choice of venue and of course hospitality, all of which can help to bring this worship alive.

Many churches already mark Racial Justice Sunday. For some dioceses they may simply wish to join in these existing celebrations. Other dioceses may wish to explore a new approach.

I truly believe that these eleven services, across the island of Ireland, could be remarkably joyous and powerful occasions for the Church of Ireland. I also believe that they could help start a fresh and vibrant dynamic for outreach within each dioceses.

Anybody who tuned into last weekend's RTÉ Sunday morning Service or saw last February's Racial Justice Sunday service in our National Cathedral, St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin, will have seen how enriching and transformative ethnic diversity has become in our Church.

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Indeed this coming Sunday, our lectionary reading from Revelation chapter 7, verse 9, provides us with a glorious heavenly vision of the Church. It says, “After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb”.

Members of Synod, may I encourage you to support the motion. Thank you.