

May 31st 2011

My Dear Priests and People,

I would like to present to you a Summary of Diocesan Finances for the year ending December 31st 2010.

First of all, once again, let me thank you most sincerely for your generous support of the work of the Church in this diocese during the past year. In particular, I want to thank you for the financial support which you continue to give to the priests and myself. Through your generosity in contributing to the levy system which prevails, this diocese is able to continue its efforts to provide the pastoral care which you deserve.

When the figures for 2010 are compared with those of 2009, a number of items require particular comment.

We have two seminarians studying to be priests of this diocese and two priests doing further studies in the United States and Canada. Each year the diocese holds two conferences for the priests. These are the chief means which we use for the on-going formation of the clergy. The total cost of the education of priests and seminarians came to €88,407.

The Diocese of Killala Fund contains monies which were accumulated in the past and form a capital reserve. This fund is invested with two investment management companies. The value of these portfolios increased by €67,343 during 2010; to a total sum of €809,404. The surplus in the various funds continues to provide an offset for parishes which have bank borrowings. Through these funds, by removing the interest on the debt on the many churches renovated in this diocese in recent years, the capital is paid off more quickly.

The Sick and Retired Priests Fund provides for the accommodation and support of our retired priests. Due to special circumstances the demands on this fund increased greatly during 2010. As a result there was a deficit of €131,544. This resulted in a decrease in the assets of the Fund from €54,158 to €422,614. The revenue of the Central Priests Fund, which relates to the income received by the priests of the diocese, also decreased. The deficit amounted to €39,085 and the resulting decrease in the assets of the Fund to €76,778. While all salaries in the diocese have been frozen at the 2009 level, the decrease in the fund for the Sick and Retired Priests, together with a decrease in priests revenue in some parishes is a cause for concern at present. I appeal, therefore, to you to continue to support the income both of the priests working in parishes and of the sick and retired priests.

I am most grateful to you for your support. I am hopeful that, with your continued help and generosity the diocese will be able to meet the many pressing pastoral needs of this time. I would also like to thank the Diocesan Finance Committee, which consists of five lay members, two priest members and myself, together with the Diocesan Finance Administrator and the Secretary, for their help and support.

Yours sincerely,  
+John Fleming

Bishop of Killala