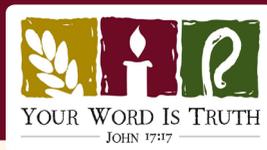
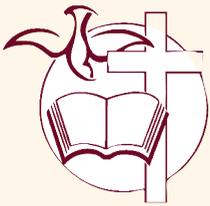


“Come to the table”



Dear Friends,

It is now over a year and a half since I took up my appointment here in the Archdiocese of Cashel and Emly. Over that time, I have had the opportunity to visit all the parishes of the Archdiocese - mainly for the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation but also for different celebrations and gatherings around special days in the life of parishes or around the Year of Mercy celebrated on a Deanery basis.



I would like to express my thanks to Archbishop Clifford, the priests, people and religious of the Archdiocese who have welcomed me from the announcement of my appointment in November 2014. I greatly appreciate the warm welcome that you continue to extend to me.

In my homily at my installation, in February 2015, I stated that the Motto I had chosen for my ministry was “Your Word is Truth” (John 17:17) and that an important part of my ministry would be to promote the biblical apostolate at all levels throughout the Archdiocese. Personally, I have been blessed to have been able to study the Sacred Scriptures beyond what is the normal course of studies in theology while I trained for the missionary priesthood. As a result, I found great joy and satisfaction in the ministry of teaching in the Seminary of SS. Peter and Paul in Ibadan, Nigeria. My years of teaching those preparing for the priesthood gave me an insight into how important it is that all our learning should serve the deeper appreciation and love for the Word of God – a treasure given to us but which, at times, we can “park out of sight”. The manner in which the Bible is loved and read by so many people in the church in Africa has also inspired me.



As we begin this new pastoral year in the life of the Church in our Archdiocese – schools and colleges are now reopened and the rhythm of life takes up again. I wish to issue an invitation to all to join me on a journey - a journey of discovery for some and a journey of rediscovery for

many, of getting to know the Bible better. On this journey we will aim to place the Sacred Scriptures at the centre of our lives, at home, in the parish, at school and in the wider world where we live and work.



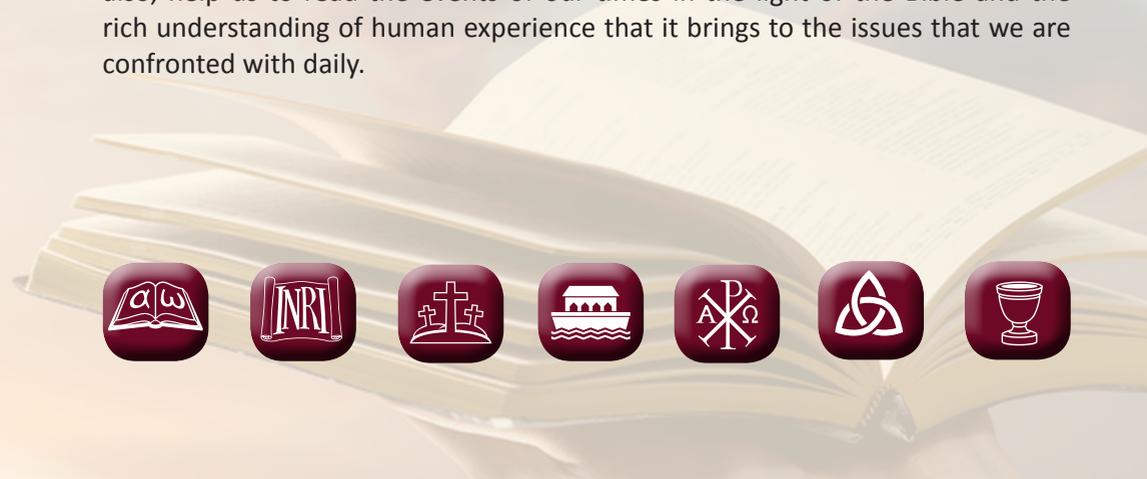
“The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us...”

As Church we venerate the Sacred Scriptures - each baptised person is invited to partake of the Bread of Life from the one table of the Word of God and the Body of Christ. For most people it is in our parishes that we encounter the Word of God when it is proclaimed as part of our Sunday or week day Mass celebrations. This is an important moment of encounter with the Word. There is continual need to ensure that the Word is read and welcomed in our celebrations as befitting its uniqueness as the Word of God.



I am aware of the various groups in the Archdiocese who gather for Lectio Divina (a way of reading and praying the Scriptures in a group context) and groups who gather to reflect on the Sunday readings. I thank all who are already engaged in deepening their faith through praying and studying the Word of God.

Over the coming months, in the Archdiocese there will be opportunities for people to explore together through reflection and prayer the Scriptures that will lead, I hope, not only to a deepening of faith in a loving and merciful God but, also, help us to read the events of our times in the light of the Bible and the rich understanding of human experience that it brings to the issues that we are confronted with daily.



“Come to the table”



The Prophet Isaiah invited the people of his time to: *“Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.”* (55:1). This is my invitation to each person who reads this letter: come to the refreshing waters of the Word of God and drink of what is offered to us so that our hearts may burn as the hearts of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus did when they journeyed with Jesus.

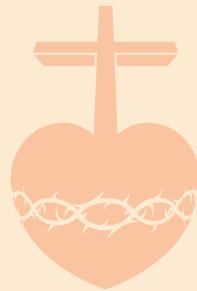
Pope Francis writing in the opening lines of his Encyclical Letter *“The Joy of the Gospel”*: says *“The Joy of the Gospel fills the lives and hearts of all who encounter Jesus.”* To encounter Jesus in the Scriptures is a fundamental part of being able to communicate that joy to our world.

Conclusion

In the Gospel of Luke we read and, indeed, when we recite the Angelus hear this powerful statement that *“The Word became Flesh and dwelt among us...”* we, in our time, are the means whereby the Word of God becomes flesh. Part of our mission as disciples is to journey together to *“Flesh”* the Word of God in our hearts and in our *“inner selves”* (Ephesians 3:20). Our prayer for the journey ahead is: *“May our hearts burn within us”* just as the hearts of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus did when they allowed Jesus to break open and explain the scriptures to them.

Come, Join me on this journey, Come to the Table.

Yours in Jesus Christ,



Date of Meeting:

Time:

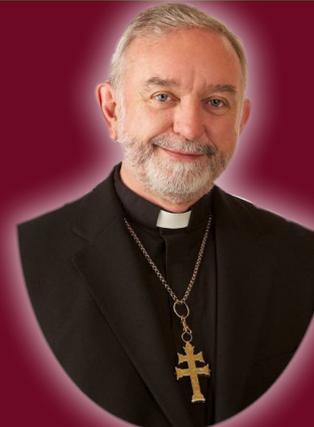
Venue:

ARCHDIOCESE OF CASHEL AND EMLY

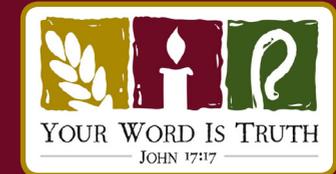
November 2016

“Come to the table”

“The manner in which the Bible is loved and read by so many people in the church in Africa has also inspired me.” Archbishop Kieran O’Reilly



A Pastoral letter
from
Archbishop Kieran O’Reilly



- Archbishop Kieran invites you to read the Bible with the hope of encountering God and coming to understand Jesus in a new way.
- Over three nights in Advent, come to a meeting in your local deanery to share and be nourished at the table of God’s Word.

