

## Provisions enable action 2017 management report

LIMBURG.- The balance sheet for the "Diocese of Limburg" corporation (Körperschaft Bistum Limburg) shows a total of 1.1 billion Euros as at 31 December 2017. That's around 48 million Euros more than the previous year. Almost 92 percent of the balance-sheet total is tied up in the corporation's fixed assets, as shown in the 2017 management report published by the Diocese on Friday 24 August 2018. The report covers the Diocese of Limburg (Bistum Limburg), the Bishop's See of Limburg (Bischöflicher Stuhl zu Limburg), and the Limburg Cathedral Chapter (Limburger Domkapitel) corporations, as well as the legally independent "School Foundation" ("Schulstiftung") of the Diocese of Limburg.

### Ensuring a capacity to act

Some 58 million Euros in total from the positive annual result achieved by the Diocese of Limburg can be used. "The current economic conditions give us some creative scope, and we are applying this consistently. Ensuring inter-generation fairness and a long-term capacity to act remain key concepts", says head of finance and diocesan economist Gordon Sobbeck. Usage of this annual result was discussed and approved by the diocesan church tax council. "We are taking advantage of the current positive climate to make targeted investments and hold fast to the tried-and-tested path of providing for the future", says Dr Herbert Braun, chair of the diocesan church tax council.

The diocese has granted 5 million Euros to the School Foundation, and the One-World fund is being topped up by a further 1 million Euros. The Caritasstiftung foundation will similarly be receiving 1 million Euros, and funding for the work being done to promote a welcome culture for refugees has been topped up by one million Euros. The Baustiftung (construction foundation) will be receiving 12.9 million Euros. 7.5 million Euros will be added to the parish construction reserves, and 5 million to the non-parish construction reserves. 1.5 million Euros have been set aside for investments in IT infrastructure. 10 million Euros has been assigned to the mandatory budget reserves, and the capital for sustainably strengthening finances has been topped up by 13.1 million Euros.

"We're well aware that, over the next twenty years, we will be facing a situation of massive, radical change as a result of demographic trends, and in particular the effect of the "Baby Boomers" coming into pension age. We need to be equipped to make do with much fewer resources and funds over the long term. And we're preparing for this by making consistent, specific provisions. To a certain degree, we're pursuing an 'immunisation strategy' here for core areas, and this strategy will make us somewhat less dependent on the long-term developments in church tax", Sobbeck explains.

### Pastoral care in the parishes remains the key focus when applying funds

Every day, more than 326,000 Euros in church-tax income is put towards on-site pastoral care work in the parishes. Church tax provided a total of around 227 million Euros in 2017, of which approximately 119 million Euros (53 percent) have been used in different ways for pastoral care in the parishes.

Some 28 million Euros of the church-tax revenue have gone into real estate, infrastructure, management, central tasks, administration and synodal work. 17 million Euros went into schools and education, while another 17 million have been put towards social tasks. The diocese used around 10 million Euros of the church-tax revenue for its work with children, adolescents and families, and around 8.5 million Euros were used for supra-diocesan and universal-church tasks. A total of 7 million Euros were allocated for pastoral care in special situations, supra-parish pastoral care, and district work. The states of Hessen and Rhineland-Palatinate received around 7 million Euros for their church-tax collection, and almost 4 million Euros went towards liturgy, church music, museums and culture.



### Annual accounts of the Bishop's See

The balance-sheet total for the Bishop's See is around 84 million Euros as at 31 December 2017, of which 79 million Euros constitute fixed assets. The profit and loss statement shows a surplus of around 688,000 Euros. "A property sale created a positive, one-off effect of around 942,000 Euros. We continue to have negative result overall, which will take time to break down", says Sobbeck.

### Cathedral Chapter – School Foundation

The balance-sheet total of the Limburg Cathedral Chapter is 6 million Euros, most of which (5.6 million Euros) is tied up in fixed assets. The current income total amounts to approximately 2.4 million Euros, while the current expenses are around 2 million Euros. Some 1.2 million Euros of this are HR expenses, which includes support and training for the Limburg boys' choir, the Limburg cathedral choir, and the girls' choir. It also includes expenses for the cathedral sexton and organist, as well as the stipends for the nuns.

The Diocese of Limburg's School Foundation, as a legal church foundation under civil law, has had its balance-sheet total increased to around 62 million Euros following a further 5-million-Euro contribution by the Diocese of Limburg. "I am particularly pleased that, last year, some 750,000 Euros in foundation money could be put towards supporting school education in the diocese", adds Sobbeck.

### Information on finances and content

The management report provides transparency in relation to the assets and financial obligations of the diocesan corporations. "We don't want get caught up in facts and figures. We also need an attitude of 'More than you see' here, which is why our 2017 management report also once again covers other areas of focus", says vicar-general Wolfgang Rösch, commenting on the compulsory task of the management report. (StS/PJ)

For further information and an e-paper version of the 2017 management report to read and download, visit [www.finanzen-bistumlimburg.de](http://www.finanzen-bistumlimburg.de).