

Convention News

THE Bishop is preparing a letter addressed to the whole diocese to mark the occasion of the first meeting of all the delegates to the Diocesan Convention. This meeting, as previously announced, will take place on Sunday, February 15. It is hoped that priests in their sermons on that day will speak about the Convention or perhaps read the Bishop's letter to their congregations. In this way the faithful will be informed of the purposes of the Convention and their interest aroused. It cannot be stressed too often that the Convention is everybody's business, not just the private affair of the delegates. Those not elected as delegates can become involved by reading the draft documents, by attending the meetings of the working groups and by making known their reactions to the proposals contained in the drafts. In the last analysis, the Convention will be judged by whether or not it succeeds in sparking a renewal of the diocese — and the diocese is people. Hence it is important that as many as possible be kept informed of the stage the Convention has arrived at and, through studying the documents, learn of the directions which renewal of the Church in Hong Kong is likely to take in the years ahead.

On Sunday, February 15 the meeting will be held in the afternoon, in Caritas House, Caine Road. This represents a change from what was originally intended. Due to unfavourable reaction to the plan of having Mass at noon, the hour has now been changed to 4 p.m. All the priest delegates are invited to celebrate this Mass with the Bishop. After Mass and some brief remarks by the chairman of the

Steering Committee, the delegates will break up into their working groups. Each group will elect a Convener to preside over the regular meetings that will commence soon after this first gathering. Secretaries to record the opinions expressed at the meetings will also have to be chosen. Then members of the drafting commissions will introduce to each group the document that is its special responsibility, explaining the method followed in composing it, the main areas it covers, the more controversial points it contains. The groups will then plan for their subsequent meetings. A buffet dinner will bring this first meeting to an end.

We had hoped to have been able to send out the Chinese and English versions of the document on ecumenism last week. But unfortunately there was a hold-up in the printing of the Chinese version. So the English version only of the document, together with the English version of the document on Priestly Life were sent to all delegates a few days ago. The next document due to appear will be that on the Social Dimension of the Church. This will be the longest draft so far—but there are even longer ones to come. The document on education, for instance, contains in manuscript 115 typed foolscap pages. The printer, in spite of the New Year holidays, promises to have a limited number of copies of this document ready for February 15.

There will be quite a delay before the remainder of the documents appear in print. A few of them have not yet been handed in, and the work of translation into Chinese of some of the others is taking considerably more time than was foreseen.