



1 October 2015

**From Bishop Donald To the Clergy No 16**

*copied for information to diocesan staff, lay chairs, and the clergy of Yaxley Deanery*

Dear friends

It isn't very long since my last letter to you all,

**The Church's Response to the Refugees Crisis**

The images and stories of the unfolding refugee crisis cannot fail to move us; a number of people have asked what the Church's response might be. The Archbishop of Canterbury has written at the start of September about the complexity of the situation which is constantly changing.

(<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/articles.php/5606/archbishop-of-canterbury-on-the-migrant-crisis>) I have asked my new Chaplain, Canon Tim Alban Jones, to coordinate the responses for the diocese. He can be contacted at my office and would be very pleased to hear about any parish or deanery initiatives.

**Professional Guidelines for the Conduct of the Clergy**

You may be aware that a revised edition of the 2003 Guidelines has been produced. The new edition reflects several changes in church life and wider society including the introduction of the Clergy Discipline Measure and increased use of social media. They express an aspiration for the very highest standards to be expected of those who serve as deacons, priests and bishops in the Church of God.

The Guidelines are available on line and can be downloaded freely

(<https://www.churchofengland.org/media/2287115/guidelines2ewebversion.pdf>) or from Church House Publishing, priced at £7.99 – further details can be found on the Church of England website). An electronic version will also shortly be available on our diocesan website in the Bishops' Office section of Church Resources. The Guidelines are wide-ranging in their scope, covering all aspects of clerical life from calling to faith, from mission and ministry at times of deepest need to discipline, trust and well-being. The section on Reconciliation is subject to further work by General Synod on the meaning of absolute confidentiality of the confessional in an age when the church is keen to promote the highest standards in safeguarding.

May I urge you all to take some time to download a copy of these Guidelines and to spend some time reflecting how they can inform your ministry.

### **Eucharistic Assistants**

Many parishes have lay people licensed as Eucharistic Assistants to help with the distribution of Holy Communion. General Synod has now changed the rules for this, so that the necessary permission can be granted at the parish level if the bishop agrees. This bishop does agree! From now on there will be new arrangements in Peterborough Diocese.

- Current Eucharistic Assistant licences, issued from our Bishops' Office, will continue to be valid until the expiry date shown on them.
- Future licences will be issued by the Incumbent or Priest-in-Charge following PCC agreement for each named person. There is a template on the diocesan website which parishes may wish to use.
- Licences are limited to five years, and must specify the expiry date, though they can be renewed with PCC agreement.
- Those who are taking Holy Communion outside the Church, to retirement homes or to the sick, must have a DBS check as pastoral ministers in addition to the Eucharistic Assistant licence.
- Under the new rules it is permissible to licence children who have been confirmed or admitted to communion before confirmation: this provision is intended mainly for services in Church Schools (in which case the Head Teacher's permission is needed instead of the PCC's); in the case of a child, permission is also needed from a parent or guardian.
- We are making a template licence which will shortly be available on the diocesan website (in the Bishops' Office section of Church Resources) to help clergy and parishes.
- It is good practice for Eucharistic Assistant licences to be displayed in the vestry, or somewhere where they can be checked.
- Any questions on this should be addressed to my Chaplain, Canon Tim Alban Jones.
- There are two training sessions being run by the Revd Adrian Holdstock already in the diary, and more details can be found on the Church Resources section of the diocesan website. Further events will be planned for the new year.

### **Sabbaticals**

The Dean and I both look forward to celebrating forty years of ordained ministry next year. Neither of us has had a sabbatical before, and we have both (independently) decided to do that. We are each taking three months plus some holiday time. Charles will be off from 13 February to 1 June, and I will be from 13 June to 2 October. During my absence both Bishop John Holbrook and Bishop John Flack will assume extra duties. I am grateful to them both.

This is an opportunity to remind clergy of their entitlement to sabbatical leave, for study and refreshment. Further details can be found here <http://www.peterborough-diocese.org.uk/downloads/cmd-menu15-16.pdf> (scroll to page 4)

### **General Synod Elections**

Please pray for the General Synod elections currently taking place, and do use your vote and encourage your lay deanery synod members to use theirs.

### **Visit to Seoul**

The Anglican Church in South Korea is celebrating its 125th anniversary during the first week of October. Anglican leaders from around the world will be there, and we as a diocese have been invited because of our link with the Diocese of Seoul. I will be going in early October for a week, with Charles Taylor, our Dean, Andrew Roberts, our Diocesan Secretary and Miranda Robinson, our Director of Education. Charles and I will both be preaching while we are there, and I will be taking a message of congratulation and good wishes from Archbishop Justin.

### **Pray for North Korea - 1 November**

A recent report from the United Nations described North Korea as the hardest place in the world to be a Christian because of the severity of persecution in that country. Thousands of Christians are incarcerated in prison camps, and while there are many secret believers, they face arrest, torture, or public execution if discovered. According to one group involved in supporting persecuted Christians, North Korea is the country at the top of their list (in other words, the *worst* country). In view of our Diocesan Link with the Diocese of Seoul in South Korea, and their deep concern for their northern neighbours, I want to make the North Korea situation more widely known. You may know that I have spoken on this a couple of times in the House of Lords. I think now is the time to say something here in the Diocese.

On Sunday 1 November (All Saints' Day, and a perfect opportunity to think about this issue) I shall be preaching at Evensong in the Cathedral at 3.30pm about the persecuted Church, with particular reference to North Korea. All are welcome to that service. I shall make my sermon available afterwards. I encourage you to include North Korea whenever you pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters, and particularly on that day. Below is a prayer which you may like to use.

O Lord God,  
your Son Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.  
In his resurrection  
he restores life and peace in all creation.  
Comfort, we pray, all victims of intolerance  
and those oppressed by their fellow humans, especially in North Korea.  
Remember in your kingdom those who have died.  
Lead the oppressors towards compassion  
and give hope to the suffering.  
Through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

### **Clergy Day - 12 November**

I am inviting all licensed clergy to spend Thursday 12 November with me in the Cathedral. I am very pleased that the Reverend Sandra Millar will be coming to talk about her work with the national Church's funerals project, *Taking Funerals Seriously*. I will give a keynote address at the beginning of the day, and an epilogue at the end. Before a cooked lunch we will share in Holy Communion. Please

put this date in your diary now and alert local retired clergy (with Permission to Officiate!) to this date to ask them to be ready to cover you for any funerals or other parochial duties. An invitation will follow shortly.

### **Cathedral Confirmation Service - 14 November**

A reminder that this autumn's Cathedral Confirmation will be on Saturday 14 November, probably at 6.00pm. You are welcome to bring candidates from any parish (including the Yaxley Deanery of Ely Diocese). Please let Canon Bruce Ruddock know numbers and names by Friday 23 October:

[bruce.ruddock@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk](mailto:bruce.ruddock@peterborough-cathedral.org.uk)

### **Discipleship Menu**

We are in the process of launching a new Discipleship Menu which will be open to both clergy and laity alike. It is a flexible programme to be held in a number of different venues in the diocese. Further information will follow over the next few weeks and I encourage you to look out for leaflets and information on the diocesan website and to then promote this in your parishes. If you have any queries please be in touch with Canon Liz Holdsworth: [liz.holdsworth@peterborough-diocese.org.uk](mailto:liz.holdsworth@peterborough-diocese.org.uk)

With thanks for your fellowship in the priestly ministry of the Gospel.

In Christ



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