

3 - MISSION AND PASTORAL CARE

3 - MISSION AND PASTORAL CARE - General Introduction

In addition to offering to Almighty God the best possible worship, the Church is called to the tasks of Mission and Pastoral Care. Each Parochial Church Council has a responsibility regularly to consider both of these topics, in order to ensure that the principal roles of the Church do not get lost in an agenda dealing only with finance and fabric, important though these latter topics are.

Mission must be at the heart of a PCC's thinking. The Church exists to proclaim the word and works of God in and to the world, and it is vital that this dimension of our calling is held constantly in view. Mission will find its outworking in many different ways: in evangelism; in outreach to the marginalised of our communities; in speaking and acting in ways which reflect the priorities of the Kingdom of God. Our perspectives on mission will be enlarged and enriched as we engage with and learn from the Church overseas.

Pastoral care is offered by the whole Church both to its members and to the wider community in which the Church is set. As such it is wider than merely the work of priests, deacons and readers. A large number of Church members regularly offer ministry in their community through their membership of secular as well as Church groups. This paper, however, is written to help PCCs and deaneries in their particular calling to offer ministry and pastoral care within parishes and within their wider mission communities.

In their consideration of these topics, PCCs have considerable Diocesan resources available to them for practical and experienced advice. Below are listed a good number of them; in addition, each Deanery (and even parish) may have within its membership individuals and groups who will be in a position to share good practice from their own experience.

A division into Mission and Pastoral Care is inevitably artificial, since a number of Diocesan groups carry a brief which transcends this division; the Board for Church and Society, for example, aids both mission and pastoral care in the Diocese. The divisions are offered here simply to aid readers of this paper locate that individual or body which will be able to provide the advice they need. Specific names, addresses and telephone numbers are printed in the Diocesan Directory.

3.1 – RESOURCES FOR MISSION

The **Diocesan Council for Mission and Ministry** carries a wide-ranging brief. It is accountable to the Bishop's Council for maintaining an overview of mission and ministry in the Diocese and serves as an 'umbrella' body for a group of Diocesan advisers and interest groups whose work relates directly to the ministry and mission of the Church. It operates on a 'covenant' model, whereby the members of each interest group (primarily through their respective convenor or Diocesan Adviser or Officer) covenant to work collaboratively for the benefit of the whole. The Council is chaired by the Bishop of Huntingdon.

The interest groups whose work falls within the remit of the Council for Ministry and Mission include:

- Worldwide Mission
- Evangelism
- Ecumenical work
- Stewardship
- Vocations work
- Developing and supporting self-supporting ministries
- Continuing ministerial education
- Ministerial review
- Liaison with the Readers' Board

In practice, the covenant model allows room for mutual accountability, for consultation, and for working together (both in terms of tasks and in terms of pooling resources), so that there is room for communication and exchange of information and ideas without diminishing the actual and budgetary autonomy of each of the interest groups. Within its membership, individuals and groups concentrate on particular matters, and are available to parishes for advice. Available for consultation are:

- *The Bishop's Adviser for Worldwide Mission*
- *The Diocesan Adviser for Mission and Evangelism*
- *The Diocesan Ecumenical Officer*
- *The Diocesan Stewardship Group*
- *The Diocesan Director of Ordinands*
- *The Director of Ministerial and Adult Learning*
- *The Reader Ministry Development Officer*

The **Worldwide Mission Group** has in its membership those who are concerned to develop links with the overseas church. These include representatives of the principal Anglican Mission agencies, and those involved in the various Diocesan links. Currently (2004) these are with the German Lutheran North Elbian Church, and (through the Cambridgeshire Ecumenical Council) with the Diocese of Vellore in South India. The Cathedral also has a link with Zanzibar Cathedral. The Worldwide Mission Group also encourages parishes that have developed their own overseas partnerships.

The **Diocesan Stewardship Group** is concerned not only with the raising of money, but an understanding of Christians' responsibility to see the whole of their lives as held in stewardship from God.

The **Diocesan Pastoral Committee** is responsible for making appropriate linking of parishes to enable the mission of the Church to be as effective as possible in the context of the smaller number of stipendiary clergy available for ministry.

3.2 – RESOURCES FOR PASTORAL CARE

Within the framework of the **Diocesan Board of Education and Training** are a number of areas, most with individual specialists available to parishes:

- *The Schools Executive*
- *The Children's Council*
- *The Youth Council*
- *The Ministerial and Adult Learning Panel*
- *The Resources Centre* in the Diocesan Office

In addition, the **Focus Christian Institute** offers high quality adult Christian education.

Clergy and Readers have the advice of the **Diocesan Directors of Ordinands**, the **Diocesan Director of Ministerial and Adult Learning**, and the **Readers' Board**.

To enable the best quality worship, resources are available from:

- **The Diocesan Liturgical Committee**
- **The Ely RSCM Committee**

To develop the spirituality both of parishes and of individuals within those parishes, available are:

- **The Diocesan Officer for Spirituality**
- **Bishop Woodford House** (*the Diocesan Retreat House*)

As already indicated, the **Board for Church and Society** carries a wide brief, and has working groups covering a number of areas of concern. Alongside the BSR, the **Committee for Family and Social Welfare** and the **Mothers' Union** both have wide concerns for the development of family life, in addition to the well-known local fellowships of the latter.

3.3 - MINISTRY STRATEGY

The Report '*All Good Gifts Around Us*', which was published in October 2002, is the fruit of a substantial piece of work undertaken during the preceding eighteen months by a task group chaired by the former Bishop of Huntingdon. It builds on previous work on strategies for ministry, both national and diocesan, and reflects the need to face the challenges and opportunities presented by changing patterns of ministry. Copies of the report are available from the Diocesan Office.

A series of presentations took place during the early part of 2003 where comments were received from across the Diocese. In the summer of 2003, the Bishop's Council set up an Implementation Group, chaired by the Bishop of Huntingdon, with the task of carrying forward the key recommendations of the report (see its pages 25-26). The work of the Implementation Group has been shared between a number of sub-groups, each of whom has a particular area of concern and responsibility. It is envisaged that the Group will have a 'shelf life' of about two years, by which time it is hoped that significant progress will have been made.

The Implementation Group has an advisory role in relation to the Diocese, to deaneries and to parishes; any changes and developments which follow as a result of the recommendations of the Report, or of advice from the Implementation Group, will be effected through the usual channels.

For further information, please contact the Bishop of Huntingdon's office.

3.4 - VOCATIONS

All who follow Jesus Christ are called to serve him in their daily lives; this is at the heart of Christian discipleship, as each person grows into his or her unique vocation to become the person the God is fashioning. Many people fulfil their vocation through the work that they do, whether in caring for family or friends, or through voluntary or paid employment in the secular world (particularly in teaching and in the caring professions). From time to time, people become aware of a particular call with increased intensity and feel it would be helpful to discuss this with somebody as they seek the way forward.

In such instances, a person may begin their explorations through talking to friends and family and then seek the wisdom of his or her spiritual guide or parish priest. He or she may in turn feel that it would be beneficial for the person to talk to somebody whose particular role is to help people discern their vocation and to suggest possible ways forward.

It is anticipated that during the course of 2004 a team of Vocations Advisers will be drawn together to offer advice and expertise across a range of possibilities. Vocations Advisers will be appointed by the Bishop, and will be equipped to listen, to discern and to give information about a range of vocational training and opportunities. As well as selection and training for ordination, they will be equipped to explore opportunities for lay ministry, full and part-time.

While parish ministers may use Vocations Advisers in whatever way is most helpful to them, including help in discerning locally-rooted ministries, nevertheless it is envisaged that their primary focus will be on wider ministries which include:

- Reader ministry
- Accredited Lay Ministry
- Youth and Children's Ministry
- Teaching in Church Schools
- The Church Army
- Religious communities
- Ordained ministry

For further information, please contact the Director of Ministry and Vocation in the first instance.

3.5 - ORDINANDS

The encouragement of vocations for Christian Ministry is the work of the Vocations Advisers, who fulfil this role through talks and personal advice.

Those considering the possibility of ordination should, in the first instance, discuss the matter fully with their parish priest, and with wise lay people within their parish – not only close friends. Where appropriate, the priest will then put them in touch with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands (DDO) or a Vocations Adviser (see 3.4) who will meet with them and discuss their vocation, giving advice both spiritual and practical.

3.5.1 THE PROCESS OF SELECTION

Candidates for ordained ministry will meet with their DDO over a period of time, towards the end of which they meet other Diocesan assessors. When a sufficient degree of certainty about their vocation has been reached, they are referred to the Bishop who will decide whether or not to sponsor them for a Selection Conference. The sponsoring Bishop will want to be sure, among other things, that candidates –

- have a sense of vocation which is soundly based and is matched by evidence of maturing Christian discipleship;
- have appropriate leadership potential and show evidence of being able to establish mature relationships with other people;
- have fulfilled the basic educational requirements set out in the Bishops' Regulations for candidates in ordination;
- have the support of those who know them best.

The Bishop will also wish to ensure that the family of married candidates have sufficient funds for support during training. If the Bishop decides to sponsor the candidate, he or she will be

invited to attend a Bishops' Advisory Selection Conference, arranged by the Ministry Division of the Archbishops' Council and staffed by selectors nominated by the Bishops of the 44 dioceses of the Church of England. The Conference usually lasts from supper on Monday until Wednesday afternoon. It will be held at a Conference Centre or Retreat House in England. Soon after the Conference, the Advisory Selectors forward their recommendations to the candidate's sponsoring bishop who will notify the candidate.

The candidate who is recommended or conditionally recommended for training will be seen again by the DDO who will discuss the choice of Theological College or Course, the manner and content of training, and where to apply for grants. Where the Local Education Authority is unwilling or unable to make a grant, the candidate's training will be paid for out of Central Church Funds, which in turn come from the diocese by way of the annual contribution for training for the ministry paid out of the Parish Share. Grants are not paid from the Central Church Funds for the maintenance of the candidate's spouse and family. The DDO will advise on grant aiding bodies, on how far the diocese will be able to offer support and on the amount which the candidate will be expected to contribute, if he or she is in a position to do so.

A candidate who is not recommended will usually be seen again by the DDO or the Bishop so that together they can investigate the direction of vocation in the light of this decision. The candidate's parish priest or a Spiritual Director can be very helpful in providing guidance through the perplexity or disappointment that this may bring.

3.5.2 TRAINING

While in training a candidate will come under the pastoral care of the College or Course Principal, as well as the DDO and sponsoring Bishop. About a year before the candidate is due to be made a Deacon, discussions will be held about the offer of a Title (first curacy).

3.5.3 FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information relating to ordination, including the non-stipendiary ministry, please write to the Diocesan Director of Ordinands, whose address and telephone number is in the Diocesan Directory under the heading 'Director of Ministry and Vocation'.

3.6 - READER MINISTRY

Readers in the Diocese of Ely are a valued ministerial resource. They are theologically trained lay members of their communities. Their range of ministry varies enormously, depending on their availability, experience, gifting and personal circumstances. Their ministry aims to serve the needs of their church and local community.

3.6.1 THE ROLE OF READERS

The traditional parochial role of Readers includes leading worship, preaching, funeral ministry, teaching and pastoral care. Additionally, they are now authorised to minister Communion by Extension. Many Readers now find their ministry is also exercised at work, or in hospitals, schools, prisons and other institutions.

Readers are encouraged to be full members of their Local Ministry Team, and to work co-operatively with ordained colleagues and the entire congregation, as envisaged in the recent ministry strategy report *All Good Gifts Around Us*.

Readers are licensed by the Bishop every three years, until they reach the age of 70. Thereafter they receive 'Permission to Officiate', which is renewed annually. When people feel they are no longer able to meet the demands of public ministry, they receive the title 'Reader Emeritus'.

3.6.2 THE SELECTION AND TRAINING OF READERS

Those considering Reader Ministry should first discuss the issue with their Parish Priest. Then they should seek a consultation with the Director of Ministry and Vocation or a Vocations Adviser (see the Diocesan Directory for details). It is necessary to have the full support of the Incumbent and PCC before making a formal application. Applicants are invited to attend a Selection Conference. There are three such Conferences annually, held in Ely.

Those selected for training follow a course which integrates practical experience, reflection and study. Topics covered include Biblical Foundations, Christian Ethics, Church History, Doctrine, Liturgy, Pastoral Studies, and Preaching.

Students work in groups with a tutor who specialises in one area of study. The work is assessed continuously by tutor and student. Leading worship, preaching, and pastoral work are continuous in the parish during training, and are supervised by the Incumbent. Each student is encouraged to undertake a placement in another parish of different churchmanship and social mix during their period of training.

On satisfactory completion of training, Readers are awarded the Church of England Readers' Certificate. They are admitted and licensed by the Bishop at the annual Readers' Licensing Service, held each year in the spring. At this service they make the declaration of faith, take their oath of obedience to the Bishop, and receive authorisation for their ministry.

3.6.3 READER MINISTRY AND SUPPORT

Readers should expect to be deployed in such a manner as to maximise ministerial resources across the Diocese.

Continuing Ministerial Education is considered by the Diocese to be important for all those exercising licensed ministry: Readers are encouraged to continue their studies to develop their gifts and competencies.

Pastoral support is offered by the Sub-Wardens, who are responsible to the Warden of Readers.

3.7 - EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE PARISHES

The Ely Diocesan Board of Education and Training exists to support parishes and schools and has a wide remit that includes parish education and training for people of all ages, lay and ordained, as well as responsibility for statutory education matters (see 3.9 - *The Diocese and Schools*). Much of the day to day work is undertaken by a team of Diocesan Officers, Volunteers and Councils and through its two Executives – Parish Resources and Schools. The Board reports annually to the Diocesan Synod and the website (www.ely.anglican.org/education) carries comprehensive materials relating to each of the areas of work. The Board involves over seventy volunteers and was awarded *Investors in People* recognition in 2002.

There are a number of main areas of work.

3.7.1 CHILDREN'S WORK

The Children's Adviser is available to offer advice, training and support on all matters relating to work with children and families. This includes training in a variety of areas of work, advice on worship with children and on all age worship and the admission of children to Holy Communion. Help is also available in selecting appropriate resources for the work to be undertaken: examples of many resources are to be found in the Resources Centre at the Diocesan Office to enable churches to inspect and try out material before they spend money on it. Dates and details of events are to be found in Ely Ensign and on the website where there are also useful documents supporting different areas of work that can be downloaded.

3.7.2 CHILD PROTECTION

See 3.8 in this Handbook.

3.7.3 YOUTH WORK

The Youth Council, via the Youth Officer and the diocesan website, offers advice and support to every parish wishing to work with young people. It does this through a varied programme of high quality annual youth events, youth leader training programmes and relevant Christian resource material. It also offers churches assistance in the formation, and short-term leadership, of exciting new youth groups and projects. It can also provide parishes with follow-up resource material and advice regarding the new group. The Youth Council has also given to every deanery a set of resource books appertaining to youth work. These books include worship material, youth leader training/advice, and youth outreach books such as the Alpha and Emmaus courses.

3.7.4 ADULT LEARNING

Support is offered for individuals and parishes wanting to develop all aspects of Christian discipleship, encouraging thoughtful and critical responses to God's world, developing parish vision and goals, enabling people to use and develop their gifts in service of church and community. Further opportunities are provided for training in adult learning, in bible study and in the development of a wide variety of lay ministries, through day events, Lent course materials, and occasional residential conferences. Adult learning in the diocese is also delivered through the Focus Christian Institute, in Cambridge and the Cathedral Education Centre, in Ely.

3.7.5 RESOURCES FOR ALL

Information about forthcoming events and opportunities is published in Ely Ensign and on the website.

The **Resources Centre** at Bishop Woodford House is open during office hours and contains an up to date collection of books, periodicals and materials for use with children, youth and adults in parish and school. There is a significant worship and music collection as well as many videos and artefacts. There are also some resources, such as parachutes and other play equipment, available for special events. Items may be borrowed free of charge and borrower registration is also free. The Centre is normally open during office hours and advertises Late Night Opening from time to time. Contact the Administrator by telephone or e-mail.

3.8 - CHILD PROTECTION

3.8.1 THE CHILD PROTECTION POLICY STATEMENT OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

The Church of England, in all aspects of its life, is committed to and will champion the protection of children and young people both in society as a whole and in its own community. It fully accepts, endorses and will implement the principle enshrined in the Children Act 1989 that the welfare of the child is paramount. The Church of England will foster and encourage best practice within its community by setting standards for working with children and young people and by supporting parents in the care of their children. It will work with statutory bodies, voluntary agencies and other faith communities to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. It is committed to acting promptly whenever a concern is raised about a child or young person or about the behaviour of an adult, and will work with the appropriate statutory bodies when an investigation into child abuse is necessary.

¶ Those who will help you

- The Bishop of Ely's Child Protection Adviser: 01223 306600
- The Children's Work Adviser: 01223 511717 or 01353 652714
- The Diocesan Youth Officer: 01353 652715

To talk through a child protection concern you may also contact:

- Mrs G Boon: 01223 871688 or 746001
- The NSPCC 24 hour helpline is 0800 800500

These two websites also provide extremely good advice if you are concerned that a child might be being abused and you are not sure what to do.

- www.doh.gov.uk/safeguardingchildren/
- www.cambsacpc.org.uk/concerned/whattodo.htm

¶ Context

Child protection and the abuse of children can only be considered in the context of the wider role of the family in society and the relationship between family, communities and the state. The interaction between these is never static. The last 40 years, in particular, have seen major changes in the structure of families and this process has involved debate about the care and nurture of tomorrow's adult population and a belief in the rights of children to be protected as they grow. The health of a society can be judged by its care and concern for its most vulnerable members.

It was from this background and in response to the publication of *Safe from Harm* by the Home Office in 1993 that the House of Bishops produced its first policy document in 1995. This document was amended first in 1999 and then in 2004, when it was published as ***Protecting all God's children: The Child Protection Policy for the Church of England*** by Church House Publishing at £5.95. Each parish or benefice should obtain a copy. The Diocese provides a folder of advice drawn from this national policy document. It is the responsibility of those who have responsibility for children and young people in church settings to familiarise themselves with the provisions of the national policy and procedures and the more locally relevant advice.

3.8.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

The Church of England, within its national institutions and within dioceses, has an obligation to support parishes and those working with children and young people in exercising their primary responsibility for those entrusted to them. It is important to recognise that it is people who protect and not only procedures. The aim is to create **a culture of informed vigilance** at all levels in the Church by -

- raising awareness of the issues involved in protecting children in the church;
- addressing the needs of our children in all their cultural, spiritual, intellectual, racial and physical diversity;
- responding to the needs of children and adults who have been abused;
- supporting and training those who work with children, encouraging them to work together to follow good practice ;
- caring appropriately for those in the church community who have abused children.

The Church is probably unique in its ministry to both those who have been abused and those who have abused. It is within this tension that policy, procedures and good practice must be made to work. The church seeks not simply to keep the law in regard to Child Protection but to foster and promote best practice as part of its work for and witness to God's kingdom.

Therefore -

- the Church of England fully endorses the principle, enshrined in the Children Act 1989, that the welfare of the child is paramount;
- the Church recognises that it is required by God to foster relationships of the utmost integrity, respect, truthfulness and trustworthiness. Clergy and laity who come into contact with children within the church need to operate within a carefully thought out framework of policy, procedures and good practice which will ensure that children are safeguarded and nurtured within a culture of informed vigilance;

- clergy and laity need to have an awareness of their use of authority and power and never betray the trust that is given them;
- clergy and laity in the church should seek to maintain the highest standards of conduct in all worship, pastoral, educational, and recreational situations;
- the Church will take allegations of abuse seriously, fully co-operating with the Local Authority Area Child Protection Committees in any matter concerning the welfare of children and young people. It acknowledges the prime responsibility of statutory agencies to investigate any significant harm to a child.
The Church will never itself investigate incidents of suspected child abuse.
- the Church will work with the statutory agencies to manage the presence in congregations of those who have been convicted of offences against children including those who are on the Sex Offenders register;
- the Church of England will seek to work with other Christian and faith traditions to promote the welfare and safety of children and young people;
- for the purpose of the Policy and Procedures a child is anyone under the age of 18 years. All those who work with or are in regular contact with such children must comply with this policy;
- all those working with or in direct and regular contact with children in a paid or unpaid capacity will be carefully recruited and their backgrounds checked at the appropriate level through the Criminal Records Bureau. These checks will also be carried out on those supervising people working with children and on those whose representational ministry, office or status gives them the opportunity or the expectation for regular or unsupervised contact with children.

¶ **Each diocese should:**

- adopt the House of Bishops Policy on Child Protection together with any additional diocesan procedures and good practice guidelines which shall be endorsed by the diocesan synod.
- provide a structure to manage child protection in the diocese.
- appoint a suitably qualified Diocesan Child Protection Adviser, directly accountable to the Diocesan Bishop, and provide appropriate financial, organisational and management support. In the Diocese of Ely, Mrs Virginia Bird has been appointed to undertake this role.
- include the monitoring of child protection in parishes as part of the Archdeacons' responsibilities.
- provide access to the Criminal Records Bureau for parishes, the cathedral, the Bishop's office and the Diocesan office for those beneficed and licensed clergy, paid workers and volunteers who need to obtain disclosures.
- provide access to a risk assessment service so that the Bishop or others can evaluate and manage any risk posed by individuals or activities within the church.
- provide training and support on child protection matters to parishes, the cathedral, diocesan organisations including religious communities and those who hold the Bishop's licence.
- provide a handbook of procedures and recommended good practice to enable parishes and others to undertake their duties, encouraging them to implement such procedures and good practice according to their local needs.

¶ **Each parish should:**

- accept the prime duty of care placed upon the incumbent and Parochial Church Council to ensure the well being of children and young people in the church community;
- adopt and implement a child protection policy and procedures, accepting as a minimum the House of Bishop's Policy on Child Protection but informed by additional Diocesan procedures and recommended good practice whilst being responsive to local parish requirements;

- appoint a co-ordinator to work with the incumbent and the Council to implement policy and procedures. The co-ordinator must ensure that any concerns about a child or the behaviour of an adult are appropriately reported both to the statutory agencies and to the Diocesan Child Protection Adviser. Ideally this co-ordinator should be someone without other pastoral responsibility for children in the parish;
- appoint a person who may be different from the co-ordinator to be a children's advocate. This should be someone whom children know they could talk to about any problems, if they so wish;
- display the "Childline" telephone number;
- ensure that all those authorised to work with children and young people or in a position of authority are appropriately appointed, trained and supported and provide all authorised personnel with a copy of the parish child protection policy, procedures and good practice guidelines;
- pay particular attention to children with special needs and those from ethnic minorities to ensure their full integration and protection within the church community;
- create a culture of ' **informed vigilance**' which takes children seriously;
- ensure that appropriate pastoral care is available for those adults who have disclosed that they have been abused as children;
- provide, as appropriate, support for all parents and families in the congregation, being aware particularly of parents whose children have suffered abuse;
- ensure that those who may pose a threat to children and young people are effectively managed and monitored;
- ensure that appropriate health and safety policies and procedures are in place;
- provide appropriate insurance cover for all activities undertaken in the name of the parish;
- review the implementation of the child protection policy, procedures and good practice, at least annually.
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- **Rural parishes or parishes held in plurality may wish to join together to implement the policy and procedures. It should be noted however that people working in isolated situations can be vulnerable and care should be taken to implement the policy in full.**
- **Local Ecumenical projects should agree which denomination's Child Protection Policy to follow and this decision should be ratified by the Bishop and other appropriate church leaders.**

3.9 - THE DIOCESE AND SCHOOLS

In March 2001 our Diocesan Synod resolved that “Church Schools stand at the centre of the Church's mission in this Diocese” and urged “PCCs and deaneries to further strengthen links with local Church Schools and become as fully involved as possible in the life of all local schools.” Later in the same year Lord Dearing’s major report “The Way ahead” signalled new confidence in the Church’s role in the education system and a strengthened commitment to mission and service through Church schools. In this diocese about a quarter of all children attend a church primary school and the provision is growing.

Many maintained primary and secondary schools (*Community, Foundation* and *Special* schools) warmly welcome the involvement of the clergy, lay ministers and members of local Christian communities.

Regular visiting (and welcoming groups to the church), classroom support, leading collective worship and becoming a governor are all established ways of developing healthy links. The involvement of the PCC and whole congregations in supporting schools is important, as is pastoral support for those who work in education. A diocesan leaflet “Parishes and Schools Working Together: 55 Practical Ideas” is available on request.

Education Sunday, established for over a hundred years and traditionally the Ninth Sunday before Easter, can be a helpful annual focus for the parish’s involvement with all its local centres of education.

3.9.1 SCHOOLS EXECUTIVE

Under the leadership of the Diocesan Director of Education and Training and through its Board, the Diocese has a direct and statutory involvement in local and national education. Much of its day to day schools' work is delegated to a sub-committee of the Board of Education and Training, the Schools Executive. Available, on request, is the current Schools Work Development Plan outlining current projects, plans and priorities. Much school support focuses on the needs of Church Schools for which the Board has a particular responsibility. Ongoing work includes general advice and direct support to schools and parishes over headteacher/deputy headteacher appointments; governance; Religious Education (R.E.); conferences; training events; annual Cathedral Activity Days; building matters; and work with local authorities and the DfES.

3.9.2 THE SCHOOLS TEAM

The *Director* is a member of several local education authority education committees in Cambridgeshire Norfolk and Peterborough, and there are C of E groups on bodies planning Religious Education and Schools Organisation. You should contact the *Director* with any query or concern regarding school matters whether or not it is a church school issue.

The *Director's P.A.* is able to deal with day to day queries and is a first contact point for all general matters. She also has a particular responsibility for the administration of Foundation Governor appointments.

There is a full time *RE Adviser*. The *Adviser* works closely with schools, local authorities and parishes on a wide variety of issues concerning religious education, collective worship and syllabus matters.

The *Schools (Buildings and Finance) Officer* works closely with Voluntary Aided Schools over building projects (see below) and administers the Ely Diocesan Schools Fund which currently bears 100% of all schools work including staff and office costs, as well as VA school buildings work. A Personal Assistant helps also with the Property Management Service offered to VA schools.

There is a *Bishop's Visitor* attached to every church school. Visitors are trained and commissioned volunteers who have a strong background in education. They offer general support to the school and headteacher, visit regularly and provide a friendly link between the school and diocese.

3.9.3 CHURCH SCHOOLS

The presence of a Church School in a parish provides a very significant pastoral opportunity indeed. A Church School should feature prominently and appropriately in the life and consciousness of the congregation(s).

There are currently some 82 Church Schools spread evenly across the Diocese maintained by the LEAs of Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Peterborough. There are more than 13,500 children on roll. 81 of the schools are in the primary phase.

¶ Governance

All maintained schools have an *Instrument of Government*. It sets out the characteristics of the particular school including the size of the Governing Body and which bodies appoint governors. The role of all governors is to play an appropriate part in the management of the school and to support the school generally as 'critical friends'.

In Church Schools the Church appoints Foundation Governors at parish and/or at Diocesan level. Their particular responsibility is to

support the ethos of the school as set out in the *Ethos Statement* within the *Instrument of Government*. There is a Nomination Form and Declaration Form for Foundation Governor appointments. LEAs and the Diocese offer regular training opportunities for Governors and Clergy.

Appointing the headteacher is, arguably, the most important task a governing body performs. Detailed guidelines are available and a member of the Schools Team will advise through the process and attend the shortlisting and interviews. A member of the Team normally attends Deputy Headteacher selection. When an impending vacancy is known it is important to contact the Director's P.A. as soon as possible.

¶ **Ethos**

Although there exist some minor textual variations, the common *Ethos Statement* of Church of England schools is:

“Recognising its historic foundation, the school will preserve and develop its religious character in accordance with the principles of the Church of England and in partnership with the Church at parish and diocesan level.

“The school aims to serve its community by providing an education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice. It encourages an understanding of the meaning and significance of faith and promotes Christian values through the experience it offers to all its pupils.”

¶ **Incumbents**

The Parish Priest is normally a Foundation Governor *ex-officio*. If he/she is unable or unwilling to serve, or there is no incumbent currently in post, the Archdeacon assumes the right of appointment.

It is important to stress that the choice of Chair of Governors is a matter for the Governing Body to determine; *no* governor has any greater or fewer pre-determined rights or responsibilities than any other. Parish Priests are encouraged to think carefully what may be their most helpful role both as a governor and chaplain to the school.

¶ Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled

Church Schools in the Diocese fall into two categories, *Voluntary Aided* (VA) and *Voluntary Controlled* (VC). The *principal* characteristics are:

Voluntary Aided	Voluntary Controlled
Foundation Governors form an overall majority	No single group of Governors holds a majority
Governors employ the staff, determine Admissions Policy (and organise admissions appeals) and may determine RE syllabus in accordance with the school's Trust Deed	LEA employ the staff, determine Admissions Policy (and organise admissions appeals) and determines locally agreed RE syllabus
Governors responsible for the <i>external</i> fabric of school including maintenance and new building. 90% grant aid from DfES and Diocesan assistance, practical and financial, is normally available	LEA Responsible for whole fabric of school
Admissions policies can pay regard to religious preferences of parents	The LEA admissions policy is followed
Personal religious criteria <i>can</i> be applied to recruitment of all <i>teaching</i> staff.	Personal religious criteria may not be applied to the recruitment of <i>any</i> staff. In the recruitment of a headteacher regard may be had to candidates' ability to <i>preserve and develop the ethos of the school</i> .
Daily Collective Worship based on traditions of Foundation i.e. will be Christian and may contain elements specific to the Church of England	

VC schools may apply for a change of category to become VA schools. Resources and advice are available on request to any school wishing to explore this change.

3.9.4 RESOURCES

Regular training events are organised directly and through LEA governor training programmes. Details are published through Ely Ensign, the website and e-mail bulletin

Resources and guidance, denominational school inspection reports, collective worship ideas and details of future events are published on the website at www.ely.anglican.org/education/schools.

A national website www.natsoc.org contains a wealth of up to date material to support those who minister in or manage church schools

An *e-mail bulletin* is sent two or three times a term to all who wish to receive it and to church schools. Please e-mail the Director's P.A. to be added to the mailing list.

The *Diocesan Resources Centre* contains a wealth of up to date material to support worship, religious education and governance in schools including artefacts, videos, posters etc. Borrowers tickets are available free of charge to members of all parishes and to schools on request.

3.10 - MINISTRY OF DELIVERANCE

Normal pastoral care by the parish priest, including the saying of prayers with the individual(s) concerned, is usually sufficient. Any further involvement should be delayed and the Bishop informed. There is a small group of specialists who work in, and advise the Bishop on, this area.

These specialists are available through enquiry to the Bishop.

3.11 - CHURCHWARDENS

This is only a brief guide to the matters outlined. For further information, please read from the Bibliography, or speak to your Archdeacon.

3.11.1 WHAT ARE CHURCHWARDENS, AND WHAT DO THEY DO?

Churchwardens have important legal duties, but also spiritual, pastoral and mission responsibilities, which make them foremost among the laity in the life and mission of the Church in the parish. They must be seen as setting an example in ministry, in commitment to regular worship, and in seeking to witness to their Lord. The partnership of priest and churchwarden is a key partnership in the effective functioning of any parish.

Functions of churchwardens include:

- to be officers of the Bishop (not the incumbent or PCC):
- to hold ex-officio membership of the PCC:
- to be foremost in representing the laity and co-operating with the incumbent:
- to encourage parishioners in the practice of true religion and to promote unity and peace:
- to have oversight of finance, even though the detail of this will be handled by the treasurer:
- to have oversight of the care of the fabric of the parish church, and to report on its condition each year to the Parochial Church Council and to the Annual Parochial Church Meeting:
- to have legal ownership of the moveable furniture and ornaments of the parish church, and to keep an up-to-date inventory of them:

- to maintain an up-to-date Log Book of all works done to the fabric of the parish church:
- to present, at the end of their year of office, answers to such questions as are put to them by the bishop or archdeacon:
- to ensure that all parish Registers and Records are properly kept and filed:
 - during a vacancy, to share the oversight of the parish with the Rural Dean:
 - to hand on to their successors in office all documents in their possession.

3.11.2 WHO CAN BECOME A CHURCHWARDEN?

To be elected to office as churchwarden, a person must be:

- baptised in the name of the Holy Trinity:
- at least 21 years of age:
- on the Electoral Roll of the parish:
- an 'actual communicant' (defined, broadly, as someone who has received Holy Communion according to the use of the Church of England, at least three times in the previous twelve months):

But there are certain categories of people who are disqualified from serving. Such are:

- people disqualified from acting as a charity trustee (broadly, those who have been declared bankrupt or who have a criminal conviction for dishonesty or deception):
- people who have a criminal conviction under the Children and Young Persons Act 1933):
- people who have been party to a breakdown of parochial pastoral relationships as defined in the Vacation of Benefices Measure.

3.11.3 HOW LONG DO CHURCHWARDENS SERVE?

Churchwardens are elected to serve for a period of one year only.

However, a person may be re-elected as churchwarden to serve in further years, normally up to a maximum of six consecutive years of service (although this rule did not come into force until 2002; thus an individual, however long previous service may have been, may continue in office until 2007, provided such a person continues to be re-elected).

After six years, a churchwarden must have at least a two-year break before seeking re-election.

But it is possible, though not recommended, for a meeting of parishioners to pass a resolution that the six-year rule should not apply in that particular parish. It is equally possible for a further meeting of parishioners to rescind this resolution.

It is envisaged that the resolution should be passed only where there is simply no-one else able to take on the responsibility of being churchwarden. It is not provided to enable someone who simply likes being churchwarden to stay in post beyond the six years.

It is in principle a very good thing for others to be allowed to take responsibility, and for an ex-churchwarden to look for a variety of other ways of serving God and the church.

3.11.4 WHEN AND HOW ARE CHURCHWARDENS CHOSEN?

Churchwardens are chosen annually by election at a Meeting of Parishioners (this is a meeting separate from the Annual Parochial Church Meeting, whose voting membership is confined to the Electoral Roll membership).

The Meeting of Parishioners includes anyone on the Electoral Roll, plus anyone resident in the parish whose name is on the register of local government electors, whether or not such a person attends the parish church.

This annual Meeting of Parishioners must be held each year before April 30th.

A candidate for election as churchwarden must be nominated and seconded in writing by two people who are entitled to vote at the meeting.

Each nomination paper must also be signed by the candidate indicating a willingness to stand for election.

Nomination papers must reach the parish priest (or, in a vacancy, an outgoing churchwarden) before the meeting starts.

Bearing in mind the considerable spiritual, pastoral, missionary and temporal responsibilities of churchwardens, it is important that substantial thought and prayer be put into the process of nomination well before the time of the meeting.

If more than two candidates stand for election, there must be an election, using properly signed voting papers, unless everyone present agrees to an election by a show of hands.

There is a procedure for deciding the result if an equal number of votes is cast, but the law makes no provision for a situation where no-one is prepared to stand for office. It simply assumes that there will normally be two churchwardens, or occasionally one, if circumstances are exceptional.

There is also a special procedure where it appears to the parish priest that the appointment of a particular person nominated might give rise to serious difficulties.

3.11.5 HOW ARE CHURCHWARDENS ADMITTED TO OFFICE?

It is recommended that once churchwardens have been elected, they should be publicly affirmed in their office in the context of public worship.

However, churchwardens do not formally take office until admitted to it by the Bishop or his substitute – this is normally the Archdeacon at his annual May Visitations.

Since the office is an annually elected one, a person must be admitted every year, even if he or she has served in the previous year.

Churchwardens therefore remain in office until their successors are admitted, or until 31st July, whichever is the earlier.

Anyone elected to the office who has not been admitted by 31st July ceases to be churchwarden, and a further election must take place.

If a churchwarden for any reason cannot attend the Visitation to be admitted to office, he or she must make separate arrangements with the Archdeacon for admission.

3.11.6 WHAT HAPPENS IF A CHURCHWARDEN WISHES TO RESIGN DURING THE YEAR OF OFFICE?

A churchwarden may resign only by first giving the Bishop written notice, and this takes effect at the end of two months.

A casual vacancy may be filled at any time; the appointment is to be made at a specially-convened Meeting of Parishioners.

3.11.7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- *The Churchwardens' Handbook – a practical guide* (2001 edition), published by Mayhew
- *Handbook for Churchwardens and Parochial Church Councillors* (2001 edition), published by Mowbrays
- *The Churchwardens Measure 2001 – a brief guide*, Church House Publishing
- *Practical Church Management (1998)*, published by Gracewing
- *So the Vicar's Leaving*, published by Arthur Rank Centre

3.12 - SIDESPERSONS

Canon E2 states: “Of Sidesmen or Assistants to the Churchwardens”;

- Sidespersons of a parish are by law elected by the annual parochial church meeting
- No person whose name is not on the church electoral roll is eligible as to serve, but all persons whose names are on the roll are so eligible.
- It shall be the duty of sidespersons to promote the cause of true religion in the parish and to assist in the discharge of their duties in maintaining order and decency in the church and churchyard, especially during the time of divine service.

3.13 - BENEFICE VACANCIES

Guidance for Churchwardens

The Vicar has announced that he is moving on from the parish. What, as churchwarden, are you expected to do? The aim of this paper is to address a number of the issues which crop up in the minds of churchwardens, and to give some reassurance about other matters.

3.13.1 WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

Let's get the terminology right to start with. 'Interregnum' is the popular word used for the period between the departure of one Parish Priest and the arrival of the next. It isn't the best word; it suggests that it is a period between the 'reigns' of monarchs - and hopefully today few clergy behave like that! More correctly, it is called a 'vacancy', simply because it is a period when the benefice is vacant. The appointment of a new Parish Priest is often known as 'filling the vacancy'.

But to return to the question. Who is responsible for a Parish during a Vacancy? The answer is clear - the Churchwardens are, whether or not they are elected as the Parish Representatives (a matter to which the paper will return). In their task, the Rural Dean will work closely alongside them; and in fact the Rural Dean has certain specific responsibilities during a Vacancy - for example, giving permission for monuments in the churchyard.

So although the primary responsibility falls on the Churchwardens, the Rural Dean is always immediately available for advice and help.

3.13.2 THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

The first thing to say is that at no point in the process are the Churchwardens or the PCC expected to make the first move; whenever you need to meet or make decisions, you will receive a letter indicating exactly what you need to do. The Law which governs most of the appointment process is the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986, and the process is clearly defined by the Measure in some detail. Very little except informal thinking within the Parish will normally happen until about a month before the previous priest leaves.

¶ The Diocesan Secretary's Letter

The Diocesan Secretary will then write to the PCC secretary, asking the PCC to meet in accordance with section 11 of the Measure, to do three things:

- to produce a Parish Profile to aid the Patron, the Bishop, and clergy invited to consider the Benefice. The Diocesan Secretary's letter describes in some detail what should be included in the Parish Profile.
- to appoint PCC Representatives under the Measure. Their function is to meet clergy nominated by the Bishop or Patron, and to attempt to discern whether or not they match the requirements of the Parish Profile. Before the 1986 Measure, it was always the Churchwardens who acted for the PCC; but now the PCC is at liberty to appoint any of its members. It is important to ensure that the two Representatives as far as possible can represent the spectrum of opinion in the parish.
- to decide whether or not it wishes to consider the specific Resolutions concerning the ministry of women priests.

¶ The Role of the Patron

This is an ancient role in the Church of England. He, she or they have the right under the Law to nominate to the Bishop the priest of their choice as the next Incumbent. But under the 1986 Measure this right is specifically circumscribed by:

- the requirements of the Parish Profile - the Patron must attempt to find a candidate who fits the description given:
- the rights of the Parish Representatives - who may refuse a candidate who does not so fit.

In certain situations, the Bishop may 'suspend presentation'. This is a technical phrase for a process by which the rights of the Patron are suspended for a period of time, and the priest appointed becomes a Priest-in-charge without the 'parson's freehold', rather than a Rector or Vicar with the freehold.

The Bishop does not have powers to suspend presentation on a whim; normally he may do so only if it is expected that some form of pastoral reorganisation may take place in the reasonably near future - if, for example, there may be new linkings of parishes or a new parsonage house. But it has been the practice of the Bishop of Ely, even when he has suspended presentation, still to follow the pattern of working alongside the Patron in the appointment.

PCCs sometimes become alarmed when receiving the letter giving notice of suspension, fearing that there might be a further hidden agenda in the Bishop's mind – possibly even closure of the parish church! It is essential to note that in law it cannot have that implication. It is simply a technical device to allow freedom for pastoral reorganisation which is far more difficult to achieve if a priest in office has the 'parson's freehold'.

¶ **Joint Meeting of PCC, Bishop and Patron**

Under Section 12 of the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986, a meeting is usually then held between the PCC, the Bishop or the Archdeacon, and the Patron, to discuss the Parish Profile in more detail. It has been the custom in the Diocese of Ely always to hold this meeting.

¶ **The Search for the new Priest**

It is only once this meeting has taken place that a search can begin for the new priest. This may happen in one of two ways. The more traditional method is that the Patron and the Bishop work together to find a suitable candidate; the Archdeacon will then introduce this candidate to the Parish Representatives. They will have one or more meetings with the nominee. After that, the candidate will say whether or not he or she wishes to pursue the matter, and the Representatives will say whether or not they believe the candidate to meet the requirements of the Parish Profile.

If either candidate or Representatives are not prepared to move forward, the Patron and the Bishop start again. If both are happy, the formal offer can be made to the candidate, and the Bishop will agree to a date for a public announcement on the same day in both the priest's outgoing parish and his or her new one.

Alternatively, a new priest may be sought after advertisement and the interviewing of more than one candidate at a time. Some Patrons routinely operate this system. If a PCC requires this method to be adopted, the PCC will need to pay the appropriate costs of advertising and travel expenses – these will usually be several hundred pounds. If on the other hand, the Bishop and Patron fail to find a suitable priest while operating the first method, and then turn to advertising, the Diocesan Board of Finance will normally pay the costs.

Once Parish Representatives, Patron, Bishop, and Priest have all agreed that this Priest is the right person for the post, the Priest will normally have to give three months' notice to leave a present post.

As may readily be deduced, the length of time between the departure of one priest and the arrival of another can vary considerably. No party to the process will cause any undue delay; but if the Patron or the Bishop experiences difficulty in finding someone prepared to consider the post, many months may pass; if on the other hand, the first person approached is willing to come, and the Representatives agree, the process may take only eight months or so.

In all this, confidentiality is of considerable importance. It is singularly unhelpful if a parish discovers that their priest is currently investigating a post elsewhere; even if he or she does not eventually make that move, the parish will be wondering from then on, just how soon the priest will be going. It can be very undermining of ministry. There should therefore be no contact with the priest's present parish unless with her or his express permission. In order to ensure confidentiality, the Parish Representatives should not identify, even to other members of their PCC, the person whom they are meeting - though of course it is acceptable to let others know that the process is moving forward through meetings with an (unspecified) priest.

3.13.3 CHURCH LIFE DURING THE VACANCY

¶ Leadership in church life

Don't think that everything has to stop until the new Incumbent arrives! A Vacancy is often an excellent opportunity to develop a more collaborative style of ministry in Church life. Now that there isn't a Vicar to do everything, try sharing out responsibilities as much as possible, as long as clear lines of accountability are drawn up, so that everyone doesn't just go off and 'do their own thing'.

Churchwardens will know about the Diocesan strategy for Ministry, based on the Report '*All Good Gifts around us*', published in 2002. Your PCC will surely have discussed it as requested by the Bishop and Synod at that time. You will remember that the Report encourages benefices to set up Ministry Teams of laity and clergy to work together in ministry. If your benefice as yet does not have people working as a team, however informally, now is a good time to discuss it with your Rural Dean and/or Archdeacon. It will enable the effective ministry of the Church to go on and flourish, even though you may not have a priest for the time being.

Before your previous parish priest departs, make sure that she or he has briefed you fully on all ongoing matters normally dealt with by the parish priest, including weddings booked, location of files and keys, and matters relating to the parsonage house.

As you look ahead to plan the period of the Vacancy, do remember that the life of every parish develops and goes forward all the time, to meet the changing environment in which we live. Occasionally Churchwardens believe that their task during a Vacancy is to put the clock back; either deliberately to undo everything that the last Incumbent did, or to re-establish the Church as it was during the Golden Age (which usually happens to have coincided with their own formative years!). On the other hand, neither is a Vacancy an occasion for major change in parish policy or style. Rather, it should be a period when the work achieved over the last few years is consolidated and built upon, ready for your new Parish Priest when he or she comes.

¶ **Regular Sunday worship**

You need to decide who will plan regular Sunday worship. If you happen to have a curate or a non-stipendiary minister, it is entirely appropriate that you invite such to plan Sunday worship. Some retired priests also would welcome this opportunity - but don't just presume that this will be so; some will prefer to help out when possible, but not to have overall responsibility.

In a multi-parish benefice, it may well be best for one person to be given the overall responsibility for planning worship, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication.

Whoever takes this responsibility will need to invite people to conduct the worship and plan any rotas for those reading the scriptures, leading intercessions or assisting with the chalice. Remember to offer visiting Clergy and Readers both their travelling expenses (at the current Diocesan mileage rate) and the customary fee. Information about current rates of both these figures is obtainable from the Diocesan Office.

Your Rural Dean will always be very happy to assist in matters to do with worship. He or she will be able to advise both on the drawing up of rotas and in suggesting possible names of Clergy and Readers to help you. The Bishop's Officer for retired clergy (whose name and address are in the Diocesan Directory) will also be able to suggest some names to you. You and the Rural Dean will need to ensure that a copy of the pattern of services is sent to the Diocesan Office.

¶ **Baptisms, Marriages, Funerals**

The local community will still be born, marry, and die. People need to know how they may make arrangements for the important Christian 'rites of passage' in our lives. To that end, information should be published as widely as possible in the community.

Put accurate information on a church notice board - it isn't any use people reading that the Vicar should be contacted for baptisms, when the Vicarage is currently empty! Use Church and Community magazines and papers to let people know to whom they should go for Baptisms, Marriages and Funerals. Contact local Funeral Directors too.

¶ Fees

Any income received, which would normally have been paid to the Incumbent, should be retained and recorded on the yellow statement submitted to the Diocesan Office. These will include the statutory fees shown on the Table of Parochial Fees received for weddings, funerals, and so on.

Wedding and Funeral fees for services taken by Readers should be passed to the Readers' Board.

The Churchwardens are responsible for paying officiating clergy the appropriate service fee from PCC funds. Licensed Stipendiary and Non-stipendiary clergy and Readers receive no service fee. Some retired clergy already working in the parish, and some other officiants, may not wish to receive a fee. The Diocese is most grateful to clergy who give their time in this way, and Churchwardens should record the detail on the yellow form even when no payment is made. In every case, of course, officiating clergy will be entitled to receive travelling expenses at the standard Diocesan mileage rate.

When a fee is paid, it is a standard figure, whether for a single service (including weddings and funerals) or, for example, Morning Prayer followed by Holy Communion.

The yellow form should then be submitted to the Diocesan Office. Fees paid out are listed on one side, and those received on the other. The Office will then reimburse the PCC for any amount by which it is out of pocket; and if the fees received are greater than the figure spent on payment to clergy, the form should be accompanied by a cheque for the appropriate amount. This account may be sent monthly, or by a single claim at the end of the Vacancy.

Normal parochial expenses, such as postage, telephone, and so on, will be (as always) borne by the PCC.

If Churchwardens require further advice, please contact the Diocesan Accountant's department at the Diocesan Office.

¶ **Chairmanship of the PCC**

Each year the PCC is expected to elect one of its number as Vice-Chairman, to take over from the Chairman (the Incumbent) if the latter is unavailable. If your PCC has not formally elected a Vice-Chairman, you will need to do so, and that person will then chair PCC meetings during the Vacancy. Some parishes have had a custom of electing one of the Churchwardens to this post; this is perfectly proper, but the Vice-Chairman may in fact be any member of the PCC.

¶ **Monuments in the churchyard**

Incumbents have the responsibility, delegated to them by the Chancellor of the Diocese, of approving simple churchyard monuments - anything more elaborate outside the standard regulations will always have to be the subject of a Faculty. During the Vacancy, this delegated responsibility passes not to the Churchwardens, but to the Rural Dean. Get in touch with him at once if you are contacted by a family or by monumental masons about any form of churchyard memorial.

¶ Looking after the Vicarage

You will receive some more detailed advice on this from the Diocesan Office; but just note one or two things:

- Don't get the phone cut off! It is best if you buy an answering machine for the Vicarage telephone, leaving a message to tell people where to phone for the information they need.
- Do look after the garden. When most of us move home, we move into a house only a day or so after the previous occupants have moved out, and the garden should be in a reasonable condition. But because there is always at least a few months between a departing and an arriving Vicar, there is plenty of time for a garden to get totally out of hand. So make sure that the lawn is mown from time to time at the very least. There is little more disheartening than arriving in a new parish full of hopes for the future, and then moving into a wilderness!!

It's quite a nice thought, when you know the date of the moving in of your new Parish Priest, to bring to the house not only some flowers and a note of welcome, but also some food for the larder - possibly even a ready-cooked meal for the family to enjoy before they collapse into bed!

3.13.4 THE END OF THE VACANCY

¶ What service will you have?

There is a form of service approved by the Bishop which is always used on these occasions. It is deliberately non-eucharistic, since we always hope that it will be attended not just by the faithful, but by many other members of the community whom the new priest is coming to serve.

If the Bishop has suspended presentation (as mentioned earlier in this paper), the service will be called 'the Licensing of the Revd

AB as Priest-in-Charge'. If patronage rights are in place, the service will usually be called 'the Institution and Induction of the Revd AB as Rector (or Vicar)'. Where the Bishop himself is also Patron, it is called 'the Collation and Induction....'

The form of Service may be presented in one of two ways. It is available in a printed booklet for parishes to borrow and use. Hymns may either be sung from the church hymn book or separately printed on a sheet of paper. It is the responsibility of the incoming priest to choose hymns or songs of her or his own choice. The form of Service is also available on disc in several formats for parishes to reproduce their own personalised edition. This has the value of being able to include hymns on the same leaflet as the service; to include or exclude certain options in the service; and to provide a memento for worshippers to take away. This pattern is undoubtedly preferable to the use of the Diocesan booklets if parishes have access to the necessary resources for printing and photocopying.

¶ **Invitations**

You will need to print invitations to the service. Include an address for replies. Ask your new priest for names of family and friends to be invited, and arrange to invite your new priest's former parishioners.

Invitations should also be sent to members of the Deanery Clergy Chapter and Readers, and to clergy and ministers of other denominations working in the benefice. All ministers should be invited to robe (tell them where). You should also invite the Lay Chairman of the Deanery Synod, and the wives of the Bishop and Archdeacon often welcome the opportunity to attend.

Since your new priest will be serving the wider community, it is a good idea to invite leading members, who may then have a role in the service itself. Such people could include the Chairman of the Parish Council, your District Councillors, County Councillor, the

Mayor or Chairman of the District Council, the Head Teacher of any school in the benefice, a community policeman, leaders of youth organisations, health workers and so on. Use your imagination to include all the appropriate people.

¶ **Publicity**

The Institution or Licensing Service is a great opportunity for publicity in the local press. Contact the Diocesan Director of Communications for some ideas and advice about publicity. His name and address are in the Diocesan Directory.

¶ **The rehearsal**

Once the date for the service is announced, you will need to be in touch with the Rural Dean to make arrangements for a rehearsal for the service a few days before the event itself. All the major participants (except the Bishop and the Archdeacon) will need to be present for this rehearsal, to make sure it goes as smoothly as possible.

¶ **The reception**

You will also need to plan a reception to follow the Service. A Church Hall, a Village Hall, a nearby School are all entirely suitable venues. You simply need somewhere where the whole expected congregation can gather. The venue must have adequate toilets.

It is usual to offer a modest finger buffet (some worshippers may not have had time for a meal before arriving at the service), accompanied by wine and soft drinks, and/or tea and coffee. Do not feel that you have to outdo the neighbouring parish's spread when they last had a new Vicar!

3.13.5 CONCLUSION

All this may seem a lot to have to do. But in every parish you will have willing helpers. Build up a team of people who can work alongside you in the leadership during the Vacancy. Delegate to them whatever you can.

If you find you come across issues to which you don't readily have an answer, your Rural Dean will always be glad to offer you any help and advice. And if the Rural Dean is stuck, or away on holiday, by all means phone your Archdeacon, who will also be happy to offer help and advice.

Finally, once you have your new Vicar in post, don't breathe a huge sigh of relief and give up! It is tempting to do so, of course; but new opportunities are just about to begin!

And as a postscript - but perhaps the most important thing of all - do keep much at prayer, for yourself, your colleagues, your congregation and community, and for those whose responsibility it is to find your new spiritual leader for you.