



**The Bishop of Chichester**  
*The Rt Revd Dr Martin Warner*

**To all Licensed Clergy, Clergy with PTO and Churchwardens**

**January 2022**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

**Happy new year! I hope you have been able to enjoy Christmas celebrations and ensured you had quality time away from the demands that ministry makes of us.**

**As we look forward to the year ahead, it is important that the full allocation of your holiday time is already booked. Mine is! But yours might well be more difficult, in terms of getting cover. Please make this a priority.**

There is a lot of information in the list below – sorry for that.

1. Omicron and community impact
2. The Dean of Women's Ministry
3. Clergy with PTO and chaplaincy ministry
4. Christian initiation: resources and celebrations
5. Diocesan LLF Synod in February
6. A visit by the Archbishop of Canterbury
7. The 2022 Lent Course
8. The Blessing of Oils and Renewal of Ordination commitment
9. Preparations for the Lambeth Conference

**1. Omicron and community impact**

The recurrence of rapid, wide-spread Covid infection will have affected the celebration of Christmas for all of us in some way. It is an indication of a future in which virus variants throw our plans into confusion.

One consequence is that we are confronted with vulnerability. That is uncomfortable at a human level but it should not be unfamiliar to us spiritually and it ought not to undermine our confidence in the mission God has entrusted to us. This is what it means to hold in clay jars the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:6,7).

As we face the challenges of planning in the parish and deanery, with all the frustrations of seeing past hopes fade under Covid restrictions, do not lose heart. Adaptation to the new circumstances on which life on earth is lived will be demanded of us all. And in that context, **I wish to renew my thanks for your ministry in serving the parishes and institutions of this household of faith and to assert its wider importance.**

**Just after Christmas I met (by Zoom) with the Chief Constable of Sussex, Jo Shiner. She spoke eloquently about “the tapestry of community intelligence” that is vested in the clergy and is crucial to good policing. Please take encouragement from that perception of your ministry, and please use any opportunity you have to support and encourage local policing, especially by community police officers.**

## **2. The Dean of Women’s Ministry**

Canon Ann Waizeneker retires this month, leaving St Mary de Haura, Shoreham and moving to Worcester. We shall miss her so much! She was ordained here in 2008 and became Dean of Women’s Ministry in 2017.

**The consultation process for her successor as Dean was led by the Bishop of Horsham. In order to widen the role, it has been decided to appoint the Rev’d Helen Garratt ([helen.garratt@stpetersbrighton.org](mailto:helen.garratt@stpetersbrighton.org)) as Dean and the Rev’d Martha Mutikani ([isfield.vicar@gmail.com](mailto:isfield.vicar@gmail.com)) as Assistant Dean.**

**Helen is Associate Vicar of St Peter’s, Brighton: she is also Assistant Rural Dean of Brighton and an Assistant Diocesan Director of Ordinands. Martha is Associate Vicar in the Uckfield plurality and works part-time as a nurse practitioner. They will be commissioned in the Cathedral at Evensong at 3.00 pm on Sunday 6 February.**

The appointment of Helen and Martha feels like an expression of confidence among ordained women in the diocese of Chichester, with an unquestioned recognition that they are integral to its life. Helen and Martha will undoubtedly ensure that, in nurturing vocations and making appointments, we continue to shape the exercise of ordained ministry in ways that reflect the needs and aspirations of the parishes we serve.

The new Dean and Assistant Dean will decide between them how to share the role, which includes membership of the Bishop’s Staff Meeting where the work to expand the number of ordained women, and the range of posts they hold, is closely monitored. “Leadership and mission in the Church needs the unique voice and experiences of women called to ordained ministry,” Helen observed, on being appointed, while Martha spoke of the “great women who saw beyond themselves” and who have influenced and sustained her own ministry.

The quality and range of women’s ministry in this diocese owes so much to those who pioneered against the odds to find acceptance. As Ann hands on the responsibility for building on the work of others in expanding the role of ordained women, we say thank

you to her for all that she has done to move the diocese forward with a spirit of mutual understanding that is a tribute to her own style and example of ministry.

### **3. Clergy with PTO and chaplaincy ministry**

We are very fortunate in this diocese to have a significant number of clergy who continue to serve as deacons and priests under the PTO provision. Having drawn on the ministry of many of them over Christmas, I wish to record thanks.

There will also be further information about ensuring that we keep the PTO up to date with DBS and safeguarding training at the appropriate level. We will do everything we can to make the process for doing this as clear and simple as possible.

**Although the PTO process will indicate the parish (or rural dean) to which a deacon or priest is attached, it does not indicate whether there is also a chaplaincy role.**

**In order to ensure that we can recognise and support chaplaincy ministry of any kind, please would licensed and PTO clergy let us know details of any chaplaincy that you undertake in this or any other diocese by emailing [andy.birks@chichester.anglican.org](mailto:andy.birks@chichester.anglican.org).**

The Bishop of Lewes oversees pastoral care of chaplains and is keen to know what work they are undertaking across the whole diocese. Thank you.

### **4. Christian initiation; resources and celebration**

One of the greatest privileges of being a Christian is sharing our faith with others and welcoming them into the company of the Church.

The template of this process comes from the celebration of Holy Week and Easter in which all Christians renew their Christian commitment in baptism, the declaration of faith, and holy communion.

All three bishops will be celebrating these rites, not only in the observance of Easter, but also across the whole diocese, after Easter, in the rites of Christian initiation: baptism, confirmation and holy communion.

**Some requests for deanery celebrations have already been received. We will also be available to baptise, confirm and admit your candidates to holy communion when we visit your parish on a Sunday for the regular Sunday morning worship.**

Please note some fundamental principles:

- Adult candidates should be baptised, confirmed, and admitted to holy communion in the same service. Please do not split the rite by baptising them in advance of the Confirmation. A careful reading of the Common Worship provision will indicate that this distorts the shape of the Easter template, which

is turning to the risen Christ, receiving the breath of his spirit, and coming to him in the breaking of bread.

- The preparation of candidates is a work of evangelisation, for the candidate and for the whole congregation. It should never be just a couple of talks from the vicar. It should invite members of the congregation to have some sense of sponsorship for each candidate, to know them and to learn with them in the process of preparation.
- Resources for undertaking this have been produced by a team of clergy from across the whole spectrum of the diocese. With the application of their experience and teaching skills they are offering a modern form of the Catechism in the Book of Common Prayer, which is still a useful standard against which to measure our teaching.
- The process of learning does not conclude with baptism and confirmation: that is the declaration of intent, commitment to a whole life of being evangelised.
- These resources also provide material for the careful and appropriate preparation of children who have been baptised to be admitted to holy communion. In the Church of England, the bishop should be informed of the decision by a parish to adopt this very good provision, and a record should be kept (in the green register) of the children who are admitted.

When administering holy communion in the parishes, I often find that well-prepared children receive holy communion with a devotion and care that puts many adults to shame. In ordination it is said that we are “stewards of the mysteries” of Jesus Christ. My hope is that we as bishops can encourage and equip you for undertaking that stewardship with renewed confidence and delight.

## **5. Diocesan LLF Synod in February**

**The engagement with the *Living in Love and Faith* resources by people in deaneries and parishes, and individually, across this diocese has been significant, and possibly more extensive than in some other parts of the country.**

**Following up on that engagement, the diocesan Synod on Saturday 5 February at St Mary’s, Horsham will focus specifically on what those resources have meant to us. It will be a “hybrid” meeting, with those who wish to isolate for Covid reasons able to join by Zoom.**

**Please pray for the members of the Synod as we meet for this important opportunity to reflect on the personal, scriptural, and theological issues that emerge from the LLF resources.**

This will not be a decision-making Synod, with votes and abstentions. It will be an exercise in what the word “synod” means: being on a road together. This implies that there will be differences, as there are on any high street. But we also believe that the road we are on is a pilgrimage, a holy journey on which God befriends and guides us.

We shall send a descriptive account of what our Synod was like to the Next Steps Group, which is monitoring response to the LLF resources. Those resources will be

assessed by the General Synod, enabling “the whole people of God to feed into the bishops’ discernment for the Church in 2022” and beyond.

In order to ensure that all discussion of LLF resources takes place in a safe space, I commend the Church of England’s *Pastoral Principles for living and learning well together*. The 6 principles are: addressing *ignorance*; paying attention to *power*; casting out *fear*; acknowledging *prejudice*; speaking into *silence*; admitting *hypocrisy*. Further details are on the Church of England website.

## **6. A visit by the Archbishop of Canterbury**

This visit should not be confused with the formal Archiepiscopal Visitation into safeguarding that started in January 2012 and lasted over a year. Ten years later a different Archbishop is coming to rejoice with us in the good things that the Lord has done, and continues to do for us, as we seek to know, love and follow Jesus.

**Archbishop Justin will be with us for three days from Friday 4<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March. The visit will have a particularly evangelistic flavour, encouraging us in apostolic life and the witness to Jesus Christ that we share with him.**

Bishop Ruth and Bishop Will are leading on the plans for this visit and there is a small team working with them to arrange the programme. The Archbishop will travel to a diversity of parishes, schools and chaplaincies right across the diocese.

In so short a time it would not be possible for everyone to be present in person with the Archbishop. But during the visit he will be inviting all clergy to join him online for the offices of Morning and Evening prayer, when he will pray with us and speak to us about the Christian life and the significance of Christian faith for the people of our nation.

Please make it a priority to join the Archbishop in whatever way is possible during his visit, and especially in the on-line offices. (Access details will be circulated separately.)

**Please make it a priority to join the Archbishop in whatever way is possible during his visit, and especially in the online offices. All clergy will shortly be invited to a zoom call with Lambeth Palace for a briefing on the visit.**

## **7. The 2022 Lent Course**

A brief reminder about this year’s Lent Course, *Comfort ye my people*, which has been devised by people brought together through the Apostolic Life team. Many thanks to them and to the Comms team that have overseen the production of the course.

It focuses on works of art and stories from the Bible that speak about how God meets our need for comfort in the midst of life’s challenges. It is designed for use by groups or individuals and can be downloaded from the diocesan website.

**The designers of the course would ask clergy to download and print material for anyone who cannot access and use on-line resources.**

## **8. The Chrism Eucharist and Renewal of Ordination Commitment**

**There is still considerable anxiety around large gatherings in places of worship, and rightly so.**

**In order to provide an opportunity to gather in smaller numbers and in a large space, there will be two Chrism celebrations this year.**

**Both will take place in All Saints, Hove. We are very grateful to Fr Ryan Green and the people of All Saints for this hospitality.**

**In a sharing of episcopal ministry, each of the Suffragan Bishops will preside at the Eucharist and bless oils on successive days, in a celebration that will be the same in all other respects. I shall be present at both celebrations to preach and to receive the renewal of ordination commitment.**

**The Bishop of Horsham will preside at 12.00 noon on Tuesday 12 April; the Bishop of Lewes will preside at 12.00 noon on Wednesday 13 April.**

## **9. Preparations for the Lambeth Conference**

**‘The Big Hello’ is the name for the fifteenth Lambeth Conference hospitality initiative. From around 20 July 2022, it invites us to provide a place of rest, welcome and community to bishops travelling to the UK before we all gather in Canterbury on 27 July for the Conference itself.**

This initiative is being supported here by a wonderful team of diocesan coordinators. Thank you to them for all they are doing to help us celebrate our companion links with West Africa and northern Kenya, and with other provinces around the Communion.

We cannot ignore the complexity that COVID-19 adds to planning for the Conference – and to The Big Hello as an integral part of it. Ongoing changes in health and travel requirements challenge us to balance enabling people to take part with ensuring that we look after the health of all involved.

**Please note the late July dates for The Big Hello. We will ensure that we minimise risks for both guests and hosts during the hospitality period. We hope you will want to be involved in offering The Big Hello to our brothers and sisters in Christ, who have long since lived with pandemic and poverty in ways we**

**simply cannot imagine. They will enrich us with their presence, their faith, and the generosity of their joy.**

**Finally**, I was recently given a copy of Bishop Rowan Williams's book, *Looking East in Winter*. It's not light reading but the scholarship and insight are refreshing when so much else on offer lacks substance.

The title is a striking one, reminding us of the importance in the Christian tradition, often lost to us now, of eastward-facing worship in the direction of the rising sun, the metaphor of the resurrection and new life each day.

Bishop Rowan concludes his introduction with words that I hope you will find encouraging:

Looking east in winter we feel the warmth of the sun on our faces, while still sensing an icy chill at our backs. Our divided and distorted awareness of the world is not healed instantly. But we are not looking at this phenomenon from a distance: we do truly sense the sun on our faces; and we have good reason to think that the climate and landscape of our humanity can indeed be warmed and transfigured.

With my prayers and thanks for the apostolic calling that we share,

+Martin