

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This is a bumper *Ad clerum!* The list of subjects is below and I hope that the material in bold will help to identify important details.

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Annex 1: Guidelines and Criteria for Occasional Preaching

1. Proclaiming the Mystery of Faith

This is the overall title for these three years, 2023 – 2025, which culminate in the 950th anniversary of the establishment of the Christian mission to Sussex, moving its cathedral from Selsey to Chichester. Progress so far:

- The **Year of the Old Testament** is drawing to a close. Thank you to all who have contributed to the exploration of how Jesus Christ is foreshadowed in Scriptures that shaped his preaching and give us the language and images with which to express the mystery of our redemption.
- Advent 2023 marks the beginning of the **Year of the New Testament**. The format will be similar to the previous Year. The focus on Jesus will intensify in the Lent Course, *You are the Christ*. We shall explore our understanding of that with the benefit of what we have learnt in the Old Testament, the witness of the New Testament, and the ways in which our worship draws from the Bible to deepen our knowledge of Jesus and our love for him.
- Advent 2024 will lead us into the **Year of Faith**, in which we celebrate our 950th anniversary and the 1700th anniversary of the Council of Nicaea and the formation of the Nicene Creed. This will be a year to look back, in order to look forward. We shall celebrate faith brought to Chichester and the invigoration of our mission in taking faith out to every part of Sussex. There will also be a diocesan pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Further details to follow.

2. Clergy Conference, 2025: *The Mystery of Faith*

The next clergy conference will take place from the afternoon of **Sunday 7 September to lunch time on Wednesday 10 September 2025**. **Please book these dates in your diary now.** As on previous occasions (2014, 2018) the conference will take place at the University of Kent at Canterbury.

The title of the conference will be *The Mystery of Faith*. It will be a significant event in the Year of Faith which we shall be keeping in 2025. The keynote speakers will again be drawn from a variety of backgrounds. Their addresses will concentrate on the ways in which the creeds help us to encounter Christ, point us towards God whom we know as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and inspire us to celebrate this faith and share it with others.

All licensed clergy will be invited to the conference, and it is expected that all stipendiary clergy will be present. If there is a reason why at this stage you think you will not be able to come, I would be grateful if you contact Howard Cattermole, at the Palace, and let him know (howard.cattermole@chichester.anglican.org).

The cost of the conference will be largely met from money that has been put aside in the diocesan budget over recent years. However, we shall, once again, be asking parishes for a contribution of £300 for each of their clergy who will be attending. This can be paid in one block of £300 or in annual instalments of £100 over 2023, 2024 and 2025 – whichever is easier.

Although, as with other requests, this amount is optional, a contribution from your parish is a very important element in our budgeting for this event, and it would be very helpful if you could stress to PCCs the importance of the Conference.

The purpose of the Conference is

- **to help sustain the spiritual and theological energy of clergy**
- **to strengthen morale and so maintain a positive approach to our ministry**
- **to encourage mission and the nurture of new vocations to the priesthood.**

It is NOT

- **an excuse for a few days off, away from the parish**
- **an indication that clergy are the most important part of the Church**
- **unusual: some dioceses have regular clergy conferences.**

I will be writing to Churchwardens in due course to ask them to support us in making this contribution. It would also be helpful if you could warn your PCC treasurer about this impending request.

In 2018 some parishes were so supportive of the benefits of the Conference that they also paid a contribution to cover the cost for a parish in an area of deprivation – where the need for building morale and hope is so great. It would be great to see that happen again. Equally, any parish that genuinely cannot afford to pay will not be prevented from sending its clergy.

Please note that although this is a donation, the requests for payment will be headed 'Invoice' because the computerised finance system does this automatically with any request for payment.

3. The Order of St Richard

On Saturday 30 September Bishop Ruth will be admitting 44 people to the Order of St Richard in Chichester Cathedral.

The Order is an annual award for lay people who have made exceptional contributions to the parish, the local community, or the diocese. Everyone receives a certificate signed by the Bishop, and a collarette with a specially designed pin badge which can be worn on its own or on the collarette.

Over a hundred people have been recipients of the award. Please encourage award holders to wear their badge and please ensure that new recipients are applauded in their home congregation.

Details about the Order of St Richard are on the diocesan website. The nomination form for 2024 will be posted there shortly.

4. Farewell to Gabrielle Higgins, Diocesan Secretary

It has already been announced that Gabrielle will be leaving the diocese after 9 years. She has been an amazing dynamo of energy and has brought a sharpness of mind and conviction of faith to all her work among us.

The Diocesan Synod on Saturday 18 November will be the most prominent opportunity for us to say farewell and to record or profound thanks for all she has accomplished and helped us to achieve.

The plans for appointment of her successor are well advanced. It is expected that we shall be able to make an appointment that will enable us to have a generous time for hand-over and a smooth transition into new leadership in Church House, Hove. Please pray for those who work out of Church House, Hove, during this period of change.

5. Additional celebrations of Baptism and Confirmation

The arrangements for deanery celebrations of baptism and confirmation seem to be working well. In certain circumstances bishops do also baptise and confirm during a routine visit to a parish on Sundays.

However, this might not meet all pastoral needs, and so in 2024 we plan to offer two celebrations of Baptism and Confirmation in the Cathedral, and one in St Saviour's, Bexhill. These will be for candidates from any parish across the diocese.

6. Guidelines and Criteria for Occasional Preaching

The Church of England rightly takes very seriously the duty to preach the word of God at the principal act of public worship in our Churches on a Sunday. It is regulated by Canon Law. The annex to this *Ad Clerum* outlines what this means for those who are not ordained ministers of the Church of England, holding the Bishop's licence or Permission to Officiate.

7. Help with appointment to the diocesan Assets Committee

We are currently seeking to co-opt one person to the Assets Committee of the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF). This small Committee has a key role in ensuring the wise stewardship of diocesan investments.

The Assets Committee is responsible for the investment strategy of the DBF, which generated over £2.5 million last year, almost 15% of our income. It provides oversight for the glebe land and non-land assets of the Diocese.

We are looking for someone with expertise in investment management who understands the range and risks of investment opportunities, can provide critical scrutiny of the investment strategy and performance, and engage with our professional investment managers.

If there is anyone in your congregation who may be suitable for this role and willing to serve in this critical capacity please encourage them to contact the Finance Director, Catherine Dawkins, for an informal chat on 01273 421021 or the Chair of the DBF Lesley Lynn (07768 115184).

The expected commitment is attendance at three online meetings a year. The role is not remunerated but reasonable expenses will be paid. The initial term of office will be until 31 December 2024.

8. The common cup in Holy Communion.

Some who are new to the diocese will not have seen the guidance that was included in the *Ad Clerum* of October 2022.

The theological and historical reasons for our discipline were outlined in the full text (available on the Diocesan website: see *Documents: Ad clerum*). The essence of the discipline is repeated below.

Please note the wording: **I urge upon you the following practice**. Departure from this practice is also a breach of ecclesiastical regulation.

From the *Ad clerum*, October 2022:-

So with regard to communion in both kinds, I urge upon you the following practice as the discipline of the Church of England's tradition:

- i. "The wine [shall be] the fermented juice of the grape, good and wholesome." (Canon B17.2) Non-alcoholic wine, that has not been fermented, does not meet the definition of what we use.**
- ii. Each communicant receives the consecrated bread to eat and then drinks from the common cup.**
- iii. Intinction ("dipping" the bread into the chalice) is a distortion of the sign of communion. It has no mandate in any rubric (law) or liturgical authority in the Church of England and should be discouraged with kindness and clarity.**

NB Reasons for departing from the discipline of receiving from the common cup are sometimes proposed, in order to meet individual needs. But the overwhelming of individuality is the whole point of the sign of communion that is the common cup. It is the sign of Jesus Christ, the life-blood of him in whom we are made one. We do not choose him: he chooses us, and in that choice he makes us one with the others who also draw life from him.

This is something that should be part of our teaching about holy communion when we prepare candidates for First Communion and for Baptism and Confirmation.

9. Our unity in love and faith

As we prepare for the November sessions of the General Synod, the challenges that are posed by questions about sexual identity threaten to divide us, if we do not remain attentive to the bonds of faith and love.

This attention requires us to understand the profundity of concern that exists in each other. How we speak of this must therefore take account of the impact of what we say. Sustaining the bonds of charity is at the heart of the Christian vocation as the Apostle Paul understands: ‘let us therefore no longer pass judgement on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of another’ (Romans 14:13).

He writes this in the context of disagreement about eating regulations. It was a matter of profound importance, touching on the inheritance among Jewish Christians of unclean food, and among Gentile Christians on the issue of food offered to pagan gods.

The bishops who serve you are very aware that in some cases you feel your very identity and livelihood are at stake. We will strive to ensure that theological conscience and individual dignity receive the greatest possible levels of understanding and reverence.

Please pray for all members of the General Synod and for the meeting of our Diocesan Synod that follows it.

10. The Synod of Bishops in Rome

The Synod of Bishops of the Roman Catholic Church is different from the synodical system of the Church of England, but it is still a *synod*, which means ‘walking together’.

This Synod of Bishops (October 4 – 29, 2023) will gather episcopal delegates from every part of the world but this time it will also include laypeople and ecumenical delegates. I have been invited to attend as an ecumenical delegate because until last year I was a member of the Church of England’s Council for Christian Unity.

Notice of this is unusually short, and I apologise for having to withdraw from some diocesan commitments in October.

The Synod meets 6 days a week throughout October. Its strap line is *For a Synodal Church*. There are three themes: *Communion*: how can we be fully a sign and

instrument of union with God? *Participation*: how can we better share gifts and tasks in the service of the Gospel? *Mission*: what processes, structures and institutions indicate a missionary synodal Church?

The task of a Synod of Bishops is to consider questions concerning the mission of the Church in the world and to offer a view on that. It has no mandate to settle matters or draw up decrees. The agenda indicates that the challenges that confront us in the Church of England and the Anglican Communion are shared by our Roman Catholic brothers and sisters. That should not surprise us.

While I am at the Synod the life of the diocese will continue to be overseen by Bishop Ruth and Bishop Will, and I will remain in regular contact with them.

Further details of the agenda for the Synod can be found online

<https://www.cbcew.org.uk/home/events/synodal-church/instrumentum-laboris/>

Please pray for all who are involved in the Synod and that its work might be fruitful for the whole Church of Jesus Christ.

Come, Holy Spirit!

+Martin

Annex: Guidelines and Criteria for Occasional Preaching

The Diocese of Chichester Guidelines and Criteria for Occasional Preaching

According to Canon Law, episcopal permission is required for any lay person preaching at the principal act of public worship on a Sunday:

'The sermon shall be preached by a minister, deaconess, reader or lay worker duly authorized in accordance with Canon Law. At the invitation of the minister having the cure of souls another person may preach with the permission of the bishop of the diocese given either in relation to the particular occasion or in accordance with diocesan directions.'
(Canon B18.1)

Therefore, all lay people preaching at the principal act of Sunday worship on a regular basis in the Diocese of Chichester will **either** need to be licenced as Readers **or** authorised as ALM through successful completion of the ALM Preaching Elective. This is in order that sound doctrine is preached in our parishes so the household of faith are fed with the Word of God and encouraged and inspired in their Christian discipleship.

This policy also ensures that anyone preaching regularly in parishes within the diocese will have current DBS clearance and safeguarding training, in line with the Church of England's Safer Recruitment processes.

What do we mean by preaching?

Episcopal authorisation as a Reader or an ALM is required for those preaching regularly at the **main act** of Sunday worship. Both are forms of public representative ministry and should be overseen by the incumbent. There is no limit on the number of times Readers can be asked to preach during a year. ALMs can preach up to six times a year, with the incumbent or another member of clergy present (or during an interregnum by a Reader, assistant priest, deacon, or churchwarden).

In addition, Canon B43 allows occasional ecumenical invitations to preach at the main act of Sunday worship to be given to: *'A person who is a minister or lay member of a designated Church, and who is baptised.'* Ordinands or readers in training can also preach as part of their initial training under the supervision of the incumbent.

There is greater flexibility at other services and events where other baptised Christians might offer less formal teaching, though clergy should ensure anyone teaching the faith is appropriately equipped and of good character with a secure spiritual life and that constructive feedback is given.

The giving of a personal testimony should be distinguished from preaching and only requires the invitation of the incumbent or person leading the worship.

Different Routes:

'The preacher shall endeavour with care and sincerity to minister the word of truth, to the glory of God and to the edification of the people.' (Canon B18.3)

All candidates will need to go through a discernment process with their incumbent and demonstrate a capacity for training and an aptitude (or potential) for fostering and inspiring

others through the ministry of preaching. A candidate should normally be baptised, confirmed, and on the electoral roll of their sponsoring church.

All candidates must have a sufficient theological grounding, which means successful completion of one of the following:

- A Higher Education (HE) course of theological study at certificate level (L4) or above, e.g., an undergraduate or postgraduate theology degree
- A non-validated theological course at equivalent level, e.g. the Bishop's Certificate or equivalent
- The Sussex Ministry Training Course

Whilst often being pivotal in faith development, completion of discipleship courses such as Living Faith, Alpha, Pilgrim or Christianity Explored are not considered to provide an adequate theological foundation for the ministry of preaching.

All candidates will be subject to the normal safeguarding checks, references, and selection processes, including nomination from the PCC.¹

Alongside those going through the regular Reader selection process, there are three possible routes for laity seeking regular permission to preach:

- **Ministers from another denomination:** Someone who has previously served as a minister in another Church but has been habitually worshipping in a Church of England would normally go forward as a candidate for Reader ministry. Consideration would be taken about any additional training required and is a decision at the discretion of the diocesan bishop.
- **Candidates who have undertaken the Sussex Ministry Training Course (SMTC), run by the Sussex Gospel Partnership (SGP) or equivalent:** SMTC aims: *'to equip students to be confident in handling the word of God'* through significant and rigorous engagement with the bible and theology. Those who have successfully completed this (or a similar) course can be authorised as an ALM without undertaking any additional training.
- **Candidates who have achieved an HE award of Certificate (L4) or above in theology or an equivalent non-validated theological course:** Someone who has achieved the appropriate level of theological study will undertake the diocesan ALM Core Module, followed by the ALM Preaching Elective

There will be a thread of discernment running through the ALM Preaching Elective to ensure that candidates have the capacity to exercise this ministry with confidence and competency.

ALM candidates will have to agree a Role Description before commissioning. Authorisation lasts for a period of three years and can then be renewed following a review by the incumbent and PCC.

¹ The process for the selection and training of Readers can be found at:

<https://www.chichester.anglican.org/reader-selection-and-training-for-reader-ministry/>

The process for the selection and training of ALMs can be found at:

<https://www.chichester.anglican.org/authorised-lay-ministry/>