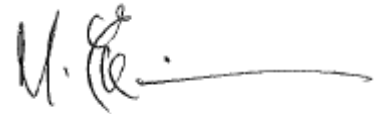


**ADVICE TO THOSE SEEKING A FACULTY FOR
A MEMORIAL PLAQUE IN A CHURCH**

1. A Faculty is necessary before a memorial plaque is placed in a church. The grant of a Faculty is always a matter for the discretion of the Commissary General. Those proposing a new memorial need to understand, therefore, that such a Faculty is not granted as a matter of course. The remembrance of every Christian soul is precious to those whom they leave behind and to the Church but there is simply not sufficient space in our churches to commemorate them all with plaques. Over the years the Church Courts have laid down the following general guidelines, which are intended to maintain the essential simplicity of beautiful churches and to prevent them becoming over full of memorials:
 - (i) Faculties for memorials cannot be freely or extensively granted because, if they were, the walls of a church might become so crowded as seriously to detract from the appearance of the church. Therefore such a Faculty has to be regarded as a special privilege reserved for very exceptional cases. The Commissary General has to ask: (a) is this case so exceptional that the special privilege of a Faculty could appropriately be granted? (b) If so, are the circumstances in this particular church such that a Faculty should be granted?
 - (ii) It is for the Faculty petitioner(s) to show that the case is exceptional. Clear evidence must be provided and the Commissary General will also want to know the views of the Incumbent and the PCC, including views on the matter of exceptionality. The DAC will be consulted on whether the church is already over full of memorials, as well as on matters of design, wording and positioning of the memorial. The question of whether the case is also sufficiently exceptional to justify the introduction of a memorial is, however, one for the Commissary General to determine, after the DAC has issued its Notification of Advice.
 - (iii) Examples of factors which may show exceptionality are (a) outstanding service to church, country or mankind by the person to be commemorated and (b) a desire to record by the memorial some important or significant aspect of local or national history.
2. The petition for a Faculty will need to state the grounds of exceptionality claimed. Those supporting the petition should explain why the case should be considered exceptional and why it is claimed that the special privilege of a Faculty should be granted.

3. Because this is a matter in which the grant of a Faculty is something of an exception, the Commissary General has requested that the Diocesan Registry should draw the content of this Advice to the attention of would be Petitioners at an early stage of any proposed application.
4. By way of assistance, in order to determine whether or not the Commissary General might be minded to consider a future Faculty petition for a specific plaque in a church, those proposing such are invited, in the first instance, to send to the Diocesan Registry details of the proposed plaque in terms of the material, size, shape, wording etc, details of the proposed location and the grounds of exceptionality claimed. The Registry will then be pleased to seek the preliminary views of the Commissary General as to the likelihood of a Faculty petition succeeding.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Ellis', followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Morag Ellis QC
Commissary General of the City and Diocese of Canterbury
9 January 2015