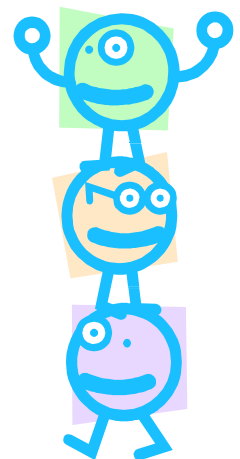


# Pastoral Visiting Teams



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## Session 1

### Reflecting God's life and Jesus' ministry

<b><u>Aims</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To introduce the course and each other.</li><li>• To explore own experience of pastoral care.</li><li>• To consider why pastoral care lies at the heart of our response to the Love of God shown to us in Christ.</li><li>• To consider our role as disciples in God's world.</li></ul>
<b><u>Learning Outcomes</u></b>	By the end of this session you will have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• learnt more about what pastoral care is</li><li>• explored some of the insights of Scripture about Christian Pastoral care</li><li>• have a clearer idea about what this foundation course will be like</li><li>• been introduced to reflective learning as an important tool for your learning</li></ul>

### Introduction

The course is about *mutual discernment* about any future role that you as an individual might have in a parish pastoral care team or other aspects of organised pastoral care in the parish.

- Discernment requires deep listening, exploration, and a lot of patience.
- It means living with questions rather than having clear cut answers.
- It requires you to share yourself with others as you can't do discernment on your own.
- It can be challenging.
- It is likely to mean moving out of your comfort zone.
- It can also be exciting.
- For some people, the process of doing a course like this means discerning that this isn't the best way for God to use their gifts. That is just as much a successful outcome as becoming clearer that this expression of ministry might well be for you.
- Discernment is always a corporate activity. Decisions about your place in a possible parish pastoral team will come about as a result of your parish priest, the PCC, and other key people reaching consensus with you.

*It's not a course in which you will be passive, therefore. There will be lots of group activities and practical learning about what it means to be involved in pastoral care.*

**What is pastoral care?**

**Share together your own experience of receiving pastoral care.**

**Write down examples on a post-it note and place on a flip chart for everyone to share.**

- What things struck you?

- Were there any examples that you hadn't thought about before?

*Points to consider:*

- The ordinariness of pastoral care
- Not about problem solving or crisis management
- Variety of experiences and situations
- Not the preserve of specialists but the responsibility of all Christian disciples
- Not individualistic but about mutual responsibility for each other
- About being rather than doing
- Presence
- Empathy not sympathy
- Listening not talking

**Why pastoral care is an imperative for Christians.**

Pastoral care is sharing in the caring activity and attitudes of God.

Read *Ezekiel 34:11-31*

- List the verbs/doing-words and phrases that relate to God's actions
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- How would you describe the words in this list?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- What insights are there about the nature of God's pastoral concern for his people?

*Points to consider*

- Be careful not to divide people into the cared for and the care giver
- Everyone needs to care
- Everyone needs to be cared for
- Think about both individual and community models

### **But Jesus (God incarnate) also needed care**

He hungered (Matt 4:2), thirsted (John 19:28) on the cross and was weary so sat down by the well (John 4:6). He knew the pain of losing a friend – he wept (John 11:35) when Lazarus died and he wept – even wailed (Luke 19: 41) over Jerusalem - so he could express strong emotions. He groaned or sighed deeply in the face of unbelief when people wanted a sign (Mk 8: 12) and could be angry, or just agitated or troubled when he arrived to find Lazarus (John 11:33, 38). He could act aggressively when he turned the tables over in the temple (John 2:13 – 22). Yet he could experience joy (Luke 10:21) when the seventy he had sent out returned in joy. And the utter desolation on the cross when he felt forsaken (Matthew 27:46) leaves us in no doubt that this man, who is also our God, knew the full gamut of human emotion.

### **How highly God values our humanity**

<sup>4</sup> What is man that you are mindful of him,  
the son of man that you care for him?

<sup>5</sup> You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings  
and crowned him with glory and honour.

<sup>6</sup> You made him ruler over the works of your hands;  
you put everything under his feet:           (*Psalm 8:4-6*)

### **About humanity**

- Everyone is of unique worth (sparrows/ hairs on head numbered)
- All made in the image of God (*Ps 8, Gen 1*) (pastoral care is about seeing God in others)
- Human dividedness (*Rom 7*)
- God in Christ is reconciling world to himself

<i>Point to consider:</i>	The Doctrine of the Incarnation means that care for each other in the fullness of our human lives is of the essence of sharing Christ's risen life.
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**Pastoral care is about relationship**



*The Hospitality of Abraham* by Andrei Rublev      Genesis 18

An image of the perfection of the relationship within the heart of God – with a place set for each of us.

- Community and belonging
- Covenant in the Old Testament communicates relationship
- A people centred care

**Interactive Bible study - John Chapter 4**

Read through the chapter as a group-sharing activity

- What is happening here?
  
- What strikes you?
- What do you notice?
- What questions does it raise for you?
  
- How does this passage connect with what we have been talking about in this session?
  
- How has this helped your understanding of [pastoral care?
  
- Does anything contradict?

*Points to consider*

Jesus seems to be able to listen deeply.  
The central tool of pastoral care is listening.



## **Reflection**

- Learning is sometimes seen as memorising/ knowing facts (university challenge). Only part of learning.
- Knowing something is only really helpful if you understand it, see it's significance for you and can work out what to do with what you know. Have you ever had the experience of rediscovering something you have known for ages and suddenly saying 'I see'. It's not new information but a new way of looking at it. That's reflection. It's much deeper learning.
- We all do it. When we mull things over in the bath or with a drink, when we talk about the day with family or friends we are often engaged in a reflective process
- Reflective learning is about creating a structured way to practice what we all do some of the time.

Reflection is:

- **a perspective** – a way of approaching/looking at things. Theological reflection asks you to look at things and ask about what this might show about God or his purposes
- **a skill** – something you can develop by doing it
- **a process** – there are specific stages you can go through to help build up a pattern of reflecting
- Starting point for reflection is our **experience** of something. Starting to notice things during an experience – 'that's strange'. Noticing how you feel. Realising that something significant or new is going on here.
- **dialogue** – with self / with experience / with God / with other things you have experienced.

**Reflection > Deep Learning > Transformative learning.**

**TASK: To keep a reflective log during course.**

Why does keeping a reflective log, and the reflection that is part of the writing, encourage learning?

1. It encourages you to **'reprocess'** that information in a way that **connects** and **integrates** it with current understanding and experience.
2. Reflecting encourages you to **take responsibility for your learning**; to realise that you can take on board new things and have new insights.
3. Reflection enables you to have **greater ownership** of the material, making it more personally meaningful and improving your grasp of it.
4. Helpful when reflecting on material that is challenging or demanding, and helps to make the learning involved a positive experience.

Preparation for next week. Session 2.

**Take one of the following:**

- a recent conversation
  - confusion or awkward family moment
  - tricky event at work
- other experience i.e. doesn't have to be a problem event.

**Then,**

- **Describe it** (*Experience*)
- **Analyse it by writing down what was happening there for me, for the group.** (*Explore and understand*)
- **Where did God seem to be present in it? Refer to tradition or scripture as able** (*Reflect and connect to understand more deeply*)
- **From my experience of it, I have learned.....** (*Action, to influence further experience*)

## **Session 2**

### **Understanding communication**

<b><u>Aims</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To explore the process of communication</li><li>• To understand the fundamental nature of communication in pastoral care</li><li>• To understand the skills required to enhance the communication process</li></ul>
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<b><u>Learning Outcomes</u></b>	By the end of this session you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be able to state the basic processes of communication.</li><li>• Have an awareness of the multi dimensional nature of communication</li><li>• Have an awareness of the non-verbal aspects of communication.</li><li>• Be able to state the common barriers to communication.</li></ul>
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#### **Introduction**

In this session we will look at some of the theory of communication and we will seek to link this theory to the pastoral situation. We will consider the non verbal aspects, barriers to communication and the role of listening.

Good communication begins before a single word is uttered.

It begins with having a self-awareness as pastoral carers of all the issues that may cause us to pre-judge people.

There are biases and prejudices, beliefs and values that may influence the establishment of an effective pastoral relationship.

To communicate well with other people we need an understanding of ourselves as well as an understanding of those with whom we wish to communicate.

#### **Understanding Ourselves**

Understanding ourselves enables us to relate to other people - to those in our care - more effectively therefore it is necessary to identify important qualities or traits within ourselves. When others relate to us, they are relating to the people we are and their behaviour towards us is a response to our behaviour towards them. It means accepting that their behaviour says something about ourselves as well as something about them.

We are all formed by the experiences and people we meet. They help to shape our lives – who we are and what we do.

### Think about personal qualities

Consider these qualities for a member of a pastoral care team.

How do these qualities apply to you?

- Friendly
  - Sensitive
  - Warm
  - Honest
  - Reliable
  - Thoughtful
  - Likable
  - Punctual
  - Communicative
  - Well balanced
  - Well mannered
  - Able
  - Helpful
  - Understanding
  - Calm
  - Open
  - Kind
- **Have a lot**
  - **Have some**
  - **Have a little**
  - **Need to acquire**

Can you think of any other positive qualities to add to the list?

- Points to consider:*
- What have you discovered about yourself?
  - How much of yourself is it appropriate to show to the people you visit?
  - What is meant by 'professional distance' and self-disclosure?
  - Self-disclosure is helpful when used appropriately and sensitively
    - Develops sense of empathy
    - Encourages person to talk
    - Emphasises shared human experience
  - Self-disclosure happens on 3 levels
    - Sharing opinions
    - Sharing experiences
    - Sharing feelings
  - **WARNING – self-disclosure must be for the benefit of the person being helped**
  - Focus must remain on the person's issues
  - Do not burden the person with your thoughts
  - Do not undervalue their feelings or experiences
  
  - *Keep adding to your reflective journal*

### **What is communication?**

Think of some words or phrases associated with communication.

List your ideas:

Write a definition for yourself or with others in your group.

*Points to consider*

There are different ways of thinking about communication

- The **WAY** we get the message from our brain to someone else's
- Our emotional **RESPONSE** to the message
- Different **INTERPRETATIONS** to the same message

Effective Communication needs the following:

*One way communication* - sending a message without concern or interest for the response or interpretation of the recipient.

Who  
What  
Why

*Two way communication* – involves interaction between the people communicating. Response and interpretation are key.

Read this scenario and discuss its implications for a pastoral visit.

Think of two people sitting in a room who wish to communicate. Imagine the first person wishes to say something that perhaps the second person may not want to hear. The second person may feel anxious about what is to be said. The first person speaks but nerves and anxiety makes them awkward and less coherent in their speech, they do not make eye contact and they are fidgety in their seat. The second person hears the words but in the process of interpreting what they hear, they note the tone of voice, the lack of coherence and eye contact, they sense the first person's discomfort. This affects how they interpret the message and how they then return another message. They too may well display non-verbal behaviour that might suggest discomfort, anger, embarrassment, dismay – they will react to the message.

**Revisit your definition of communication. Do you wish to make any amendments?**

2 way communication depends upon the WAY the message is sent: the RESPONSE it prompts: the INTERPRETATION that is made.

Non-verbal behaviours are fundamental in all communication processes.

**Discuss in groups this data:**

<p><b>55% is communicated through body language</b> <b>38% by tone of voice and facial expression</b> <b>7% is through the words used</b></p>
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**What are the implications for how we express ourselves and how we interpret other people's communication to us?**

How do cultural and social expectations dictate the way we communicate?

When is it appropriate to touch or move into someone's personal space?

When do we naturally reduce the level of language we use?

When might we rely upon gesture to help us to express ourselves?

What other visual forms of communication do we use?

When might people's listening skills be less effective?

*Points to consider:*

- Not everyone has the same natural skills for interpreting facial expression and body language
- How people use eye-contact is different and needs careful interpretation. Some people stare whilst others avoid all eye-contact.
- We usually have an idea about what is comfortable for our personal space. Generally speaking, the closer the space, the closer the relationship.
- Stature and how we hold our bodies can indicate emotion and feeling.
- Using gesture is a very natural way of communicating which we all use. Some people rely more on visual systems to aid their communication.
- Touch is another natural way to communicate but works within social and cultural boundaries.

Barriers to effective communication:

- Language – even within the same language there may be significant differences e.g. text and teenagers
- Physical impairments – hearing, sight, speech, breathing difficulties
- Learning difficulties
- Jargon and culture specific terminology
- Physical and emotional pain
- Stress and anxiety
- Mental health - dementia / confusion

Communication is an ACTIVE process that needs our full attention. When one person is trying to communicate and the other is distracted then 'attention seeking behaviours' may result – even in adults.

**Discuss the following pastoral situation with regard to the communication involved.**

George is a member of the congregation who attends church regularly. His wife, Anne, used to accompany him every week but for the last six months he has been on his own. He comes into church almost as the service starts and is usually one of the first to leave with only the briefest of conversations with the clergy at the door. One Sunday, George remains in his seat. Lydia, who has been an acquaintance of George and Anne's because of their attendance at church, is worried. She goes to George and asks if he is alright. George says that he is alright and Lydia smiles and turns to leave. She then notices that there are traces of tears on George's face so she pauses. George breaks down and weeps openly, saying he can't go on, Anne is suffering from dementia and he doesn't know what to do or who to ask for help. Lydia sits down and encourages him to talk.



## Session 3

### Listening Attentively

<b><u>Aims</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To examine and explore the nature of listening as a caring activity</li> <li>• To build on last week's session on communication, looking at listening as an active part of the process</li> <li>• To identify the skills of active listening</li> <li>• To practice active listening skills</li> </ul>
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<b><u>Learning Outcomes</u></b>	<p>By the end of this session you will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain what is meant by active listening</li> <li>• State the behaviours that enable active listening</li> <li>• Assess your own ability to engage in active listening</li> <li>• Reflect on the practice of active listening</li> </ul>
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#### Introduction

#### **Listening is a caring activity in which we need to consider the following:**

- Establishing a caring pastoral relationship requires the creation of an environment in which people feel comfortable.
- The level of comfort with the pastoral relationship will be indicated by the ability of the person seeking help to share personal information with the carer.
- A person will not feel able to 'open up' if they do not feel they are being listened to, that what they are saying is not important enough to demand the carer's full attention.
- Never underestimate the potential for helping others simply by listening to them!

#### **Reflection activity:**

Spend a few minutes trying to recall a time when you needed to talk to someone about a difficult, sensitive or personal issue with a 'professional' carer such as a nurse, or doctor, or priest or counsellor.

*What behaviours did they show that made you feel more comfortable about discussing your concerns?*

*Did they say or do anything which you found off-putting or made the task of talking harder?*

*Share your thoughts with another member of the group and complete the table.*

<u>List of behaviours</u>	<u>Common factors</u>

**Remember:** Communication facts:

**55% is via body language**

**38% is via tone of voice and facial expression**

**7 % is via spoken words**

*What is the implication of this for active listening?*

### **Listening Activity in pairs.**

- One person is the speaker / the other is the listener
- Speaker talks for as long as they can about the last 24 hours in their life.
- Listener sits alongside and actively ignores the speaker

How long did the speaker keep going?

How did it feel to be ignored?

How did it feel to do the ignoring?

- Points to consider:*
- As a listener you communicate through gaze, body posture, facial expression and even touch.
  - Words can be a barrier to listening so do not talk over your partner
  - Reflecting, summarising and paraphrasing can aid the speaker if done with sensitivity

### 1. Reflecting:

- Reflect back the key words and phrases used by the speaker
- The speaker can hear their own words being used
- The listener has to pick out the most significant words or phrases

e.g. 'I have been feeling very lonely lately' *to which you may reflect back* 'so you feel lonely'

Or 'since my husband has died I have found life difficult' *to which you might reflect back* 'so life has been difficult since he died'.

- This shows you are paying attention
- What people say is important to you
- Avoid sounding like a parrot by using appropriate tone of voice, body language, facial expression

### 2. Paraphrasing:

- Comment back to speaker by paraphrasing what they said
- Check their reaction to the content of what they said put in a different way
- Avoids sounding like a parrot

### ***Role-play Activity in pairs:***

Take turns to be speaker and listener.

Take turns to reflect and paraphrase.

Choose some of the following as a starting point for a 2-way communication.

**'I get anxious on my own and feel too frightened to go out.'**

**'I feel so bad, I get tired and feel I can't cope so I end up just shouting at the kids all the time.'**

**'I know I should come to church but I don't know anyone. Its such a long time since I went.'**

**'I am frightened of dying.'**

**'I don't like living on my own.'**

### 3. Summarising:

- Identify the key points when someone has been talking for a while
- Pause from time to time to give a summary
- Check that you have understood the points being made
- Separates the key points
- Allows opportunity to expand or clarify what has been said

#### ***Role-play activity in pairs:***

Take turns to be speaker and listener.

The speaker will talk for 2-3 minutes on any topic of their choice.

Use summarising, as well as reflecting and paraphrasing as the listener.

Discuss how it felt to be both speaker and listener.

### 4. Silence:

Silence can feel uncomfortable with people who we don't know so well.

In a pastoral situation silence may occur naturally.

*Do not be tempted to break the silence just for the sake of it.*

Silence is necessary sometimes to allow the speaker time to consider what to say.

If the time of silence begins to feel very uncomfortable then try reflecting back the last point of the conversation:

e.g.

'you said you were feeling anxious'.

Or give a prompt:

e.g.

'perhaps it is difficult to know what to say next'.

A good listener will tune in to the unspoken communication and allow the person time and space by coming alongside them, sharing their journey.

#### *Points to consider:*

- Active listening is a skill that will develop through practise
- Do not leap in with a comment of your own
- This moves the focus away from the person we are trying to help back on to our selves
- God gave us two ears and one mouth – perhaps He was trying to tell us to listen more than we speak!

## **Session 4**

### **Interpersonal Skills: Using Helping Skills**

<b><u>Aims</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To promote the awareness of the use of listening skills in establishing a helping relationship.</li><li>• To build on the previous two sessions looking at establishing rapport.</li><li>• To remind us of the importance of active listening in the helping relationship.</li><li>• To remain focussed on the person being helped</li><li>• To remember this not a form of therapy for the helper!</li></ul>
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<b><u>Learning Outcomes</u></b>	By the end of this session you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have revisited the concept of active listening.</li><li>• Be aware of the difference between using listening and counselling skills</li><li>• Be able to discuss sympathy and empathy and their influence within the helping relationship.</li><li>• Be aware of the need for integrity within the helping relationship.</li><li>• Have practised establishing rapport within a relationship.</li></ul>
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#### **Counselling:**

**NB pastoral visitors are NOT counsellors.**

Counselling is a professional, specific, structured activity in which a trained counsellor will apply appropriate psychological or therapeutic approaches to enable a client to move from one emotional place to another.

#### **Listening as part of a helping relationship:**

There are 3 core conditions for a helping relationship.

- Empathy
- Being ourselves, being true and real
- Accepting people as they are – not making judgements

## **Empathy**

Empathy is not sympathy. It is thinking about how the world appears to the other person.

How is empathy expressed?

- Think about what has been said already about how we communicate. Empathy can be effectively expressed through non-verbal means such as appropriate touch, body posture, gestures and facial expression.
- Words need to be well chosen. Avoid expressions such as 'I understand how you are feeling' even if you have had a similar experience yourself. To an individual, their situation is unique so how can anyone understand how they feel? They could be quite offended by such phrases no matter how well intentioned.
- More helpful phrases or sentences may be:
  - 'I imagine this must be very painful for you. How can I help you?'
  - 'I can't pretend to know how you must be feeling but I want to be here for you – do you feel able to talk to me about it?'

Each of these ends with a question inviting the person to express their feelings, to tell their story. Don't forget to listen!

Do avoid relating your own experiences, no matter how similar they may be. The focus is on the other person, not you and they are likely to find neither help nor comfort in this. If you are asked about your experiences, keep your reply brief and to the point. Move the focus back to the other person as soon as you can.

## **Being ourselves**

This means being real with the other person, showing them our true selves. To achieve this, we need to be self-aware, comfortable in our own skin. We are not pretending to be something, or someone, we are not.

To maintain a relationship means being aware of how we exercise power in that relationship. The moment someone accepts our help and support, they become vulnerable. For the Christian exercising this ministry, it must be our recognition that, alongside everyone else, we too are sinners and we, too, are loved and redeemed. That is the message we must convey, that we all stand equal and loved in God's eyes.

## **Accepting others**

We do not make judgements about their behaviour, attitudes, beliefs or values. As Christians, this means remembering that every person is a beloved child of God just as we are. Every person is precious to Him and deserving of the care we offer in His name.

**Read this story and discuss your reactions to it.**

St Patrick's Homeless Project in Hove.

During a Eucharist, one of the homeless men standing around the altar detached himself from the group, walked over to one of the pillars and relieved himself. No-one batted an eyelid. The man finished what he was doing and rejoined the group. One of the congregation quietly moved up the church with a mop and bucket and cleared up the mess. No comments, no judgement, just quiet acceptance of this homeless gentleman and his particular set of values and social boundaries.

**Now consider these questions.**

How do you cope with:

- Noisy children in church?
- Strangers who wander in front of you when shopping who are unkempt, smelling of alcohol?
- Disabled / disfigured people?
- Gay / lesbian / transgender people?
- Groups of lads shouting about on the playing field?

Each one is unique and special to God – can they be special to you?

**Small Group Activity**

This is a role play, it will help you practice the things we have been discussing. Further down the page there are some scenarios that might occur in a pastoral care situation. Choose three of these to role play with two other members.

You will work in groups of three.

- One person will be the Pastoral carer
- One will be the person receiving pastoral care
- One will observe and offer comment on the interaction.

Swap around for each scenario so that each person has a chance to be the observer, the care and the person being helped. There are no scripts to follow, just use your imagination as you go along!

When you have completed three scenarios, reflect on how you felt being the care and being cared for.

Think about the behaviours you observed when you were the observer – did these relate to the interpersonal skills we have been discussing over the last few weeks? Discuss your conclusions within your group. Be prepared to feedback to the other participants when the whole group comes back together.

### **Scenario 1**

Eric Jones is a member of the congregation. He has recently lost his wife after 52 years of marriage and has not been to church since her funeral. The Rector has visited him and feels that regular contact with a member of the pastoral team might help Eric to maintain contact with the church and enable him to attend services again. The pastoral team member remembers Eric as a stalwart of the church, always at church events with his wife, Jean. They were regular members of the congregation, well loved by all. Jean was involved with the flowers, a choir member until ill health limited her activities before her death. Eric used to be a server, was Church Warden for a number of years and, until his wife died, was always ready with a laugh and a joke to cheer people up. The pastoral team member is thinking of these things as Eric answers the door. Eric appears to be rather grumpy but invites the pastoral team member to come in. A social conversation starts then Eric admits he cannot face coming back to church without Jean.

### **Scenario 2**

Jenny is in her mid-forties and has recently come home from hospital following an operation. The Rector has asked if a member of the pastoral team could pop in and visit her at home. Jenny is very active within the church and regularly helps out with the children and youth work activities. She is facing a lengthy recuperation from her illness and will not be able to participate in active church life for several weeks. She is feeling frustrated and useless. The Rector wants to ensure she knows she is still a much loved and valued member of the church community.

### **Scenario 3**

Tom and Angie and their three children aged 4 – 9 are on the fringe of the regular church congregation, coming when there is a family-type service where they can feel comfortable. They haven't been to a service for a while and the Rector learns that one of the children has been in hospital and has been quite poorly. The child is home from hospital now but is still off school. Tom and Angie are having to continue to take time off work to look after the poorly child and are starting to suffer financially. A pastoral carer visits and, although Tom and Angie are polite and welcoming, there is obvious tension in the air.

### **Scenario 4**

Ellie and Dave are a young couple in their early thirties who have just moved into the area. They have attended church and have filled out a 'contact card'. The Rector wants to ensure this couple feel welcomed and asks the pastoral team to ensure they are visited and have relevant information about the church.



**Scenario 5**

Ellen is a housebound lady in her later eighties. She has been a faithful member of the congregation for nearly 60 years. She relies on regular visits and home communion to help her maintain her faith and her contact with the church. She regrets she is unable to be active in the church anymore and wants to know how she can still be involved. The pastoral care team are asked to make regular visits.

**Scenario 6**

Kathleen is in her mid fifties and attends church fairly regularly. She suffers from depression and has not been seen in church for several weeks. The Rector is concerned and asks a member of the pastoral team to visit to see if she is all right. When the team member visits, Kathleen says that her husband is right, the church doesn't care and no-one can help her. The team member feels that, with the right care and support, Kathleen's faith can be restored.

Notes from the feedback:

Appropriate use of interpersonal skills can enhance any relationship, particularly when we are seeking to help and support a fellow human being.

Members of a pastoral care team need to use their communication skills to good effect to enable the people they are helping to feel loved, supported and valued by members of the church.

## Session 5

### Being Trustworthy

<u>Aims</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To explore the notion of trust and confidentiality.</li><li>• To explore what is meant by confidentiality</li><li>• To discern those occasions when disclosure of information to certain agencies is necessary for the protection of those concerned with the situation.</li><li>• To enable participants to discern those occasions when trust and confidentiality can be inadvertently broken despite the best of intentions.</li></ul>
<u>Learning Outcomes</u>	By the end of this session you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be able to state the need for confidentiality and the reasons and conditions for appropriate disclosure.</li><li>• Be aware of situations when trust and confidence may be inadvertently betrayed.</li><li>• Have been introduced to the Diocesan Guidelines on Confidentiality</li></ul>

#### Introduction

*Being trustworthy is not just about keeping things confidential. It is about being straightforward and honest within the helping relationship, so that the person we are seeking to help knows that we will do the right thing, we will not pass judgement and we will continue to demonstrate God's love for them.*

#### **Share together as a whole group what the word trust means to them**

Write down examples on a flip chart for everyone to share.

- What are the most commonly held thoughts?
  
- Are there any other ideas not brought out in the discussion that can be added later?
  
- Were there any examples that you hadn't thought about before?

Look up and discuss the theme of trust in these Biblical passages.

- Psalm 37: 3-7a
- Proverbs 3: 5-6
- John 3: 18-21,
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Write down examples from the discussion on a flip chart.

*Points to consider:*

- The dictionary definition of trust is a belief in the reliability of a person or thing – when you came in and sat down, you trusted the seat to support you! – or a state of being relied on or confided in.
- Undertaking any form of pastoral care immediately puts the carer in a position of trust and great harm can be done both to individuals and to organisations if trust is betrayed.

**Discussion points in pairs**

- Have there been any occasions in your life when you have felt your trust was betrayed?

Summarise key points but *DO NOT* compromise confidentiality.

- How did it make you feel?
- How did you cope with that betrayal?

**Discussion points in the group**

- How might Jesus have felt when he was betrayed by Judas?
- How might he have felt when Peter denied him?

*Points to consider:* In a pastoral care situation there has to be trust in the relationship. Using good interpersonal skills can help establish that trust but it will be through demonstrating trustworthiness that confidence in the relationship will be maintained.

- When offering ourselves in service to others we will have the privilege of being trusted by them. They have the right to expect us to honour that trust and know that we will deal responsibly with the relationship that is established.
- Immediately a caring relationship is commenced a power relationship exists. There is always the potential for the carer to exploit the one they are caring for. By establishing and adhering to our trustworthiness, those we are caring for can feel safe and protected from exploitation. The moment we break that trust, the relationship is damaged and harmful.
- Trust goes both ways. It is important for the pastoral carer to be aware of situations where they can be at risk of harm, either physically or emotionally.

### **Activity in 2's or 3's.**

*What do you understand by the term 'confidentiality'?*

Discuss in small groups and feedback by putting ideas onto a flip chart.

Definitions of confidentiality:

*Points to consider:*

**Are you safe with secrets?**

- In the pastoral care situation, it is likely that people will entrust you with information that is private and personal and will do so because they trust you to take care of that information.

**Are you a gossip?**

- It is very difficult to know what to do with information offered in such situations, particularly if that information impacts on others in some way.
- As a general rule, do not promise secrecy. It is better to state that information will be kept confidential but that it may be beneficial to the person if they consent to certain information being disclosed to the Rector/Vicar but only if absolutely necessary

### **Legal Aspects of Confidentiality**

The Data Protection Act of 1998 provides for the protection of personal data. It defines personal data as information that relates to a living person which would lead to the identification of that person.

The Human Rights Act of 1998 compliments the Data Protection Act as it recognises the individual's right to a private and family life.

Disclosure of any information gained through a pastoral encounter to unauthorised persons may contravene either of these laws.

In view of this, it is not expected that pastoral carers will keep any written records (manual or electronic) of those they are involved with through the pastoral care team. The only records that should be kept are those legally required of the incumbent of the parish and the control of that information is also governed by the Data Protection Act.

### **Moral/Ethical Aspects of Confidentiality**

Knowledge is power, it is said. If we know something about someone then we have some power over them. We have the potential for gaining status by passing that knowledge on to carefully selected others.

Of course, Christians would never do that.....

**Group activity: discuss in small groups and then feedback to the whole group.**

*Consider the following situations. Are they familiar?*

Have you ever been involved in a situation similar to any of these, when you have been exposed to an unnecessary amount of information about someone?

1. Two ladies of the church bump into one another in the shop. A conversation ensues in which the various ailments of people in the parish are discussed. Sympathy for the sufferer is expressed but names are mentioned and medical details discussed.
2. A member of the pastoral care team bumps into a fellow parishioner. The pastoral carer is fresh from visiting someone with a few problems. He asks the fellow parishioner to pray for this person, giving many details of the problems he has been entrusted with so that the fellow parishioner knows what to pray for.
3. At the regular parish prayer meeting, one person prays for another and gives God the person's life history and many details so that God knows exactly who is being prayed for and what needs to be done – and so does everybody else at the meeting!
4. A member of the pastoral team always shares everything with his/her partner. They share their daily prayer time and discuss all issues with each other so that they can pray together. Their relationship is founded on that idea that they will never have secrets from one another.

- Points to consider:*
- Consent must be given for any prayer for a person in a public meeting or service.
  - God already knows the details – we don't need to tell Him.
  - If a person is to be prayed for by others, either privately or in a public forum and they have given their consent then it is sufficient just to give their name (Christian name alone will suffice)
  - If people ask for details then gently tell them that the information is confidential but if they could just remember the name in their prayers that would be helpful

### **'Holy Gossip'**

Sometimes we hear something about someone and feel a need to make it public, often with the best of intentions, such as including someone on the prayer list or eliciting support in prayer from others.

It is vital that the person concerned is aware and consents to such activity. They may not want the whole congregation to know their business. If they do not give permission for this sort of 'sharing' then it simply must not happen.

Personal information should always be treated as confidential and with respect. This applies at all times, not just when we are 'on church business'.

### **Necessary Sharing of Information**

There may be occasions, and these will be rare, when it would be irresponsible to keep certain information to yourself. If you suspect the person concerned is in a situation that affects others, has committed a crime, is in danger or is a danger to others then you must tell the Rector.

Be honest with the person, tell them of your concerns and the need to pass them on. Ask their permission, explaining it is in their best interest and let them know who you are passing the information on to and what the likely consequences might be.

If permission is not forthcoming, you must seek advice from the Rector. You can explain the outline of the situation without disclosing personal details. If all else fails then you should be straightforward with the person and tell them what you intend to do. This will inevitably cause distress and possibly the breakdown of the relationship so must only be undertaken when all other avenues are closed.

### **Some Basic Guidelines:**

When you are about to receive personal and confidential information it is important that you explain what is meant by confidentiality before anything further is said.

This may include:

- An agreement that anything said remains confidential between you and the other person and that any disclosure to another party will be with consent. *(Make it clear, however, that a confidential conversation is not the same as a sacramental confession in the Church which must be made to a Priest and is governed by Canon Law).*
- Your assumption is that all confidential information is true although you retain the liberty to question the validity of what is being said in a face-to-face conversation with the other person.
- An agreement between you that matters of a serious nature such as child abuse, terrorism or other threat to harm others may, for legal reasons, be disclosed to a third party.
- Never offer complete secrecy, particularly to a minor. Encourage the person to understand that other people may need to be told in order that the person gets the help they need. Avoid being left with information that binds you into a secret.
- If the person is unwilling to allow you to operate within these guidelines then you must explain that you are unable to help them any further. Refer the person back to the Rector
- Any information heard about a third party during a confidential conversation must be treated with the same level of respect as other matters. It may or may not be true!

*(From Strictly Confidential: A Guide to Confidentiality, Diocese of Chichester)*

*Remember, you are representing your Church, other Christians.*

*Trust in a helping relationship is vital, breaking that trust brings hurt and harm to all.*

### **Final reflections on Biblical passages.**

Exodus 23:1

2 Thessalonians 3: 11-12

Proverbs 25:18

Psalms 57:4



## **Session 6**

### **Boundaries and limitation of the pastoral care team**

<b><u>Aims</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To develop an awareness of the boundaries and limitations of the pastoral care team role.</li><li>• To have some knowledge of where further help, both spiritual and secular, may be found.</li><li>• An understanding of the grief process to be able to offer a listening ear, basic spiritual support and friendship.</li></ul>
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<b><u>Learning Outcomes</u></b>	By the end of this session you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be aware of the boundaries safeguarding each party in a one-to-one contact situation.</li><li>• Be aware of their role within the Pastoral Care Team and the remit of that team</li><li>• Be aware of the limitations of the Lay Pastoral Assistant role and when to refer to other agencies.</li><li>• Be aware of the grief process, how to help the bereaved in the immediate situation and where to direct them for further help.</li></ul>
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### **Introduction**

#### **Why are boundaries needed?**

Pastoral carers are in a position of trust and power so boundaries need to be set in order to protect the person being cared for and the carer themselves.

Pastoral carers also need to be fully aware of their remit to visit on behalf of the church and to ensure that they do not tread beyond the bounds of that remit because this may cause damage to all parties:

- Trust may be betrayed
- Hopes and expectations may be destroyed
- The carer and the cared for may both be harmed

People are vulnerable in a care situation. On most occasions, the most vulnerable person is the one being cared for which is why all pastoral team visitors will need enhanced CRB clearance.

There may be occasions, however, when the carer is the vulnerable one. If you feel uncomfortable about the situation you are in when visiting someone you must bring the visit to a close and leave. At the earliest opportunity you need to discuss this situation with the incumbent.

**Group discussion with time for problem solving as a team.**

What situations can you envisage that might make you feel vulnerable as a pastoral visitor?

How does this make you feel?

How can we help each other?

What support do you think the team needs to cope with potentially difficult situations?

- Same sex visitors?
- Initial visit made by ministry team?
- Carry a mobile phone?
- Tell someone where you are going and when you will be back?
- Other ideas?

**Small group activity in 3's or 4's.**

Discuss in small groups and then feedback to the whole group.

Make a list of the boundaries that need to be considered in a pastoral visiting relationship.

How can we ensure that these are properly addressed?



**Activity in small groups.**

*Look at these scenarios.*

***What do you think the boundaries are that need to be recognised in these situations?***

Discuss in small groups and feedback by putting ideas onto a flip chart.

**Scenario 1**

Eric Jones is a member of the congregation. He has recently lost his wife after 52 years of marriage and has not been to church since her funeral. The Rector has visited him and feels that regular contact with a member of the pastoral team might help Eric to maintain contact with the church and enable him to attend services again. The pastoral team member remembers Eric as a stalwart of the church, always at church events with his wife, Jean. They were regular members of the congregation, well loved by all. Jean was involved with the flowers, a choir member until ill health limited her activities before her death. Eric used to be a server, was Church Warden for a number of years and, until his wife died, was always ready with a laugh and a joke to cheer people up. The pastoral team member is thinking of these things as Eric answers the door. Eric appears to be rather grumpy but invites the pastoral team member to come in.

A social conversation starts then Eric admits he cannot face coming back to church without Jean.

**Scenario 2**

Jenny is in her mid-forties and has recently come home from hospital following an operation. The Rector has asked if a member of the pastoral team could pop in and visit her at home. Jenny is very active within the church and regularly helps out with the children and youth work activities. She is facing a lengthy recuperation from her illness and will not be able to participate in active church life for several weeks. She is feeling frustrated and useless. The Rector wants to ensure she knows she is still a much loved and valued member of the church community.

**Scenario 3**

Ellie and Dave are a young couple in their early thirties who have just moved into the area. They have attended church and have filled out a 'contact card'. The Rector wants to ensure this couple feel welcomed and asks the pastoral team to ensure they are visited and have relevant information about the church.

**Scenario 4**

Tom and Angie and their three children aged 4 – 9 are on the fringe of the regular church congregation, coming when there is a family-type service where they can feel comfortable. They haven't been to a service for a while and the Rector learns that one of the children has been in hospital and has been quite poorly. The child is home from hospital now but is still off school. Tom and Angie are having to continue to take time off work to look after the poorly child and are starting to suffer financially. A pastoral carer visits and, although Tom and Angie are polite and welcoming, there is obvious tension in the air.

### **Scenario 5**

Ellen is a housebound lady in her later eighties. She has been a faithful member of the congregation for nearly 60 years. She relies on regular visits and home communion to help her maintain her faith and her contact with the church. She regrets she is unable to be active in the church anymore and wants to know how she can still be involved. The pastoral care team are asked to make regular visits.

### **Scenario 6**

Kathleen is in her mid fifties and attends church fairly regularly. She suffers from depression and has not been seen in church for several weeks. The Rector is concerned and asks a member of the pastoral team to visit to see if she is all right. When the team member visits, Kathleen says that her husband is right, the church doesn't care and no-one can help her. The team member feels that, with the right care and support, Kathleen's faith can be restored.

### **WARNING !**

Talking about abuse can give rise to feelings and emotions that may have remained hidden or dormant for many years.  
Please be aware of how you are feeling and ask for support if you feel you need to talk anything through.

### **What is Abuse?**

Abuse can involve any one or more of the following:

- **Neglect:** persistent or severe neglect of a child/vulnerable person, or failure to protect the child/vulnerable person from exposure to any kind of danger, resulting in the significant impairment of health or development.
- **Physical injury:** actual or likely physical injury to a child/vulnerable person or failure to prevent physical injury (or suffering).
- **Sexual abuse:** actual or likely sexual exploitation of a child, adolescent or vulnerable person. The child/vulnerable person may be dependent or developmentally immature.
- **Emotional abuse:** actual or likely severe adverse effects on the emotional and behavioural development of a child/vulnerable person caused by persistent or severe emotional ill treatment or rejection. All abuse involves some emotional ill treatment. This category should be used where it is the main or sole form of abuse.

If you suspect there is some kind of abuse happening then you **MUST** discuss this with the Incumbent and/or parish safeguarding representative as a matter of priority.

## **The Grieving Person**

**Bereavement** literally means 'to take away from' and is usually used in the context of the death of a loved one. It can equally be applied to a person who has lost something meaningful in their lives, perhaps after redundancy, divorce, a loved one moving away, the loss of a role or status that had been part of life.

**Grief** is the emotional response to death.

**Mourning** is the culturally determined expression of bereavement and grief.

There is some disagreement among the experts about the number of stages in the grief process but four common themes appear to emerge:

1. Numbness and denial: the initial reaction, as if one's feelings have been 'turned off', acting as if the deceased has somehow managed to escape death
2. Yearning or pining: The need to re-create the deceased, often 'seeing' them or 'hearing' them.
3. Despair and depression: A feeling of helplessness and hopelessness at the inability to bring the deceased back from the dead. May be accompanied by other emotions such as anger, guilt, or anxiety.
4. Recovery and reorganisation: 'letting go' and a realisation that life must go on.

The time span for the grieving process varies from person to person and can often take a backward pace, for example, when a birthday or anniversary triggers the grief reaction again.

Dealing with the bereaved is never an easy task, often they will want to talk about their loved one. The role of the Visitor is to listen but to also be alert to the needs of the person as they might need more formal bereavement counselling.

If you think this may be the case you might want to offer contact information for a bereavement support scheme or you might feel it more appropriate to come back and talk to a member of the ministry team about the best way to help.

Bereavement Counselling is a very specific skill and needs to be undertaken only by those trained in this if harm is to be avoided.

## **Session 7**

### **Making pastoral visits**

<b><u>Aims</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To explore the expectations of the parish of a pastoral visitor</li><li>• To establish the experience of participants as the starting point for visiting</li><li>• To discuss difficult issues</li><li>• To establish the purposes of visiting</li></ul>
<b><u>Learning Outcomes</u></b>	By the end of this session you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have explored the notion of visiting the housebound and the sick</li><li>• Have considered the issues surrounding visiting the sick in a variety of settings including hospital, residential care and nursing homes and in their own home.</li><li>• Have considered other areas in which the parish may require your ministry e.g. baptism and marriage preparation, visiting newcomers</li></ul>

#### Introduce the theme

### **Visiting as an element of Pastoral Care**

#### **Reflection Activity - Individual task**

Spend a few minutes reflecting on those occasions when you may have been visited by representatives of the Church

- who visited?

- what was their purpose?

- did you value/appreciate the visit?

- what, if anything, did you find difficult?

- was there anything that made you feel uncomfortable?

### **Group activity**

Discuss and feedback with the whole group your reflections.

Key points to be summarised onto a flip chart.

### **Biblical perspectives**

Read these passages through in small groups and then feedback to the whole group.

- The role of pastoral visitor is a response to a Biblical imperative.  
*Matthew 25:31-46*
- Pastoral care became a delegated responsibility very early in the life of the Church.  
*Acts 6:1-6*
- Pastoral care is the responsibility of the whole church community and of each individual within it.

Points to consider	Deacons provided pastoral care which enabled the apostles to have time for prayer and proclamation. Are there any comparisons with the church today? What can we learn for developing collaborative and complimentary styles of ministry between the clergy and laity?
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## **Visiting within different contexts**

### **Reflection Activity**

In groups, try to identify the main things you will need to be aware when:

- hospital visiting

-visiting in a residential home

-visiting in someone's own home

Discuss in small groups and feedback by putting ideas onto a flip chart.

Points to consider

*There are a wide range of issues to be considered, some are context specific others will relate to all visiting:*

- What is the appropriate time to visit? Hospital procedures and regulations; routines in hospital, residential home, and own home.
- Has the person just had a series of visitors and all they want to do is sleep?
- Relationships with other involved in care. Professionals take precedence.
- Courtesy towards all staff - they have a job to do.
- Always inform chaplaincy team that you have visited someone in hospital.
- Remember the little things. When visiting someone at home always ask where you should sit - otherwise you may cause offence by sitting in the chair which hasn't been used since their husband died....
- The person you are visiting may be experiencing feelings of fear, powerlessness etc..
- Don't overstay your welcome. A 10 minute visit can do far more good than an hour and a half marathon!
- Be aware that you are a visitor, treat people courteously and with respect.
- There may be a range of professionals responsible for the person you are visiting. They have tasks to fulfil and a duty of care.
- Recognise and maintain the boundaries.



## **Session 8**

### **Praying with and for People**

<b><u>Aims</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To explore the role of the Pastoral Team member in praying both with and for the person, praying for healing.</li><li>• To explore the issue of praying with and for others in a pastoral situation.</li><li>• To consider your own views on prayer</li><li>• To discuss with others your own experiences and any fear or anxieties you may have about this aspect of ministry.</li></ul>
<b><u>Learning Outcomes</u></b>	By the end of this session you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Have discussed your views on prayer</li><li>• Have explored your feelings regarding praying with someone and the appropriate use of bible reading.</li><li>• Have discussed dealing with difficult issues e.g. when prayer seems unanswered, suffering.</li></ul>

#### **Introduce the theme**

#### **Prayer in a Pastoral Context**

Prayer is an essential part of the pastoral ministry, although we may not always feel confident in our ability to pray for and with others. We may feel hesitant in making the offer to pray with others.

Read *James 5:13-16*

#### **Reflection Activity**

In pairs discuss your experience of prayer

- which aspects do you find easy?

- which aspects do you find hard?

- what are your expectations?

- what concerns do you have about praying with others?

## Group activity

Discuss and feedback with the whole group your reflections.

Key points to be summarised onto a flip chart.

Points to consider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Do not be afraid to offer to pray with those whom you visit</li><li>• Remember to keep your prayers short and to the point</li><li>• Do not lecture or dictate to God - there is a real danger in telling God how he should answer prayers. God knows our needs better than we do ourselves and may not answer as we wish. This can lead people to feel that prayer is pointless. At its worst it can lead to a crisis of faith and the rejection of God.</li><li>• Remember that God gave us the gift of language - use language which is appropriate to the context and the person you are visiting. Try not to ramble or be unnecessarily repetitive.</li><li>• Do not be afraid of silence.</li><li>• Remember to give thanks</li><li>• The Lord's Prayer</li></ul>
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## The Bible & Prayer

Make a note of a number of short passages which may be especially useful.

Those who are sick or in distress may not be prepared for a whole chapter of Leviticus!

The Psalms, 23, 121

The Miracles & Sayings of Jesus

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.' *Matthew 11:28*

'Be still, and know that I am God' *Psalms 46:10a*

'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.'  
*2 Cor 12:9*

### **Reflection Activity**

Discuss in pairs those times when you feel that God may not have answered your prayers or you feel as if he has ignored them

What did it feel like?

What do you think was really happening?

What would you say to someone who asked you why God didn't answer them?

Feedback and discussion with the whole group

### **Conclusion**

There may be an expectation that you will offer a prayer when visiting someone.

The person being visited may be too embarrassed to ask, so do not be afraid to offer prayer if this seems appropriate – they can always say 'no'!

Why not close the session by getting into small groups and offering a short prayer for each other?

## Session 9

### Moving forward as a Team

<b><u>Aims</u></b>	To consider the resourcing, support, spirituality, continued learning and working procedures for accountability for pastoral ministry
<b><u>Learning Outcomes</u></b>	<p>By the end of this session you will have reached a common understanding about:</p> <p><i>Continued Learning:</i>              Importance of reflective journaling in maintaining perspective              Need for continued resourcing and growth</p> <p><i>Support and Supervision:</i>              Necessity of meeting as a team for support              Need to have regular supervision</p> <p><i>Spirituality and Prayer:</i>              Importance of regular prayer life              Introduce Spiritual Direction</p> <p><i>Procedures from here:</i>              Introduce working procedures</p>

### Looking back.....

- Identify how your view of the task of involvement in pastoral care has changed during course
- Identify key themes that keep coming back to you as being important
- Identify areas you have a sense of wanting to learn more

## **Where do we go from here?**

This course has encouraged **mutual discernment** about any future role that you as an individual might have in a parish pastoral care team or other aspects of organised pastoral care in the parish.

Discussion with the Incumbent about your sense and his of whether being part of a pastoral care team is God's will for you.

- Discernment requires deep listening, exploration, and a lot of patience – we have been reflecting and using much listening in recent weeks
- It means living with questions rather than having clear cut answers. You probably have lots of questions now – possibly more than you started out with about Pastoral care and your role
- It requires you to share yourself with others as you can't do discernment on your own. How does it feel to know you have done that?
- It can be challenging but also enjoyable and exciting too. How have you felt?
- Decisions about your place in a possible parish pastoral team will come about as a result of your parish priest, the PCC, and other key people reaching consensus with you.

## **If it is decided to invite you to join a Pastoral Visiting Team then:**

- talk with your incumbent about the sorts of areas in which you might be involved
- you'll have a brief and simple working agreement/min spec
- If don't have a recent one for the parish already, a **CRB check** will be needed as you may be visiting vulnerable adults in their home

## **Commissioning**

- In a Parish Eucharist the team as a *whole team* will be commissioned by the incumbent. You will be asked, together, to come to the front and affirm your commitment to the tasks of pastoral care under supervision and guidance.
- You will be asked to affirm your commitment to contribute to the life of the team
- The congregation will be asked to affirm their willingness to support the team
- The team will be prayed for.



You will be given an **Identity Card** and possibly a parish badge to wear

- This is only to be worn when you are visiting on behalf of the parish – i.e. when you ‘have been sent’ = apostle = mission
- You will need to distinguish capacity in which you are visiting. This is not the same as popping in for cup of tea with someone, though training and heightened discernment may draw out of you an increasing desire for and opportunities for ordinary care for people around

### **Working Agreement**

This will include the following:

- The boundaries for the role
- The support offered to you and the kind of support you will offer
- The direction or plan for the team
- Expectations and procedures for dealing with problems
- Accountability – The Incumbent has the cure of souls in the parish which he shares with the Bishop – this is laid down and said at his/her licensing. He/she exercises that role in a collaborative way by involving others in this task. You share in a small but particular way in that ‘cure of souls’. This means that:

The incumbent is accountable to the Bishop for

- his care and support of you
- how you operate in your representative role
- how you are protected
- how you are resourced

### **Agreement contains**

- Membership of team for 3 years. For those of riper years there will be an informal chance to review each year, so everyone is sure that you are able and willing to continue.
- Renewable in 3 year batches. But there may be occasions when circumstances suggest the need for a break
  - e.g bereavement of close family member
  - major work issues
  - other family issues
  - temp health issuesthe whole point is that you need to be able to discuss your involvement and make plans according to circumstances and parish need
- Time commitment
- Main areas you can expect to be involved in (e.g. young mums/ older people)
- Expectation that you will continue to grow, develop and learn
- Expectations about your spirituality – e.g. Regular attendance at the Eucharist and a commitment to regular private prayer.

- Opportunity for an annual review
- Pre-arranged out of pocket expenses will be re-imbursed
- 3 yearly review. Renewable by mutual consent, but there will be an expectation that you will have attended regular supervision meetings and developed learning in some way.

### **Working Procedures**

- The incumbent or the team leader will suggest an activity for each person to be involved in/ person to visit/ in accordance with
  - a) parish needs and
  - b) who is discerned as the right person/ has the most appropriate gifts for a given situation.
- Any areas you are not happy about – you should talk to the incumbent
- This is not a competition – why has she had 3 people to talk to and I only have one? *‘Ministry is a gift to be shared not a territory to be defended’*  
If you start to sense such feelings – reflect about your own security/ own relationship with God and talk to your incumbent or team leader.
- Making suggestions. It is likely that you will start to discern that there are people who might need care. Others may speak to you. The route is always to put these suggestions to Incumbent or team leader. He/she can discern who might be the best person to move on this.

### **Expectations of team members**

Support, supervision and the life of the team

- Team meetings – monthly or quarterly – a social occasion  
for sharing of experiences  
to support each other  
all adds up to supervision
- Need to keep ongoing journal for own benefit and to feed into these meetings
- Possibility of buddying for peer support

Own Spirituality and growth

- As someone involved as a representative of the parish you will be seen as someone mature in faith. Essence of maturity is the recognition of a continued need to grow
- Daily prayer life
- Life of intercessory prayer (remember sense of sharing God’s life from session 1)
- Spiritual Director/ Soul friend
  - a) Outside parish
  - b) Lay or ordained
  - c) Someone who will listen and reflect
- Help to find person can be provided
- Someone who will ‘Support you and walk with you on your journey of faith’
- An Awayday for the team may be considered

Continuing to learn and grow

- Journaling and attention to prayer life is part of this process
- Reading- e.g.
  - Anne Long *Listening*
  - Nouwen *Return of Prod Son*
  - Runcorn *Spirituality Workbook*
- Developing Discipleship courses provided by the Diocese throughout the year
- Following Jesus – a 26 week diocesan course to help speak about faith and grow in maturity
- Other areas relating to pastoral ministry
  - Bereavement
  - Marriage/ follow up to marriage
  - Welcoming
  - Young mums
  - Faith sharing
  - Baptism visiting and follow visits
  - Elderly
  - Hospital visiting
  - Child protection\*training
  - Quiet day\*

### **Discussion and thoughts about the commissioning service**

Look through the service and make practical arrangements for the day

Final thoughts and reflections:

Questions: