



# The Bishop's Certificate in the Diocese of Worcester



*Are you thinking of doing a Bishop's Certificate course? Read on to find out more ...*

## **What is the Bishop's Certificate?**

This is a diocesan study course which is offered in different places around the diocese each year and run by volunteer tutors. It's designed to help you learn more about the bible and the great themes of Christian faith and life, and to relate these to your own experience and locality. It will encourage you to explore and reflect as you learn with, and from, the other people on your course. It's a great way to get to know people from neighbouring churches and different Christian traditions.

### **What qualifications do I need?**

No academic ones, just enthusiasm, interest, an open mind and the willingness to commit yourself to attending the whole course, as well as to learning in a group.

### **How long does the course last?**

There are 30 sessions over the course of a year, and each session lasts between 1½ to 2 hours. Most courses run on a weekly basis over three terms, with the usual breaks for holidays, but each group plans its own timetable.

### **What happens in a typical session?**

Each session includes a mix of input: the tutor has their own input, and there is common course material. Everyone has their own copy of the full notes for every session. Then there is discussion, and personal reflection, usually based around looking at passages from the bible together. This is a course that invites everyone to get involved in sharing their ideas and experiences, but only as much as they wish to. Listening to, and learning from, each other is a significant ingredient of the whole experience.

### **How much reading will I have to do?**

There is suggested preparation material for each session which includes some reading, usually from the bible, and making notes to help introduce you to the topic. Sometimes some 'homework' might be recommended and if you want to find out more about a topic, there will be ideas for further reading.

### **Are there tests or essays?**

No. There are no formal assessments required.

### **How big is a group?**

Most groups are have between six and twelve people in them. If groups are too big, they can inhibit shy people, and if they're too small, it may lessen your chances of interesting discussion.

### **How much does it cost?**

It's £30 per person, to cover the cost of the materials and administration.

### **When and where will the course happen?**

This is a diocesan course, so everyone covers the same material, but it's delivered in different places around the diocese by local tutors. The tutors will plan the location and timing of the sessions. Email [training@cofe-worcester.org.uk](mailto:training@cofe-worcester.org.uk) or ring 01905 732812 to find out if a course near you is already arranged.

### **What happens at the end of the course?**

You'll receive your certificate from the Bishop at a special diocesan presentation evening with a reception for all the course 'graduates' that year, along with their families and friends.

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## An outline of the Bishop's Certificate

My Story	1 Introductions	Together on the journey
God's Story	2 Basic Bible Introduction	Major themes of the Old Testament
	3 Creation and Fall	
	4 Abraham & Sarah	
	5 Moses	
	6 Passover & Exodus	
	7 A Jewish Perspective on Passover and Scripture	
	8 The Prophets	
	9 Exile & Future Hope	
	10 The Psalms	
	11 Encountering Jesus	
	12 The Impact of Jesus	
	13 Jesus Reveals God's Kingdom	
	14 Jesus – what caused his death	
	15 Resurrection	
	16 Who Jesus is	
	17 Pentecost & the Holy Spirit	
	18 Trinity	
	Joining Stories	
Living the story	20 Christian Faith and Creeds	How we live in the light of God's story
	21 Being in relationship – a person who prays	
	22 Being in good company – traditions of prayer	
	23 Being at Jesus' table – the Eucharist	
	24 Being Anglican – our family of faith	
	25 Being ecumenical – wider traditions	
	26 Being interfaith – alongside other communities	
	27 Being disciples – living our faith	
	28 Being witnesses – sharing God's love	
	29 Being the church – building up the body of Christ	
	My story revisited	

## What happens after I do this course?

That depends on you. There will be two study days in the year after you complete your course, which will act as a group reunion, and give help you keep your learning alive. Many people find themselves enthused and energized to continue learning, whether formally or informally. The course can be a great stepping stone into further study, and for quite a few people it is also a significant step in exploring their own discipleship and vocation. While tutors will be very happy to talk about “What next?” questions with you, there is no pressure to do anything else. This is a course of valuable learning in its own right for those who want to deepen their understanding of the Bible and their faith.

## Study days after the Bishop’s Certificate

*In due course we intend to offer a new follow up to the course:*

### **Exploring Church: an autumn Saturday**

to reflect on *the Letter to the Ephesians* and catch up with each other.

### **Exploring Church: a spring Saturday**

to reflect on *the Acts of the Apostles* and catch up with each other.

## I'd like to do the course - what do I do now?

Courses usually begin in the autumn of each year and details of dates and venues are typically planned during the early summer. Contact the Ministry and Discipleship team for a registration form. Either email [training@cofe-worcester.org.uk](mailto:training@cofe-worcester.org.uk), or go online at <https://www.cofe-worcester.org.uk/your-faith/study-resources/bishops-certificate/>. If a local course near you has already been arranged, then the tutor will have written it in below.

If courses for the coming autumn have not been finalised when you enquire, your name will go on a list to register your interest and an application form will be sent to you as soon as it is available. If a course is planned near you already, then the details are below.

If you have any queries not covered here, please don't hesitate to ask.

Your nearest local course is:

Your local Bishop’s Certificate tutor is: