

To all Licensed Clergy

Petertide 2019

Date: 5<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Our Ref: MS/ec-bp8660

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We hope this letter finds you well and enjoying the summer weather which has finally arrived. Once again, this letter comes with our grateful thanks for your ministry and the privilege of being called by God to this shared ministry.

### **Update on Wellbeing**

The wellbeing of clergy continues to be high on our list of priorities. We have been delighted that a good number of you have joined us on the Bishops Retreat Days at Launde Abbey over the past months. To date, approximately 120 clergy have participated and the feedback we have received has been positive. We will continue offering these along a similar format, starting with a brief gathering worship at 9am and ending with a simple Eucharist at 4 pm. The time in between is spent in silence except for a “talking” lunch. There is no charge and you can book your place by contacting Launde Abbey directly, [bookings@launde.org.uk](mailto:bookings@launde.org.uk). Future dates are:

7<sup>th</sup> August 2019

[September – Bishops’ Conference]

29<sup>th</sup> October 2019

18<sup>th</sup> November 2019

9<sup>th</sup> December 2019

15<sup>th</sup> January 2020

12<sup>th</sup> February 2020

12<sup>th</sup> March 2020

23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020

Bishop Guli has convened a People and Wellbeing Group which currently meets quarterly with two aims in mind at this stage. First, to work on ensuring that our structures and processes are organised in such a way as to enable, as much as possible, a diocesan culture in which people can flourish. Secondly, to explore different themes underlying the whole area of wellbeing, both those things that foster better wellbeing and those things that obstruct. Additionally, Bishop Guli is reflecting on how she might embark on a process of careful listening across the diocese through which we can try to understand how best to move forward. We are conscious that this is a complex area to which there are no simple or quick answers, but we are committed to ongoing engagement. You may have seen that General Synod is also considering this important question - paper GS2133 being debated on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/policy-and-thinking/work-general-synod/agendas-papers/general-synod-july-2019#na>

**Bishops Lodge, 12 Springfield Road, LE2 3BD**

0116 270 8985, [bishop.leicester@leccofe.org](mailto:bishop.leicester@leccofe.org), [www.leicester.anglican.org](http://www.leicester.anglican.org)

Meanwhile, a reminder of the rhythm we encourage for all in ministry (adapted appropriately for those whose church ministry is part-time):

- Every week: Licensed stipendiary clergy are expected to take a full 24 hours off from the business of daily ministry each week and when possible attach that to a second day with a slower rhythm than the rest of the week.
- Every month: All clergy are encouraged to take 48 hours off (rather than 24 hours) once a month.
- Every year: Annual holiday allowance is six full weeks including 6 Sundays (and we would want to encourage taking a full two week holiday at some point in the year).

### **Ministerial Development Reviews**

Continuing on the theme of wellbeing, we also want to let you know that we are reviewing the process for MDRs. Currently all licensed clergy have an MDR with a member of the Bishop's Leadership Team every two years. We hope that you find this helpful, but we are conscious that we haven't asked for feedback before now. Rather than a formal process of feedback, can we simply ask you to send any comments or suggestions about the process directly to us by email. If you have an MDR booked for later this year, please assume it will go ahead as planned. We will notify you later of any changes for 2020.

### **Confident Engagement**

Here in Leicester we have chosen the phrase "confident engagement" to sum up our approach to relationships with people of other faith communities. There are opportunities to spend time with people of many different faith and belief perspectives throughout the county and city. While many of our village populations lack diversity, you do not have to go far to encounter difference. You will meet people of other faiths when you read the news or go shopping in a market town or city or go to school, college, university or work.

Christians can, at times, be diffident in how they engage with people of other faiths, perhaps out of a desire to not offend or because of uncertainty as to what is acceptable to say. The purpose of the attached leaflet is to encourage Christians to be confident in how they engage. Confidence is not arrogance or brash certainty; it entails self-knowledge, humility, a willingness to learn and grow through developing relationships of trust and understanding for the good of all. The *Confident Engagement* leaflet has been produced primarily to encourage discussion within local parish churches; it contains simple next steps that can be adapted to any context as you develop your confidence and experience in relating to people of other faith and belief perspectives.

We plan to discuss the booklet at Diocesan Synod in September 2019, and hope that parishes and deaneries will also use it as a resource. If you would like further support or help in the area of interfaith engagement, please do get in touch with the St Philip's Centre, where the Director (Tom Wilson, [director@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:director@stphilipscentre.co.uk)) or Churches Training Officer (Laura Johnson, [courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk](mailto:courses@stphilipscentre.co.uk)) would be happy to help in whatever way they can.

### **Brexit**

The theme of 'confident engagement' could also apply to our civic and political life. It is our observation that many people are struggling to know how to talk about the changes happening at the moment. While continuing to encourage you to use the Church of England resources for prayer and conversation starters: <https://www.churchofengland.org/together> we also want to encourage wider reflection on the questions of social capital and resilience within our communities. Please talk with our Social Responsibility Enabler, Alison Adams, [alison.adams@leccofe.org](mailto:alison.adams@leccofe.org) or Together Leicester worker Sian Rigby, [sian.rigby@leccofe.org](mailto:sian.rigby@leccofe.org) to explore this further. <https://www.facebook.com/pg/TogetherLeic/posts/>

### **Safeguarding**

We would also like to draw your attention to the recent report from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse on the Anglican Church:

<https://www.iicsa.org.uk/publications/investigation/anglican-chichester-peter-ball>

If you have not already read it, we would encourage you to do so – it is quite long, and it is difficult reading because of the painful truths it exposes – but these are truths which need to be heard in the church, and they need to be taken very seriously. If you would like to discuss the issues it raises, please speak to someone in the Diocesan Safeguarding Team ([rachael.spiers@leccofe.org](mailto:rachael.spiers@leccofe.org) and [peter.holloway@leccofe.org](mailto:peter.holloway@leccofe.org))

Finally, we look forward to seeing most of you at our Conference in September. We hope that this will be a relaxed time to learn together and grow our partnership in the gospel.

With our prayers and best wishes,



The Rt Revd Martyn Snow  
Bishop of Leicester



The Rt Revd Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani  
Bishop of Loughborough