

**THE BISHOP'S CERTIFICATE COURSE:
Living Faith**

- * Provides an opportunity to learn more about the Christian faith
- * Encourages exploration of the Bible and the traditions of our faith
- * Links the area of study to living as Christians in today's world
- * Help to equip us in the Church's mission of serving Christ and others
- * Encourages and enables us to be more confident followers of Christ

Bishop's Certificate courses are run locally in parishes, or groups of parishes and enable participants to study in their own Christian community. The Bishop's Certificate Course normally runs over one year and is divided into three terms of ten weeks each.

The material for the course is available from the Diocesan Ministry Department, and includes a work book as well as some audio and visual material. The workbook and CD/DVDs are available for a small charge, or can be downloaded for free.

Living Faith: The Bishop's Certificate Course is a one year programme for people who would like to deepen their understanding of Christian teaching, and reflect on what it means to have a living faith. The course follows the seasons of the Christian calendar and invites reflection on the major festivals of the faith. Through the events of the Christian year, different themes are explored through studying passages from the Bible, from Christian teaching and from the contemporary world. The course can be used in parish or deanery groups, or by small groups.

If you would like to start up and/or lead a *Living Faith* Course or if you are interested in joining a course in your area, please get in touch with:

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**The new
Bishop's Certificate
Course**

Living Faith

 **DIOCESE OF
LICHFIELD**
GOING FOR GROWTH

ordinary + advent + christmas + epiphany + lent + holy week + easter + trinity +

In a world in which few people have time for church, and lots of people find the Christian message irrelevant, it's not surprising if many Christians feel a bit unsure of themselves and would like the opportunity to learn more about the Christian faith.

Faced with unspoken doubts about
... God...
... the world
... our own experience
... the Bible
... what we're here for
... where it's all going

its all too easy to avoid the big questions.

The Bishop's Certificate Course: Living Faith helps us to find the confidence to live for God in an indifferent world, by deepening our understanding of the past, present and future of the people called Christians.

The Bishop's Certificate Course: Living Faith is an introductory course for all people who want to learn more about the Christian faith and discipleship. It follows the seasons of the Christian year, and looks at some key aspects of Bible study, belief and the work of the Church. It ties in with the worshipping life of the Church as we journey through the Christian year and mark the key seasons and festivals. It is possible to start at the beginning of any of the modules. Each module includes a film night and a group meal. At the group meal, participants are encouraged to talk about some of the things they have been thinking about during the course, and to make connections between these themes and the experiences and circumstance of their own lives.

+ Epiphany + Lent + Holy Week + Good Friday +

The ten weeks of this term focus on the period between Christmas and Easter. The module is particularly concerned with the story of Jesus' death and the events that lead up to his crucifixion. We explore what the narratives of Jesus' *Passion*—his suffering, tell us about who he was and is. We consider why this matters to us today and reflect on some of the layers of meaning of Jesus' persecution and death. The module begins with the new year, and explores the way in which God constantly offers us new starts.

+ Easter + Ascension + Pentecost + Trinity +

This term begins with the celebration of Easter; the Good News of the resurrection of Jesus Christ which changes the world, and our relationship with God forever. As the term continues, we look in more detail at who Jesus is, and why Christians believe he lives today. We then explore some of the key beliefs of the Christian faith, including the understanding of God as Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The module moves on to explore how these beliefs are made manifest in the Christian life and we examine what it means to be part of the Church and to have Good News about who we are, and who God is, that we want to share with others.

+ Ordinary + Harvest + Advent + Christmas +

The first part of the term explores the Christian understanding of creation, and asks why it is important that we identify God as the creator of the world, and indeed the universe. It goes on to explore some of the implications of this in terms of our responsibilities to the natural world and to one another. These themes are brought into focus by the Christian festival of harvest. The sessions reflect on both our thanksgivings for plentiful harvests, and the way in which we continue to worship when the harvests are poor.

The second part of this term focuses on Christmas and the importance of Jesus coming into the world as one of us. We explore the period of advent, preparation to encounter God amongst us and ask what difference it makes to believe that God chose to become *incarnate*, to become human as we are, that we might truly know Him.

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