



## **AD CLERUM: 11 July 2018**

Dear Colleagues

There can be few better days in the Church's calendar than the Feast of St Benedict to announce the appointment of the Venerable Jackie Searle as the next Bishop of Crediton. The announcement was made from Downing Street this morning. Prior to her ordination, Jackie trained as a Primary School teacher, specialising in English. Following her ordination and two curacies in London, Jackie became a Lecturer in Applied Theology at Trinity College, Bristol. From there she moved to the Diocese of Derby becoming Vicar of Littleover, Rural Dean and Dean of Women's Ministry. In 2012 she moved to her current appointment as Archdeacon of Gloucester and Canon Residentiary of Gloucester Cathedral. She is married to David Runcorn and they have two grown up children, Joshua and Simeon.

Jackie is a person of wide sympathies with a deep love of Christ. She has been a Training Partner with Bridge Builders for several years, specialising in conflict transformation, and will bring to her new role the same mixture of compassion, integrity and professionalism that has characterised all her work. She understands the challenges and opportunities of rural ministry well and will enrich the life of the church in Devon in all sorts of ways. I look forward to welcoming her to the Diocese this autumn. She will be consecrated in London on the Feast of St Vincent de Paul, Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September, and her welcome service will be in Exeter Cathedral at 4pm on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> October. More details about both services will follow in due course.

As Bishop of the Diocese I am committed to the flourishing of us all under God and this letter gives me the opportunity to repeat my commitment to the Five Guiding Principles set out by the House of Bishops. As we prepare to welcome Bishop Jackie, I pray that the spirit of generosity and joy that has characterised our life in Christ may continue to permeate our partnership in the Gospel in the years ahead.

### **Cathedral**

It will also be a pleasure to welcome Dr Christopher Palmer as our new Canon Chancellor this summer. Chris will be installed at evensong on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> August at 3pm. He comes from Southwark Diocese where he has been Team Rector of Merton Priory since 2010 and is the Bishop of Southwark's Spiritual Formation Adviser. Chris has a doctorate in the theology of St Paul and has a keen interest in New Testament studies. Amongst his responsibilities as Canon Chancellor will be to forge and deepen strong relationships between the Cathedral, city and Diocese.

## **Communications and Farewell to Rebecca Paveley**

At the end of June we said a fond farewell to Rebecca Paveley who has been our Diocesan Director of Communications for nine years, a post which she has fulfilled admirably and with considerable flair. Rebecca is taking up a new post with the National Trust in Dorset, but thankfully will still be living in Devon; so we won't lose sight of her altogether. We are busy recruiting her successor and will be interviewing candidates in August.

## **Clergy Well-being and Farewell to Julia Barrett**

This summer we also say farewell to Julia Barrett who has faithfully headed up our Diocesan Counselling Service over many years. As I explained in my recent letter/email to you all, the time has come to refresh and reframe the professional support we offer clergy, readers and diocesan staff, putting your well-being at the top of our agenda. Informed by the feedback that is coming through the Ministerial Development Review process, as well as responding to new national approaches to well-being and mental health, we are developing a more holistic approach to pastoral support which will include the outsourcing of our counselling services to accredited counsellors. In the autumn we will be gathering a new reference group of clergy and professionals under the chairmanship of the new Bishop of Crediton to oversee the work. In the interim, following Julia's retirement, if you have any concerns please do not hesitate to contact Anthea Carter-Savigear, our Diocesan HR Adviser who is herself an accredited coach and mentor. She can be reached on 07783 586079 or by email : [counselling@exeter.anglican.org](mailto:counselling@exeter.anglican.org). Your approach will be treated entirely confidentially.

## **College of St Philip the Deacon**

I am delighted to announce that our diocesan deacons have formed themselves into a College under the patronage of St Philip the Deacon. They hope this will give to their ministry a greater degree of pastoral and liturgical coherence, and a distinctive identity within the life of the Diocese. The choice of Philip the Deacon reflects his readiness to obey the Holy Spirit, his freedom to go when he was called, his 'raising of the dust' with his message, and of course his evident joy at sharing the gospel and leading the Ethiopian official to baptism. He symbolises the outward-reaching vocation of every deacon to share God's love with those on the margins of church and community. A national conference for distinctive deacons, called 'Deacons on the Move', is taking place on 27<sup>th</sup> October in Birmingham with Professor Paul Avis as the keynote speaker. His theme will be ' A *Flagship Ministry: Deacons and the Church's Mission*'. Further details and tickets can be found at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/deacons-on-the-move-tickets-42469581662?aff=estw>

Please note the resources concerning distinctive deacons on the diocesan website: <http://exeter.anglican.org/ministry/vocations/diocesan-deacons/>

## **The Armistice Centenary**

The centenary commemorations of the First World War draw to a close this year on 11<sup>th</sup> November with the anniversary of the signing of the Armistice. This will be an event of immense significance both nationally and internationally. There will be poignancy to our commemorations in Plymouth and Devon with our historic associations with the Armed Forces. As with other commemorations, it is often standing beside a war memorial in a village or naval base, or sharing in a school service that the true scale of this 'war to end all wars' is most keenly felt. Every community in Devon has its own story to tell.

The accent on Remembrance Sunday this year will therefore be on the Armistice and services should appropriately focus on peace and reconciliation as God's will for the world. Various battles, such as the Somme and Jutland with their devastating loss of life have already been marked. In November the focus will shift to thanksgiving for peace. The emphasis will be pastoral rather than

prophetic. History provides its own sermon for this commemoration which is why taking time to draw upon a variety of local sources, including diaries and journals, can make for an effective service, particularly with students and school children.

To mark the anniversary, the Liturgical Commission has produced various resources which are all downloadable and were published last week on the Church of England website:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/first-world-war-centenary>. They range from a Vigil Service for Peace and Reconciliation to prayers that might be said by a school party or a family visiting a war grave in Belgium or France. I know the date feels a long way off, but come September when the schools go back, time will be short. So I encourage you to use the summer to do some creative thinking.

### **Towards a Safer Church: some liturgical resources**

Safeguarding is at the forefront of public consciousness and the Church needs to embody best practice in safeguarding in our network of parishes, schools and chaplaincies as part of our commitment to excellence in pastoral care. A suite of safeguarding liturgical resources has been assembled by the Liturgical Commission for a variety of pastoral circumstances. They range from a safeguarding prayer that could be posted on your church noticeboard or be used to conclude a day of safeguarding training, to a litany of penitence for past failures. The prayers focus on wisdom, compassion, vigilance and pastoral care. Although a broad range of texts has been garnered, collectively they are neither the first word nor the last word on this subject, but they are offered in the hope that by God's grace the Church may become a safer place where everyone is valued.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/media-centre/news/towards-safer-church-liturgical-resources>.

### **Domestic Abuse**

Research and experience is making us increasingly aware of the sad prevalence of domestic abuse in Britain today. Many people, both men and women, are being subjected to abusive conduct in its various forms, sometimes on a daily basis. Sadly, church members are not immune from being either the victims or perpetrators of such abuse. It is important to be alert to the signs and symptoms of domestic abuse, and be ready to recognise and respond well to those who seek our support or whom we believe may be at risk.

This autumn the Safeguarding Team will be rolling out training and resources to raise awareness of the prevalence, signs and symptoms of domestic abuse, and advising about 'what to do if' scenarios. Details will be sent out later, but in preparation I invite you to consider the document "[Responding well to Domestic Abuse 2017 Revised](#)" policy which gives guidance on how we should respond to victims/survivors of abuse and to alleged/known perpetrators." You may also care to look through the supporting resources available on our Diocesan website safeguarding page.

### **Diocesan Advisory Committee (DAC)**

Sadly we were unable to make an appointment of a new Chair last month and continue to be on the look-out for a successor to Frank Eul who has fulfilled this role admirably for the last five years and retires this December. The DAC helps parishes to manage any kind of change to their church buildings, be it repairs, reordering or building extensions. Their responsibility is to advise the Chancellor as he makes decisions about whether or not to grant a faculty to permit the proposed work. Not surprisingly, the DAC can have a major impact for good on parish life in the Diocese and its chairperson is a key appointment. The Chair does not have to be an expert, but does need to be adept at chairing meetings, including site meetings to parishes. Please draw the vacancy to the attention of suitable lay people in your congregation and contact your archdeacon if you would like to propose someone or need further information.

## **Visit of Archbishop Josiah Idowu-Fearon: Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> July**

We look forward to the visit of Archbishop Josiah, the new Secretary General of the Anglican Communion, this Saturday. Prior to taking up his post, he was Archbishop of the Province of Kaduna in Nigeria. He will be speaking at the Cardinal Newman Centre, Wonford Road, Exeter EX2 4PF. The lecture is free and open to all, but places need to be booked in advance. Please follow the attached link to make your booking:

<http://exeter.anglican.org/events/archbishop-josiah-idowu-fearon-secretary-general-of-the-anglican-communion/>

## **St John's Guild**

Next year celebrates the centenary year of the St John's Guild, a Church of England charity which provides access to liturgical services for blind and visually impaired people within our churches. The Guild produces liturgical service sheets in both large print and braille from the Book of Common Prayer and Common Worship to enable visually impaired people to fully participate in church services and spiritual activities. A new project the Guild has launched this year is the offer to subsidise pilgrimage and retreat costs for registered blind and visually impaired people and/or their carer. More information can be found on the St John's Guild website

<http://www.stjohnsguild.org/>.

## **Clergy Financial Assistance**

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you there are a number of trusts in the Diocese that are available predominantly for the support and relief of clergy and their dependents. The trusts and a brief description of the terms under which they are able to support grant applications can be found on the diocesan website <http://exeter.anglican.org/ministry/ordained-ministry/sources-grant-funding>.

Many of you will be aware of one of these trusts in particular, *The Bishop of Exeter's Clergy Fund*, which is administered from my office in the Gatehouse. The objectives of this trust are "for the advancement of religion through the support of licensed clergy and others employed and/or actively engaged in the ministry of the Church of England". I welcome applications for grants from those of you who are in particular need and feel they fulfil the criteria. Applications forms can be obtained from your Suffragan Bishop, Archdeacon, Rural Dean or directly from my office. The form can also be downloaded from the diocesan website.

## **Plymouth Partners in Mission**

Finally, some really good news. I am delighted to report that we have been successful in our application to the national Strategic Development Fund for mission in the outlying estates in Plymouth and have secured a grant for £1.68 million. We owe a huge debt of thanks to all those who have sweated over this application, but in particular to Rafael Krasnodębski without whose patient and professional expertise in facilitating conversations and gathering data we would never have reached the starting-blocks. Every effective renewal movement in the history of the Church has begun not with the richest and most influential, but with the poor and marginalized which is why this initiative is so important. When we put the poor first, the whole Church benefits. A Gospel proclamation that answers the questions of the poorest citizens of this country will transform lives anywhere.

In relation to Plymouth, may I also take this opportunity of recording my thanks to Prebendary Nick Shutt who is continuing to cover for the Archdeacon of Plymouth who remains unwell and is off work. Queries in the archdeaconry should continue to be addressed to him rather than to Archdeacon Ian.

Bishop Nick joins me in sending you greetings for a relaxing August in the hope that you will make time and space for rest and recreation before the launch of the new school year and autumn gets under way. In the words of St Benedict, 'may you prefer nothing to the love of Christ' and always 'listen to God with the ear of your heart'.

With my thanks for our partnership in the Gospel,

+ Robert Exon