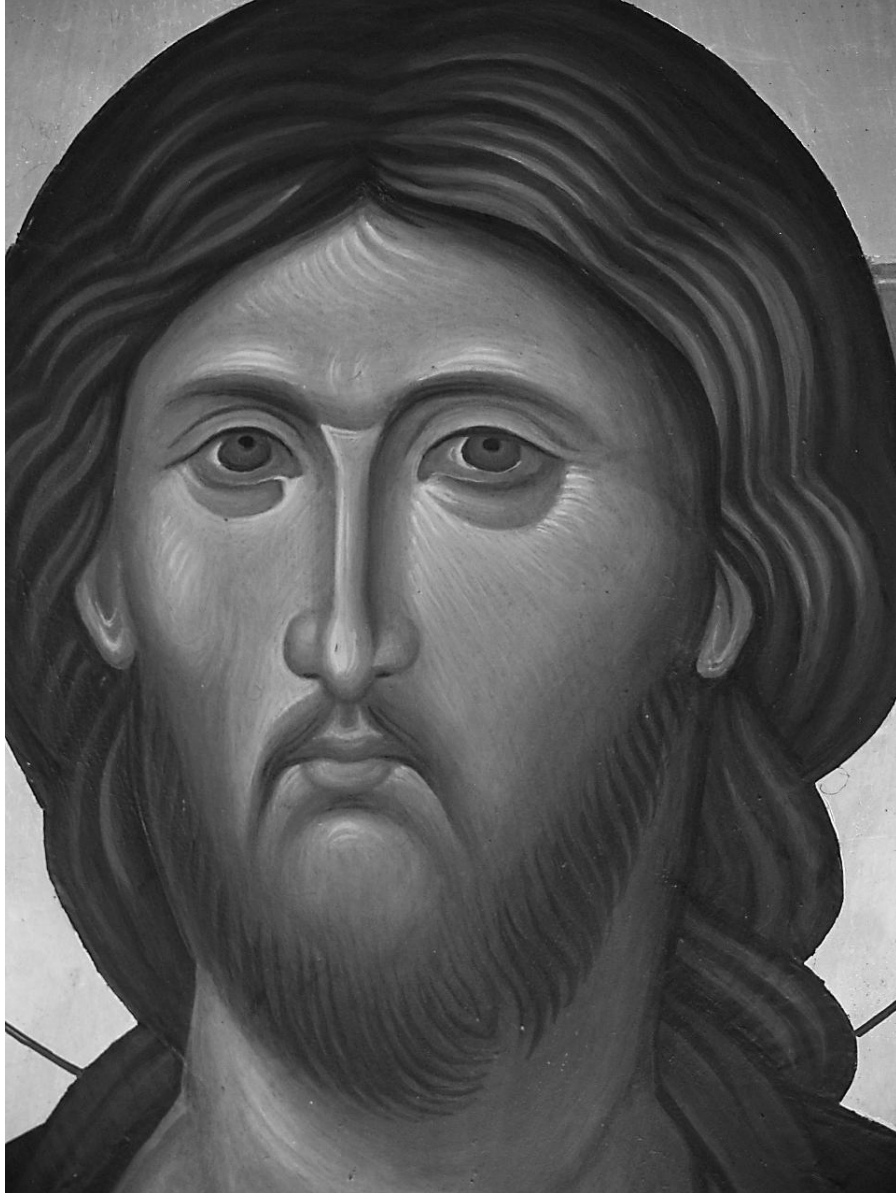


# **Diocese of Clifton**

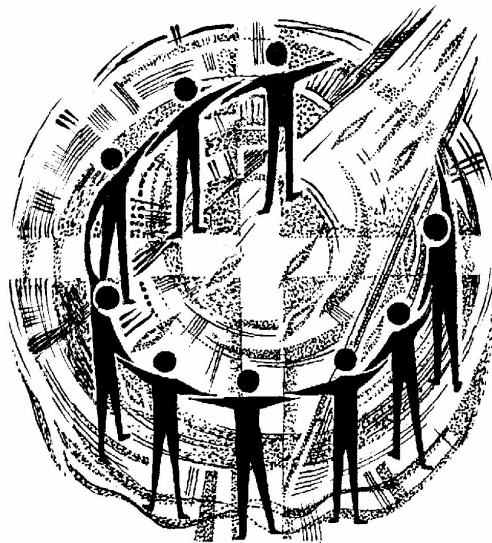


## **SEEKING THE FACE OF CHRIST**

*DRAFT Guidelines 2008*

*'Our entire existence and being  
should shout the Gospel from the rooftops.  
Our entire person should breathe Jesus.  
All our actions and our entire life  
should proclaim that we belong to Jesus.  
Our lives should be a mirror image of an evangelical life.  
Our entire being should be a living sermon,  
a reflection of Jesus,  
something that proclaims Jesus,  
that makes others see Jesus,  
and that shines like an image of Jesus.'*

(Blessed Charles de Foucauld)



(You may send your responses in any form, but if you would like to send back this whole document with your comments you may wish to include below your name and Parish)

Name: .....

Parish: .....

**WHERE TO SEND YOUR RESPONSES:**

“Seeking the Face of Christ”, Alexander House, 160 Pennywell Road, Bristol BS5 0TX

Email responses can be sent to: [seeking@cliftonDiocese.com](mailto:seeking@cliftonDiocese.com)



## Introduction

I would like to thank all the Parishes, Schools, Religious Communities, Clergy and many individuals who have responded to our Diocesan Consultation *Seeking the Face of Christ*. They give a very positive picture of the life of Clifton Diocese and many people have expressed how pleased they have been to participate in the process. Almost all parishes have been involved and this booklet is based upon what I have heard.

These Draft Guidelines represent the next step. In 2007 I asked you to reflect upon what it means to be the Church at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. From those reflections you suggested what might be included in Diocesan Pastoral Guidelines which will allow our Parishes and Deaneries to live their Christian calling. These Draft Guidelines are based upon those responses and also upon the Diocesan study day that was held at St Bede's College, Bristol on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2007.

We have divided this document into three areas:

**Church celebrating Liturgy and Prayer**

**Church as Communion**

**Church of Mission**



These areas are overlapping and interconnected. What centres them all is Christ who is at the heart of our whole endeavour. Making him known both to ourselves and to others is our deepest vocation.

The Pastoral Guidelines which will be published in the autumn of 2008 will set out a roadmap for practical ways in which we can implement that vision. Hopefully they will be a springboard for us to work together in mission.

Declan Lang, Bishop of Clifton

## How to approach this Booklet

This document is a further step in drawing up the Diocesan Pastoral Guidelines and seeks to incorporate the wisdom and insights that have emerged from the initial consultation in 2007. Even if you have not been involved in this process up until now, your participation in the next step will be very welcome.

The responses gave a picture of a vibrant Church with many signs of growth and vitality. They give an overall picture of deep commitment and people wanting to be part of the mission of the Church. There was also a considerable consensus about the issues which face us as we take up the challenge of being the Church that Christ calls us to be. This document is based upon all the responses that have been received. Each section has three parts:

- i) What we have heard** (with quotations from parishes)
- ii) What needs to be done**
- iii) Specific proposals**

The point of the Guidelines is that we do not face the future alone but as one Church. From Salisbury to Tewkesbury, from Minehead to Swindon we can pool our resources to help each other. But that also reminds us that in our local planning we have to bear the whole in mind. Almost all the decisions we make locally will have an impact elsewhere in the Diocese. As in any family what affects one can affect all.

Many responses also emphasised the need to work ecumenically and, rather than have a separate section on ecumenism, we assume this will underpin everything we do.

So these proposed Guidelines take a Diocesan wide view of the way in which we, as all the people of Clifton Diocese, can best work together and use our common resources. However, these will only come alive if they are of practical use in our Parishes and Schools. You can send your responses by post or email to the address on page 2. If you find it useful you can simply make alterations to this document and mail it.

**When you read each section, the questions you need to ask yourself are: is this a priority, do you agree with the way in which it might be implemented and how might your Parish engage with it?**

**You should also bear in mind that some of the proposals, if accepted, would require additional financing. How would you suggest this would be raised?**

There is a space on page 2 for you to fill in your name but you are very welcome to send in your responses anonymously.

### Timeline

30 April 2008

Final deadline for feedback to the Pastoral Guidelines Steering Group

**Autumn 2008**

**Diocesan Pastoral Guidelines published**

# THE CHURCH CELEBRATING LITURGY AND PRAYER

Once Jesus was in a certain place praying, and when he had finished one of his disciples said, *Lord, teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.* He said to them, *Say this when you pray;*

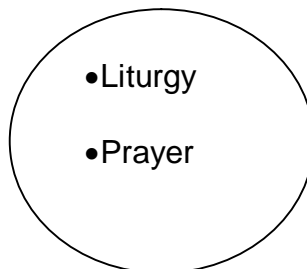
*Father, may your name be held holy,  
your kingdom come;  
give us each day our daily bread,  
and forgive us our sins,  
for we ourselves forgive each one who is in debt to us.  
And do not put us to the test.* (Luke 11:1-4)

Just as the first disciples turned to Jesus and asked him to teach them to pray so we too make their words our own: *Lord, teach us to pray*

As Christians we find in Christ our example of what prayer is and how to pray. Throughout the Gospels Jesus goes to the Synagogue and to the Temple to pray. Also, from the temptations in the wilderness to the garden of Gethsemane he finds places of solitude to pray alone with his Father. It is prayer, in his relationship with the Father, which is the source of everything that Jesus does.

It is to the extent that we are rooted in prayer, both communal and solitary, that we will be able to discover our mission and have the strength to carry it out.

This section will look at:



The way in which we plan and celebrate our liturgies, the care and attention which we give to our personal and communal prayer, demonstrates to us . and to those with whom we come in contact . the importance of Christ in our lives and of our need for his grace working within us.

When we come together to celebrate the Eucharist, when we bring ourselves into the presence of Christ in prayer, we come that we may be fed and be formed. Not simply that we may reflect Christ's light to the world, but that we may be Christ's light for the world.

While looking at this section we can bear in mind the recent words of Pope Benedict XVI:

*A non-Christian who enters one of our assemblies finally ought to be able to say: God is truly with you. Let us pray to the Lord to be like this, in communion with Christ and in communion among ourselves.*<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Benedict XVI: Christ and his Church, CTS Publications, p128

# Liturgy

## 1. What we have heard

The following responses to the initial 'Seeking the Face of Christ' consultation emphasised the centrality of the liturgy which is the source and summit of our Catholic life.

*"Develop liturgical celebrations which are more participatory.....Each Parish should have a liturgy group or equivalent to explore, develop and enhance the liturgy in their community; this should be supported by the Diocesan Liturgy Commission"* (Portishead)

*"It was felt that we should be witnessing more publicly through our liturgies".* (Chippenham)

*"Symbols are important within liturgy.....we need to find living images"* (Nailsea)

*"We need to be aware that Mass is not the only liturgy and we need different liturgies for different groups"*<sup>2</sup>

## 2. What needs to be done

In the light of the changing nature of Parish life and the growing involvement of Deacons and Laity, there may be a need to rethink liturgical practice which may then require additional liturgical formation. In particular, there is an increasing request for formation in presiding at liturgies. Formation is also required in a range of liturgical ministries. There is a desire for alternative liturgies which are inclusive, both in language and culture. Parishes and Schools have asked to be supported in providing liturgical catechesis and in developing their liturgies.

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<sup>2</sup> Where the quotation is not attributed to a Parish it is from the Diocesan Study Day at St Bede's College 20<sup>th</sup> October 2007

### 3. Specific proposals

<b>Action</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Responsible person/group</b>
Promote the Pastoral Liturgy Certificate	During 2009 Ongoing	Department of Liturgy/Bishop
Identify Liturgy contact in each Parish	Ongoing	Department of Liturgy/ Parish Pastoral Councils
Training and trainers for liturgical ministries to be provided	Ongoing	Department of Liturgy
A revised Diocesan to Supplement to the missal to be produced which focuses on Diocesan saints	2010	Department of Liturgy
Every Parish to develop a Liturgy committee that makes use of a range of experiences and resources	Ongoing	Parish Priest and Parish Pastoral Council
Parishioners to be encouraged to become involved in the development of liturgy and to share their ideas and experiences	Ongoing	Parish Priest and Parish Pastoral Council

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **How do you anticipate a Liturgy committee will enhance your Parish?**

# Prayer

## 1. What we have heard

It has been suggested that Diocesan Guidelines could usefully give a more coordinated approach to the riches which we have in the Diocese to help develop our spirituality and prayer life.

*Include ways of developing spirituality and reaching the marginalised+(Brockworth)*

*We are fortunate in our Parish to have such a range of spiritual activity. The future plans for the Diocese need to encourage diversity in Parishes, rather than a 'one size fits all approach'. (Thornbury)*

*Every Parish should have a choice of life-giving prayer groups+(Stonehouse)*

*Retreats: more imaginative use of these, be they for a week, a week-end or a day (we need) to do more to really open up and explain the immense riches of our liturgical cycle ò let the young develop different liturgies+(Stroud)*

*"We need a greater understanding of the spirituality of the Church's year+*

*"We need to find the meaning in our liturgies"*

## 2. What needs to be done

We need to rediscover, and at times reinterpret, the richness of our spiritual heritage. We need to help people connect faith to life so that our prayer informs our practice and is integrated into the practicalities of our everyday lives. There needs to be a recognition that different types of prayer appeal to different groups and it is impossible to develop a 'one size fits all' approach. In particular the growing number of Catholics arriving in our Parishes who come from different cultural traditions means that we have new resources for reinvigorating our prayer life. Where possible we need to work ecumenically to support people in their prayer life. Examples of good practice need to be collected and shared by all.

### 3. Specific proposals

<b>Action</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Responsible person/group</b>
A contact person for the distribution of resources for each Parish to be identified	Ongoing	Liturgy Department
Parishes and Schools to work together to share ideas on prayer, share resources /venues	Ongoing	Parish reps/ school leadership teams/school chaplains/
Each Parish/Deanery to consider forming a team to develop spirituality to provide a variety of prayer structures and to incorporate the different cultural groups in their area	Ongoing	Parish/Deanery Pastoral Councils
Each Parish/Deanery to consider holding a mission on a regular basis	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Councils
Parishes to consider working with ecumenical partners to take on specific prayer projects and activities (there are already many excellent examples of this)	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Councils
Parishes to provide opportunities for people to participate in retreats and to help with information on different types of retreats. Where appropriate ecumenical retreats should be considered	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Councils
All Schools to continue to develop their retreat programme	Ongoing	Schools
All Diocesan departments involved in producing resources for prayer to co-ordinate their work	Ongoing 1 <sup>st</sup> meeting to be held before Advent 2008	Heads of Department
Each Department to consider how they can support the prayer life of Parishes, Schools and individuals and to produce a series of exemplar material showing how prayer can be integrated and linked to our lives today	Ongoing but initially by 2009	Each Department but coordinated by Department for Adult Education

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **What could we change in our Parishes/Schools that would help us become people of prayer?**

## Notes

# THE CHURCH AS COMMUNION

On the night before he died for us Jesus prayed these words:

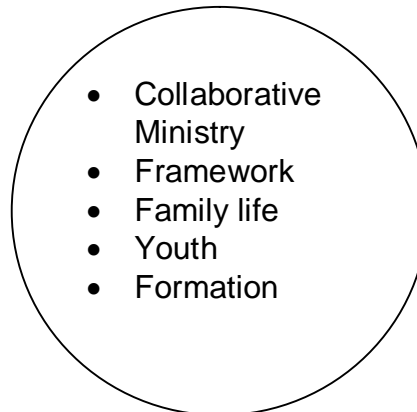
± pray not only for these,  
but for those also who through their words  
will believe in me.  
May they all be one.  
Father, may they be one in us,  
as you are in me and I am in you,  
so that the world may believe it was you who sent me.q (John 17:20-21)

Jesus Christ has revealed that God is a communion of three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, continually pouring out love for one another and he prays that his followers will reflect this communion of love in the way in which we share our life and gifts with one another. Indeed, Christ teaches that the closer believers are united the more deeply we will share in God's life but also, when we truly draw near to God, then false divisions, rivalries and barriers will be broken down. Pope Benedict recently reminded the Church that communion with God is the root and source of our communion with one another.

±Wherever communion with God, which is communion with the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit, is destroyed, the root and source of our communion with one another is destroyed. And wherever we do not live communion among ourselves, communion with the Trinitarian God is not alive and true eitherq<sup>3</sup>.

The way in which we organise the framework of our Diocese, Deaneries and Parishes, the way in which we collaborate with one another, all underpin and deepen the mission of the Church. We do not first organise ourselves and then begin the mission of the Church; the very way in which we work together is part of our mission. At the root of our understanding of Church as Communion is not of efficient management but what sort of Church God is calling us to be. Pope John Paul II in his letter to mark the beginning of the new millennium reminded us that when the structures of the Church reflect the self-giving love of the Trinity then this ±spirituality of communion supplies institutional reality with a soulq<sup>4</sup>

So in this section we include:



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<sup>3</sup> Pope Benedict XVI: Christ and his Church, page 16

<sup>4</sup> Pope John Paul II: At the Beginning of the New Millennium: No 46

# Collaborative Ministry

## 1. What we have heard

The importance of the Diocese acting as one body and working together was underlined. In the seeking the face of Christ process people appreciated seeing and hearing the Bishop exercising his ministry as teacher in the life of the Diocese. Many responses stressed the importance of Clergy and Laity working effectively together in Parishes.

*“In order to live our Christian calling we should be part of the one body of the Church. This means supporting and sharing, listening and responding. To be effective we must have clear communication guidelines. No Parish, Deanery or Diocesan Council exists in isolation and therefore the Guidelines should indicate how these should relate and communicate, vertically and horizontally, to maximum effect.”* (Glastonbury)

*“All Parishes to try to become more actively involved with other Parishes and communities within the local church of Clifton; we are one Church and we should live this out in our actions”* (Calne)

*“Lay people involved, realistically involved+”* (Taunton)

*We need help with “the best way to secure active participation by the Laity at all levels”* (Chard)

*“collaborative ministry must be a priority”<sup>5</sup>*

*“We need to encourage Lay people to take on more responsibility”*

*“We recognise the important contribution that the Religious Communities make to the life of our Diocese and we would wish to promote their charism”*

## 2. What needs to be done

Develop a clearer understanding of what collaborative ministry involves and the Church's teaching on working together.

We need to strengthen the structures of collaborative ministry and in particular strengthen the development and role of Pastoral Councils. In order to facilitate this, the existing Guidelines for Pastoral Councils need to be renewed.

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<sup>5</sup> Where the quotation is not attributed to a Parish it is from the Diocesan Study Day at St Bede's College 20<sup>th</sup> October 2007

### 3. Specific proposals

Action	By when	Responsible person/group
Parishes to form Pastoral Councils if they have not already done so and/or to review the effectiveness of the Pastoral Council	By 2009	Parish Priests, Deans, Deanery Pastoral Council
Information and training days to be provided to give a clearer understanding of what the Church means by a spirituality of communion <sup>6</sup>	Ongoing but initially by 2009	Department for Adult Education
To make more widely known the contribution that Religious Life makes to the Church and the wider world	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Councils Religious Congregations
Information and training days to be provided to give a clearer understanding of what the Church means by the vocation of all the baptised especially through the Church's teaching document <i>Christus Fideles Populus</i> <sup>6</sup>	Ongoing but initially by 2009	Department for Adult Education
Revised Guidelines for Pastoral Councils to be produced.	By 2009	Department for Adult Education

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **Are there ways in which your Parish can work more collaboratively?**

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<sup>6</sup> Pope John Paul II *Christifidelis Laici*

# The Framework of the Diocese

## 1. What we have heard

Many responses indicated that the Deanery and Parish framework needed to be reconsidered.

People also felt that there was a need to make sure that existing Clergy were supported. Relationships within Diocesan structures and making communications within the Diocese more effective were also an area of concern.

*“We need clarification of the structure and role of the Deanery system” (Westbury-on-Trym)*

*“This is a major issue for the Diocese and deserves to be a priority for future planning” (Thornbury)*

*“This is a priority; we need to plan for fewer Priests, to consider Parish structures and boundaries”*

*“We have inherited structures from the 1950’s”*

*“We should look at our current Parishes/Deaneries to review them in the light of the number of Priests”*

*“We need to improve the strength of the existing organisational structure and reinforce links”*

*“There is a need to enhance the role of all ministries and in particular the vocation to the Priesthood”.*

## 2. What needs to be done

A review of existing structures within the Diocese. The changing patterns of Parish life and the possible clustering of Parishes call for formation and support for Priests, Deacons and Laity. Parishes to be fully consulted about any proposed changes and helped to prepare for these.

The way in which Priests will exercise their ministry will change and Priests will need support and guidance to develop their ministry in the light of their changing circumstances.

We should further develop a culture of actively promoting vocations to the Priesthood.

### 3. Specific proposals

<b>Action</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Responsible person/group</b>
A group (Clergy and Lay) to be formed to review the existing Parish/Deanery structures in the light of the projected numbers of Clergy and pastoral needs; and to make recommendations to the Bishop	Group formed by Nov 2008 Recommendations by Nov 2009	Bishop to form a group responsible for recommendations
Parishes, Schools, Colleges and Chaplaincies to promote materials that encourage vocations to the Priesthood	Ongoing	Vocation Director/ Parish Councils/ Schools
Further co-ordination of Diocesan Departments to help them work together more effectively	Nov 2009	Trustees/ Heads of Administrative Departments under leadership of a Vicar General

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **How are you already working and planning with your neighbouring Parishes?**

# Supporting Family Life

## 1. What we have heard

Supporting Family Life was an area of concern for many Parishes who felt that families were coming under increasing pressure in today's world. There was also recognition that family life was no longer straightforward and that there were many different types. The need to be welcoming to all was frequently expressed as was the need to be able to reach to families who feel put off by Church. Within this area concern was also expressed for those families who had children with disabilities or who had members suffering from mental health issues.

*"For our part we need to be more aware of disability issues"* (Blaisdon).

One of our Deacons wrote: *"Provision of support through expert training, particularly in marriage and bereavement counselling; in the exploration of family needs, including work with the growing numbers of separated and divorced Catholics and their children."*

*"The parents of children attending children's liturgy are a group that needs to be welcomed, evangelised, involved."* (St Gregory, Cheltenham).

Variations on this from other Parishes talked about the need to involve parents of children in first communion or confirmation programmes.

*"Many parents who send their children to Catholic Schools do not come to Church: how do we help these parents feel welcomed and involved in Church"*

*"We need to encourage prayer in the family. How do we do this?"* (Taunton)

*"We must support families and help them in their prayer life"*

*"Families take different forms we need to let them know Church is for them too"*

## 2. What needs to be done

Help all Parishes become more aware of the differing needs of families and develop techniques and skills to support families. Encourage all Parishes to develop liturgies that are family friendly and which speak to people about their everyday lives. Develop a sense of the spirituality of everyday life. Within our Schools reach out to people who would not normally come to Church. Help those families who have children with disabilities feel that they are able to be fully involved in the Church and develop the skills to support these families with catechetical programmes designed to involve their children. Raise awareness of the problems of those suffering any form of mental illness. Ensure that there is a safe environment in which children and vulnerable adults can flourish. Where possible explore joint approaches with our ecumenical partners.

### 3. Specific proposals

Action	By when	Responsible person/group
Seek a coordinator for marriage and family life	Nov 2008	Bishop and Director for Adult Education
See that each Parish has the opportunity to be fully involved in initiatives supporting family life, such as Home is a Holy Place and has access to training and resource materials to support these initiatives	Ongoing	Coordinator working with Adult Education and the Diocesan Pastoral Council
Develop contact links in each Parish	Ongoing	Coordinator working with Adult Education and the Diocesan Pastoral Council
Develop a range of liturgies to support and involve families; provide resource materials for family prayers and devotional practices which connect with the lives of people today	Ongoing	Department of Liturgy/ Department for Adult Education
Provide training for working with children with disabilities for those responsible for children's liturgy/catechetical programmes	Initially by July 2009	Department for Adult Education. Parish Pastoral Councils to take responsibility for implementing the training within their Parishes.
Provide appropriate training for families who are experiencing difficulties, broken relationships and bereavements	Ongoing	Co-ordinator for married life, with the support of Marriage Care and the ASDC
Where possible Schools and Parishes to share good practice in this area and develop joint training days	Ongoing	Department for Adult Education / Schools Department
See that marriage care materials such as Marriage Care, ASDC and contact details are promoted and available in each Parish and School	Jan 2009	Marriage Care, Parish contacts, Schools.
To explore and initiate at both Diocesan and Parish level the possibility of ecumenical projects in working with families	Ongoing	Coordinator/Department for Adult Education /Diocesan /Parish Pastoral Councils

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **How is your Parish already supporting family life in all its aspects?**

# Youth

## 1. What we have heard

Many Parishes stressed the need for support in their work with youth both with the appointment of a youth officer and in terms of resources and training. Questions being asked were:

*How do we involve the youth who do attend church in the life and prayer of the Parish?*

*How do we reach out to young people who are baptised Catholics but no longer attend Church or connect with the Parish?*

*How do we reach out to young people in general?*

*How do we provide a safe environment in which young people can flourish?"*

*"The Diocese should provide for a youth officer" (Portishead)*

*"What do we have to do to attract the youth?"*

*"Youth – where are they?"*

*"Should be seen as priority"*

*"We should make every effort to involve youth in the liturgy"*

## 2. What needs to be done

Respond to Parish requests to be supported in their work with youth and this needs both training and resourcing.

Explore ways of helping young people who do attend Church to feel part of the community and fully involved in Parish life. Liturgy needs to be appropriate and to speak to their hearts and minds. The Good News should be presented in a way that makes sense to them. Many young people do not attend Church and we need to meet them where they are instead of waiting for them to come to us.

Schools have contact with young people in a way that others do not and we need to explore creatively how the links between School and Parish can be deepened. Ecumenical links should be developed so that we can learn from and support each other in our work with young people. Resources and good ideas can be shared throughout the Diocese.

### 3. Specific proposals

Action	By when	Responsible Person/Group
A Diocesan youth committee, (DYC) to be formed to inspire and help develop youth programmes at the Parish level and to line manage and develop a job description for a Diocesan youth co-ordinator	Jan 2009	Bishop
A Diocesan youth co-ordinator to be appointed	April 2009	Bishop
Diocesan youth gatherings/events to be organised	From July 2008	Schools advisers and DYC, Coordinator
A formation programme for youth leaders to be developed	July 2009	Schools advisers DYC and Youth Coordinator
Training to be provided for youth leader, chaplains and clergy in developing liturgies for young people	July 2009	Youth Co-ordinator, DYC and Schools advisers
A newsletter to be developed and issued on a regular basis for youth leaders	Nov 2008	Schools DYC, co-ordinator advisers
A webpage to be developed for youth	July 2009	Communications Officer and Youth Co-ordinator
A contact list to be developed for youth leaders in each Parish	July 2009	Parishes and Co-ordinator
Deaneries to formulate a strategy for youth evangelisation in their area and to consider the appointment and financing of a deanery youth worker	July 2009	Deanery Pastoral Council with the help of the DYC
Deaneries/Parishes/Schools to review and strengthen their links; consider joint chaplaincy work	July 2009	Deanery/ Parish Councils
Young people to be encouraged to become Parish leaders and where possible Parishes to form Youth Parish Councils alongside the Parish Pastoral Council	On going	Parishes with the help of DYC
All secondary Schools to have a named person responsible for chaplaincy with the time and resources to carry out their work: Primary Schools to explore options for chaplaincy in conjunction with Parishes	On going	Schools Department and School leadership teams
Schools to implement retreat and spiritual formation programmes and to involve the Parishes in these programmes	On going	Schools Department Schools RE co-ordinator
To explore and initiate at both Diocesan and Parish level ecumenical projects in working with youth, particularly those projects which take the form of outreach	On going but initial reports by Sept 2010	Diocesan Youth Co-ordinator, Diocesan Pastoral Council Parish Pastoral Councils and youth leaders

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **How would your Parish involve itself in the work the Diocesan Youth Department?**

## Formation

### 1. What we have heard

Many responses identified the need for a richer understanding of scripture and the importance of the catechesis of adults for Christian maturity and a missionary Church. It was felt that this should be the shared responsibility of Bishop, Priests, Deacons and Laity. The importance of formation of the whole community is integral to communion and mission.

Almost all responses spoke of the need for ongoing formation for Laity and Clergy.

*+Adult education/formation to increase knowledge of faith+(Taunton)*

*%Somehow the Diocese needs to educate and inform adults, possibly in local settings, rather than Diocesan wide. The Diocese could provide local formation facilities+(Burnham-on-Sea)*

*We need %strategies for reaching out to Catholics who are baptised but not practising+(Devizes)*

*“We need to develop mature attitudes to faith through education”*

### 2. What needs to be done

The Diocese needs a clear strategy for developing Parish adult formation leaders, teams and catechists.

This would be implemented by a Diocesan catechists training course. A comprehensive Resources Manual to be produced. Raise awareness of catechetical programmes that are already available. The structure of the present Department for Adult Education to be reviewed.

### 3. Specific proposals

<b>Action (for everyone)</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Responsible person/group</b>
A Diocesan training course for catechists will be developed	Sept 2009	Department for Adult Education
The structure of the present Department for Adult Education to be reviewed	Jan 2009	Bishop
Scripture courses will continue to be developed	Ongoing	Department for Adult Education
A resources manual for Adult Education will be produced	2010	Department for Adult Education
Formation in faith is a lifelong activity. Parishes need to adopt the appropriate strategies to promote this	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Councils

<b>Action (for Priests)</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Responsible person/group</b>
<b>All Priests to be encouraged to take part in an annual programme of formation</b>	Ongoing	<b>Department of Ongoing Formation for Priests</b>
<b>Topic papers to be produced for discussion at Clergy Deanery meetings</b>	From 2009	<b>Department of Ongoing Formation for Priests</b>
<b>All Priests to be encouraged to take part in annual retreat</b>	From Jan 2009 & Ongoing	<b>Department of Ongoing Formation for Priests</b>

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **How does your Parish already make use of the opportunities provided for formation?**

## Notes


## THE CHURCH OF MISSION

At the very beginning of his ministry as the successor of St Peter, Pope Benedict reminded us that to be Christian is to share in the mission . the sending . of Christ. Pope Benedict spoke of Christ the Good Shepherd who has come to seek out that which is lost. He said that:

The Son of God leaps to his feet  
and abandons the glory of heaven,  
in order to go in search of the sheep  
and pursue it,  
all the way to the Cross.  
He takes it upon his shoulders  
and carries our humanity;  
he carries us all  
- he is the good shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep.  
ō ō ō .at the same time  
he invites us to carry one another<sup>7</sup>

For the Christian to be missionary is to share in the mission of the Son. We too are sent by the Father to be witnesses to the Gospel. And we too are called to leap to our feet in the service of others.

In this section we will look at:

- 
- Outreach  
/welcoming
  - Living for Others
  - Dialogue
  - Rite of Christian  
Initiation of Adults
  - Environment

In his recent teaching on the Eucharist, Pope Benedict emphasised the connection between participation at Mass and the work of mission:

Truly, nothing is more beautiful than to know Christ and to make Him known to others. The institution of the Eucharist, for that matter, anticipates the very heart of Jesus' mission: He is the one sent by the Father for the redemption of the world. At the Last Supper, Jesus entrusts to his disciples the Sacrament which makes present his self-sacrifice for the salvation of us all, in obedience to the Father's will. We cannot approach the Eucharistic table without being drawn into the mission which, beginning in the very heart of God, is meant to reach all people.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience, 24<sup>th</sup> April 2005

<sup>8</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, Sacramentum Caritas, CTS Publications 2007

# Welcoming and Outreach

## 1. What we have heard

There was a recognition that ~~welcoming~~ was far more than someone handing out booklets as people come into Church, although the importance of having someone greet you and smile at you cannot be underestimated. Parishes wanted to do more to reach out to those who would not normally come to Church or regard religion as important in their lives.

Particular concern was expressed for those newly arrived nationalities and families and the way in which we integrate.

*%We should like to see the Diocesan Guidelines include something on the situation of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and would be ready to collaborate on this ....*

*We should like to see a Diocesan network established to advise Parishes on refugee and asylum issues .... (Diocesan Commission for Justice and Peace)*

*"We need to reach out to the 'stranger' - people of all nationalities. +*

*We need to ~~be~~ inclusive not exclusive – regardless of race, mental state, sexuality + (Brockworth).*

*%God is calling us to reach out to others in the community – not just Catholics or lapsed Catholics - and to be aware of God in all people" (Taunton).*

*%The Diocese needs to be seen more overtly as being for those who are not members of the Church, not just for its existing members. To this end the Diocese and Parishes need to see themselves more as servants of the whole community rather than just the Catholic community. + (Southmead)*

*"Priorities should be outreach rather than mission. Consider practical steps to reach out to the less fortunate whether socially, financially or emotionally, of whatever background or creed; both locally and further afield" (Portishead).*

## 2. What needs to be done

We need to create communities that see outreach as a vital part of their mission and who are prepared to take risks in order to bring the ~~Good News~~ to others. We need to be where people are rather than waiting for them to come to us. We need to form communities who are concerned about welcoming all and seeing in each individual the image of God. We need to support those who feel marginalised and to find ways in which to connect with the needs of people. Parishes needed to be active in their local areas so that they make a positive impact on the area, working ecumenically where possible. Further support mechanisms need to be developed for those from newly arrived communities, refugees or asylum seekers.

### 3. Specific proposals

Action	By when	Responsible person/group
Parishes to produce welcome packs for visitors or new members	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Councils
Parishes/Deaneries to consider identifying each year one specific outreach project (in conjunction with ecumenical partners if appropriate) an example might be street ministry	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Councils
Parishes and local Catholic Schools to consider jointly ways of reaching out to parents/ families of children who attend school but who do not have contact with the Parish	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Councils/ School leadership/ chaplain
The Bishop's Conference initiative such as <del>All are Welcome</del> to be more fully disseminated throughout the Diocese	Ongoing	Diocesan Pastoral Council
Diocesan Guidelines to be produced for welcoming and supporting migrants, refugees and asylum seekers	2009	Diocesan Pastoral Council/ Commission for Justice and Peace
Training opportunities to be provided for those Parishes that wish to undertake specific catechetical activities	Ongoing	Department for Schools, Department for Adult Education

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **How will your Parish or School become more outward looking and deepen its awareness of the needs of the wider community?**

## Living for Others

### 1. What have we heard

Many Parishes spoke about their work in support of CAFOD and/or third world projects. There was an understanding that the way we responded to the needs of others was a clear witness to our faith. Most people talked about the need to do more and to learn from others. This area was clearly one where people felt it was both possible and desirable to work in an ecumenical fashion.

*“Consider practical steps to reach out to the less fortunate whether socially, financially or emotionally, of whatever background or creed; both locally and further a field.”* (Portishead)

*“Be more active in social justice and ethical issues”* (Holy Family, Swindon)

*“We should foster unselfishness and a desire to work for the common good”* (Cirencester)

*“We need to go out to seek out the needs of others not wait for them to come to us”*

*“We need to hear more about the work other Parishes are doing in this area so we can spread good practice+”*

### 2. What needs to be done

We are called to follow more closely the example of Christ, to feed the hungry, to welcome strangers, to visit those who are sick or in prison. We can learn from the example of St Francis of Assisi and preach the Gospel, using words if necessary.+Within our Parishes we need to encourage a wide range of activities that reflect our support for the common good and to work ecumenically where possible.

### 3. Specific proposals

Action	By when	Responsible person/group
Contact lists for Justice and Peace representatives to be collected for all Parishes to improve communication	Jan 2010	Commission for Justice and Peace
Diocese to collect and share good examples of Justice and Peace Projects	Ongoing	Commission for Justice and Peace/ Diocesan Pastoral Council
Each Parish should aim to develop a diverse range of Parish ministries including supporting those who are sick, who live with disabilities or who are in prison	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Council
Parishes to form and support Justice and Peace groups to support the work of organisations like CAFOD/ Pax Christi. Schools to do the same	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Council and Schools
Parishes to review the needs of those who are vulnerable adults and seek ways of supporting them	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Council
Parishes and Schools to work together to support common projects.	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Council and Schools
Parishes to work ecumenically in Justice and Peace issues within the local area.	Ongoing	Ecumenical Commission/ Parish Pastoral Council

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **In what ways do you already witness to your faith in your Parish/Schools?**

# Dialogue

## 1. What we have heard

Our outreach should include dialogue with other faiths and those of no faith.

*Interfaith dialogue to be given greater emphasis and where it is operating examples of good practice to be made available+(Trowbridge)*

*“What resources are there for interfaith dialogue?+(Melksham)*

*“We need strategies to integrate and welcome newcomers+(Tisbury)*

*“How can we speak of God to a secular world?+(Blaisdon)*

*“Identification of existing links with non-Christian religions” (Westbury-on-Trym)*

*“We need to establish links to enable the exploration and understanding of other faiths.....we need to reduce fear, promote friendship and create a state of openness”.*

## 2. What needs to be done

To try to promote an understanding of the search for truth that exists within other faiths, and to recognise that the Second Vatican Council says clearly that the Church ~~rejects~~ nothing which is true and holy in these religions.<sup>9</sup> Where possible we need to encourage interfaith dialogue and action to promote the common good and engage in dialogue with contemporary society and its problems. We should also listen attentively to the voices around us, act with justice and compassion and bring hope to bear on a world too often torn by hatred, war and injustice.

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<sup>9</sup> Vatican II: Decree on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions, (Nostra Aetate) 1965,

### 3. Specific proposals

Action	By when	Responsible person/group
Promote the Bishops Conference materials on other faiths; for example those found on <a href="http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk/resource/interfaith/index.htm">http://www.catholic-ew.org.uk/resource/interfaith/index.htm</a>	Ongoing but from 2008	Diocesan Interfaith Coordinator/ Diocesan Pastoral Council
Parishes actively to seek ways to work with other faiths on projects involving issues of Justice and Peace.	Ongoing but from 2009	Locally determined with help from Commission for Justice and Peace
Parishes and Schools to seek ways of sharing with other faiths their spiritual heritage.	Ongoing but from 2009	Parishes/Schools with help from the appropriate Departments
Schools to continue to develop the students understanding of other faiths.	Ongoing from 2008	Schools with advice from Schools Department
Schools to continue to develop their approaches to community cohesion and to share with Parishes their work in this area.	Ongoing from 2008	Schools/Parishes
Parishes to seek to undertake projects which actively make a positive difference to their local environment and /or the wider world community.	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Councils

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **What does your Parish need to do in order to have more effective dialogue with other faiths?**

# Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

## 1. What we have heard

Every Parish recognises a calling to witness to its faith and to be able to form those who want to become part of the Church. This is included in the section on mission because it is primarily to do with those who are not baptised.

Parishes asked for help with this whole area.

*%Ideas for announcing the Gospel in a language which can be understood.+(Devizes)*

*%A deeper understanding of place of the RCIA in the life of the Diocese is needed. The Diocesan Guidelines need to emphasise that the process of the RCIA is not an option but is a central rite and the normative way of being received into the Church.+(Nailsea).*

*“The RCIA programme should be run in all Parishes and more use made of the Guidelines”*

*“The RCIA should be promoted as outreach to society and we need to be more active in promoting this”.*

## 2. What needs to be done

A clearer understanding of how important the Rites of Christian Initiation are in the life of each Parish. A renewed catechesis is needed.

A deepening awareness within each Parish that everyone has a responsibility for sharing their faith and welcoming new members into the life of the community.

### 3. Specific proposals

<b>Action</b>	<b>By when</b>	<b>Responsible person/group</b>
To continue to develop the Diocesan RCIA team	Ongoing	Director and Department for Adult Education
To revise the RCIA guidelines and resources to be made available to support Parish RCIA programmes	2009	RCIA Team
Each Parish should have an RCIA team	Ongoing	Parish Pastoral Councils
Develop a deepening understanding of the teaching of the Church	Ongoing	Department for Liturgy/ RCIA team

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **How effective is the RCIA process in your Parish?**

# The Environment

## 1. What we have heard

Groups were concerned with making the link between our sacramental vision of life and lifestyle; to be active stewards of creation. Many mentioned the concept of stewardship and the need to witness to our beliefs through our actions. Many talked about the good work that was already taking place in this area. They felt there was a need for this work to be more widely known. There was also recognition that this area might attract the interest and support of young people and that it was possible to work both ecumenically and with other faith groups in this area. Schools were also cited as an area of good practice and the possibility of learning from their experience was mentioned.

*“Be sustainable and environmentally aware in everything we do as a Parish – as Christians we should lead the way on these issues” (Portishead)*

*“As Christians our concern for the environment should be based on our belief that the environment not only manifests God, but is the context in which we seek the face of Christ and also reflects that face. We should be active stewards of the creation of which we are part” (Calne)*

*“Working on deeply felt social and environmental issues can also be a way of ‘being Church”*

*“Are there resources and information we can use?”*

*“We need to be seen as caring of the environment and respectful of creation.”*

*“We need to gather best practice and circulate these ideas”*

*“We need to look after God’s creation”.*

## 2. What needs to be done

At all levels we need to become aware of how we interact with the environment and what specific steps can be taken to live sustainably and witness to our beliefs by becoming active stewards of creation. Our liturgy should reflect a concern for the environment. In environmental issues we can work ecumenically. These issues particularly interest young people who would welcome being involved in this work.

### 3. Specific proposals

Action	By when	Responsible person/group
Resource material to be produced for Schools and Parishes outlining the spirituality of the environment and advice on where guidelines on carrying out environmental surveys can be found	Oct 2008	Schools Department and the Commission for Justice and Peace/ Liturgy Department
Liturgical resources about the environment to be produced for use in Parishes/Schools to help people make connections between faith and life.	Ongoing	Schools/Liturgy Department, Commission for Justice and Peace
The Diocese to plan to become a Fairtrade Diocese. <sup>10</sup>	Jan 2010	Diocesan Pastoral Council/Commission for Justice and Peace
Schools/Parishes to consider carrying out surveys and to look at their carbon footprint.	May 2009	Schools/Parishes
Parishes and Schools to be encouraged to support CAFOD's environmental work and to make use of its resources to help Parishioners explore ways of putting the ideas into practice in their own lives.	Ongoing	CAFOD Schools/Parishes

- **To what extent do you agree with these priorities and the proposed action plan?**
- **How far does your Parish support sustainable living?**

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<sup>10</sup> The Fairtrade Foundation officially recognizes a diocese as Fairtrade if its offices and at least 30% of its churches and Schools pledge to serve only Fairtrade tea and coffee whenever providing refreshments, to endeavour to use other fairly-traded items wherever possible, to promote the use of fairly-traded items amongst our congregation and to support the principles of Fair Trade Justice and sustainable living.

**Vicar General:** In Clifton we have three Vicars General who deputise for the Bishop and are delegated to act in his name.

**Diocesan Pastoral Council:** The DPC meets three times a year and its work is to support the Bishop in the pastoral care of the Diocese. It is made up of the Bishop, the Vicars General and two representatives (a Priest and a layperson) from each of the thirteen deaneries and represented by each of the Diocesan Departments.

**Deanery Pastoral Council:** is representative of the Parishes in the Deanery and meets about three times a year to discuss how they can work together.

**Parish Pastoral Council:** each Parish is required to have a Parish Pastoral Council or Team to work with the Clergy in the pastoral care of the Parish.

**The Council of Priests:** The main purpose is collaborate with the Bishop in the pastoral care of the Diocese.

**Deacons Council:** The main purpose of the Deacons Council is to coordinate the role of the Deacons and to plan their ongoing formation.

**Diocesan Communications Officer:** there is a communications officer based at Bishop's House whose responsibility is to facilitate communication both within the Diocese and to the wider community.

#### **Diocesan Departments mentioned in this booklet:**

**Department for Schools and Colleges:** advise and support the Schools of the Diocese in carrying out their mission as Catholic Schools.

**Department for Adult Education:** the Department exists to support all aspects of formation and education.

**Department of Ongoing Formation for Priests:** works with the Department for Adult Education to have a programme of ongoing formation for Priests.

**Department of Liturgy:** the Department works to promote formation and understanding of the liturgy.

**Commission for Justice and Peace:** works to support and encourage individuals and groups working for Justice and Peace around the Diocese.

**Trustees:** The Diocese of Clifton is established as a charitable corporation. In general, all properties and assets of the Diocese are invested in the Diocesan Trustees.

**More information about all the above can be found in the Diocesan Directory or on the Diocesan Website which is [www.cliftondiocese.com](http://www.cliftondiocese.com)**

## Notes

***“What is needed today are heralds of the Gospel;  
who are experts in humanity,  
who know the depth of the human heart,  
who can share the joys, the hopes, the agonies, the distress,  
of people today,  
but who are, at the same time, contemplatives,  
who have fallen in love with God”***

Pope John Paul II

