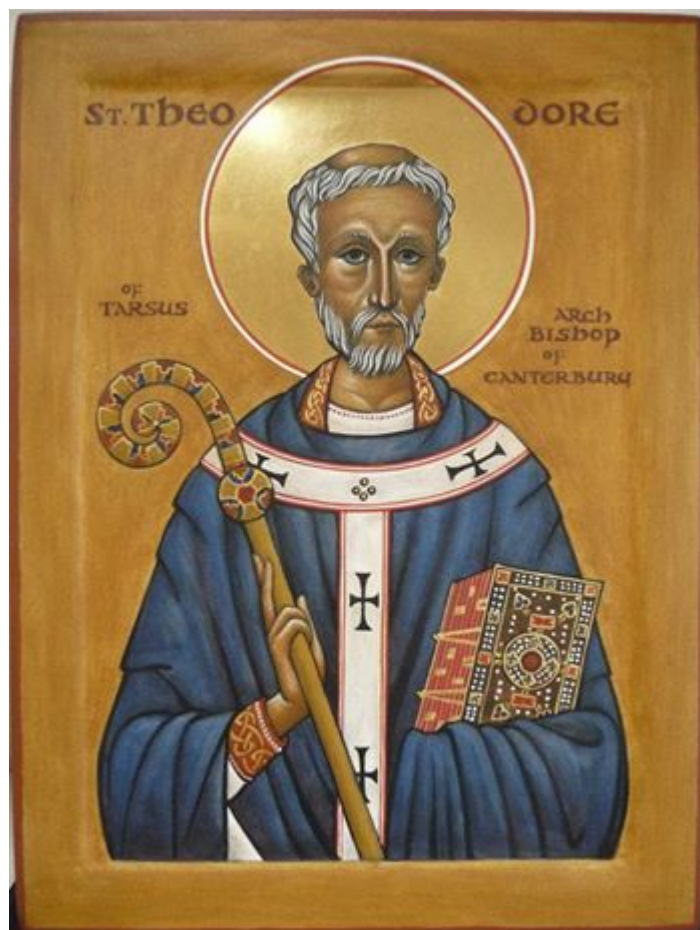


**ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN
ARCHDIOCESE OF THE BRITISH ISLES AND
IRELAND**

**POLICIES
and
GUIDANCE**



18th Edition: April 2023

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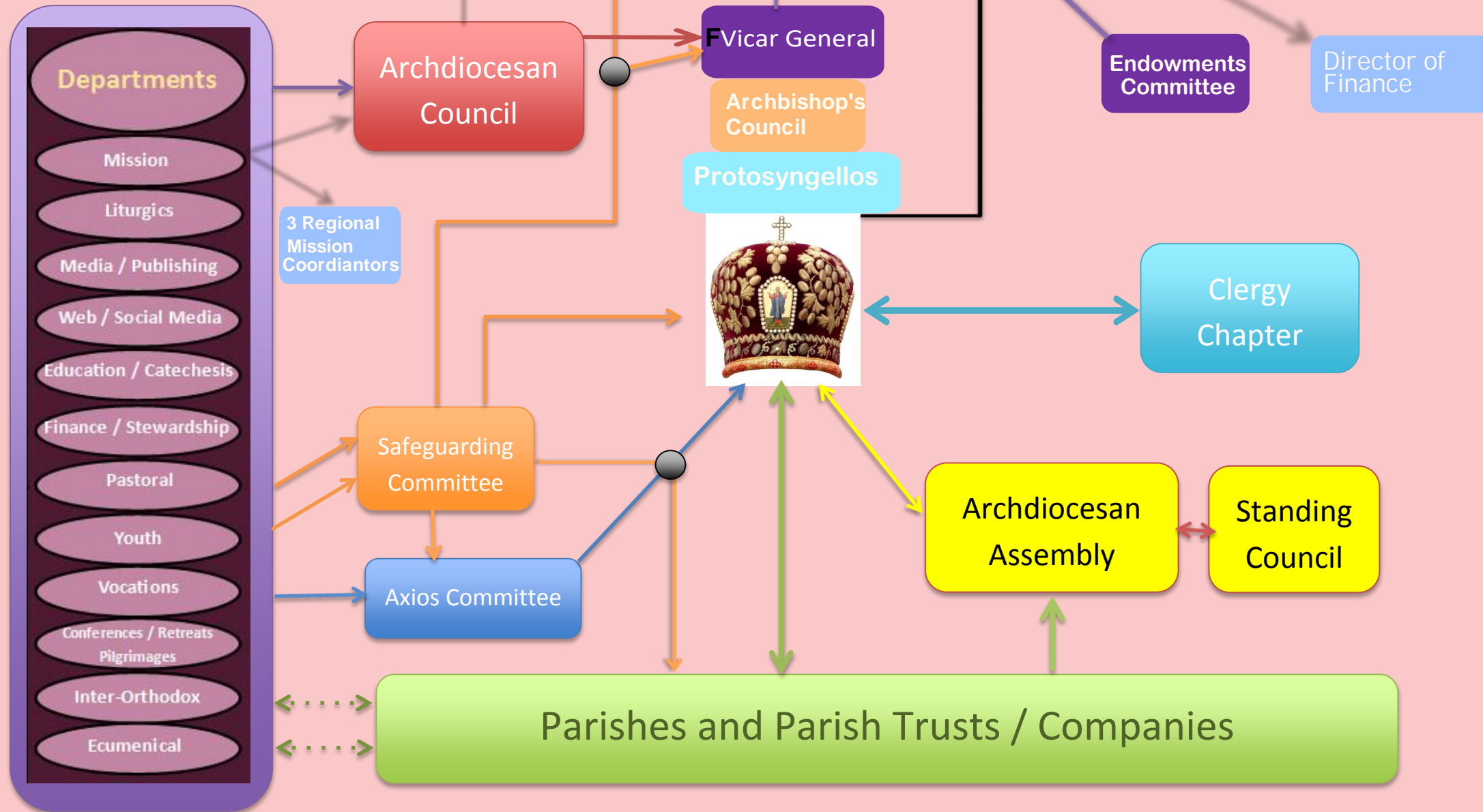
Appendix "A" - Risk Assessment (See Health and Safety Policy)

Appendix "B" - Complaints Handling (A Model for Parish Councils)

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How the Archdiocese Works

Updated March 2023



NOTES

1. The Clergy Chapter directly relates to the Bishop and no one else.
2. The entire trustee body sets the total budget and is responsible at all times for the day to day management and decision making of the CIO Charity. The Chancery is a team of specialists offering legal and other regulatory services to the Archdiocese.
3. The Archdiocesan Council reports to the Bishop and the Board of Trustees. It supervises the work of the Departments whose Chairmen comprise the Council membership. It agrees budget allocations to the Departments. The Council appoints its own Chairperson who attends the Board of Trustees, but not necessarily as a Trustee.
4. The Departments recruit staff from the parishes who contribute their expertise. The Departmental Chairmen are appointed by the Bishop in consultation with the relevant Departmental Committees.
5. The Archdiocese will hold regular conferences, retreats, youth and other ministerial events (not show here). The bishop with the Archdiocesan Council will design and plan these.
6. The Archdiocesan Assembly is a non-executive body chaired by the Bishop comprising laity and clergy according to its Constitution. Its Standing Council organises its business and sets up meetings by order of the bishop.

Archbishop's Council consists of the Vicar General, the Protosyngellos, 3 Regional Mission Coordinators, a representative of the Cathedral and a Canonist

7. The Axios Committee is appointed by the Bishop. It reports directly to him. It checks prospective ordinands with "Safeguarding".
8. The Archdiocesan Safeguarding Officer (ASO) is appointed by the Board to oversee all aspects of the diocese's work with children and adults with care and support needs. The ASO works with a team of specialists who deal with safeguarding issues across the Archdiocese but in particular in relation to the work of the Youth, Pastoral and Axios Committees. The ASO is assisted by a ASL (Lead). The ASO reports directly to the Bishop or if a complaint involves the Bishop, the Holy Synod of the Church of Antioch.
9. The Vocations Department presents candidates to the Axios Committee as requested by the parishes. Its role is to foster vocations by running conferences and education days. It has no discernment remit in respect of prospective ordinands.
10. The parishes have their own trusts but must abide by Archdiocesan statutes and policies under the oversight of the Bishop.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING PARISH COUNCILS IN THE CHURCH OF ANTIOCH

The Holy Synod of Antioch, under the chairmanship of his Beatitude Patriarch Ignatius IV, Patriarch of Antioch and all the East, promulgated the following in January 1993.

Article 1 The faithful take part in the life of the Church through their participation in the life of the parish to which they belong.

Article 2 The Parish Council is an organisation which helps the priest in Christian Education and the growth of the spiritual life, and development of the financial resources of the Parish.

Article 3 The Parish Council is chosen by mutual agreement between the Bishop and the Parish concerned.

Article 4 The Council is constituted of three to fifteen persons depending on the number of parishioners.

Article 5 The members of the Council should be:

- A From the parish, fully twenty-one¹ years of age and registered in the Parish Registry.
- B A member who has paid all his subscriptions² and is free from any obligation owed to the Church.
- C A believer and a devout church-goer and known for his moral conduct and good behaviour.
- D Able to perform effective service to the Parish.

Article 6 The membership of the Council is open to Orthodox women as well as to Orthodox men.

Article 7 The function of the Council:

- A It selects from among its members its executive and the necessary committees for carrying out its functions.
- B It supervises and protects the funds and properties of the Parish, the Church fittings and furnishings such as Icons, Holy Vessels, books, vestments and others.
- C It provides for the living of the priest and the servants of the altar and expenses for the work of the Parish.
- D It executes the decisions of the Bishop concerning the Parish.
- E It prepares the budget of the Church and its needs at the beginning of every year and presents it to the Bishop for confirmation.

Article 8 The Council holds its meetings once a month under the chairmanship of the priest or the elected chairman.

Article 9 The term of office of the Council is four years.³

Article 10 The Council keeps an official registry in which all the minutes of the meetings are kept, which are signed by all the members attending.

Article 11 These regulations shall be put into effect within three months of the date of their promulgation.

Article 12 These regulations may be amended by a decision of the Holy Synod.

Promulgated by the Holy Synod, 28 January 1993

¹ It would be more usual in this Diocese for the minimum age to be 18.

² Diocesan parishes do not, on the whole, follow the practice of membership subscription. Councillors, however, should be supporting the parish financially through their regular giving.

³ This clause assumes rotation of Council membership such that each member stands down for at least 1 year after 4 years' service. This clearly depends on persons being ready and able to serve.

CHARITABLE BODIES TO SERVE THE PARISH

All the information, guidance and regulations concerning setting up a charity to serve the parish may be found on the Charity Commissioner's Web Site.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

Parishes will need to decide on the form of charitable instrument to use, a Trust, Company Limited by Guarantee or CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation). Guidance may be found here:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

Model documents for charities may be found here:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/setting-up-a-charity-model-governing-documents>

The launch page for setting up the chosen charitable instrument is here:-

<https://www.gov.uk/running-charity/setting-up>

Please note that in addition to Safeguarding Trustees or Directors and Parish Council members must have a written policy to deal with conflicts of interest. Guidance may be found here:-

<https://www.gov.uk/manage-a-conflict-of-interest-in-your-charity>

Payments to Trustees or Directors are restricted. Guidance is given here:-

<https://www.gov.uk/payments-to-charity-trustees-what-the-rules-are>

Two Bodies or One?

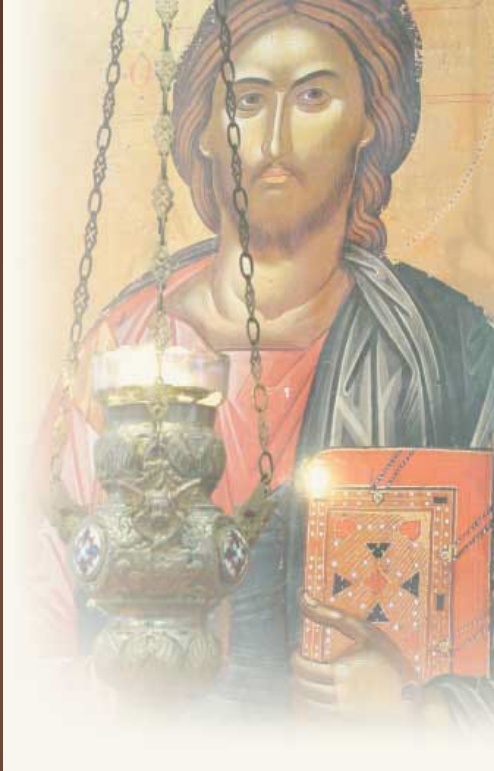
Concerning registration with HMRC for Gift Aid, please be aware that the Charity registered for that purpose *might* be separate as such from the Parish Council which could remain an unincorporated association. If the body is the same then you would have the issue of a regularly changing Council membership which would be serving at the same time as Trustees or Directors. This means that you would have to update the Charity Commission database (or Companies House for Companies Limited by Guarantee) on a much more regular basis and indeed if your Council is large then you might not want to have so many Charity officers. Some parishes run the parish Trust / Company separately from the Parish Council precisely for this reason. It is easy enough to make transfers on a regular basis from the Trust / Company to the Parish Account. This also has the advantage of the priest being paid from a body (the Parish Council) which is not a Trust or Company itself. (See above: Payments to Trustees or Directors). If this option is followed then it would be a good idea to have some if not all the Trustees or Directors as ex officio members of the Parish Council to coordinate parish policy.

Finally ...

Parishes may wish to consider subscribing to the services offered by this body. It is run by a Christian and the advice it gives is often timely and can save any community from making one of those otherwise unforeseen costly mistakes!

<http://www.afvs.org.uk>

(Advice for the Voluntary Sector)



Christian Giving

Thanksgiving Projects in Action

Funding the Church includes:-

- **CHRISTIAN GIVING**
- Fund Raising (e.g. social events)
- Buying Church goods (e.g. vestments, vessels)
- Selling Church goods (e.g. candles, books, icons)
- Loans from parishioners
- Grants from Trusts
- Wills and Endowments

But we are only going to consider **CHRISTIAN GIVING** ... as this is the only form that Scripture and Tradition emphasise.

The Principles of Thanksgiving Projects

- In Christian teaching, money is a spiritual issue and this concerns issues of attachment / detachment. The parable of the rich young ruler, (taken up in the Life of S. Anthony and the teaching of the Fathers generally), all stress this point:- The righteous care nothing for their own lives (detachment) but everything for God — the only possible enduring and fruitful attachment. This attachment or simply, love makes authentic and freely made thank-offerings possible.
- Christian giving therefore is driven by a sacrificial faith and has nothing to do with "keeping the roof on" or "sugaring the pill," (fundraising). How each community deals with this teaching and practices the asceticism of almsgiving has to be worked out in each context, but the basic principles must be taught and embedded. They form the theory and praxis of any Thanksgiving Project.

What the New Testament says (1):-

- **THE GOSPEL** "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich." [2 Corinthians 8:9]
- **THANKSGIVING** "... for the rendering of this service not only supplies the wants of the saints but also overflows in many thanksgivings to God." [2 Corinthians 9:12]
- **JOYFULLY** "for God loves a cheerful giver ..." [2 Corinthians 9:7]
- **WILLINGLY** "... for they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own free will."
SACRIFICIALLY [2 Corinthians 8:3]

What the New Testament says (2):-

- **GENEROUSLY** "... he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."
[2 Corinthians 9:6]
- **TRUSTINGLY** "... and God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work."
[2 Corinthians 9:8]
- **REGULARLY** "On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up as he may prosper ..."
that is:- PROPORTIONATELY [1 Corinthians 16:2]

What About Tithing?

- Tithing (giving 10% of one's income to God's work) is an Old Testament standard but the New Testament emphasises a faithful, joyful, sacrificial response - proportionate to our income - not a "law." We should, therefore, teach PROPORTIONATE giving, not tithing as such.
- Recognise that proportionate giving includes ALL our charitable giving, not just to the Church.
- We PRAY to God concerning what PROPORTION of our income should be given to Church and what proportion to needy causes. People may need help with the maths, eg. 5% = £1 for every £20. Gross income should usually be used but disposable income is acceptable. These proportions should be prayerfully reviewed on a regular basis.

How Does a Thanksgiving Project work?

- Every year – shortly before the end of March OR the parish’s financial year - a Sunday is chosen as **Thanksgiving Sunday**.
- On this day at the end of the Liturgy the people will complete a pledge **Card** (Template “A” – slide 8) with planned weekly or monthly giving for the next year.
- Two weeks before Thanksgiving Sunday each household will receive a **teaching leaflet** (Template “B” – slides 9, 10) which will have as its FINAL page a projected budget for the following year. This will inform the peoples’ prayer. A private family or personal commitment will be made on the basis of this leaflet. It should not be discussed with anyone else.
- It is ESSENTIAL that the cards be completed **in the Liturgy**, albeit at the end. This is communal as well as personal offering in prayer.
- The Cards will be used by the **Recorder** to issue envelopes or standing order forms and form the basis for Gift Aid recording where relevant.

Template "A" – slide 8

ST. THEODORE ECCLESIASTICAL TRUST

Name

Reference (Office Use)

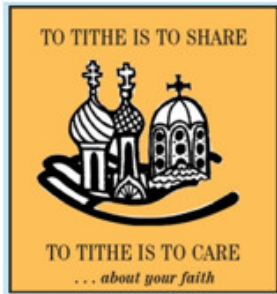
Address

I/we will try to give to the St. Theodore Ecclesiastical Trust and its work

the sum of £ : p each week / each month (please choose by circling)

I/we understand that although this offering is for one year, I/we may increase, decrease or cancel this gift at anytime should circumstances change. I/we understand that the trustees are supporting the Orthodox Church of St. Aidan from these monies given.

Date Signed



Being a tax payer, I/we wish to make this gift by **GIFT AID**

OR - if you want **INFORMATION** about **GIFT AID**, tick this box

If you want to pay by **STANDING ORDER** from your Bank,
please tick this box

2014 Thanksgiving Sunday, 16th March

(Template "B" – slide 9)

Thanksgiving Sunday Liturgy 18th March 2018

Giving to God's Work

Please note – we do not receive any money from the
Archdiocese or the Government
(apart from Gift Aid tax refunds on your giving).



St. Aidan's Orthodox Church, Manchester

THANKSGIVING SUNDAY LITURGY – 18th MARCH

Christian giving is our responsibility as God's stewards, both for the ministry of the Church and for the relief of the poor. We renew our giving every year to the Lord's work in conformity with the teaching of the holy fathers, (especially Ss. John Chrysostom and John the Merciful), and the teaching of Scripture. Consider:-

THE GOSPEL "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich."
[2 Corinthians 8:9]

THANKSGIVING "... for the rendering of this service not only supplies the wants of the saints but also overflows in many thanksgivings to God."
[2 Corinthians 9:12]

JOYFULLY "for God loves a cheerful giver ..."
[2 Corinthians 9:7]

WILLINGLY "... for they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own free will."

SACRIFICIALLY [2 Corinthians 8:3]

GENEROUSLY "... he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully."
[2 Corinthians 9:6]

TRUSTINGLY "... and God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work."
[2 Corinthians 9:8]

REGULARLY "On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up as he may prosper ..."
that is:- PROPORTIONATELY
[1 Corinthians 16:2]



(Template “B” – slide 10)

WHAT SHOULD I (OR WE, AS A FAMILY) DO NOW?

Please pray to the Lord **FOR HIM TO TELL YOU** what **PROPORTION** of your income you should dedicate in thanksgiving to his work. Please do not think of an amount and then work backwards to the proportion! Pray about the *proportion*, the share you are going to give to God’s work over the next year.

The biblical guide to proportionate giving is of course the **TITHE** or **10%**, that is 10p in the £1. However, in Christ we live in grace, not by laws or rules. For some on low incomes this might be too much, (but, remember the widow at the Temple?) For others it might well be not enough. Pray about it!

**ONLY GOD CAN TELL YOU WHAT IS HIS WILL
PLEASE DO NOT ASK YOUR PRIEST OR ANYONE ELSE. DO NOT DISCUSS OR
JUSTIFY THIS WITH ANYBODY
PLEASE TALK TO GOD ABOUT IT.
AFTER I’VE PRAYED WHAT NEXT?**

On **Sunday 18th March**, (or beforehand if you are away this weekend), you will have an opportunity at the end of the Liturgy and in a moment of silence to complete your pledge card. This action will confirm and offer in the Divine Liturgy what you will have already committed to the Lord in prayer at home. Unless you are away, this card will only be distributed at the Liturgy. It is essential that we make our commitment prayerfully and together. The envelopes for your weekly or monthly offering will then be issued for the following year beginning Sunday 1st April, Palm Sunday (or, of course, you may give by standing order, weekly or monthly).

HOW DOES THE TRUST COME INTO THIS?

St. Aidan’s planned giving is channelled through the St. Theodore Ecclesiastical Trust for tax advantages. [If you pay income tax, you should tick the Gift Aid box on the card. This enables us to claim back tax from the Inland Revenue]. If you need any more information please speak to Fr Gregory. Apart from these tax refunds (which YOU have paid)

DO NOT RECEIVE MONEY FROM ANYONE ELSE!

Neither the Government nor the Archdiocese gives us anything by the way of grants etc. We stand and fall by God’s grace on our own.

HOW WILL THE PARISH’S INCOME BE ALLOCATED?

Well the simple answer is with just as much care and prayer as you are giving to your own giving decision. Here are some of the figures which might apply over the forthcoming year.

THE CHALLENGE

We have a greater challenge this year as some people have moved away from Manchester or their circumstances have changed. We will of course adjust the budget in the light of the giving of the community pledged on Thanksgiving Sunday, but the following represents our goal as a community :-

PARISH BUDGET 2018/2019

	£
2 Clergy (includes Tax & National Insurance)	31,500
Office, Telephone, Stationery, Printing	4,000
Gas, Electricity, Water	1,500
Altar Goods	2,000
Building Maintenance, Fire & Safety	1,000
Insurance (Buildings and Contents)	1,000
Grounds Maintenance	1,000
Archdiocese Contribution (15%)	5,500
Poor Relief (Current: 5%)*	1,800
Reserve Fund**	8,000
Equipment	800
Kitchen and Bathrooms	800
Transport	300
<u>Sundry Expenditure</u>	<u>800</u>
<u>TOTAL TO RAISE</u>	<u>£60,000</u>

* Needy causes are supported by occasional separate appeals.

** Fr Gregory will receive a State pension from June 2018. At his own request, his Church income will be reduced by this pension (£8000 gross). The money saved will go into a Reserve Fund for future building and ministry needs - including training and providing for his successor when the time comes to hand over the leadership of the parish. This is not included in the Archdiocesan Contribution which is raised this year from 12% to 15% now that Fr Gregory is doing less work for the Archdiocese.

PLEASE NOTE: Your pledge is to give to God’s work week by week or month by month ... not just when you actually come to church.

PLEASE PRAY that God’s will may be done in your life!

Thank you and God bless you.

Father Gregory

Practical Arrangements (1) – Thanksgiving Sunday

- **Nobody must be left out** – makes sure everyone gets a teaching leaflet two weeks before and a pledge card on Thanksgiving Sunday.
- If someone is **going to be away** on Thanksgiving Sunday then they may have a pledge card before they leave to complete at home and return. This is the **ONLY** exception to the rule that the cards are to be completed at the end of the Liturgy (after the second “Blessed ...”)
- On Thanksgiving Sunday the pre-printed cards are handed out immediately before completion **inside an envelope with a pen**. The cards are completed **in silence** although the priest may offer a **prayer**. They are **collected and offered** in the Altar.
- Those **unable** to complete a card should simply sign it without an amount. That way nobody visibly does anything different from anyone else.
- **Envelopes or Standing Orders / Gift Aid forms** are issued as soon as possible. Make sure that the name(s) are written on each envelope set.

Practical Arrangements (2) – Thanksgiving Recorder

- The Recorder sorts the cards and marks the giving for each on a **confidential record** which shows a weekly register of income (by Envelope or Standing Order). The records must identify those who have chosen to Gift Aid their giving so that the necessary information is always available to make the regular claim on the Inland Revenue.
- The **Recorder** need not be the Treasurer or the person who banks the collection. **Cash handling** should be under dual control. Only a very limited circle of people should have access to the **confidential** records.
- The Recorder needs to be the person who makes the claim for **Gift Aid** tax refunds from the Inland Revenue. The parish or trust and the Recorder will need to apply to the Inland Revenue for this purpose.
- Loose cash collections *, other sources of income and Thanksgiving Income will constitute the parish's yearly **budget**. PUBLISH THIS!

** Loose cash collections are assessable for Gift Aid up to a maximum of £8,000, i.e. up to £2,000 tax refund at the current standard rate of tax (2021/22).*

Preparing a Thanksgiving Project (1) – The Council (i)

- **Pray, Lead, Plan** --- Pray, Teach, Share --- Pray, Execute, Review
- Under “Leadership” it is vitally important that the Parish Council is **UNANIMOUS** on the decision to go ahead before anything happens. When that decision is made each member of the Council is given an advance copy of the **Teaching Leaflet** (designed by the Priest).
- A **second Council Meeting** is then scheduled at least two weeks later to **plan** the practical details of the implementation of the Project.
- At this meeting each Council member will, after a time of prayer and privately, complete an **anticipatory pledge card**. These are then sealed and replaced by the cards to be completed on Thanksgiving Sunday. The purpose of this “dummy run” is for the Council to **lead by example**. The fact that Council members have done this **MUST** be **communicated** to the parish. Again, unanimity is essential.

Preparing a Thanksgiving Project (1) – Timeline (ii)

- **Pray, Lead, Plan** --- Pray, Teach, Share --- Pray, Execute, Review
- The **first Thanksgiving Sunday** may be in the middle of the parish's financial year. It may or may not be close to the end of the tax year. Either way less than a full twelve month's supply of envelopes will be used and the second Thanksgiving Sunday will be less than twelve month's distant. Ideally the parish's financial year should end on 31st March (to tie in with the fiscal year used for Gift Aid) with Thanksgiving Sunday a little before that; steering clear of course of any early date for Pascha or a Sunday where the clocks moved forward!
- Once the date of the first Thanksgiving Sunday has been fixed, **work backwards** from that point the weeks you will need for preparation. You will need to order envelope sets from **Lockie Ltd.** <https://www.lockiechurch.com/> or another supplier in good time, (usually at least 3 months in advance in Lockie's case to take advantage of their discounts). Use weekly and monthly envelopes. You will have to estimate (initially generously) how many sets of each. Make sure that you have weekly and monthly standing order forms printed ready.
- Once the system is in place you will only need to issue the **teaching leaflet** each year at least two weeks prior to each Thanksgiving Sunday. Revise it from time to time.

Preparing a Thanksgiving Project (2) – The Community

- Pray, Lead, Plan --- **Pray, Teach, Share** --- Pray, Execute, Review
- At least two weeks before the first Thanksgiving Sunday (coordinated with the leaflet issue) the congregation will need to hear a brief **verbal introduction** to the Project from the parish priest and perhaps also the Treasurer / Warden etc. Reference should be made to the **Teaching Leaflet** distributed that day and, in the first year, the completion of the **anticipatory Pledge Card** by each member of the Council beforehand. The message will need to be repeated, albeit in a shorter form, but still by all the original persons, the following Sunday - but if more than 2 weeks ahead of time, at your discretion concerning repetition.
- In this crucial two week period before Thanksgiving Sunday the priest and Council need to do everything possible **prayerfully to educate and inspire** the community in its preparation for its commitment.
- At this time, **those being away** on Thanksgiving Sunday may be issued with pledge cards to complete and return either before departure or after their return. **NO ONE ELSE MUST HAVE CARDS BEFOREHAND.**

Preparing a Thanksgiving Project (3) – The Commitment

- Pray, Lead, Plan --- Pray, Teach, Share --- **Pray, Execute, Review**
- In the two weeks before Thanksgiving Sunday the community both in in groups and individually must pray for a faithful response. The priest *may* take the opportunity at this time to teach or preach on the theme of Christian Giving but he must resolutely refuse to answer such questions as:- “*How much should I give Father?*” **People should pray privately** about this before coming to church on Thanksgiving Sunday.
- The Treasurer / Recorder and others appointed with him / her need to make sure that all the **stationery and practical arrangements** are in hand before the start of the Liturgy on Thanksgiving Sunday. Envelopes and Standing Orders must be issued in good time after Thanksgiving Sunday ... that is before the last year’s set expires. Standing orders of course only need to be reissued if the amount changes. Everyone paying tax should complete a **one-time Gift Aid Form** as provided by HMRC / CC.
- After Thanksgiving Sunday, the global result of the pledges and the forthcoming budget must be published back to the Community. The Council should then consider and review the **parish’s own giving** to worthy causes and other charities. Progress reviews should be regular.

Typical 3 Month Timeline for the introduction and running of a Thanksgiving Project (1)

ACTIVITY	SUNDAY COUNTDOWN (includes week following)	SCHEDULED TASKS
An indeterminate period of discernment by the clergy	Pre Council	Discern the right time to introduce a Thanksgiving Project (TP) to the parish. Informal conversations may take place at the discretion of the parish priest.
Parish Council No. 1	S12	Formal adoption of a TP by a required unanimous vote of the Council. No further progress can be made without that unanimity. If approved, the Council is briefed on the stages of preparation and their involvement. Date of Thanksgiving Sunday is fixed at least 3 months ahead of this meeting. ¹ Giving envelopes are now ordered in readiness for Thanksgiving Sunday.
Consultations	S11	Councillor consultations with the parish priest as required.
Parish Council No. 2	S10	The “Dummy Run” of pledge card preparation by Council members followed by practical preparations, including ordering of envelopes, stationery and the setting up a Working Party to deliver on the TP preparations.
Working Party	S9	Working Party meets to allocate jobs after drawing up a task list. The Stewardship (Gift Aid) Recorder could easily be someone else than the Treasurer, but if possible, this should not be the Parish Priest. All records of course must be kept in accordance with GDPR (Data Protection) law.

¹ Avoid major feasts and in the case of Christmas, the whole of December and for Pascha of course, Great and Holy Week. Avoid also Sundays when the clocks change! It might be better if you can set your year end as the 31st March, not 31st December, to coincide (more or less) with the fiscal year ending 5th April. This will (more or less) synchronise your Gift Aid claims with the fiscal cycle, (quarterly claiming is recommended).

Typical 3 Month Timeline for the introduction and running of a Thanksgiving Project (2)

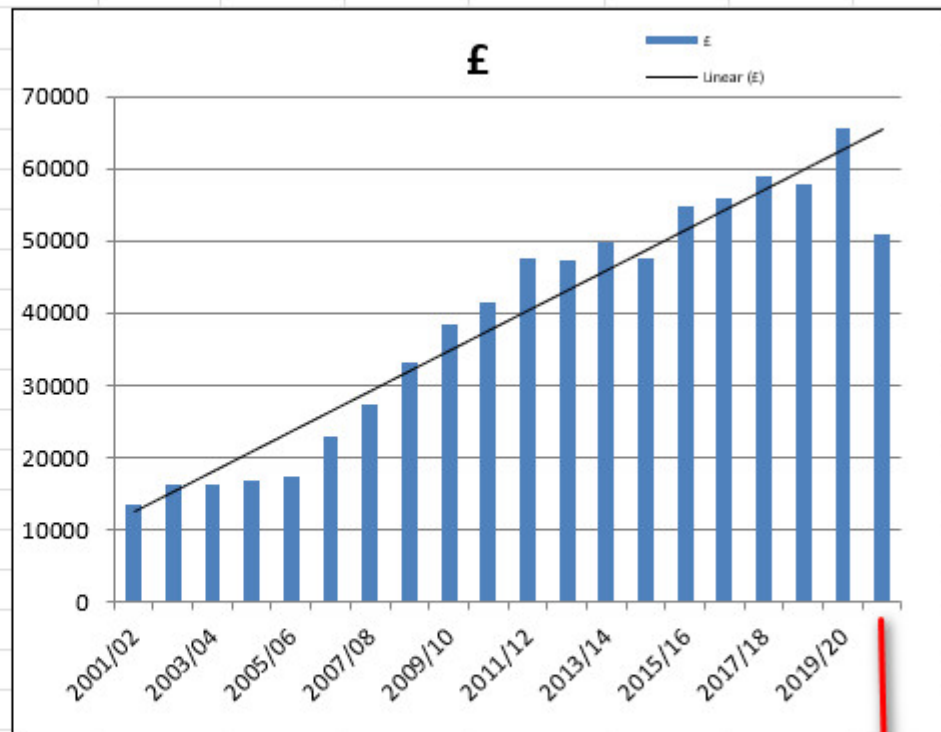
Working Party	S8	Working Party preparations continue.
Working Party	S7	Working Party preparations complete.
Parish Education	S6	Announcement to the Parish (1) with simple explanation, Q&A.
Parish Education	S5	Announcement to the Parish (2) with further explanation, Q&A.
Parish Education	S4	Conversations in the Parish with Parish Councillors and clergy full involved.
Parish Education	S3	Conversations in the Parish with Parish Councillors and clergy full involved.
Parish Prayer and Fasting	S2	Teaching leaflet published and emailed to all parishioners with paper copies available in church. Prayer and fasting to inform household decisions begins.
Parish Prayer and Fasting	S1	Continued prayer and fasting leading to a household decision on (1) the proportion of income to be given to God's work and (2) the amount.
THANKSGIVING SUNDAY	S0	The pledge cards are completed in silence at the end of the Liturgy before the Blessing and Dismissal. These are collected, offered with a prayer and given to the Treasurer / Gift Aid recorder for analysis, envelope / standing order preparation and parish budgeting.
Review and Planning	S+1	Envelopes issue in church together with Standing Order and Gift Aid forms.
Review, Planning and Parish Reporting	S+++	Parish Council and Working Party joint meeting to review before the Annual Meeting convenes to approve the accounts and the budget for next year. ²

² Ideally, the Annual Meeting should take place within a month of Thanksgiving Sunday. The parish's calendar should take all these factors (including the fiscal year) into account when planning and adjusting.

St. Aidan's Orthodox Church, Manchester – a Case Study

INCOME GROWTH

Year for Ordinary Income	£
2001/02	13570
2002/03	16175
2003/04	16354
2004/05	16838
2005/06	17450
2006/07	23027
2007/08	27362
2008/09	33098
2009/10	38452
2010/11	41362
2011/12	47489
2012/13	47314
2013/14	49707
2014/15	47641
2015/16	54874
2016/17	55978
2017/18	58912
2018/19	57879
2019/20	65475
2020/21	50912



effect of the pandemic

TAXATION AND THE CHURCH

Business Rates

There are some important facts to be aware of if you wish to allow hire of the Church Hall to unconnected groups in order to raise funds for the maintenance of the building.

Activities undertaken by a Church are exempt from business rates HOWEVER this is subject to certain rules being met. Principally these fall into the category of being direct fundraising for the mission of the Church or direct use of the Church in a community setting. For example the Church could lead a mother and baby group and non-attenders could participate, that would be exempt.

It is not, however, permissible for the Church to hire out its premises to non-church groups, such as Slimming World, on an hourly or nightly basis, as this would incur a liability for business rates. Even though the income was to help maintain the church building, including any halls, there would still be a liability for business rates as the building(s) are being used in part for commercial purposes rather than solely by the Church.

For example, a Church may have opened a workspace and a café. The workspace is treated as a business and rates are paid. The café, however, should be treated as an activity of the Church so long as ALL the profits are ploughed back into the Church.

Please remember that the actual liability falls first on the members of the Church Council and it is important that the distinction is clearly understood. In English law a Church may be deemed to be a charity even if it is not registered. In that case, the liability attaches to the Parish Council. In the case of a Trust, the trustees are jointly and severally liable (personally). As mentioned elsewhere in the guide, insurance should be purchased to cover all these eventualities.

Council Tax

If your Church building has unused rooms which could be converted for human occupation, DON'T! If your local Council finds out that the Church is being used for human habitation, it will charge you Council Tax and then the utility companies will start changing the basis for their assessments.

Corporation Tax

People are often surprised and even shocked to receive a corporation tax return for the Church from HMRC. Some may slip through the tax man's net and never receive one; others, perhaps most, will receive one every two or three years. HMRC seems to have been extending its coverage of Churches in recent times. Invariably Church charities, registered or not, will be exempt from liability to Corporation Tax in respect of surpluses made through church trading activities even on such small scales as the candle stall and the book store. However, this exemption needs to be claimed when, and only when, the return is received. In addition to providing basic financial information, the Church will have to confirm that all surpluses are ploughed back into charity funds in fulfilment of its Objects. This is the necessary precondition for exemption from liability to Corporation Tax, a situation analogous therefore to exemption from business rates.

Gift Aid/Tax Rebates

All regular giving from tax payers in Church should be gift aided. On current rates of taxation, without putting this in hand, the Church would be missing out on 25% of its planned giving. Additionally, there now exists the GASD scheme (Gift Aid Small Donations) which as of the date of this policy document entitles a Church to claim tax rebates on up to £8,000 per annum on loose box collections. Since the procedures concerning gift aid are clearly laid out on line and kept up to date on the HMRC website, these are not shown here. Please check this website:

http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/charities/gift_aid/

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Public Benefit

A prerequisite for claiming gift aid tax rebates is that the charity be registered and that it provides "Public Benefit". Churches and even other educational bodies are not now deemed to qualify for tax exemption unless these requirements are met. Full details and case studies explaining how Public Benefit works may be found on the Charity Commission's website here:

<https://www.gov.uk/public-benefit-rules-for-charities>

PAYE

It really is very simple setting up PAYE for paid officers and clergy. All that is needed is a registration of an employer with the HMRC against which a secure log-on to the PAYE section of their site will be granted. From here, employees can be added quite easily and software downloaded to record payments as and when made. The software automatically calculates any tax and National Insurance due, the former being based on the tax code which the employee will provide and the latter calculated according to the usual NI rules. All this happens in the background; the user does not have to do anything, so long gone are the days when an employer needed to know how to use tax and National Insurance tables. The software even prepares the end of year return and the P60s for each staff member. Full guidance on all these procedures may be found on this HMRC web page:

<https://www.gov.uk/business-tax/payee>

Contract of Employment

1. Employer

Your are employed by the Parochial Council of [name of parish]
[Address of parish council secretary]
[Address]
[Address]
[Postcode]

2. Employee

[Name]
[Address]
[Address]
[Address]
[Postcode]

3. Job Title

Your job title is [job title].

Both this council supporting your ministry and yourself are accountable to the bishop. The bishop will determine your ministry (if a parish priest) in consultation with the parish council where necessary. Assistant clergy duties are determined by the parish priest in consultation with the clergy team and parish council where appropriate.

4. Date of Commencement

The date that your employment began was [date]

Your employment will continue until such time as you retire or are redeployed whichever is sooner.

5. Non Parochial Duties

These, if any, will be determined by the bishop from time to time or the parish priest in respect of assistant clergy.

6. Remuneration and Expenses

Your basic gross annual salary will be £[amount].

You will be paid monthly, in arrears, by credit transfer into your bank or building society account. Payment will normally be made on the [day of month] day of each month (or the nearest working day). Stipend reviews will take place on an annual basis and any change in remuneration will take effect from the beginning of the following fiscal year.

The parish council shall come to an agreement with the bishop concerning any graduated increments to the employee's stipend over a fixed period of time in order that, as finances allow, the employee will eventually be remunerated in accordance with duly agreed and authorised pay levels across the diocese.

Expenses – The parish council will pay your expenses in full according to its standard assessments and rules and in compliance with fiscal statutory regulations. Any variation from this policy will be agreed with yourself in order for you to claim allowable amounts against tax deductions in your PAYE coding.

7. Hours of Work

You are employed to work [full / part] time.
Your working hours are [X] hours per week.

8. Holiday Entitlement

It is the parish council's responsibility to provide for 'locum tenens' cover for weekend duties such that you should have not less than 2 full weeks holiday each year and if possible up to 4 weeks.

9. Sickness Absence

If you are absent from work because of illness, you must inform the church wardens as soon as possible in order for them to arrange sickness cover. Extended leave of absence for whatever reason should be notified to and agreed with the bishop.

Self-certification [in the form provided] is required for absences lasting more than 7 days after which a Doctor's Certificate must be provided.

You are usually entitled to contractual sick pay at your normal salary for a period of time as follows:

[(If you have more than one year's service,) you are entitled to receive your normal salary for four weeks in any 12 month period.]

Such payments will include any statutory sick pay you may be entitled to.

Thereafter, you may be entitled to statutory sick pay.

Payment of sick pay is conditional upon full compliance with the above procedures. Non-compliance with these rules may lead to the withdrawal of sick pay and may constitute a serious disciplinary offence.

Holiday entitlement continues to accrue during the first four weeks of any sickness absence, but does not accrue thereafter.

10. Absence due to Injury

In the unfortunate event that you shall be incapable of attending to your duties by reason of injury sustained wholly or in part as a result of actionable negligence, nuisance or breach of statutory duty on the part of a third party, all payments made to you by the parish council under the sickness absence clause, shall to the extent that compensation is recoverable from the third party, constitute loans by the parish council to yourself which shall be repaid when and to the extent that you recover compensation for loss of earnings from the third party by action or otherwise.

11. Pension

As required by law, a Diocesan Pension Scheme will be available as from 2017. All employed clergy will be required to join this Scheme with employer's contributions sourced from a negotiated combination of parish and Diocesan funds.

12. Termination of Employment

The amount of notice you are required to give to terminate this contract is three calendar months. The amount of notice of termination of your employment you are entitled to receive is three calendar months.

13. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures

The disciplinary and grievance rules and procedures are enclosed with this Contract.

The disciplinary and grievance rules and procedures do not form part of your contract of employment.

The [name of parish] reserves the right to suspend you on full pay for a reasonable period of time in order to investigate any allegation of misconduct or other disciplinary matter.

14. Data Protection

The [name of parish] and its agents hold information relating to you which is subject to the Data Protection Act 1998. By signing this Contract you consent to them processing, both manually and by electronic means, your personal and sensitive personal data for the purposes of the administration and management of your employment and/or the parish council's business.

15. Deductions from Pay

You hereby authorise the [name of parish] and its agents to deduct from your pay (including holiday pay, sick pay and pay in lieu of notice) any amounts which are owed by you to the parish council.

16. Return of property on Leaving

On request, and in any event on termination of your employment for any reason, you are required to return to the [name of parish] any property, including:

- any keys
- church computers, software - including discs and all documents in whatever form together with all copies (irrespective of by whom and in what circumstances such copies were made) which are in your possession or under your control
- all non-personal vestments and other church goods being church property

17. Rules, Policies and Procedures

You must comply at all times with the [name of parish] rules policies and procedures as amended from time to time and as directed by the bishop.

Parish council membership: In accordance with the Statutes of the Patriarchate of Antioch, the parish priest is an ex-officio member of the parish council and ordinarily chairs the meetings. Again according to these Statutes the priest can delegate this role to someone else as occasion needs. The parish priest will not chair that part of a council's meeting which is concerned with fixing his terms and conditions of employment but he may appeal to the bishop in cases of dispute. In respect of assistant clergy, their membership of the parish council depends on local practice. The same exclusion from chairing the meeting would apply to these clergy as to the parish priest where appropriate.

I accept the terms and conditions of this employment as stated above.

Signed by Employee:

Date:

Signed by the church wardens of the parish council of

Name:

Date:

Name:

Date:

REMUNERATION OF CLERGY, EXPENSES AND PENSIONS

NOTE: As of January 2015 there is no consistent practice across the Archdiocese and no policy concerning the remuneration of clergy. Some of what follows is a legal requirement (pensions), what HMRC expects (expenses) and an aspiration for us all, (a full time stipendiary clergy). In respect of the latter, the comments here reflect best practice. However, until the Metropolitan arrives and guides us, the recommendations in the Remuneration section (below) are provisional and transitional. Please consider them carefully nonetheless.

Expenses

HMRC requires as far as possible that (even in the case of volunteers and other unpaid staff) expenses are paid in full. The employee or ordained person may claim any unpaid qualifying expenses against tax on the annual return but HMRC prefers that these unclaimed expenses be kept to a minimum. If any parish, or for that matter mission, does not at the very least pay expenses in full to any worker, this is unacceptable. From an accounting point of view no worker should be allowed to state that he or she will forgo expenses in lieu of personal giving. Let them give and then let them claim their expenses in the usual manner. This is better for them spiritually and also necessary for the Church accounts to show the true costs of the Church's operations.

Remuneration – stipends (clergy) and salary (church workers)

All communities, both parishes and missions, should prayerfully work towards paying all employees, including ordained persons, the full rate for their work. Although many church workers will be part time employees and most will be giving their services for free as volunteers, different standards should apply to the clergy. Serving as a parish priest or a parish deacon is a full time commitment - if of course the Diocese is serious about maintaining the health and wellbeing of its clergy and is also concerned to have the parishes grow physically and spiritually!

Clearly, in the early years of a mission, and in the absence (for the time being) of historic diocesan endowments, clergy may have to maintain appropriate secular employment. However, the Parish Council should have a plan right from the very beginning to increase clergy remuneration on an annual escalator as the community grows and its finances strengthen. This commitment should be prior to acquiring an owned building simply because people come before bricks and mortar.

Never should a serving retired clergyman constitute a pretext for avoiding the challenge of paying the clergy. If such a retired priest voluntarily surrender his rights in this regard, the funds should still be set aside and invested to provide for his eventual successor. This man will more likely be young, have no secular employment and may well be supporting a young family. Planning for the future must always be kept in mind.

Pensions

As from April 2017, and as required by law, the law requires ALL paid clergy and other workers to opt in to an approved Workplace Pension. Since all clergy are paid salaries locally from local trusts, it is these that must conform to the law in respect of parochial personnel (ordained or otherwise). Go here for further information:-

<https://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en>

Financing Clergy Remuneration - See the Guide section on Church Giving.

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ABSENCE POLICY

ANNUAL LEAVE

Annual leave should be agreed with the Parish Priest in advance to ensure that there is sufficient cover in the parish during the absence of any of the employees or ordained persons

COMPASSIONATE LEAVE

Requests for compassionate leave in relation to death or serious illness of someone to whom the employee is close will, of course, be given sympathetic consideration.

PATERNITY LEAVE AND PARENTAL POLICY

This policy document applies to employment as a clergyman or any other employed person in the Antiochian Orthodox Archdiocese of Great Britain and Ireland. The legally enshrined right of maternity and paternity leave may be difficult to deliver if claimed. However, it is a fact of law and cannot safely be ignored.

1. Policy Statement

1.1 The employer's policy is to comply with the law of England & Wales regarding parental and paternity rights. The aim of this policy is to set out the law applicable to the rights of employees or ordained persons with new children. The policy is not a contractual document.

1.2 In the event that this policy and the law conflict, the law shall take precedence. If employees or ordained persons are in any doubt as to what their rights are they should discuss matters with the employer. Should this policy change as a result of amendments in the law the changes will be notified to the employee via the employer's notice board.

1.3 This policy is intended to apply to all employees or ordained persons who wish to take leave to look after a child or who have become fathers, whether the child in question is born or adopted.

1.4 Any employee who is dissatisfied with any decision affecting their parental and paternity rights should use the employer's formal grievance procedure.

2. Definitions

2.1 Parental Leave – The right of male or female employees or ordained persons who satisfy certain criteria to take unpaid leave of up to 13 weeks for a child born or adopted over whom they have or expect to have responsibility.

2.2 Paternity Leave – Payable to all employees or ordained persons in relation to the birth or adoption of a child where the employee is either the biological father or the intended father, or the mother's partner (including same sex or civil partners) and who have at least 26 week's continuous service with the employer ending with the 15th week before the expected week of childbirth or the week in which an approved match with the child is made in the case of adoption, provided the employee satisfies certain criteria. The entitlement is to take paid leave of up to 2 weeks.

2.3 Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) – Compulsory pay payable to all employees or ordained persons taking paternity leave, provided they satisfy certain criteria.

2.4 Remuneration - Wages or salary.

2.5 Parental Responsibility Agreement - contract entered into by the unmarried natural parents of a child which gives the parent without care certain rights over the education, health and welfare of that child. Parental Responsibility can also be granted to that parent by the court in the form of an order.

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2.6 Expected Week of Childbirth (EWC) – this is the week in which the expected date of the baby’s birth falls, beginning on a Sunday and ending the following Saturday.

2.7 Matching Week – this is the week in which the adopter is notified of having been matched with the child. The matching week begins on a Sunday and ends the following Saturday.

3. Parental Rights - Entitlement to Parental Leave

3.1 Employees or ordained persons (male or female) with at least 1 year’s continuous service with the employer are entitled to unpaid parental leave in respect of children born or adopted on or after 15th December 1994. The period of leave is 13 weeks for each child up to the child’s 5th birthday. In the case of a child entitled to a disability living allowance, the period of leave is 18 weeks.

3.2 For children born or adopted between 15th December 1994 and 14th December 1999, the employee's right to take parental leave will last until 31st March 2005, or if a child is adopted; until the child's 18th birthday, if that is sooner. In these cases an employee must have completed one year's continuous service with the employer between 15th December 1998 and 9th January 2002.

3.3 For children born or adopted on or after 15th December 1999, the employee's right to take parental leave will last until the child's fifth birthday, or if the child is adopted; until five years following placement for adoption. In these cases the employee must have completed one year's continuous service with the employer.

3.4 Employees or ordained persons with disabled children can take 18 weeks parental leave for each disabled child entitled to disability living allowance, up until their child's 18th birthday, regardless of when the child was born.

3.5 Parental leave also applies to employees or ordained persons who have obtained a parental responsibility order from a court or enter into a parental responsibility agreement in respect of that child.

3.6 The following applies with regard to how the 13-week leave may be taken:
(i) The leave may only be taken in blocks or multiples of one week, (except in the case of a disabled child).

(ii) The employee must agree the period and time for taking the leave with the employer and must give the employer 21 day's notice before taking parental leave. The notice from the employee must state the start and end date of the proposed parental leave period. (The employer reserves the right to postpone an employee's parental leave for up to six months where the employer's business would otherwise be unable to cope).

(iii) However, parental leave cannot be postponed when an employee gives notice to take leave immediately after a child is born or is placed with the family for adoption.

(iv) Employees or ordained persons with disabled children can take parental leave one day at a time or for longer periods, if required.

(v) The employee may only take a maximum of 4 weeks leave in any 12-month period for each relevant child.

(vi) The employee's period of leave taken with a previous employer will be taken into account when calculating their total entitlement.

(vii) The personnel/human resources department may request from the employee proof of their responsibility for the relevant child together with a copy of the child's birth certificate, proof of adoption, or the child's entitlement to disability living allowance as the case may be.

3.7 The employee will remain employed whilst on parental leave and certain terms of employment will remain in force as follows:

(i) Implied obligation of trust and confidence.

(ii) Notice of termination.

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- (iii) Disciplinary and grievance procedures.
- (iv) Non-disclosure of confidential information.
- (v) The acceptance of gifts or other benefits.
- (vi) Non-participation in any other business.
- (vii) Compensation in the event of redundancy.

3.8 An employee who takes parental leave for a period of 4 weeks or less, (and where such leave did not include any period of additional maternity or adoption leave) may return from leave to the job in which he or she was employed before taking leave. This will entitle the employee to the same terms and conditions of employment previously enjoyed.

3.9 It is the employer's intention that employees or ordained persons who take parental leave for more than 4 weeks, (or parental leave of less than 4 weeks, which includes a period of additional maternity leave or additional adoption leave) shall also return to the same job. However, if this is not reasonably practicable the employee will be fully consulted and offered any suitable alternative employment. The new position will be one, which is both suitable for the employee and appropriate for him/her to do in all the circumstances.

3.10 In the event that after parental leave an employee will be required to work in a new position their manager/supervisor/head of department will arrange a meeting prior to return to discuss the change in position and any administrative details.

3.11 In the unlikely event of the employee's job not being available due to redundancy, the employee will be fully consulted and offered any available suitable employment.

4. Paternity Leave - Entitlement to Paternity Leave in the case of childbirth

4.1 An employee who has been continuously employed for a period of not less than 26 weeks ending with the 15th week before the expected week of the childbirth will be entitled to statutory paternity leave if:

- (a) The employee is either the father of the child, and has or expects to have the responsibility for the upbringing of the child, or
- (b) Married to, or is a partner of, the child's mother, but is not the child's father, and has the main responsibility for the upbringing of the child, in both cases, or is
- (c) Either one of two parents jointly adopting a child or the partner of someone adopting a child individually and is not taking statutory adoption leave and pay and will be taking time off work to support the adopter and/or care for the child, and
- (d) Complies with the notification requirements under clause 5.

4.2 If the child is born earlier than the 15th week before the week in which its birth is expected and the employee has not been continuously employed for 26 weeks but would otherwise have been, he will still qualify for paternity leave as long as the other conditions are satisfied.

4.3 An employee will also be treated as satisfying the qualification requirement relating to length of employment if he has not satisfied those requirements, but would have done so, but for the fact that the child's mother has died.

4.4 An employee will also be treated as satisfying the qualification requirement relating to length of employment if he has not satisfied those requirements, but would have done so, but for the fact that the child was stillborn after 24 weeks of pregnancy or has died.

4.5 The entitlement to paternity leave is 26 weeks paid leave to be taken on or after the expected week of childbirth (in the case of a child born on or after 3rd April 2011), but in any event must be taken within 56 days

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of the expected week of childbirth or 56 days after the actual date of birth if this is earlier than the expected week of childbirth.

4.6 An employee's entitlement to leave under paragraph 4.5 will not increase simply by virtue of the fact that more than one child is born in respect of the same pregnancy.

4.7 The paternity leave can be taken (in the case of children born on or after 3rd April 2011) at any time within the period beginning 20 weeks after the child is born and will end 12 months after that date.

4.8 The employee may choose whether to begin the leave either on the date the child is born or elect a certain number of days after the date on which the child is born or select a predetermined date after the first day of the expected week of the child's birth.

4.9 If the employee chooses to take the leave after the first day of the expected week of the child's birth, he must serve a written notice on the employer of his intention to take such leave and the dates on which such leave will be taken.

4.10 Alternatively, the employer may specify the dates to be taken by the employee in respect of paternity leave by serving a written notice on the employee.

4.11 If the employee has chosen to begin his period of leave on the date on which the child is born and he is at work on that date then the employee's period of leave begins on the day after that date.

GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

COMPLAINTS GENERALLY

All complaints made against any member of this Archdiocese, where there has been alleged harm to any person(s) or bod(ies) in connection with their ecclesiastical duties or roles shall be documented and thoroughly investigated by the competent authorities, ecclesiastical and/or civil. There are separate procedures for complaints involving the safeguarding of children or adults at risk from harm (see section 24).

GRIEVANCE BY EMPLOYEES

If the employee or ordained person has a grievance relating to their employment, it should be raised initially with the parish priest or the bishop with a view to resolving the matter informally.

FORMAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

The employee or ordained person should put their grievance in full in writing to the Parish priest or the Bishop.

If the grievance concerns the parish priest, the grievance should be put in writing to the Parish Council and from thence to the bishop if appropriate.

HARASSMENT

If the employee or ordained person believes they are being harassed in any way (sexual, racial, unlawful discrimination or other form of harassment), they should follow the Harassment Policy procedure.

INVESTIGATION

The investigator will fully investigate the grievance and arrange a meeting to discuss the outcome of their investigation. After the meeting, the decision will be put in writing with details of the person to whom the employee or ordained person can appeal should they not agree with the decision.

APPEALS

The employee or ordained person should put the reasons behind their appeal in writing within 7 days of the written decision being presented. After the appeal has been heard at a pre-arranged meeting, the decision will be issued in writing and this will be final and binding.

REPRESENTATION

At all stages of the grievance procedure, the employee or ordained person will have the right to be accompanied by a suitable person of their choice.

ESCALATION

Complaints that cannot be resolved at parish level may be escalated as follows:

1. to the Bishop directly, if the matter is highly confidential or is having a serious impact on parish life; or
2. to the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Lead and the Bishop jointly if the complaint alleges a safeguarding issue; or
3. to the Vicar General for noncompliance with other Archdiocesan policies or matters of an administrative or practical nature; or
4. to the Protosyngellos if the complainant considers that the matter has a significant spiritual element and the other options are not appropriate.

Please be aware that any matter addressed to an Archdiocesan officer may be reported by them to the Bishop in the ordinary course of their duties.

HARASSMENT POLICY

Everyone should be treated with dignity and respect at work. Bullying and harassment of any kind are in no-one's interest and should not be tolerated in the workplace, but if you are being bullied or harassed it can be difficult to know what to do about it.

What are bullying and harassment?

These terms are used interchangeably by most people, and many definitions include bullying as a form of harassment. Harassment, in general terms is unwanted conduct affecting the dignity of men and women in the workplace. It may be related to age, sex, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation, nationality or any personal characteristic of the individual, and may be persistent or an isolated incident. The key is that the actions or comments are viewed as demeaning and unacceptable to the recipient.

Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means intended to undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient. Bullying or harassment may be by an individual against an individual (perhaps by someone in a position of authority such as a manager or supervisor) or involve groups of people. It may be obvious or it may be insidious. Whatever form it takes, it is unwarranted and unwelcome to the individual.

Bullying and harassment are not necessarily face to face. They may also occur in written communications, email, phone.

Bullying and harassment make someone feel anxious and humiliated. Feelings of anger and frustration at being unable to cope may be triggered. Some people may try to retaliate in some way. Others may become frightened and demotivated. Stress, loss of self-confidence and self-esteem caused by harassment or bullying can lead to job insecurity, illness, absence from work, and even resignation. Almost always job performance is affected and relations in the workplace suffer.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Informal Remedy - Individuals who feel they are victims of harassment should inform their harasser that their behaviour is unacceptable and should stop. If this is not appropriate or more formal action is warranted, the formal complaints procedure should be adopted.

Formal Remedy – A formal complaint should be made in writing and sent to the Parish Priest and/or Parish Council. The formal complaint should state:

- the name of the harasser
- the nature of the harassment
- the dates and times of harassment
- the names of any witnesses

Once the complaint is received, it should be investigated immediately with complete confidentiality. The situation should first be discussed with the person lodging the complaint and then separately with the person accused of the bullying or harassment. If effective remedies cannot be achieved, then the complainant with the Parish Priest and Council concerned may approach the Bishop for a resolution. Nothing in these provisions shall prejudice a complainant's rights in law but it is the responsibility of the church to avert this possibility by prompt and fair action.

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DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

SCOPE

The purpose of this procedure is to help and encourage all employees and ordained persons to achieve and maintain standards of conduct and job performance.

The purpose is also to ensure that all the institutions of the Archdiocese behave fairly and consistently.

These procedures will only be used when necessary and as a last resort.

SUSPENSION

If a complaint has been raised against an employee or an ordained person, they may be suspended after a preliminary investigation has been carried out and which finds from the evidence that there is a case to answer.

The suspended employee or ordained person will receive written confirmation of the reason for suspension and the date from which the suspension will operate.

During the period of suspension, an employee or ordained person's contract of employment will continue including all rights with pay.

If the complaint is against an ordained clergyman, the Bishop and the Chancery of the Archdiocese will take charge of this process according to the requirements of both the Canons and National Laws. If the employed person is not ordained, then the appropriate subsidiary authority will take charge of the process with a right of appeal being reserved to the Bishop.

INVESTIGATIONS

No action, including suspension, will be taken until a preliminary investigation has taken place to see if the evidence is sufficient to take the case forward. If, after consideration of all the facts, the employing authority determines that there is a case to answer, the employee or ordained person will be suspended and required to attend a disciplinary hearing or ecclesiastical court.

DISCIPLINARY HEARING / ECCLESIASTICAL COURT

The employee or ordained person will be given written details of the complaint against them in advance of the hearing to allow time to prepare a response. The employee or ordained person will be advised of the decision of the hearing as soon as reasonably possible. In the case of an action against an ordained person where the Bishop is the employing authority, the disciplinary hearing / ecclesiastical court must be chaired by an officer of the Chancery Division who will report to the Bishop in due course with his/her recommendations.

APPEALS

The employee or ordained person has the right to appeal any disciplinary decision and will be advised of the person they should approach, which must be within 7 days of the date of the decision. In the case of a non-ordained person, the right of appeal is to the Bishop or a person delegated by him, but not being anyone connected with the subsidiary employing authority, (for example Parish Council, associated charity, monastery). In the case of an ordained person, the right of appeal against the Bishop in canonical matters is always the Patriarch of Antioch together with the Holy Synod, if appropriate. It is the Patriarch himself who has the right to grant the appeal in this case. The decision of the person hearing the appeal will notify the employee or ordained person in writing and their decision will be final and binding under the procedure.

REPRESENTATION

At all stages of the disciplinary procedure, the employee or ordained person will have the right to be accompanied by a suitable person of their choice.

THE PROCEDURE IN THOSE CASES WHERE THERE HAS NOT BEEN AN ALLEGATION OF BREACH OF THE CANONS

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Stage 1 – First Warning

Oral Warning – if conduct or performance does not meet acceptable standards, the employee or ordained person will be given a formal oral warning at 12 weeks. The employee or ordained person will be advised of the reason for the warning and that it constitutes the first stage of the disciplinary procedure.

Written Warning – if the poor conduct or performance continues or is more serious, a first formal written warning will be issued at 18 weeks. This warning will advise the employee or ordained person of their right of appeal and that a final written warning may be issued should there be no sustained improvement or change.

Stage 2 – Final Written Warning

This will be issued at 24 weeks if the offence is serious or if the employee or ordained person fails to improve their conduct or performance during the period of the prior warning. This will give details of the complaint, the improvement required and the timescale. It will also warn that failure to improve may lead to action under Stage 3 (dismissal or other action short of dismissal) and will refer to the right of appeal.

Stage 3 – Dismissal

If there is still no discernible improvement or if the conduct amounts to gross misconduct then the final stage may be dismissal for the employee or canonical sanction by the Bishop in the case of an ordained person. This decision will be confirmed in writing at 30 weeks.

The following examples apply only to non-ordained persons employed by a subsidiary authority of the Archdiocese, for example, a Parish Council, a monastery or an associated charity.

EXAMPLES OF INCAPABILITY

- Poor performance
- Incompetence
- Lack of application

EXAMPLES OF MISCONDUCT

- Bad time-keeping
- Unauthorised absence
- Failure to observe parish policies
- Failure to comply with parish regulations

GROSS MISCONDUCT

- False declaration of qualifications
- Theft, fraud, falsification of accounts or expense claims
- Intoxication by reason of drink or drugs
- Sexual, racial or other harassment
- Breach of confidentiality

All the above examples are by no means exhaustive.

CANONICAL SANCTIONS AGAINST AN ORDAINED PERSON

Following investigation of an alleged breach of the canons and due process in an Ecclesiastical Court, the Bishop will apply a sanction to the ordained person. As with all those under the authority of the Bishop or a subsidiary authority, sanctions (canonical or otherwise), will additionally be applied in the case of a breach of the civil or criminal law as judged by a secular court. The degree of severity of this ecclesiastical sanction will match the seriousness of the conviction in the secular court without prejudice to any civil or criminal proceedings.

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF THE BRITISH ISLES AND IRELAND (13)

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY AND REQUIREMENTS

(Suggested template to be signed and kept with the parish records)

Each parish or mission will appoint a Health & Safety Officer (HSO) who will report to the Parish Priest and the Parish Council at regular intervals but no less than annually.

We will, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide and maintain safe and healthy working conditions, equipment and systems of work for all our employees and voluntary helpers, and provide such information, training and supervision as they need for their purpose. We will consult employees and voluntary helpers on a regular basis in order to seek their views on health and safety matters.

We expect everyone to have due regard for their own safety and this policy, and bring any deficiencies or concerns to the attention of the HSO and Parish Priest immediately they become aware of an issue.

We will also endeavour to ensure health, safety and welfare of all members of the congregation, visitors, contractors and others who may visit the church and churchyard.

The arrangements that we will make to implement the policy are set out below.

This policy will be kept up to date, particularly in the light of any changes to or in the church or activities. We will regularly review the policy and the way in which it has operated, and make any appropriate changes.

A Health and Safety review will form an item on the agenda of the Annual Parish Meeting.

Parish Priest / Parish Council Responsibilities:

- Ensure that employees are aware of Health & Safety standards and procedures
- Establish that all equipment, plant and substances that are used are suitable for the task and kept in good working order including regular servicing and maintenance, e.g. PAT testing, fire extinguishers
- Provide adequate training, information and instruction for use of various equipment
- Take immediate and appropriate steps to investigate and rectify any risks to health and safety arising from any equipment, plant and substances
- Ensure that all accidents are recorded in the Accident Book and investigated to identify the causes and rectification necessary

Employee Responsibilities

- Take responsibility for their own health and safety
- Consider the safety of others who may be affected by their acts of omissions
- Work in accordance with information and training given
- Refrain from intentionally misusing or recklessly interfering with anything that is provided for Health & Safety reasons
- Report all faulty equipment, accidents and 'near misses'
- Not undertake any task for which authorisation and/or training has not been given

(Signed) Parish Priest:

Date:

Next Review date:

Health & Safety Protocols

Introduction

The activities of a parish or mission and its maintenance do not generally present serious safety concerns. If there are fewer than five employees, no *formal* written Health & Safety policy needs to be in place. Nevertheless, there still remains the potential for accidents. The aim of this policy is therefore:

- to make arrangements which enable hazards in our surroundings to be identified;
- to reduce the risks presented by these hazards to tolerably low levels;
- to encourage church members, voluntary helpers and visitors to be vigilant, taking care of their own safety and that of others.

A checklist should be prepared to assist in the identification of potential hazards.

*In this policy, the term **hazard** means a safety concern or a situation which could cause harm. The term **risk** is a combination of the severity of the hazard and the likelihood of its occurrence*

Safety Inspections

A safety inspection of the church will be carried out every twelve months by the Parish Priest and HSO.

A record of the inspections and their findings will be kept.

Any actions arising will be dealt with under the supervision of the Parish Priest and HSO, this may include immediate rectification and/or carrying out risk assessments. The information will be brought before the Parish Council.

The check list is really only a starting point. It cannot cover every possible hazard. The inspection team, and indeed the whole church community, must be alert to new or unexpected hazards and situations.

In order to facilitate an ongoing review of Health & Safety concerns in the parish, a **Risk Assessment** exercise should be performed each time a new hazard is anticipated. This Risk Assessment must be kept up to date in real time and should inform and drive forward the Health & Safety policy. A Risk Assessment Template is appended to this guide as a separate file.

Specific Requirements

1. Accident Book

- 1.1 The church maintains an accident book (a notice should be displayed to advise of its location). Any accidents on church premises involving personal injury, or near misses, will be investigated by the designated HSO, and the details (including dates, times, circumstances and any relevant observations or recommendations) entered in the accident book.

2. Medical Emergency

- 2.1 A first aid box is available (a notice should be displayed to advise of its location). The contents should be checked regularly;
- 2.2 In the event of a medical emergency, dial 999 if appropriate.

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3. Fire Safety

- 3.1 A specialist company will advise how many and what type of extinguishers are required at the premises and these should be tested annually;
- 3.2 In the event of an emergency, an announcement should be made for everyone to leave the building and to assemble at the pre-determined location. The emergency services should be contacted. Details of the assembly point should be displayed in Church;
- 3.3 The HSO should ensure that all emergency exits are free from obstruction and unlocked from the inside at all times. These exits should be clearly marked with battery operated "running man" sign.

4. Electrical Safety and PAT Testing

- 4.1 Every five years, fixed electrical systems should be inspected and tested by a competent contractor who is a member of the NICEIC, ECA or other approved body. Any necessary remedial work should be carried out;
- 4.2 All electrical equipment when used by members of the public needs to be tested regularly, either every year or every other year. Any used electrical items donated by members of the congregation should ideally be PAT tested before being used to ensure they do not have any faults which may lead to a fire risk. It may not be a condition of your Insurance policy that PAT testing should take place, but this removes some of the risk of fire from using faulty equipment. PAT testing should be undertaken by a registered contractor.

5. Hazardous Substances

- 5.1 Hazardous substances which may be found in normal domestic premises (such as detergents, bleach and polishes) should be stored securely in church out of reach of children.

6. Plant and Machinery

- 6.1 Volunteers using equipment on church premises (such as portable tools) should ensure that these are properly maintained and that they know how to use them safely. Power lines to the outside of the premises should be circuit trip protected.

7. Accident Risks and Maintenance Issues

- 7.1 The routine safety inspection will include attention to the state of the floors, carpets and steps in the church. The HSO will also check that the state of paths and steps in the church yard is satisfactory;
- 7.2 Impact from falling boxes, heavy items and masonry is of concern. Any potential problems here will be identified and addressed by the HSO;
- 7.3 If the building is leased, any concerns in relation to the structure of the property, its fixtures or fittings for which you are not responsible should be brought to the attention of the Landlord in writing and an inspection arranged to discuss the situation.

8. Lighting and Heating

- 8.1 A routine safety inspection will include a check that all the lights in the church are working correctly;
- 8.2 Boilers should be serviced and safety checked on an annual basis.

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9. Safeguarding

- 9.1 A safeguarding policy is designed by the Archdiocese for implementation by all the parishes and missions and details of the local representative should be displayed in Church and on any parish website.

10. Personal Safety and Lone Working

- 10.1 Working alone in the church or church yard is discouraged, however, it is recognised that in many cases there is no practical alternative. If someone is working alone in church, they should make sure someone knows that they are in church, have their mobile phone with them and let a family member know what time they expect to return home;
- 10.2 If the church is open to the public during the day under supervision, there should ideally be two persons on duty and the same provisions for each person above (10.1) apply.

11. Church Activities

- 11.1 All special church activities (festive days, special events) must be subjected to a risk assessment. The organisers must take appropriate action depending on the outcome;
- 11.2 Events that take place under the management and service provision of others (e.g. horseriding, community sports events etc) should be assessed as safe and all the necessary insurance provisions are in place.

12. Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)

- 12.1 There should be ground floor suitably adapted toilet facilities;
- 12.2 If there are steps into the building a ramp should be provided to enable wheelchair users to gain access the building.

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RECOMMENDED INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

(PLEASE NOTE – This list is by no means exhaustive as each church building and individual has different needs. This is intended as a guide and should not be treated as formal advice. You should contact your insurance broker for further details.)

Public Liability Insurance

If an accident happens in or around your premises, then anyone whether they are a member of the congregation or not can pursue a claim against your Church for compensation. Your liability can be triggered by something as simple as someone slipping on a wet surface inside your Church or in the grounds and suffering an injury. We see many adverts on TV encouraging people to make a claim if they have had an accident and it is true that we are becoming more litigious as a society. However, if someone fell in your building or grounds or something fell on them which injured them and they became hospitalised, it could mean that they would be unable to work for a period of time and ultimately not have an income. In this case, a claim on your Public Liability policy would ensure that they received a justifiable payment whilst recovering, rather than as some might see it as “trying to make some money out of the situation”.

Employers’ Liability Insurance

For all employees, including ordained persons, there is a legal requirement for Employers’ Liability Insurance to be in place to provide cover should a claim be made by an employee who has sustained an injury in an accident. Employers’ Liability could be triggered even if the employee is a voluntary helper or is self-employed but working under your supervision. The annual certificate must be displayed on a noticeboard in the Church.

Trustees Indemnity Insurance

Charity Trustees bear unlimited personal liability for their actions in managing the charity’s affairs. This policy provides cover in respect of costs and damages for which a trustee is legally liable resulting from any “wrongful act” committed by a trustee in that capacity or defending any alleged “wrongful act”.

Buildings Insurance

If you own the building in which you worship, buildings insurance is required with the sum insured to be reviewed annually. Accidental Damage cover will be available as an additional extension.

Rented Premises

If you lease your property from another body, the obligations under the lease and the legal requirements in respect of insurance should be thoroughly investigated and provided for.

If you rent the premises, it is unlikely that you will be expected to purchase buildings insurance, however, there may be specific requirements within your lease that will be your parish’s responsibility, for example damage to windows (which although part of the building may not be covered under the Landlord’s policy) and any breakages will become your responsibility. When renting premises, pay particular attention to your lease which should identify who is responsible (you or the Landlord) for the following, although this list is not necessarily a full list:-

- Public Liability Insurance
- Tenant’s responsibilities in relation to the building including repairs
- PAT testing of electrical equipment
- Fire extinguishers
- Burglar alarms

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Contents Insurance

A general sum insured for your contents will be required with the figures reviewed annually. It is wise to make an inventory of all the equipment: vestments, vessels, icons, furniture to name a few categories to assist you in reviewing this each year. It is also useful for your Insurance Broker to have this information when they are looking at quotations for you. It is amazing how much you discover you have in Church when you start making a list! Accidental Damage cover can also be added.

The following extensions may also be required:-

- All Risks – this covers items occasionally removed from the Church, for example being taken on pilgrimages or taking Holy Communion to someone who is housebound
- Money – this can provide cover for money held either on the premises, someone's home or in transit
- Cover may be required for items owned by the church but kept at different premises; for example a photocopier which may be kept at the priest's home
- Single Article Limit – individual items or sets which have a value over and above the single article limit set by the policy should be separately specified on the schedule

If you use more than one building and keep items at both properties, both addresses should be included on the contents policy with either a "floating" or "specified" sum insured.

Motor Insurance

Business Use should be specified on your motor policy (commuting is not enough).

Clergyman's Home Contents Insurance

Ensure that your policy includes the extension 'working from home', this will also probably give you some cover for office equipment. Alternatively a separate 'Home Office Policy' may be arranged alongside your standard 'Home Contents Insurance Policy'. Insurers will probably advise that if you have any visitors to your house this should only be by prior appointment and Insurers may place a 'theft by violent or forcible entry or exit' endorsement on your policy. (This means that if a theft occurs, cover will only be provided if it can be proven that the burglar broke into or out of your property).

If you have church equipment stored at your home, such as vestments and vessels, ensure your contents Insurer is aware of this as it is likely that they would have to be itemised separately on your policy. You will, of course, need All Risks cover to ensure they are covered away from your home as well.

Personal Safety

Under the current circumstances of society, it is desirable that the public should not have easy access to the private areas of your house. This may not be possible, of course, but it is something to be considered when receiving occasional visitors into your home for pastoral purposes. Common sense rules apply.

Legal Expenses and Compensation Claims

Employees are increasingly aware of their rights and, encouraged by several high-profile cases and increasing media coverage, are more likely to take action if they lose their job or consider they have been discriminated against. We are thinking here primarily of non-ordained staff employed by Church bodies. However, we cannot rule out the possibility that eventually an ordained person might resort to the Courts for compensation in the event of a dispute with a Church Council or Bishop. It is essential, therefore, that insurance is taken out that covers both legal expenses and compensation claims. Usually this will be by way of an extension to your existing Church Buildings and Contents or Trust Policy.

The Legal Dimensions of Marriage

Introduction

Many Orthodox make the mistake of thinking that the legality of a marriage can only be secured by either having a civil ceremony first or by having the Registrar present at our wedding service in order to have the Marriage Schedule signed. This is not the case. A so-called "Authorised Person" - designated by the Church - may, upon application to the Registrar and after one year, function as 'locum tenens' for the Registrar, completing the legal formalities at the wedding itself. For this to happen, the Church building must be registered for the purposes of the solemnisation of marriage (different from general worship registration, see below). The Orthodox marriage service must be approved from a legal standpoint (only!) by the Registrar. Alternatively, some Orthodox churches prefer that there should be a civil marriage first followed by the marriage in Church, but there are a number of disadvantages to this option:-

1. Under modern circumstances, the Orthodox couple may think that the civil ceremony is enough and not present themselves subsequently for a church marriage, especially if they are non-practicing believers. They cannot, of course, receive Holy Communion until they have been married in church, (and by that we mean the ORTHODOX Church. Exceptions can be made to this withdrawal of the chalice where the Church marriage service is necessarily delayed by church circumstances, sickness or some other justifiable cause.
2. Non-Orthodox will probably only turn up at the civil ceremony, a missed opportunity for mission!
3. With two marriage occasions necessary, the couple is involved in a doubling up of arrangements, (with the attendant extra costs), thereby exacerbating the factors in (1) above.
4. The Church should be able to show herself as dealing with the *whole* matter of the marriage.
So, how does one go about making arrangements for everything to be done "in house" ?

Registering the Parish and Other Preparations

If the building belongs to the church it must be registered as a Place of Meeting for Religious Worship under the "Places of Worship Registration Act 1855". If the building was bought from another church, note that the registration lapses when the property is sold. It must, therefore, be re-registered. Contact the local Registrar on how to do this and to acquire the necessary forms. It is a straightforward procedure.¹ After the certificate of registration is received the trustees or other officers must approach the Registrar to have the building registered for the solemnisation of marriage. If the building is not owned but rather shared or rented then it must be subject to a Sharing Agreement under the provisions of the Sharing of Church Buildings Act 1969. Consult the Registrar in this case on how to proceed.

In addition to the usual forms, it is likely that the local Registrar will ask for the local parish to submit its marriage service text so that he or she can confirm that it conforms to the requirements of law. The Registrar is not interested in theology of course ... just the contractual words in the form of vows, which the Orthodox service does not have. These vows, logically, should be inserted in the Orthodox marriage service in the liturgical pause between the Betrothal and the Crowning parts (see below). All that is required here is that the contractual words are said audibly by the bride to the groom and then by the groom to the bride; duly witnessed by two competent persons. In the traditional form of the vows any reference to "until death do us part" will be omitted being not essential to law and not compatible with Orthodox marriage doctrine.

¹ Note that this should be done anyway. because in law, if the church is not (yet) a REGISTERED charity, such building registration affords the church status as an unregistered charity with zero assessment by the Rating Authority and HMRC (Corporation Tax). The utility companies will also usually charge a much lower rate of VAT (as at 2022, 5%).

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The Contractual Words

5. It is absolutely essential to the validity of the marriage that in some part of the ceremony each of the parties shall make the following declaration:—

“I do solemnly declare that I know not of any lawful impediment why I A.B., may not be joined in matrimony to C.D.”

and that each of them shall say to the other either—

“I call upon these persons here present to witness that I, A.B., do take thee, C.D., to be my lawful wedded wife [or husband]”; or

“I A.B., do take thee, C.D., to be my wedded wife [or husband]”.

6. These declaratory and contracting words must be said in the presence of the authorised person acting on the occasion and of the witnesses to the marriage.

7. Immediately after the marriage is solemnized the authorised person must register all the particulars prescribed by law in the duplicate marriage register books of the registered building in which the marriage has taken place; the entry in both books must be signed by the parties married, by at least two witnesses and by the authorised person.

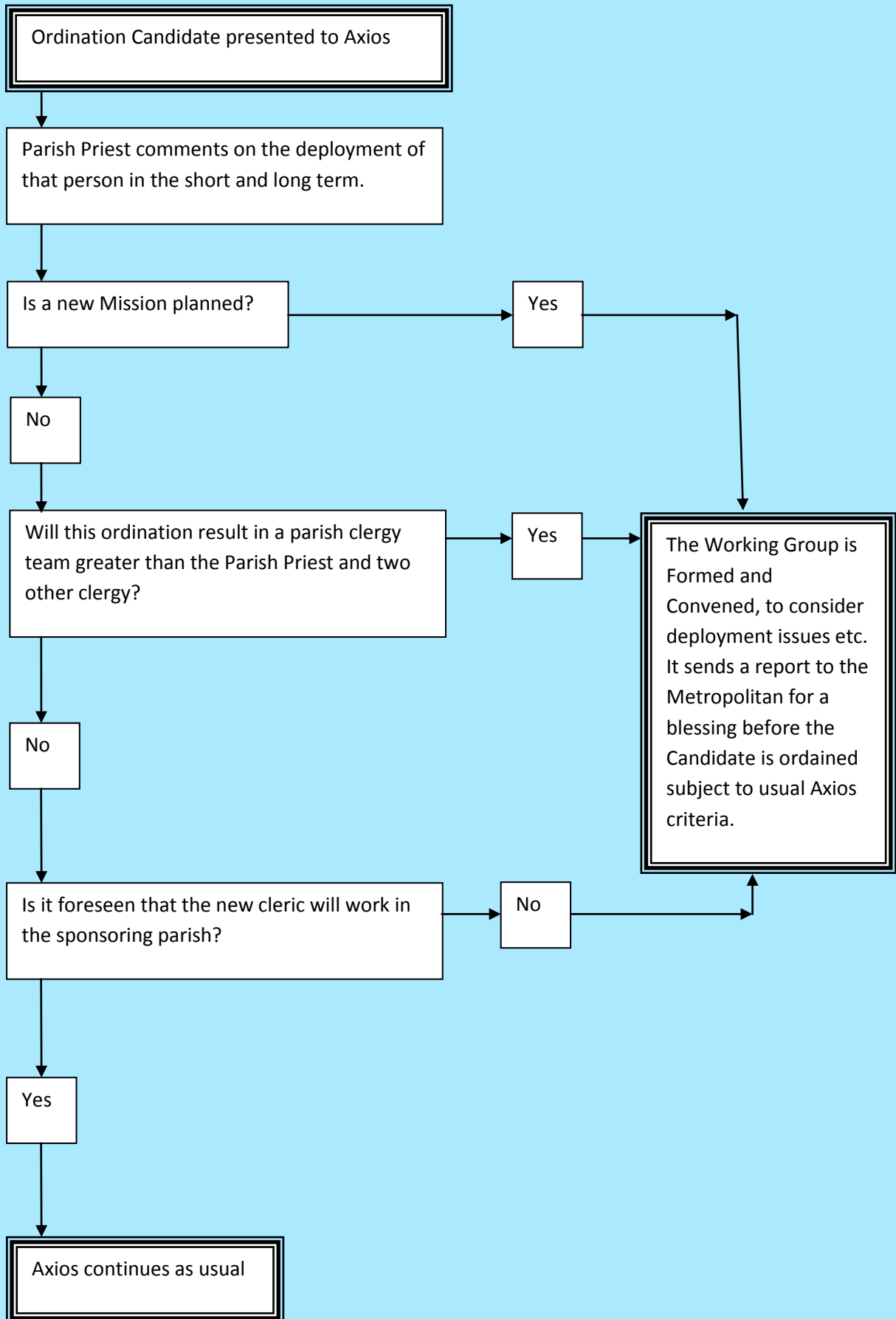
8. After the registration of the marriage a certified copy of the entry thereof may be obtained from the authorised person on payment of the prescribed fee.

After the Registrar has been satisfied that the documentation is in order it will, in turn, be approved by the Superintendent Registrar and AFTER ONE YEAR has elapsed, the designated “Authorised Person” (who may not be the priest but who must always be in attendance ... there may be more than one) may begin to function. Take care if a visiting priest is to preside at the wedding. An Authorised Person must be present, or failing that, the local Registrar. The Registrar issues a Guide for Authorised Persons and training is offered locally ... an important service today bearing in mind the state of flux concerning marriage and its registration in the eyes of the State.

The Marriage Process

1. The couple will apply in good time to the Registrar to have notice given of the marriage on 3 successive weeks in the Gazette. The priest may also give notice in church as well, but this has NO LEGAL EFFECT.
2. The couple will present the Marriage Schedule (issued by the Registrar after notice) to the priest. ONLY WHEN THIS HAS BEEN RECEIVED MAY THE MARRIAGE PROCEED, WITHIN THE ALLOTTED TIME.
3. When the marriage takes place, the Authorised Person will have the Marriage Schedule completed by the couple and the witnesses and he will then forward this to the Registrar.
4. The state Marriage Certificate is issued by the Registrar alone, upon application. The Church will additionally issue its own Marriage Certificate according to the canons and the prescribed form but only AFTER a prior civil marriage with the production of the state marriage certificate or at the Orthodox marriage service itself where the above requirements for registration have been met.
5. Legally at this time (February 2022), arranging an unregistered Church marriage is fraught with dangers and should be avoided at all costs. It is possible that Parliament may outlaw such marriages in the near future as having in any case, no legal effect. Any unregistered marriage ending in divorce has grave legal implications for both parties. Do not rely on the couple's promise that they will have a civil marriage afterwards!

Ordination of New Clergy and Deployment.



Some things to think and pray about ...

You may feel you are being called to ordination as a deacon (and perhaps later as a priest). This leaflet sets out the process of *discernment* in the Deanery.

It is important that you prepare yourself sensibly throughout the process – talk to your parish priest and spiritual father/ adviser and wife (if you are married) about this often, keep in touch with the chairman of the Axios Committee, work hard at your studies, and within your parish. Take on real responsibility locally.

No one will expect you to know all the answers to each and every pastoral problem or theological question but Axios will expect you to know what you will do if you are faced with such a problem or question. Similarly, Axios *will not* ask you to perform miracles but we *will* expect you to have a serious attitude to your life of prayer, Bible study, theological reflection and attendance in Church.

Axios will not expect you to be converting the masses or founding churches but it will expect you to be able to articulate the Christian Faith intelligibly to different hearers. You need to be able to do this in a way that is real, personal and living. Axios will expect you to have a priest, spiritual father and parish who are all enthusiastic about you being ordained.

Axios expects you to be realistic and open about your positive and negative attributes and about what you can and cannot offer to God in ordination.

1.

Many men find this process daunting! Try and remember that God saves us in the state we are in *now* so don't long for a better, holier (ordained) time in the future! Get on with learning to pray, attending to your studies and apply yourself to family and work as if you will never be ordained. Seek how you can serve Christ *now* and how you can serve His people just as you are. Don't try to do too much.

Visit other parishes and dioceses, if you can, visit Orthodox in other countries, read under guidance, go on pilgrimage and never miss an opportunity to learn more. Spend time in silence. Regularly and faithfully receive the Holy Mysteries and other sacraments of the Church, including Confession.

Remember that Christianity is not just head-learning but it is a relationship with God. Keep that love affair crisp and fresh, seek out the Lord and look for opportunities to be with Him.

Commit yourself to your parish. Think carefully how much time you can realistically give to diaconal ministry. If you work every weekend or unsocial hours you will have to think of changing jobs. Above all, be faithful.

It may be that Axios or the Bishop decides that God is not calling you to ordination. If that is so, be grateful! Priestly and diaconal ministry is a huge burden, a serious act of self sacrifice that is lifelong, often thankless too and with no prospect of retirement. As a lay person you'll be free to choose your own way but be ordained? Read John 21:18 – 19. Just follow Him anyway. God bless you!

2.

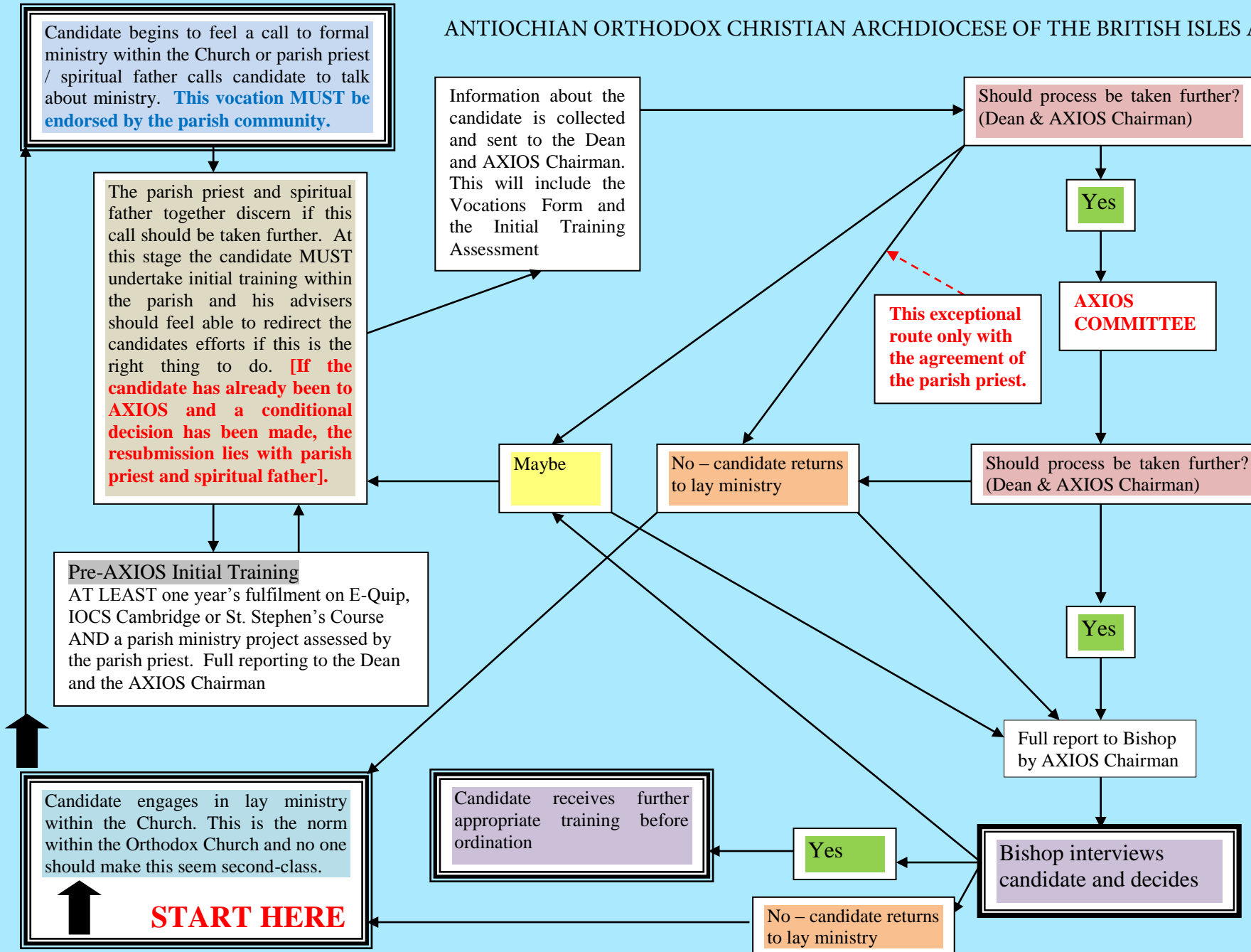


Ordination

The process.

Ministerial Formation to the Point of Ordination (start bottom left)

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Work hard at your studies. Whichever course of studies you are going to do, aim to complete them with the highest possible marks. Accept any criticisms you have been given and double your efforts. Don't just read in order to complete an essay but fix your eyes on Christ and work for Him. Be aware that the enemy will try to deflect you by giving you doubts or by making you think you'll be wonderful! Just keep on going.

As soon as it is sensible, and this should be fairly early in the process, your parish priest or spiritual director should contact the Chairman of the Axios Committee and tell him all about you. The chairman will contact you and send you some forms to complete. These are returned to the Dean and Chairman. You'll probably be interviewed by the Chairman or another member of the Axios Committee at that point. You'll be given clear instructions about what to do next. You'll probably be asked to do a project within your parish: a 1000 word essay about this will be submitted to the chairman. Do as you have been instructed and keep in regular contact with the Chairman (email is best) letting him know how you are getting on. Your work with E-Quip will be shared with the Dean and chairman. When the Dean and chairman thinks the time is right you'll be invited to an Axios Meeting.

Axios Meeting

These are held a couple of times a year in different venues. The Dean, Chairman of the Axios Committee and one or more of the other members meet with you, your parish priest and, perhaps, with your spiritual father.

4.

It is important to remember that we are all on the same side! It is a meeting of Christ's disciples (including you) attempting to discover His will for you.

There will be a lot of information that they will have discussed beforehand. The meeting will start in prayer, the parish priest will describe the need for a deacon and how you might fulfil the needs of his parish or how he feels you may be used elsewhere (you may well be deployed elsewhere). He will describe how you have performed in the parish. He will do this in front of you!

You'll be asked questions by the members of the Committee. These are searching questions but they are not designed to humiliate you but rather to see how you choose to answer. The committee knows that you'll be nervous.

There is then a separate meeting whilst the Committee considers your future. This is then relayed to the Bishop who makes up his mind!

Before long a letter is written to your priest, with a copy to you, saying what the Committee decided. It may decide that you should be ordained, that you need more training or that it doesn't think you should be ordained. This last option can be disappointing but really it means that you are to engage in lay ministry. No one should think that this is a second class ministry. It isn't of course! Committed lay men and women are central to His ministry! In the end we are ALL called to serve and no one form of service is "better" than another.

5.



Ordination

Is God calling you?

Some things to think and pray about ...

In Acts of the Apostles there is an account of a man called Simon who, having noticed how filled with power the Apostles were, offered to pay money to receive the same power. He had just made two mistakes: The first was that he thought God could be bought and the second was that he thought that he could call himself to ordination. You'll remember that in the Gospels Jesus appointed the Apostles and later in Acts the Apostles appointed Bishops and Priests. That has not changed. It may be that God is calling you but the decision doesn't just rest with you!

This call can be known in a number of ways but the first is that the community in which you pray, receive the sacraments and work will begin to determine that you should be set apart by ordination. It might be that your spiritual father or your parish priest has suggested this to you. They will not do that without much prayer and thought. Again you might have been feeling that God may be calling you to this way of following Him. You should talk long and hard to your spiritual father in each of these cases. If you are married or engaged you should ask your wife or fiancée about the prospect of being a Khouria or Diaconissa. If she says "No" then you are NOT called!

Soon you should be meeting with your parish priest and talking through the whole situation with him. Your priest will begin to take notes and talk to others who know you to build up a full picture of the person you are.

1.

You should start, if you are not already doing so, some serious Theological reading. You may have begun the E-Quip Course (<http://www.equip-orthodox.com>). This or a blessed alternative is required of all those who are accepted for ordination. Indeed you should be reading a variety of authors on a number of subjects.

By now you will also be reading the Scriptures regularly. Read the whole Bible and use the readings for each day. Get hold of some good commentaries (ask your priest) and study them. Attend your parish Bible Study classes.

Make sure you are following a sensible daily rule of prayer. Your spiritual father should advise you but morning and evening prayers and other devotions should come naturally. A prayer book like the one published by Holy Trinity Monastery, Jordanville is a good resource (available from Amazon).

Your priest will begin to give or continue to give you specific jobs within the parish. You will naturally want to help but also the priest will be asking himself how you are performing and how others in the parish are receiving your ministry. It may well be that you will decide that you should continue to serve God as a layperson – that is a good result!

You will also need to spend time in the choir and with the serving team. What is your singing and chanting like? If they are not too good you will need singing lessons. Book yourself in! Too many services are spoiled by out of tune singing!

2.

Question your priest and other priests and deacons about their lives. What is it *really* like being a priest/deacon in our deanery? You'll find that your parish clergy are hiding a life of real self sacrifice, long hours, shortage of resources, juggling family, job and Church with everyone thinking they spend too much time elsewhere! Your wife/fiancée should be asking the same questions of the Khouria and Diaconissa.

Then there are other matters to consider:

You must be Orthodox (and been Orthodox for a while)! You should have been married only once or not at all. Your wife/fiancée should be Orthodox and in favour of you being Ordained. She, also, must have been married only the once.

If you are NOT married you must ask yourself "Can I remain celibate?" Once you are ordained deacon you cannot marry. The life of a single priest/deacon has its own joys and hardships.

The ideal is for a deacon/priest to be full time and paid by the church but, sadly, in many parishes he will barely be paid expenses let alone a salary. We intend that should change but the communities must grow first. You may have to keep your day job, which must be appropriate for an ordained person. Your priest or spiritual father can give you guidance about this. Most importantly, ensure that you are not getting into financial difficulties or moral ones! Seek help if you need to *before* things get out of hand.

3.

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A Summary of the Criteria for Selection for Ordained Ministry.

A - Vocation

Does the parish and Spiritual Father sense a Vocation? Candidates should be able to show an understanding of what it means to be a deacon or a priest. They should be obedient, realistic and informed. How would they be used?

B - Ministry

They should be able to reflect on changes in contemporary society and the implications of this for ministry and the Church.

C - Spirituality

Candidates should show evidence of a commitment to a spiritual discipline, which involves individual and corporate prayer and worship. They should be committed to a developing pattern of disciplined prayer, Bible study and the regular receiving of Holy Communion. They should be able to show how they discern God's activity in their life, how their spiritual practice may have changed over time and how it is changing them. They should be able to reflect on how engagement with the world and others both affects, and is affected by, their practice of prayer. Their spiritual practice should be able to sustain and energise them in daily life and future ministry.

D - Personality and Character

Candidates should be sufficiently self-aware, mature and stable to show that they are able to sustain the demanding role of a priest or deacon. They should be able to demonstrate how they have faced change and pressure in a balanced and flexible way and how they manage stress. Candidates should be seen to be people of integrity who can generate trust and display honesty. They should be able to speak of how they have coped with difficult life experiences, how they have reflected upon them and incorporated them within their life and understanding.

E - Relationships

Candidates should show the capacity to build healthy personal, professional, and pastoral relationships. They should demonstrate an awareness of the need for, and ability to establish and sustain, appropriate boundaries between personal and professional life and within pastoral relationships. They should be able to manage conflict and show an ability to negotiate difficult relationships. Candidates should demonstrate good interpersonal skills, the willingness to learn from experience, and a commitment to building inclusive relationships within diversity. They should show the potential to exercise effective pastoral care. Candidates must be either married or willing to remain celibate.

F - Leadership and Collaboration

Candidates should demonstrate an ability to offer leadership in the Church community and in the wider community as appropriate. This ability includes the capacity to offer an example of faith and discipleship

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which is inspiring to others and witnesses to the servanthood of Christ. They should show a commitment to identifying and nurturing the gifts of others and be able to collaborate effectively. Candidates should be able to identify their own leadership style, and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of this and of the different ways in which leadership may be exercised within the Church. They should be able to be flexible and adaptable in leadership and demonstrate ability to guide and shape the life of the Church community in its mission to the world.

G - Faith

Candidates should show a fair understanding of the Christian faith and a desire and ability to deepen their understanding. They should demonstrate a personal commitment to Christ and a mature, robust faith which shapes their life and work. Candidates should show an ability to reflect critically on their faith and make connections between faith and contemporary life. They should demonstrate a capacity to communicate their faith engagingly and effectively.

H - Mission and Evangelism

Candidates should demonstrate a personal commitment to mission that is reflected in thought, prayer and action. They should show a wide and inclusive understanding of mission and the strategic issues and opportunities within contemporary culture. Candidates should be able to articulate the good news of the Kingdom appropriately in differing contexts and speak of Jesus Christ in a way that is exciting, accessible, and attractive. They should enable others to develop their vocations as witnesses of the good news. They should show potential as leaders of mission.

I - Quality of Mind

Candidates should have the necessary intellectual capacity and quality of mind to undertake satisfactorily a course of theological study and ministerial preparation and to cope with the intellectual demands of ministry. They should demonstrate a desire to learn through the integration of academic study and prayerful reflection on experience and a commitment to this as a lifelong process of learning and formation. Candidates should show flexibility of mind, openness to change and challenge, and the capacity to facilitate learning and theological reflection within the Church community.

Acceptance of the Clergy according to the Canons



Source of Inspiration

'If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A Bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behaviour, hospitable, able to teach, not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the Church of God?); not a novice lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.'

St Paul, 1 Timothy 3:1-13.

Basic Conditions for Acceptance

A Vocation. Essential feature for becoming a 'pastor'

B Valid Baptism. The Holy Spirit sends only those anchored in the Holy Trinity

C The Male Gender. Not as an exclusive character, but as iconic (Laodicea Canon 11)

D Free Will. (Saint Basil Can. 10)

Special Conditions

These are conditions that would prevent the candidate, if accepted to the ordination, to carry out his activity. They are physical, religious ethical, and intellectual cultural.

A. Physical Conditions

a) Healthy Constitution of the Body

While he cannot be deaf or blind, not every physical infirmity will stand in the way of an ordination, when the candidate seems worthy of the priestly service. The Canons state that not bodily deficiencies would damage the candidate's being, but a blotted soul. Assuredly, the bodily deficiencies, which prevent the Divine Services and the Church activities from being achieved regularly say by an epileptic or severely crippled person, would be permanent impediments to the ordination. However, a bishop would not likely dismiss such a candidate if either his condition was medicated or his disability not so severe as to enable him to perform his duties as capably as any other person might.

b) The Age of the Candidate (may be suspended by the bishop)

The religious convictions and serious decisions are bound to a certain age when the candidate's mind has reached a certain majority, and his free will can be expressed without any constraints.

For the Reader: 18 years

For the Subdeacon: 20 years

For the Deacon: 25 years (Carthage Can. 16; Troul Can. 14)

For the Priest: 30 years (New Caesarea Con.11; Troul Can. 14)

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For the Bishop: 35 years – 33 years (Justinian)

B. Religious Ethical Conditions

a) **Firm faith** in the Christian truths. The knowledge and living of the Church's teachings as basics (Carthage Can. 13)

b) **Blameless Moral Life**

A blameless family life, which needs to be checked before any decision about ordination. The candidate's origin is not anymore to be under scrutiny as it was in the Old Testament. Illegitimates can be accepted (Nicephores of Constantinople, Can. 8) if they meet all the other conditions. The same about those born out of illegal marriages but satisfy the other requirements. Life at home must be exemplary in order to be received at the ordination. Those who have been married twice, or betrothed the like cannot be accepted (Apostles Can. 17; Trullos Can. 3; St Basil the Great Can.12). Those married with a widow or with a divorcee (Apostles Can. 18) cannot be accepted; the same for the concubinage (Apostles, Can.17); those whose marriages are contracted under illegal grades of kinship (Apostles Can.19); those married to an adulterous woman (NeoCaesarea Can.8); those married to a fornicator (Apostles Can. 18); those married to a heterodox (Trullos, Can.14). Those who have contracted marriages against such canons or against related canons in connection with the married priest unwittingly, will be prohibited from the administration of the Holy Mysteries, but will keep their rank (Trullos Can.26).

c) **Other Social Aspects**

Those who fell from teaching or confessing the True Faith cannot be received for ordination, nor those accused and revealed as witches, magicians or sorcerers (St Gregory of Nyssa), or fornicators or adulterers (Apostles Can.61), or having killed even unwittingly (St Gregory of Nyssa, Can. 5), or taken others' goods (Apostles Can. 24, St Basil Can. 64), or found guilty of perjury, or have *personally* charged interest on lending money (1st Ecumenical Council Can.17), or mutilated themselves (Apostles Can.)

C. Educational – Cultural Conditions.

Our Lord and Saviour instructed the Apostles about teaching the Saving Truth to the people (Mark 4:34, John 15:17, Acts 1:3). The Apostles have exhorted in the same way those who have been charged by them to lead the communities of believers (1 Timothy 4:6)

Canons require from future clergymen the fundamental and effectual knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and all that is needed for teaching people (Can. 2 of the First).

The Priest is supposed to possess quite a broad education, covering as many fields as possible, because the cases the people will address them are extremely variable. The Holy Fathers urge the Servants of the Word to take hold of the Divine revelational teaching as well as the worldly.

Today Orthodox theological institutions seek for quite a comprehensive education of the students, so that those who graduate should be able to lead others to the Faith, and from there to the salvation of their souls.

The Canons emphasis in a special way the need for a scientific culture for the clergymen, refusing ordination to those who do not give proof of fundamental preparation, and get hold from the priestly service those who will show a certain unworthiness (Apostles Can. 8.10; 1st Ecumen. Can 2; Laodicea Can. 12; Carthage Can.18).

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D. The Assessment of the Qualities of the Candidates to the Ordination.

When we assess the qualities of the candidates and some facts stand as obstacles to their reception into the clergy ranks, we take into account some Canon Law Rules that differ from their civil law counterparts. We do that because we have in mind the primary importance of the service character that will be taken on by the new member of the hierarchy.

The Church looks first at the internal aspect of the deed, because a conclusion can be drawn about the personality of the individual from it. Even if this deed did not have any consequence at the civil relations level, and cannot be brought to court, nevertheless the Church will look at it as an impediment to ordination, when She is informed about it, and especially when She has reached the conviction that the deed can imply a moral status inadequate with the one who did it. Hence, the canons make provisions for the nature, the inclinations and the habits of the candidate to be submitted to hard scrutiny and a minutia report about them be sent to the Bishop prior to the ordination taking place (Can. 2 of 1st Ec; Can. 22 of 6th C.).

If one can observe that the candidate's nature does not correspond with the spiritual service, that the qualities with which a priest stands out are lacking, then the fact shall be considered as an impediment to the reception into the clergy.

Besides this, in dealing with an impediment, the Church does not take into consideration the sincere repentance of a guilty one, nor his suffering with long patience the charged penance, which are important factors in other cases. In this case the Church stresses the public character of the deed and its conclusiveness. If such a deed has been committed and proved publicly, it will remain in the memories of others, in spite of the candidate's repentance and the Church's indulgence. In consequence of that, the prestige of the candidate's personality will be shaky forever, and the ordination of such a candidate will humiliate spiritual dignity and would be in contradiction to the goals of the spiritual services. Therefore, the Canons rigorously forbid the reception into the clergy one who has been discredited for a certain deed (Can. 61 and 80 Ap.; Can. 2 of the Second).

The qualities of the ordination candidates are displayed by the Canons in connection only with those persons who are in full membership of the Church. The Canons do not display impediments to the ordination that the candidates could have had before receiving Holy Baptism. Hence, the Church considers only the obstacles that have appeared since the candidate became a member of Her.

The rigorousness of the canons is not extended to cases where an obstacle against ordination has not been observed through lack of knowledge but has been subsequently confessed by the candidate himself (Can. 3 of the Sixth).

NOTE!

The competent Church authority has the right to suspend the action of a Canon, but only that authority which has the right to give dispensation from some impediments, when the Church progress requires that, and the existing general fundamental laws are not transgressed.

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Canonical Testimonial for _____

The Apostles preaching God, and arranging divine things right, and the association of the God-bearing Fathers who came after them have canonically prescribed that no one shall be deemed to deserve the divine degree of holy orders without much investigation and strict examination, lest the most divine functions be performed by men who are unworthy. Now, therefore, my spiritual son _____, a son of _____, of the County of _____, in the United Kingdom having come to me, asked to receive the great office of the Diaconate / Priesthood, and after I had him stand before the sacred icon of our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and having probed the depths of his heart, and not content with this having also obtained information from other credible witnesses who have firsthand knowledge of his conduct both in public and in private, and having found nothing in him that would present an obstacle with respect to laws, I certify him to be worthy of the Diaconate / Priesthood and to be of mature age, just as the sacred Canons bid. Hence there was given to him the present document in evidence thereof, confirmed by mine own hand and signature, and by the testimonies aforesaid of credible witnesses. And thus it is signed by the Spiritual functionary.

Signed: The Reverend Father _____, _____

Date: _____

Address:

Letter of Support from the Parish Priest for Ordination to the Diaconate:

Comment on all of the following:

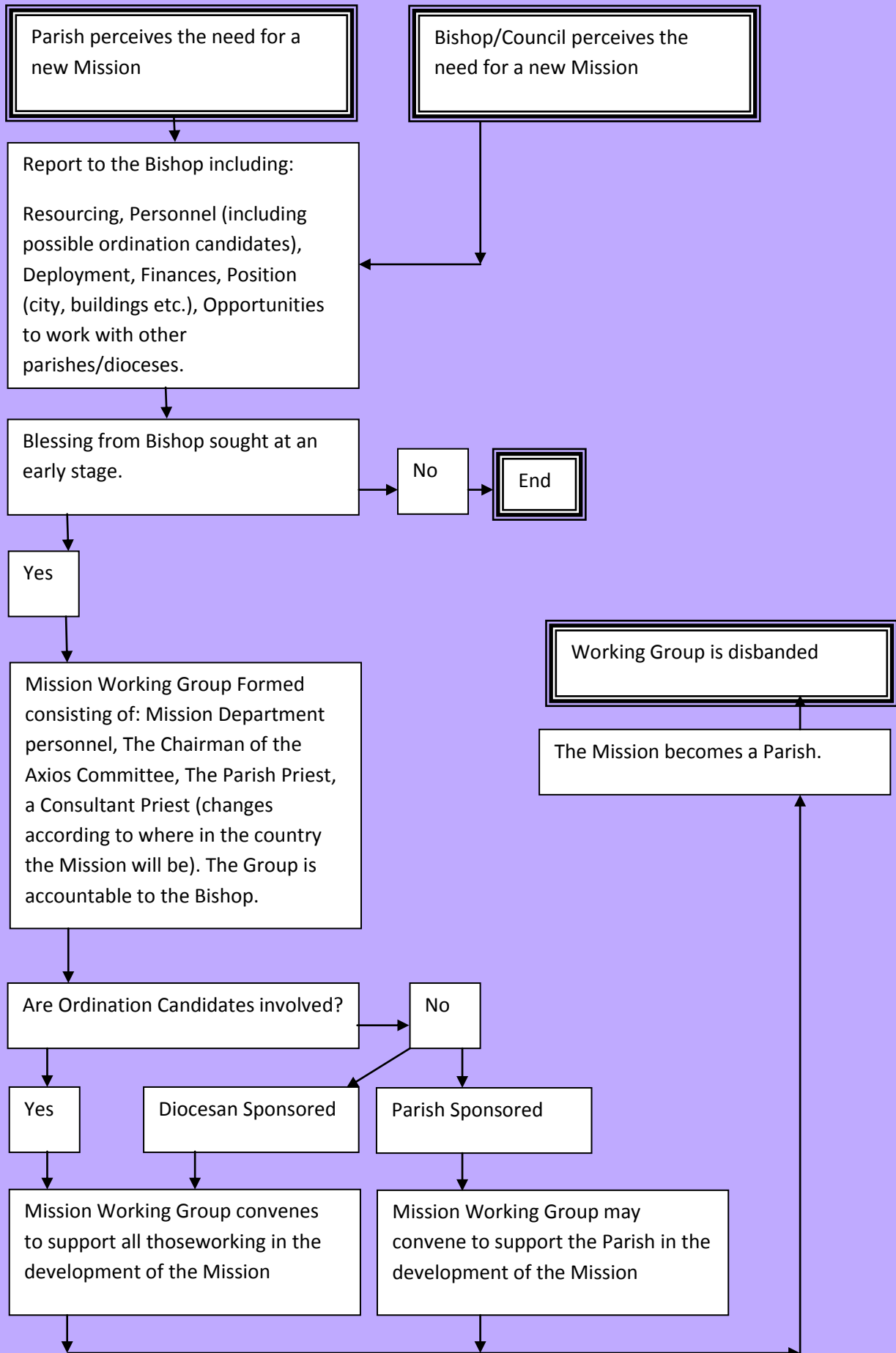
1. How long have you known him?
2. How does he currently serve Christ in His Church?
3. His relationships with the other laity. How does he work with others? Is there any tendency to lord it over others in the congregation? Does he enable or disable other people's ministries?
4. His loyalty to you personally. Is he obedient? Can you trust him to work with you? Do you enjoy being in his company?
5. His ability to see a job through and specific examples of work he has undertaken over a long period (at least 6 months) and the outcomes of that work. Does he have time and energy and resources to do the work appertaining to a deacon? Does he understand the very humble role of a deacon in the Orthodox Church? If he were never to become a priest how would he react?
6. Does he have a stable marriage? (Or is he absolutely happy as a celibate man?) Are his children well behaved? Is his family fully supportive of his possible Ordination?
7. Does he have any drink, drug or other similar problems? Is his physical health good? Is his mental health stable? His emotional maturity?
8. What is his ability to cope with problems and failures within himself / in others? Does he know his own strengths and weaknesses? How tough is he?
9. Does he have a secular job – how well does he perform this job – is he stable within it?
10. His leadership qualities. Specific examples of his ability to lead and motivate others. Does he have interesting / exciting ideas?
11. Does he gladly take to regular study of the faith?
12. How does he react to criticism?
13. How does he react to not being given a blessing to do something?
14. How does he react when he disagrees with you or another member of the congregation?
15. What are the views of your congregation about his possible Ordination – how do you know?
16. What are his negative/ destructive qualities? Do you have any reservations about him?

Then finish as follows:

In summary: I am confident that (name of candidate) should be ordained to the diaconate for service within my parish and recommend him to the Metropolitan.

Sign this in ink and attach your seal (if the parish has one) and send two top copies: one to the Archpriest Gregory Hallam and one to Fr. Philip (Hall).

Diocesan Growth: Planting new Parishes



Structure of Safeguarding within the Archdiocese

While safeguarding is the responsibility of every member of the Church, certain specialised roles have been created to ensure the safe and effective implementation of "thirtyone:eight" safeguarding policies and practices.

If a complaint or disclosure is made against one of these officers, that person will be suspended from duty for the duration of any investigation and subsequent resolution, their deputies standing in for that role.

These officers are:

Archdiocesan Safeguarding Officer (ASO)

[Appointed by the Metropolitan Archbishop]

- With the Board -

Role: - to liaise with the Metropolitan Archbishop and Archdiocesan institutions at parish and archdiocesan level in safeguarding matters. The ASO is the first contact in matters raised by the parishes and other communities in the Archdiocese where implementation of "thirtyone:eight" policies have a national rather than just a local implication. The ASO is also the first of two investigating leads in any disclosure or complaint made at any level.

Archdiocesan Safeguarding Administrator (ASA)

[Appointed by the Metropolitan Archbishop]

- With the Board -

Role: - to liaise with and support parishes and other communities, their clergy and officers in the fulfillment of their safeguarding responsibilities. The primary contact for the ASA will be the parish or community Safeguarding Representative (SR). All DBS searches are facilitated by the ASA. The ASA is also the second of two investigating leads in any disclosure or complaint made at any level, working alongside the SR.

Parish or Community Safeguarding Representative (SR)

[Appointed by the Parish Priest and Parish Council]

Role: - to ensure with others locally that "thirtyone:eight" policies and procedures are followed exactly in all aspects of Church life and work. This will include regular audits of church workers for DBS checks to be referred to the ASA, community education on safeguarding issues and the monitoring of all activities that have a safeguarding aspect. Any complaint or disclosure must be immediately shared with the ASO and the ASA.

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES AND POLICY

Statement of Safeguarding Principles

The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland is committed to working in partnership with other Orthodox Jurisdictions, other Christian communities, and with relevant secular agencies, both statutory and non-statutory, in order to promote and maintain the emotional, physical, sexual, mental and spiritual wellbeing and safety of all children, young persons, and all adults committed to our pastoral care. The Archdiocese implements its safeguarding duties exactly as set out by the safeguarding Christian charity: "Thirtyone:eight". What is "Thirtyone:eight"? this is from their website: <https://thirtyoneeight.org/>. *"We are an independent Christian charity which helps individuals, organisations, charities, faith and community groups to protect vulnerable people from abuse. Our vision is a world where every child and adult can feel, and be, safe, and to achieve this vision we work together with a network of thousands of organisations across the UK, helping them to create safer places."* Much of the information, policies and procedures are open access on the website above and is deliberately not reproduced here since that would constitute unnecessary duplication and breach of both copyright laws and the licence under which the Archdiocesan Safeguarding function operates. Anything you cannot find on the website will be in a separate part of the site accessible only to the Archdiocesan licensees who, with effect from 10 March 2023, are the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Officers, Father Mark Shillaker and Mr Dušan Radunovic.

The Archdiocese is committed to ...

- Pastoral ministry based on the loving, respectful care and nurturing of all children, young persons and all adults.
- Prioritising the issues of safeguarding and protecting all children, young persons and all adults in our care.
- Taking all necessary steps to establish safe, caring communities which provide a loving and compassionate environment where victims of abuse can report or disclose abuse, and where they can find support and care delivered in accordance with the standards set by recognised best practice in this area.
- Developing the necessary pastoral resources at diocesan and parish levels in order to foster an appropriately informed ministry that can recognise and respond to the unique needs of those who have been abused.

In the Archdiocese and in fulfilment of these commitments ...

- We will carefully select, support and train all those with any pastoral responsibility within the Church, in line with both existing statutory requirements and in line with standards set by best practice in this area, including the use of criminal records disclosures and registration/membership of the relevant vetting and barring schemes.
- We will respond without delay to every complaint made, that any adult, young person or child may have been harmed, or is at risk of harm, cooperating with police and local authorities in any investigation(s).
- We will seek to offer informed pastoral care and support to anyone who has suffered abuse.
- We will seek to protect survivors of abuse from the possibility of further harm or abuse.
- We will seek to challenge any abuse of power, especially by anyone in a position of trust and/or authority.
- We will seek to offer appropriate pastoral care and support to any member of our church community suspected or convicted of having offended against a child, young person or adult at risk of harm.

In all these principles, we will follow existing legislation, guidance from competent authorities, and recognised good practice in the area of safeguarding.

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES AND POLICY

Collective and Shared Responsibilities between the ASO and the ASA

1. To coordinate safeguarding education and practice throughout the Archdiocese for those involved in pastoral ministry.
2. To act as direct support for Parish or Community SR's.
3. To hear any concerns relating to safeguarding, including any disclosures or allegations of abuse, and take responsibility for managing the diocesan response to that concern or disclosure.
4. To report all instances of suspected or disclosed abuse, where there are reasonable grounds for concern, to local authorities, to the police, and to the Bishop.
5. Where the ASO or ASA are unsure if a concern raised meets reasonable grounds for concern, they may consult informally with the Duty Social Worker from the area in which concern has been raised.
6. To also refer all instances of suspected or disclosed abuse relating to parish personnel to the relevant Church authorities.
7. Out of office hours and in the case of an emergency, where a child is at serious and immediate risk, to report the matter to the police without delay.
8. To coordinate pastoral services to both those who raise allegations of abuse and those implicated by allegations of abuse.
9. To ensure that the person raising a concern, disclosing abuse, or making an allegation, and any member of Church personnel who is implicated by that, are regularly informed about the progress of the inquiry process.
10. To record all steps undertaken as part of these procedures.
11. The Bishop must appoint a Deputy ASO or ASA, who can act in the event that the ASO or ASA is unable to deal with a concern/allegation for any reason. In any Safeguarding matter, both routine and exceptional, the Bishop must be kept fully informed at all times.

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES AND POLICY

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARISH/COMMUNITY SAFEGUARDING REPRESENTATIVE (SR)

1. To make themselves familiar with all aspects of the safeguarding procedures and know where parishioners might access the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Information.
2. To keep a record of all under 18 activities within the Church and those who run them.
3. To keep a record of all activities involving adults at risk from harm within the Church.
4. To be willing to participate in safeguarding training and ongoing training. According to the requirements of the Insurance Company, there must be an approved training event for each eligible person at least annually.
5. To assist the parish in raising awareness to the issues of Safeguarding by:
 - promoting or arranging suitable and relevant training in consultation with the ASO and ASA.
 - ensuring that all volunteers working with young people understand and adopt a safe code of conduct.
6. To inform external organisations eg sports clubs who use Church facilities, of the need to have their own safeguarding policy.
7. To assist the parish priest with the implementation of Archdiocesan Safeguarding Policies
8. With the parish priest ensure that the Archdiocesan recruitment process takes place:
 - asking all volunteers to complete appropriate application forms;
 - arranging for references to be taken up;
 - interviewing prospective volunteers in the parish working with children and adults at risk from harm;
 - identifying volunteers who require a DBS check and liaising with the ASA.
ALL DBS checks must be completed and assessed BEFORE the person takes up the role, post or office. In respect of clergy, both major and minor, this must be before ordination takes place.
9. The SR will be responsible with the Parish Priest or Abbott for the effective, efficient and smooth operation of Safeguarding in the parish/community by:
 - ensuring that all searches, training requirements and other safeguarding duties are undertaken locally within ***4 weeks of notification or identification***; excepting unforeseen or extenuating circumstances. Emergency situations must be dealt with immediately.
 - Any delay or variation must be cleared with the ASO and /or ASA first.

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES AND POLICY

10. Assist the parish priest in monitoring the work of new volunteers. This can be achieved through the following:

- reviewing new volunteers after an initial 6 month probationary period;
- being available to discuss matters of concern with volunteers;
- showing an interest in the work being done with children, young people and adults at risk from harm within the parish.

11. To act as a recognised contact point for adults and young people who need to report concerns about safeguarding issues.

12. To refer any concerns about a child or adult at risk of harm to the appropriate agency according to Archdiocesan policy and then immediately to the ASO and ASA.

13. To assist the parish priest in the management/monitoring of known sex offenders in the parish, if the need arises.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

The Parish or Community Safeguarding Representative will need:

1. to be a trusted person within the parish community and have skills of tact, resilience, communication and understanding to undertake this vital role;
2. to have basic skills in observation and listening;
3. a clear commitment to the protection of children and adults at risk from harm based on a belief in the dignity of the human person, made in the image of God;
4. the ability to put the principle of the paramount welfare of the child (or adult at risk from harm) first in any decision making about children or adults at risk from harm and not to be swayed by external pressures to depart from this principle;
5. the ability to refer child protection or adults at risk from harm protection issues to the appropriate statutory or police authorities;
6. the ability to record child and adult at risk from harm protection concerns, in writing and to collect and record data about activities in the parish involving children or adults at risk from harm;
7. to be sensitive to the concerns of volunteers, in particular in relation to aspects concerning form completion and ongoing supervision and monitoring and be able to explain the requirements of volunteers to comply with the policy;

SAFEGUARDING PRINCIPLES AND POLICY

ALLEGATIONS AGAINST PARISH CLERGY, PASTORAL WORKERS OR VOLUNTEERS

ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN

ALLEGED INCIDENT(S) REPORTED TO THE SR



Document details of allegation(s), including name(s), date(s), location, person(s) present, context in which alleged incident(s) occurred.



IS THE CHILD/ADULT IN ANY DANGER OR AT IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM AND THEREFORE IN NEED OF URGENT PROTECTION?



YES



IF THE CHILD/ADULT IS IN URGENT NEED OF PROTECTION: CONTACT THE POLICE AND AMBULANCE IF REQUIRED.

DIAL 999 FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES.

THEN CONTACT THE ASO AND ASA.



NO



CONTACT THE ASO/ASA

- Providing information on allegations as detailed above.
- Provide details of actions taken so far.



THE ASO AND ASA WILL ADVISE ON:

- THE APPROPRIATE PERSON/AUTHORITY TO REPORT INCIDENT TO.
- DECIDE ON THE IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED TO SAFEGUARD ANY PERSONS AT RISK.
- WILL SEEK FURTHER ADVICE FROM "THIRTYONE:EIGHT" AS AND WHEN NECESSARY.



Where it is deemed necessary to report the incident to local authorities, the ASO and ASA will support the SR in making the appropriate referral to either:



[Allegation against a CHILD or about a staff member who works with CHILDREN]
THE LOCAL AUTHORITY DESIGNATED OFFICER (LADO) for the area where the incident is alleged to have taken place.



[Allegations against an ADULT or a member of staff who works with ADULTS]
SAFEGUARDING ADULTS CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE in the area where the incident is alleged to have taken place.

If there is any police or social services involvement in an allegation, then it would be one of these agencies who would be the LEAD AGENCY, and they will inform the cleric/pastoral worker/volunteer of the allegations made/investigation details. The ASO and ASA should request details of the investigation and allegations to determine what action should be taken by the Archdiocese.

11th June 2021
Edition 15

ANTIOCHIAN ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN ARCHDIOCESE OF THE BRITISH ISLES AND IRELAND

APPENDICES

What about other Orthodox Dioceses?

Of course, we are one Orthodox Church, not several. Multiple “jurisdictions”, where they occur, only refer to the oversight of each bishop in his diocese within any given see. Therefore, this Archdiocese will work as closely as possible with all the other Dioceses and their bishops to ensure the safety of *ALL* our children and adults at risk from harm. We need to share best practice and that might include our policies subject to each bishop’s oversight and instruction. Furthermore, in level 1 infractions of our Safeguarding Policy, our Metropolitan will undoubtedly wish to share appropriate safeguarding information with other Orthodox bishops in the same way that he does when dealing with any clergy who have been suspended for other reasons. In these ways our actions for the safety of our children and adults at risk from harm will be both consistently and universally applied across the Church as a whole.

Data Protection Policy: Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland

Introduction

The Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland (hereafter: “the Archdiocese”) uses personal data about living individuals for the purpose of general Church administration and communication.

The Archdiocese recognises the importance of the correct and lawful treatment of personal data. All personal data, whether it is held on paper, on computer or other media, will be subject to the appropriate legal safeguards as specified in the General Data Protection Regulation 2017.

The Archdiocese fully endorses and adheres to the eight principles of the GDPR. These principles specify the legal conditions that must be satisfied in relation to obtaining, handling, processing, transportation and storage of personal data. Employees and any others who obtain, handle, process, transport and store personal data for the Archdiocese must adhere to these principles.

The Principles

The principles require that personal data shall:

1. Be processed fairly and lawfully and shall not be processed unless certain conditions are met.
2. Be obtained for a specified and lawful purpose and shall not be processed in any manner incompatible with that purpose.
3. Be adequate, relevant and not excessive for those purposes.
4. Be accurate and where necessary, kept up to date.
5. Not be kept for longer than is necessary for that purpose.
6. Be processed in accordance with the data subject’s rights.
7. Be kept secure from unauthorised or unlawful processing and protected against accidental loss, destruction or damage by using the appropriate technical and organisational measures.
8. Not be transferred to a country or territory outside the British Isles and Ireland, unless that country or territory ensures an adequate level of protection for the rights and freedoms of data subjects in relation to the processing of personal data.

1. Maintaining Confidentiality

The Archdiocese will treat all your personal information as private and confidential and not disclose any data about you to anyone other than the Archbishop and his immediate staff to facilitate the administration and day-to-day ministry of the Church.

All the Archdiocesan staff and volunteers who have access to Personal Data will be required to agree to sign a Confidentiality Policy and a Data Protection Policy.

There are four exceptional circumstances to the above permitted by law:

1. Where we are legally compelled to do so.
2. Where there is a duty to the public to disclose.
3. Where disclosure is required to protect your interest.
4. Where disclosure is made at your request or with your consent.

2. Use of Personal Information

The Archdiocese will use your data for three main purposes:

1. The day-to-day administration of the Church; e.g. pastoral care and oversight including calls and visits, preparation of ministry rotas, maintaining financial records of giving for audit and tax purposes.
2. Contacting you to keep you informed of Church activities and events.
3. Statistical analysis; gaining a better understanding of Church demographics and trends.

N.B. Although collated general statistical church data may be passed to a third party, this will be anonymised and no personal data will be disclosed.

The Database

Information contained on the database will not be used for any other purposes than set out in this section. The database is accessed through the Cloud and therefore, can be accessed through any computer or smart device with internet access. The server for the database is in the UK and hosted by Claranet, (the Archdiocese's ISP as of the date of this policy). The database will always be maintained in the British Isles and Ireland in compliance with the law both in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland.

1. Access to the database is strictly controlled through the use of name specific passwords, which are selected by the individual.
2. Those authorised to use the database only have access to their specific area of use within the database. This is controlled by the Data Controller and other specified administrators. These are the only people who can access and set these security parameters.
3. People who will have secure and authorised access to the database include the Archbishop, the Archdiocesan Staff, data input clerks, departmental heads, and the Archdiocese Trustees.
4. The database will NOT be accessed by any authorised users outside the British Isles and Ireland, in accordance with current Data Protection legislation, unless prior consent has been obtained from the individual whose data is to be viewed.
5. All access and activity on the database is logged and can be viewed by the Database Controller.
6. Subject Access - all individuals who are the subject of personal data held by the Archdiocese are entitled to:
 - Ask what information the church holds about them and why.
 - Ask how to gain access to it.
 - Be informed how to keep it up to date.
 - Be informed what the Archdiocese is doing to comply with its obligations under existing legislation.
7. Personal information will not be passed onto any third parties outside of the Church environment.

8. Subject Consent - The need to process data for normal purposes has been communicated to all data subjects. In some cases. If the data is sensitive, for example, information about health, race or gender, express consent to process the data must be obtained.

Rights to Access Information

Employees and other subjects of personal data held by the Archdiocese have the right to access any personal data that is being held in certain manual filing systems. This right is subject to certain exemptions: personal Information may be withheld if the information relates to another individual.

Any person who wishes to exercise this right should make the request in writing to the Archdiocesan Data Officer.

If personal details are inaccurate, they can be amended upon request.

The Archdiocese aims to comply with requests for access to personal information as quickly as possible, but will ensure that it is provided within 30 days of receipt of a completed form unless there is good reason for delay. In such cases, the reason for delay will be explained in writing to the individual making the request.

Data Protection Policy 24th October 2017 revision

.....

Data Protection Policy understanding and acceptance

Name:

I function in the roles below (please circle those that are applicable)

Staff member

Data input team member

Trustee

Archbishop

Archbishop's Officer

Departmental Head

Archdiocesan Subcommittee / Working Party member

I have read and understood this policy and agree to adhere to its contents.

Signed:

Date:

CHURCH RISK ASSESSMENT (APPENDIX "A")

These notes are offered as guidelines to help parishes conform to Charity Commissioner reporting requirements. Risk Assessment is an essential component of a robust Health and Safety Policy.

These notes can never be a substitute for detailed professional advice if there are serious and specific problems.

RISK ASSESSMENT

It is not the intention, indeed it is not possible, to eliminate all risks but rather to recognise where they might occur, assess their potential impact and take action to reduce their likelihood or put in place contingency plans.

It is helpful to record all identified risks, even where they are fairly small, as it may be that small risks in a specific area could together generate a more significant overall hazard.

It is important that an assessment has input from a number of people rather than to relying on one person who may inadvertently assess risks from a particular point of view.

The risks should be considered from the point of view of the church, its members and congregation and of visitors of all ages and abilities. The risks should be assessed bearing in mind also the buildings, activities and environment in which it serves. Not all churches will need to consider all of these responsibilities.

For risks which are manageable by the church, the aim of any control should be to reduce the likelihood of the risk. However, where the risk is largely unmanageable, the control will normally be more about reducing the significance [potential damage] of the risk.

In some cases there will be a cost associated with putting the identified control/s in place. Where the cost is high in proportion to the risk, it may be more appropriate to establish a contingency plan rather than try to adopt finance risk mitigation. Care must be taken to strike the right balance.

The assessment should be a "live" document, in that once completed, it should not be filed away but periodically reviewed and updated. It may be helpful if a note is kept of events that that have resulted from risks, whether anticipated or not, so that these can be considered in the reviews.

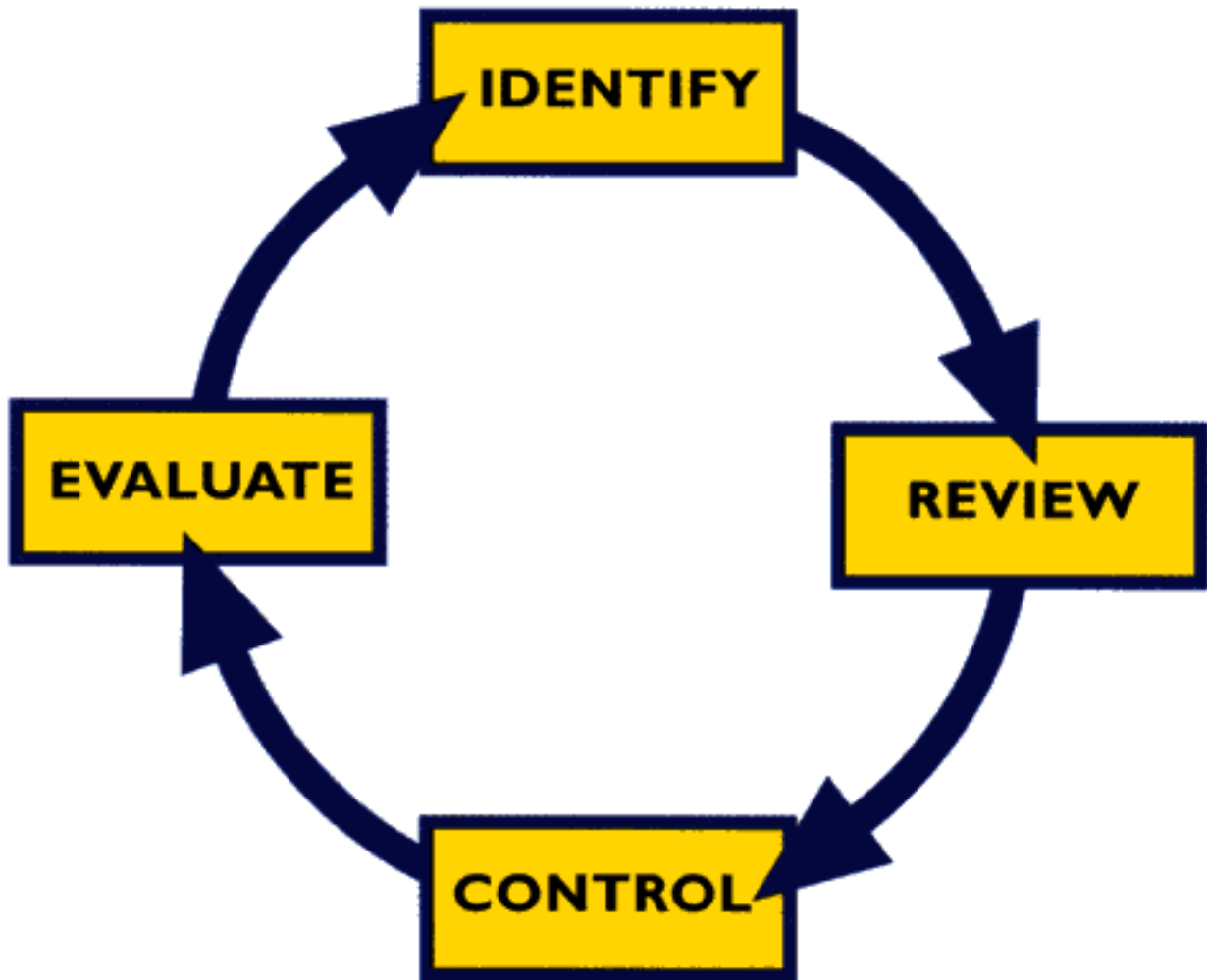
The template has been constructed based on the risks identified at a fairly large church. It is however likely that all churches will recognise that, whether they are large or small, traditional or contemporary, urban or rural, the vast majority of the list of risks will be applicable to their situation. In addition, it is possible that there are other risks arising from specific activities which have not been listed. In that case, they should be added in the appropriate section.

The various boxes should be filled in as follows:

"Event" describes the identified risk.

"Significance : Probability" shows the significance of any consequences arising from the risk occurring alongside the probability that it might happen. This is not a scientific calculation, rather a judgement which may be based on figures or, more likely, on discussions around the issue.

The Risk Assessment Cycle



The scores to be used are:

	<u>Significance</u>		<u>Probability</u>
1	negligible	1	very unlikely
2	slight	2	unlikely
3	noticeable	3	possible
4	serious	4	probable
5	very serious	5	very likely

- The "Risk rating" is simply = Significance x Probability.

- "Controls" describes the action(s) identified to reduce the probability or significance of the risk occurring.
- "Controls in place" notes whether the identified control(s) have in fact been activated. This is not an exercise in criticism, therefore, care should be taken not to answer "yes" when in fact a more correct statement would be "partly or we're thinking about it" [provided that the thinking does not go on too long!].
- "Comment" adds flavour to the statement on controls, especially where controls are not easy to put in place or where a contingency plan may be the more appropriate action.
- "Person(s) responsible" is a key item as it is important to identify who should take responsibility for action. It should be noted, however, that the Charity remains accountable for ensuring appropriate action is taken.

The table has identified risks in dark type, together with a few important notes. All other items are shown in faded type as examples of how the risks may be assessed by churches. You are free to copy these example notes if appropriate or insert your own text. The "Control in Place" column has been deliberately left blank.

In general terms, risk ratings of 12 or over should be highlighted as requiring early action. Any risk with a significance or probability of 5 needs swift attention by the responsible person(s) and a risk rating of 20+ calls for immediate action with appropriate reports to the Trustees and church meeting.

It is quite likely that there will be a number of risks with a rating of 12 or more and it is important that this is seen as normal. Uncovering potential problem areas early on is the best way to avoid future crises and ensure appropriate actions are put in place. Charity trustees need to feel confident about the integrity of the process.

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
1	<u>Ministerial, Leadership and General</u>						
1.1	Reduction in religious tolerance to Christian faith						
1.2	Criminal charges brought against leader/s or members						
1.3	Adverse publicity or loss of reputation						
1.4	Breakdown of tolerance from neighbours due to disturbance from church activities						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
1.5	Unacceptable theological statements by clergy.						
1.6	Charges of intolerance by special interest groups						
1.7	Unacceptable theological statements by lay workers and church officers.						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
1.8	Trustees exceed or fail in their responsibilities						
1.9	Church becomes out of touch with the local community						
1.10	Congregation members making harmful remarks to non-church goers						
1.11	Issues arising from church website						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
1.12	Adverse publicity caused by other churches in the area						
1.13	Adverse publicity caused by other religions in the area						
1.14	Adverse publicity in Social Media locally						
	FREE CATEGORY						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
	FREE CATEGORY						
2	<u>Staff and Volunteers</u>						
2.1	Inability to fill officer roles of Treasurer & Secretary						
2.2	High turnover of employees or volunteers						
2.3	Inability to replace staff						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
2.4	Inadequate performance of staff						
2.5	Sickness or long term absence of staff						
2.6	Health and Safety violations leading to legal action or adverse publicity.						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
2.7	Inappropriate relations or unbecoming conduct of staff						
2.8	Employment tribunal claim/s						
2.9	Accident or harm to staff working alone on the church premises						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
2.10	Inadequate plans in case of fire						
3	Safeguarding						
3.1	Child protection and Vulnerable Adult issues						
3.2	Complaints or concerns from parents of children or young people						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
3.3	Persons attending church who are on Sex Offences Register						
3.4	Sexual Predators						
3.5	Fear of legislation or litigation deters people from helping or limits range of activities						
4	<u>Volunteers</u>						
4.1	Generally						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
4.2	Inability to get enough volunteers for regular activities						
4.3	Loss of volunteers at short notice						
4.4	New activities fail to excite sufficient volunteers						
4.5	Volunteers not meeting requirements of the task						
4.6	Volunteers unaware of key policies & guidelines						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
4.7	Personal abuse/accusations						
5	<u>Records and Personal</u>			All those holding personal information should be made aware of the Data Protection Acts requirements, especially about cross use. The need for secrecy of personal information and the final total destruction of such information needs emphasising.		Membership records, Church Diaries/Directories and the like & particularly details of children and young people must all be kept confidential and on a "need to know" basis. Taking and distribution of photographs without (parental) consent should be discouraged	

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
5.1	Loss of documents through malicious action						
5.2	Loss of documents through mistakes						
5.3	Loss/theft of personal possessions						
5.4	Accidental or malicious disclosure of personal information						
6	<u>Third Party use of Church Premises</u>						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
6.1	Anti-Christian activities						
6.2	Abuse of Church's principles						
6.3	Damage to the reputation of Church						
6.4	Damage to property						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
6.5	Misuse of kitchen facilities or poor health and hygiene practice leads to illness or health authority sanctions						
6.6	Non payment of rent/hire charge						
6.7	Loss of rental income due to unavailability of appropriate rooms						
6.8	Inadequate insurance cover						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
7	<u>Financial Matters</u>			Strict confidentiality must be kept over all personal financial matters		Churches should consider creating a Financial Manual drawing upon Charity Commission documents such as CC8 "Internal Financial Controls for Charities" and "The Essential Trustee", to include such items as two unrelated church 'members' counting and banking offerings.	
7.1	Loss of charity status with subsequent loss of gift aid tax refunds						
7.2	Loss of capital through inappropriate investing						
7.3	Reduction in investment interest						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
7.4	Loss of major donors within the congregation						
7.5	Individuals withdrawing their financial support but remaining within the church						
7.6	Fraud or theft of funds						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
7.7	Theft of Sunday collection cash						
7.8	Unanticipated significant increase in expenditure						
7.9	Unanticipated significant decrease in income						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
7.10	Inaccurate accounting						
7.11	Poor accounting systems						
7.12	Failure to respond to economic changes and priorities						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
8	<u>Premises and Property</u>			Risk assessments should be prepared & reassessed periodically for the buildings, including consideration of all uses to which the buildings are put; special attention being given to issues of health, hazardous materials ,fire safety and means of escape & the care for vulnerable people		Risk assessments are to be carried out regularly. These include H&S issues, fire hazards, fire fighting equipment, first aid facilities, standard of catering facilities, safety for children	
8.1	<u>Church Premises</u>						
8.1.1	Total loss through fire, explosion, falling objects or terrorist action						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
8.1.2	Serious damage due to fire, explosion, falling objects, vandalism or terrorist action						
8.1.3	Loss or damage due to unauthorised entry, theft, vandalism etc						
8.1.4	Significant failure of essential services (power, heating, water)						
8.1.5	Death or injury to persons						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
8.1.6	Injury due to poor maintenance of the buildings						
	FREE CATEGORY						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
9	<u>Disability Discrimination Act</u>			The Disability Discrimination Acts requirements would be too long to list but should be considered			
9.1	The church fails to comply with DDA regulations						
9.2	Complaints received that discrimination is "practiced" by the non- consideration of those with special needs						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
9.3	Failure to consider disabled issues when setting up a programme or project and thus creating an excluded section of the congregation						
10	<u>II</u>						
10.1	Network failure, hardware failure or loss						
10.2	FREE CATEGORY						
10.3	FREE CATEGORY						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
10.4	Corruption of databases for technical reasons						
10.5	Accidental corruption of databases etc.						
10.6	Corruption of databases etc. -through wilful abuse						
10.7	Virus attack						
11	<u>Legal and Compliance</u>						
11.1	Changes in Charity Law						
11.2	Serious failure to achieve proper Governance of Charity						

	Event	Significance : Probability	Risk rating	Controls	Controls in place	Comments	Persons responsible
11.3	Prosecution due to lack of relevant licences						
11.4	Litigation against the Church re Data Protection						
11.5	Litigation – clergy or staff aggrieved by disciplinary process						
11.6	Legislation or regulations incompatibly with Church's principles and ethos						

Definition of *Significance & Probability*

	<u>Significance</u>		<u>Probability</u>
1	negligible	1	very unlikely
2	slight	2	unlikely
3	noticeable	3	possible
4	serious	4	probable
5	very serious	5	very likely

Over all risk = Significance x Probability

Formal documents held in support of reducing risks and providing contingency plans:

- Trust deeds
- Church constitution
- H&S policy
- Booking of Premises requirements
- Premises Licence
- Fire procedures
- Procedures for employing staff
- Terms of appointment
- Terms of employment - other staff
- Staff handbook
- Charity Trustees responsibilities
- Finance Manual
- Quality Control of Church website

A model Complaints and Grievances Procedure for Use by Parish Councils (PC's)

Appendix B

I

It may be that your PC have already agreed such a procedure. You are strongly recommended to have one in place, especially if you are employing staff. If you don't already have one, you may wish to adopt the following model.

1 What counts as a complaint and a grievance?

A complaint is a written or verbal expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet about an action, or lack of action by a person acting on behalf of the church, or about the policies and procedures of the church.

When the complaint is made by someone who is deployed within the parish, whether paid (for instance, paid youth workers and administrators) or holding unremunerated office (for instance, Sunday School leaders, servers), it is usually referred to as a **grievance**.

A complaint or a grievance may include **an allegation** that a person has behaved in an unacceptable way.

Complaints and grievances against clergy are handled through the Archdiocesan Disciplinary Procedures.. Complaints or grievances against clergy should be addressed to the bishop.

Complaints and grievances against licensed or commissioned lay workers are handled in the first instance by the Parish Council and then by the bishop in regard of any unresolved matter(s).

2 Problem-solving

The aim always, when responding to complaints and grievances, is to enable them to be resolved informally, speedily and fairly by discussion, problem solving, mediation and negotiation. Problems should therefore be brought direct to the person(s) deemed responsible for the area of dissatisfaction or disquiet, and will hopefully be resolved in this way.

If, however, a complaint or grievance relates to or includes an allegation that a child or adult who may be vulnerable has been harmed or is at risk of harm, or that an adult or another child may have caused harm to a child or adult who may be vulnerable, it must be responded to through the Archdiocesan Safeguarding Procedures immediately.

If the complaint or grievance does not concern a child or adult who may be vulnerable, and the person bringing it is not satisfied with the outcome at the problem-solving stage, s/he may then invoke this formal procedure.

3 Formal procedure for complaints and grievances

Stage 1

A complaint should be submitted in writing to a churchwarden of the parish (who is not him or herself the subject of the complaint).

A grievance should be submitted in writing to the person to whom the person bringing the grievance is accountable; this will be the direct line manager of a paid employee, or the person responsible for co-ordinating the work of a volunteer. If however, the person who is accountable is the subject of the grievance, the grievance should be taken to a churchwarden.

The person bringing the complaint has the opportunity to state his or her case; and to be represented, if they wish at any meeting, by a friend or other supporter.

The churchwarden (if a complaint) or line manager (if a grievance) will meet with the complainant to listen to and note the facts of the complaint or grievance. S/he will then give to the subject of the complaint or grievance the facts relating to it. The churchwarden/ line manager will then interview the subject of the complaint or grievance, who may also be represented by a friend or other supporter if they wish, to listen to their response to the complaint or grievance brought against them. The churchwarden/line manager may then interview any other relevant parties.

The churchwarden/line manager then draws conclusions and informs the complainant and the subject of the complaint or grievance of the outcome, ideally within a week of the complaint or grievance being made.

Stage 2

If the reply given at stage 1 does not satisfactorily resolve the complaint or grievance, the complaint or grievance should be put in writing to a churchwarden, who will take the complaint to the priest and the PC. The PC will form a panel of three of its members who have not been involved in the process before.

The panel will establish why the complainant continues to feel aggrieved, and receive all the documentation from the previous investigation at Stage 1. The panel will then meet with the complainant and his/her supporter, the subject of the complaint or grievance and his/her supporter, and the churchwarden or line manager who investigated the complaint at the first stage. Witnesses may be called.

The panel members will then sit alone to form a judgment and make a decision about the complaint or grievance. They will inform the complainant and the subject of the complaint or grievance of the outcome, within a month of the complaint being made.

The decision of the panel representing the PC will be final.

As a result of an investigation into a complaint or a grievance, it may be necessary to address the matter through the disciplinary procedure.

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY (APPENDIX C)

Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of the Archdiocese.

Such conflicts may create problems; they can:

- discourage free discussion;
- result in decisions or actions that are not in the interests of the Archdiocese and risk the impression that Archdiocese is acting improperly.

The aim of this policy is to protect both the organisation and the individuals involved from any appearance of impropriety.

The Declaration of Interests

We ask trustees to declare their interests, and any gifts or hospitality received in connection with their role in the Archdiocese. A declaration of interest form is provided for this purpose (see appendix A1).

The declaration of interests needs to be updated at least annually and also when any changes occur.

The following types of interest should be declared:

- Any personal/family relationships with paid staff and volunteers or possible recruitment of any personal or family member.
- Any gifts or hospitality received
- A trustee renting property or lending money to the charity
- Any relationships with other groups that will affect your role as trustee – if you are a member of another organisation this needs to be declared as there may be a conflict. Particularly if both organisations work in the same geographical area or have the same client / user groups.
- An officer, employee or board member of the Archdiocese
- A funder of the Archdiocese
- A trustee who learns of an opportunity at a board meeting which the charity may or may not wish to exploit but which he / she wishes to take advantage of themselves or on behalf of another group.

Data Protection

The information provided will be processed in accordance with data protection principles as set out in the Data Protection Act 2003. Data will be processed only to ensure that trustees act in the best interests of the Archdiocese. The information provided will not be used for any other purpose.

What to do if you face a Conflict of Interest

If there is a situation which will be a long term conflict this should be discussed with other trustees (in particular the chair) at the earliest convenience and a decision made on how to proceed.

At the beginning of all meetings you should declare immediately if there is an item on the agenda where they may be a conflict of interest.

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland

E.g.: If you are a user of Archdiocesan services, or the carer of someone who uses Archdiocesan services, you should not be involved in decisions that directly affect the service that you, or the person you care for, receive. You should declare your interest at the earliest opportunity and withdraw from any subsequent discussion. You may, however, participate in discussions from which you may indirectly benefit, for example where the benefits are universal to all users, or where your benefit is minimal.

Disclosure in Accounts

Any income or benefits a trustee receives from the Archdiocese in the course of an accounting year must be disclosed.

Where a member of the Archdiocesan staff are connected to a party involved in the supply of a service or product to the charity, this information will also be fully disclosed in the annual report and accounts.

Decisions taken where a Trustee or Member of Staff has an Interest

In the event of the board having to decide upon a question in which a trustee or member of staff has an interest, all decisions will be made by vote, in line with the organisations constitution.

Recording Disclosure of Interest

All decision, including the declared conflict and the outcome should be reported in the minutes of the board.

Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of the British Isles and Ireland

Appendix C 1

(GROUP) Declaration of Interest Form

I {insert name of trustee} have set out below my interest in accordance with the Trust's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Category	<i>Please give details of the interest and whether it applies to you or where appropriate a connected person.</i>
Current employment and any previous employment in which the Trustee continues to have a financial interest	
Appointments (voluntary or otherwise) e.g.: trusteeships, directorships, local authority, membership, tribunals etc	
Membership of any professional bodies, special interest groups or mutual support organisations	
Investment in companies, partnerships and other forms of business major shareholdings, beneficial interest where these are felt to constitute a potential conflict of interests.	
Any contractual relationship with the Archdiocese	
Ownership of any property that could create a conflict of interest	
Gifts or hospitality offered by external bodies and whether this was declined or accepted in the last twelve months	
Any other conflicts that are not covered above where there could be perceived to be conflicts of interest	
Any other people, organisations, companies or institutions with whom you are connected whom you have not already referred to on this form	

To the best of my knowledge, the above information is complete & correct. I undertake to update on an annual basis. I give my consent for it to be used for the purposes described in the conflicts of interest policy and for no other purpose.

Name: _____

Signed: _____

Position in the Archdiocese: _____

Date : _____

Volunteer Management (Appendix D)

1. Introduction

The Archdiocese maintains a Volunteer Policy to ensure fairness in its use of volunteers and safe and effective practice among those individuals and communities served..

It does this by:

- Working to improve quality of volunteer placements.
- Helping people who might otherwise have found themselves excluded to take part in their communities.

The Archdiocese is committed to involving volunteers directly within the organisation to:

- Contribute to the delivery of our services
- Form our board of management
- Make sure we are responsive to the needs of our users.
- Provide different skills and perspectives.
- Offer opportunities for participation by people who might otherwise be excluded.

This volunteer policy sets out the principles and practice by which we involve volunteers.

2. Recruitment

Volunteer workers in the Archdiocese shall be Orthodox Christians in good standing with the Church.

People interested in becoming volunteers with the Volunteer Centre will be invited for an informal talk with the appropriate contact person. They will be given an information pack including general information about the the Archdiocese and specific information on the volunteer post in which they are interested. .

All volunteers will be asked to complete a simple registration form appropriate to the role that they are applying for and to supply two references, one of whom shall be their parish priest or confessor. Where applicants are not placed in the role applied for, they will be provided with feedback and given the opportunity to discuss alternative volunteering roles both with the Archdiocese and other volunteer involving organisations.

Volunteers are likely to come into contact with vulnerable people and/or be in a position of trust. They will therefore be asked to provide information about any criminal convictions via a self disclosure form that is completed prior to starting your volunteering. For roles which involve care giving and/or sustained and direct contact with young people or adults at risk, volunteers will also be required to have a full DBS disclosure check.

This information will be dealt with in the strictest confidence and will not necessarily prejudice the person being accepted for voluntary work.

3. Volunteer Agreements and Voluntary Work Outlines

Volunteers will receive a role description and volunteer agreement containing full information about their chosen area of work and a clear idea of their responsibilities and the volunteer's responsibilities to them.

4. Induction and Training

Volunteers will be given induction and training appropriate to the specific tasks to be undertaken.

5. Support

Volunteers will be assigned a named contact person who will provide regular support. Support sessions will provide the opportunity for ongoing dialogue about the development of the volunteering role and any advice and guidance as needed. Where the volunteering role is emotionally demanding these sessions also give volunteers the opportunity to access emotional and spiritual support from the Archdiocese.

6. The Volunteer's Voice

Volunteers will be consulted in decisions which affect them. The Archdiocese is committed to developing consultation and representational procedures for volunteers.

7. Records

Minimum details will be kept on volunteers. This will include the registration form, references, placement details, crisis contact, correspondence and any other relevant information in accordance with Archdiocesan confidentiality policy.

8. Expenses

The Archdiocese will ensure that there is a clear and accessible system to enable volunteers to claim out of pocket expenses.

9. Insurance

Volunteers will be covered by insurance while carrying out agreed duties.

10. Health and Safety

The Archdiocese will take all reasonably practicable steps to ensure the volunteers' health, safety and welfare while at work in accordance with the Archdiocesan Health and Safety policy.

11. Problems

The Archdiocese has a policy to help deal with grievances that volunteers may have. In line with this policy volunteers have the right to discuss any concerns they may have with their named contact at any time.

If the contact person is unable to resolve the problem they will refer the matter to the Bishop.

14. Endings

When volunteers move on from their role they will be asked to provide feedback on the volunteering experience by way of an exit questionnaire. They will also be given the opportunity to discuss their responses to the questionnaire more fully with their Volunteer Support Worker or a member of the management team.

On the basis of their voluntary work, volunteers will have the right to request a reference. Volunteers will be supported to move on to other options.

Disciplinary issues will be covered by the Archdiocese's standard grievance procedures.

15. Monitoring and Evaluation

The Archdiocese will systematically monitor and evaluate its use of volunteers with reference to this Volunteer Policy.