

Ad Clerum 2.1

Healing and Deliverance Ministry Ad Clerum

Ministry to the sick and troubled is an essential part of the Church's ministry. This ministry is one of prayer and sacrament, word and care.

The Bishop, by his consecration, is called to be principal shepherd in a diocese, which includes a call to 'hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken' (*Prayer Book Consecration Service*). This is a ministry he shares with his priests. It is symbolised in the blessing of oil for anointing the sick during Holy Week. The sacramental anointing of the sick is administered by a priest, using the oil blessed by the bishop, or if necessary, by the priest. Under certain circumstances, the priest may delegate the ministry of anointing to other ordained or authorized ministers. (*Canon B 37*)

Attention is drawn to the forms of prayer and guidelines found in the *Common Worship Pastoral Services*, in the section called *Wholeness and Healing*. These, (together with the form in *Common Worship* itself, called *Thanksgiving for the Healing Ministry of the Church*), suggest that laity may be invited to share in prayer ministry and laying on of hands.

The Diocesan Group for the Ministry of Healing provides support and advice relating to Christ's reconciling ministry of healing and deliverance. The Group recommends and endorses the code of conduct found in *A Time to Heal Handbook* (House of Bishops 2000).

Deliverance Team

The Bishop of St. Albans authorises a team of ministers and consultants to support parish clergy in their work of pastoral care and support. This team is overseen by the Bishop's Adviser for Healing and Deliverance Ministry and is called the Deliverance Team. Members work within the professional boundaries of the Church of England, Diocesan policies and relevant legislation. This is to ensure those seeking ministry will be treated with respect, in a professional and non judgemental manner, including strict confidentiality¹. A confidential report on meetings with a Deliverance Adviser may be sent to the Bishop's Adviser and Bishop.

Deliverance Ministry should be seen as part of the wider healing and pastoral ministry of the church. To help discern what sort of ministry is needed, and to avoid the problems of misdiagnosis and inappropriate ministry the advice of the Bishop's Adviser for Healing and Deliverance Ministry should be sought.

In particular, no ministry should be attempted which is, or might be perceived to be, exorcism of a person or place, without consulting the Bishop's Advisor.

The Diocesan Deliverance Team organises opportunities for those who are seeking freedom to have prayer ministry.

All such ministry should be done with regard to the House of Bishops' safeguarding policies and best practice for children, young people and vulnerable adults.

Any complaints about personal conduct and/or lack of attention to safeguarding should be taken seriously and referred to the Diocesan Safeguarding Officer for investigation.

The Diocesan Deliverance Team aims to provide timely information, advice and support to Clergy. They

¹ The Team does not give any information to anyone outside the team without the person's permission, unless they or someone else is at risk of harm, or we are requested to do so by a competent authority. In these cases the Healing & Deliverance Adviser will try wherever possible to involve them in making decisions about any action.

work in partnership with Clergy to offer Healing and Deliverance ministry to people in need.

This includes responding to Clergy enquiries about persons suffering from spiritual oppression, poltergeists and apparitions, previous spiritually abusive ministries, involvement with the occult, or reports of paranormal activity.

The Team works to the House of Bishops Guidelines for Deliverance Ministry - all support should be offered:

1. *in collaboration with the resources of medicine, using a multidisciplinary approach,*
2. *in the context of prayer and sacrament,*
3. *with the minimum of publicity,*
4. *by experienced persons authorised by the Diocesan Bishop,*
5. *with continuing pastoral care offered as follow up, and*
6. *should include the practice of keeping careful and confidential records, within the constraints of the Data Protection Act*

How to access Support

Details of the Bishop's Adviser and the Deliverance Team are held by the Bishops' offices and are **not made available to the public**. The approach to the Team should therefore be made by the local minister who is in pastoral contact, not by the person seeking help.

Process

The Adviser will consider urgency and risk and may give information and advice over the phone, accompany the minister on a home visit or agree to assess whether the Deliverance Team is able to offer ministry which matches the person's needs - or if there are other agencies who might help them.

The Bishop's Adviser may allocate a Deliverance Adviser to work with clergy, but will always maintain an overview of the Team's work, reporting as appropriate to the Bishop. For this reason, any enquiry made to a member of the team directly will be shared with the Bishop's Adviser.

Emergencies:

In crisis or emergency, for example where there is a concern over the possibility of suicide or self harm etc. then the person's GP, or NHS direct 111 or Accident and Emergency Department or Mental Health Team becomes the appropriate, and immediate, first point of contact.