



Ad Clerum
The Feast of the Epiphany
January 6, 2023

Note: An 'ad clerum' (from the Latin meaning 'to the clergy') is a letter addressed to the ordained clergy from the diocesan bishop. It is also shared with the broader church as guidance on particular matters concerning the life and ministry of the diocese. It is not intended as a Pastoral Letter to be read to the congregation, but pertinent parts of it may be shared with the Vestry and Parish Council if deemed necessary.

**Bishop's Guidance for Ordained Ministry in the
Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador**

My dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

Greetings in this blessed Season of the Epiphany!

As your Bishop, we are coworkers with God and each other. When a clergy is licenced to serve by the bishop to exercise ministry in a diocese, there is a phrase from the Book of Common Prayer in the service of institution or induction that states: "Receive this charge which is mine and thine." This means that a licensed cleric represents the bishop's ministry in the spiritual care of a particular church or ministry in the diocese. I offer this Ad Clerum to you, my dear friends in Christ, as Episcopal guidance in our shared ministry. It is not a comprehensive guide or a "how to" in ordained ministry, as many other more thorough resources are available. Please think of this as advice, "*from one beggar telling another beggar where to find some bread.*" (Various attributions)

I am grateful to my colleague, the Rt. Rev. Shane Parker, Bishop of the Diocese of Ottawa, for providing practical resources in the formation of this letter. Also, some of this information can be found in the [Diocesan Handbook \(2007\)](#) for the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador and our [Diocesan Constitution](#).

My overall hope for us as clergy serving in the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador is simple: *we are to love and serve God, the church, and God's people.* How we live this in daily ministry is set out in the Ordination Examination, which is read before the consecration of all ordinands, whether bishops, priests, or deacons. It is helpful to recall, prayerfully and regularly, what we promise to be and do when we are ordained. Our primary responsibility will be to those we serve, being faithful to the vows we made at our ordination and in adherence to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Anglican Church of Canada.



Specific to this are the following guidance that is offered for us to consider in our service to God and God's people in the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador:

Personal Spirituality and Prayer

The purpose of Christian prayer is to build a relationship with God and to seek God's will and guidance in our life. As clergy, we are to be people of prayer both corporately and privately. For many of us, regular prayer from the Daily Offices of the Church, with the assigned Scripture readings, is our practice. Prayer can take many forms, such as a silent contemplation or a ritualized practice incorporating other sources. Spiritual Direction helps deepen our relationship with God, and clergy can be assisted in finding a Spiritual Director through the Archdeacon of Diocesan Spiritual Direction and Faith Development. We should always be ready to pray when called upon as we know it is God who, through the Holy Spirit, *"will teach (us) at that time what you should say."* (Luke 12:12)

Worship

Our primary responsibility in a parish is to arrange the liturgies and worship life of the parish so that the corporate and individual lives and ministries of the parish community are given expression. Clergy are required to adhere to the following provisions: On Principal Feasts, Sundays, and Holy Days, clergy are expected to use liturgical texts (including supplemental texts) authorized by the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada or by the Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador. For liturgies other than Principal Feasts, Sundays, and Holy Days, clergy are permitted to make informed use of liturgical texts authorized by other provinces of the Anglican Communion. From time to time, the Bishop will approve liturgical texts prepared by the General Synod for trial use and evaluation, and clergy are encouraged to explore them. The use of any other liturgies (or parts of liturgies) requires the approval of the Bishop. While formal and dignified, worship should not become a dull routine devoid of energy and passion for God. As the chief presider at the liturgies of the Church, we are called to *"let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts."* (Colossians 3:16)

Pastoral Care and Visitation

Clergy oversee the parish's pastoral life, identifying and training pastoral care team members and providing administrative and communication procedures to support a healthy pastoral care ministry and other volunteer ministries in the parish. Also, to ensure that dynamic, Christian education programs are available to people of all ages in the parish and to oversee their delivery. Clergy are expected to pray with and visit



parishioners regularly and when called upon. Pastoral care of the elderly, the weak, the sick, and the poor is essential to parish ministry in the Diocese. Visitation and Pastoral care to parishioners in hospitals and Long Term Care facilities are expected when requested by the family or the Diocesan Chaplains. In the Metro St. John's Area, our Hospital Chaplains provide excellent pastoral care and visitation to those in Eastern Health facilities. They are resources to assist the clergy in the pastoral care of parishioners. As we read in the Letter of James, *"Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the church elders to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up."* (James 5:14-15)

Sacramental Ministry and Marriage Equality:

Clergy are to provide general leadership to foster a solid spiritual, scriptural, and sacramental base within the community so it may reach beyond the parish. Our Diocese accepts the full inclusion of all baptized Christians to receive any or all of the Sacraments of the Church, including Holy Matrimony. Any cleric who, because of their conscience, cannot marry a couple seeking the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony must first inform the Bishop, so that provision for alternate pastoral care for the couple is provided. At no time should any lawful couple be refused the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony by a cleric in any church in the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador before consultation with the Bishop. We strive to be a Church that will *"welcome one another as Christ has welcomed (us), for the glory of God."* (Romans 15:7)

Clergy Collegiality:

Clergy are encouraged to share in the broader work of the Diocese and to support their colleagues in ministry. We value collegiality and cooperation amongst one another and encourage collaboration in a team ministry atmosphere. There should not be a "lone ranger" attitude amongst the clergy. This means regular attendance at inductions, ordinations, archdeaconry meetings, Synod, and clergy days or conferences is expected of all clergy. From time to time, clergy will be called upon to participate in committee work in the Diocese and other activities outside their assigned parish. All clergy are encouraged to seek opportunities for ecumenical collaboration and for building mutual understanding and respect among churches within their given parish. Clergy are also encouraged to make themselves known to leaders of other aspects of life in the community they serve and to cooperate with them and others who work for the common good in their area. Working together as members of the Body of Christ will, as St. Paul says, *"make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit."*



Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." (Philippians 2:2-4)

Accountability and Administration:

All licensed clergy are accountable to the Bishop, with whom you share responsibility for the spiritual well-being of the people of the parish. You are also accountable to your Territorial Archdeacon, who represents the Bishop in your area. Clergy are to preside at vestry meetings, work with the vestry to establish goals, manage the parish's resources, and develop stewardship programs. Administration of the Parish must not be the sole work of only the clergy nor the lay leadership but a mutual sharing of gifts for building up God's Kingdom in the parish. You share responsibility for the administration of the parish, including its properties and finances, with its churchwardens and lay leaders, as governed by Civil and Canon Law. The administration also includes working in partnership with the Diocese. Please consult with the Diocesan Executive Officer if things are unknown or questionable regarding something within parish life. From time to time, the Diocese will request information from a parish or a cleric for its ministry and administration. There is an expectation that responses to such requests are made promptly. As St. Paul declared, *"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good...All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines."* (1 Corinthians 12:7,11)

Time Management, Continuing Education, and Vacation:

A cleric's work includes activities directed to a parish and its well-being and involves ministry on behalf of the Bishop, the Diocese, and the community. A recommended workweek for clergy can be measured in terms of units of mornings, afternoons, and evenings. For a full-time stipendiary cleric, this can be calculated as ten to twelve units of mornings, afternoons, or evenings in various combinations reflecting the demands of ministry. In general, no more than two evening units per week are expected. The cleric is expected to preserve at least one continuous 24-hour period each week solely for personal time for rest and renewal. In addition, clergy should take their allotted annual vacation time for rest and renewal and a yearly approved Education Leave.

- *Education Leave:* Education Leave is a "Professional Development" tool and should be kept entirely separate from other regular and approved "days off." In keeping with this intent, and to be fair to parishes, the guidelines around Education Leave are interpreted as follows: Two weeks of Education Leave can be made available annually to clergy with the approval of the Bishop. Written notice must be given to the Bishop at least three months in advance of proposed Educational Leave dates. Clergy receiving Education Leave are to arrange with the churchwardens, and the vestry will be expected to arrange regular Sunday



services and another cleric to cover parish emergencies. Education Leave should not be used in conjunction with vacation, except when the educational event exceeds two weeks in which the cleric can use vacation time to complete the event.

- *Vacation:* Vacations must be taken annually; there is no entitlement to carry-over. Scheduling of vacation times is left to the discretion of the individual cleric in consultation with the churchwardens of the cleric's parish. Clergy with under 15 years of Ordained Ministry service are entitled to one month's paid vacation per calendar year. An additional one-week (7 days) holiday after 15 years of ordained ministry service. The cleric's parish assumes the cost of supplying clergy or lay readers during vacation. Advance notice of vacation times should be given to the Bishop's Office and the appropriate Territorial Archdeacon. For Statutory Holidays, Clergy are entitled either: (1) to a paid holiday for each statutory public holiday recognized by the government of the province in which the cleric's parish is located or (2) to take time off in lieu of those days.
- *Sabbatical Leave:* All those working in a full-time professional parish or diocesan capacity in one or more of the three Newfoundland Dioceses for a period of seven or more consecutive years shall be eligible for three months of paid Sabbatical leave. Such leave shall not be cumulative. Any cleric who qualifies shall consult first with the Bishop, and the Bishop shall confirm the exact leave period after consultation with the applicant. In determining the leave period, preference will be given to those with the greatest number of years of professional service to the church. The Sabbatical leave shall be used for study and reflection relative to the ministry of the Anglican Church of Canada. As the Letter to the Hebrews directs, "*There remains, then, a Sabbath-rest for the people of God; for anyone who enters God's rest also rests from their works, just as God did from his.*" (Hebrews 4:9-10)

Relationship with the Bishop

The bishop is an "overseer," which means they help define the vision and mission of the diocese in consultation with other diocesan leaders. The bishop's relationship with the clergy within the diocese is collegial. As chief priest and pastor, the bishop shares with the clergy responsibility for the spiritual health and well-being of the parish and its people. Although the relationship between the bishop and the clergy is positive and nurturing, it is nevertheless a relationship in which the clergy are accountable to the bishop. The diocesan bishop has disciplinary authority over other licenced bishops, priests, deacons, and lay members of the church within the diocese or otherwise under the bishop's jurisdiction. Our Diocesan Constitution, under Canon 3:8, states, "*Every*



cleric who wishes to exercise ordained ministry within the Diocese shall be required to possess a licence or a general permit issued by the Bishop, which shall describe the ministry which is so authorized." A bishop's ministry with the licensed clergy provides the necessary unity and discipline in the diocese to help us respond to God's call to loving service.

As I have stated numerous times, I am here to support you as best as I can in our shared ministry. When it comes to our relationship, I would prefer you talk *to me* rather than *about me*, as the latter excludes the bishop from the conversation. One of the roles of the bishop is to be the "pastor to the pastors." I take this role seriously and consider it a privilege to serve God alongside you. You are loved in Christ and I value you deeply as friends and coworkers in the Gospel.

As Peter admonished, "*Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away.*" (1 Peter 5:2-4)

As we journey with God, my prayer is that of St. Paul, "*that all things work together for good to those who love God, who have been called according to his purpose.*" (Romans 8:28). May we be faithful to this purpose and to the promises we made to God and each other.

In God's Love,
+Sam: Eastern Newfoundland & Labrador