

Going, Going, Gone...

What to do when the Vicar Leaves

A guide for parishes in preparing for and working through an interregnum.

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INTRODUCTION

The Vicar is leaving. The moment your parish either dreads or dreams about has arrived. Once the announcement of their impending departure is made, the Church enters a period of uncertainty. With this uncertainty will come a range of new demands and responsibilities, not least for the Churchwardens and PCC, but also opportunity for growth and development in the life of the Church.

The Interregnum can be a valuable time. Approached in a positive way, and correctly handled, it can forge new relationships with other local churches, encourage greater unity and clarity of purpose within the congregation, and release a whole range of undiscovered and unused gifts.

This booklet is written to help make this happen. It contains information and advice on legalities, procedures and practicalities. It is written primarily to give you confidence that you can cope and to direct you to sources of help if you can't!

It is hoped that this booklet will help clarify what to do. It will be useful for Churchwardens, Parish Representatives, other clergy in the parish, lay readers, pastoral workers, treasurers. We have attempted to bring together various documents, the current diocesan policy and practice and the wisdom of others to provide a single basic resource for a parish facing the departure of their incumbent.

Please note that the words Incumbent, Vicar and Rector are interchangeable as appropriate in this document.

The most important piece of advice is - ASK FOR HELP, YOU ARE NOT ALONE! There are lots of people who will gladly help - the Area Dean and the Bishop's Chaplain are a first point of contact. Beyond them lie a whole host of others, the Diocesan Office, the Archdeacons, the Registrar, churchwardens in other parishes with recent experience of an Interregnum, and many more besides. Do use them. As one parish put it "*Don't worry; ask for help as often as you need to; share your fears; you are not alone.*"

Chapter 1 GOING, GOING... What to do when your Vicar is leaving

The Vicar has announced at the Sunday services he/she is leaving. Responses can be mixed, however, there is normally an understandable rise in anxiety – the life of the parish will change. The security of the current way of things is being lost and people have lots of questions, looking for details that will give security. There will be different phases in the process from now on. These are both in the practicalities of the process and in the emotional aspects of parish life.

This chapter outlines the practical process in the aftermath of the announcement. This process is likely to continue for some time after the Vicar has left and so much of the work will happen through the interregnum.

It is worth noting that legally the Incumbent is in post until the day of their induction into a new parish, the day they take up another appointment, or the day of their retirement. This means there is likely to be a time, after the final service and leaving when he or she is still technically the incumbent.

The choice of the new Vicar is the responsibility of the Patron, who is required in making that choice to consult with the Diocesan Bishop and representatives of the parish. In some cases the Bishop himself will be the Patron. If you are not sure who the registered Patron is for your parish, you'll find them named under the section 'Benefices of the Diocese' in the Diocesan Directory.

The major people involved in the process are:

The Bishop's Chaplain who is the 'Designated Officer'.

The Archdeacon

The Area Dean

Each has a distinctive role in the process.

The Bishop's Chaplain as Designated Officer ensures the legal procedures are followed. It is the Chaplain who sends out the formal notices of a Vacancy that start the process of finding a new incumbent and who then ensures that all the appropriate steps are followed.

The Archdeacon will act on behalf of the Bishop in liaising with the parish on the appointment.

The Area Dean will be responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements for the pastoral life of the parish are covered and for arranging the Induction service.

The Process

Once a vacancy is declared, a procedure is put in motion which goes something like this:

1. THE DESIGNATED OFFICER WILL ISSUE THE NOTICE – FORM 31

This will be sent to the PCC Secretary and will include information and documents on the process to be followed. The notice requires the calling of a PCC meeting.

Notices are also sent to the Archdeacon, Area Dean, Patron and the Diocesan Registrar.

SUSPENSION

At this stage it may be that the Bishop and/or the Diocesan Pastoral Committee have to suspend the presentation to the benefice. If this is the case, a consultation will take place. Suspension does not mean the outgoing Incumbent will not be replaced. Suspension is usually sought when there is good reason to consider some sort of reorganization of the way in which ordained ministry is being provided in the area. It can mean that a priest-in-charge is appointed

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to the parish or that there may not be an appointment, therefore, alternative clergy cover is provided for the parish. The consultation will make clear to the PCC what is being considered. If suspension does go ahead, it will mean that the legal process as outlined below no longer has to be followed. See Appendix 6 (page 21) for details of the process where suspension means the appointment of a priest in charge.

2. PCC MEETING

Within four weeks of the official notification, the PCC must meet.

N.B. This meeting (and any others that are necessary concerning the vacancy) must **not** be attended by the outgoing Incumbent, or their spouse, or the Patron.

The purpose of the meeting is to do three things:

1. **Prepare a statement for the Patron**, describing the 'conditions, needs and traditions' of the parish. In the Diocese of Sheffield we use the **PCC Statement** questionnaire, Appendix 2 (page 15), which will be sent to the PCC Secretary along with the official notification of the vacancy. This provides headings to indicate the appropriate sort of information required for this important description of the parish and the preferred qualities of the next Incumbent. This may take more than one meeting to finalise.
2. **Appoint two lay members of the PCC to act as Parish Representatives** during the selection procedure for the new Incumbent. Where there are two parishes in a united benefice, two Representatives are chosen from each parish. Where there are more than two parishes, then normally one representative is chosen from each parish.

The choice of these representatives is obviously a critical part of the whole procedure. In many instances PCCs opt for the Churchwardens, but it is by no means necessary for them to do so. PCCs should be clear what qualities and skills they feel are important in their choice of representatives. Their role in relating to the Patrons, prospective incumbents etc means they need to be able to represent things fairly, be able to make significant decisions and stand by them.

No member of the clergy, deaconess or licensed lay worker (e.g. Church Army Officer, full-time youth worker) may be appointed as Parish Representative - but that's merely common sense!

3. **Decide whether to request the Patron to advertise the vacancy.**

This could be either by

- Internal appointments - the norm at the moment,
- Advertising in the Church press (Church Times or Church of England Newspaper), in which case the PCC must bear the cost of the advertisement,

or

- by the Patron notifying the Church of England's Clergy Appointments Advisor who distributes a fortnightly list of vacancies to clergy who are looking for a new appointment. There is no charge for this.

Although advertising a vacancy in the church press can seem very attractive to PCCs (who naturally enough may want to 'fish' in the largest possible pool), it can be quite expensive. It is worth pointing out that the Patron is under no obligation to divulge the list of applicants to the PCC. This can be a source of frustration if a PCC feels that paying for advertising gives them the right to 'inspect' a wide field of applicants unfortunately it does not. Generally whoever wishes to advertise will be responsible for the cost of advertising.

Experience shows that advertising does not often produce great benefits over the alternatives, and considering the costs, it isn't very cost effective. It is very helpful to discuss this matter with the patron.

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It is worth talking informally with the Patron before the PCC meeting, to establish how they like to work throughout the process. Clarity about their view of advertising, how they will relate to the PCC, what information will be accessible to the PCC, what procedures the Patron will adopt for shortlisting and forwarding names to the Parish Representatives etc will be helpful. This informal approach can help to avoid misunderstandings at a later date.

There is a fourth matter on which the PCC can decide, and that is whether to request a meeting of the PCC with the Patron and the Bishop (or their representatives). This is known as a Section 12 meeting. The Patron and/or the Bishop may also request this meeting if circumstances require. It is the policy of the Bishop of Sheffield to call such a meeting in most cases, and **so a decision on this by the PCC is unnecessary.**

Action after PCC Meeting

- Form 34 needs to be sent to the Bishop to inform him of the names and addresses of the Parish Representatives.
- When the PCC has approved the Statement of Needs, copies of this need to be sent to the Patron, the Designated Officer and out of courtesy to the Area Dean.

3. SECTION 12 MEETING - ARCHDEACON

The Archdeacon will arrange this meeting. The PCC meets with the Archdeacon as the Bishop's representative, the Patron (where the Bishop is the Patron, the Archdeacon will represent him) and the Area Dean. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the statement of needs of the parish so that all are clear about its contents and an idea of the person being looked for is developed.

This meeting is valuable in establishing good understanding between the parties involved in the process.

4. A POSSIBLE CANDIDATE

It is the responsibility of the Patron to select the candidate they feel is most appropriate, and ask the Parish Representatives to consider him or her. The Patron will contact the Representatives once a candidate has emerged, and ask them to see him/her.

From the point at which the Patron contacts them, the Representatives have two weeks to approve or refuse the candidate. Approval or refusal must be notified in writing to the Patron, and if nothing is heard within the two weeks approval is assumed.

Seeing the prospective candidate is a critical moment in the whole process of appointment, and it's worth saying a number of things here:

- It's important to create the right environment for meeting the candidate.
- Parish Representatives need to be clear about the basis on which they accept or refuse a candidate. This decision should clearly relate to the PCC Statement. It's all too easy for hidden prejudices to colour the decision, which would be clearly unfair both to the candidate and to the parish.
- It is very important for a parish to be realistic about the selections offered by the Patron. Every Patron will genuinely attempt to place the right person in the right place at the right time, but there will always be limitations. Parishes can be particular about the qualities and experience required of their next Incumbent, but the number of suitable candidates is inevitably limited! Equally, the personal circumstances of clergy (children at school, working spouse etc.) may impose severe constraints on a Patron's freedom of choice. So, be realistic!

5. INTERVIEWING AND SELECTION

To talk in terms of Parish Representatives 'selecting a candidate' can be misleading. In many ways the legal power of the Parish representatives is more like a 'right of veto'. They can say 'No' to the offered candidate, but it is *expected* they will say 'Yes', for the candidate offered by the Patron is the *preferred* candidate.

This having been said, Patrons operate in different ways at this point. The Grove Booklet 'Situation Vacant' (see list of resources on page 15) recounts four different models! The basic distinction is between the following situations:-

- where a Patron sends a *preferred* candidate to see the Parish (where it is expected that the choice has already been made, and the Parish will only say 'No' in extremis'),
- the situation where the Patron invites the Parish Representatives to be part of a Selection Board to interview and decide between more than one candidate.

Much of what follows here assumes the latter situation, although the points can be equal valid for the former.

Each set of Parish Representatives will find their own way of meeting a prospective Incumbent and making their decision to approve or refuse them. Even so, there are a number of things which need to be borne in mind if the process of selection is going to be thorough and fair. Interviews, whether they are conducted formally or informally, need to offer the best opportunity for both the parish and the prospective Incumbent to represent themselves clearly to each other. It is better to ask the awkward questions here rather than after the post has been offered and accepted. See appendix 4 for further points on interviews.

6. THE DECISION

It is the patron who makes a conditional offer of the position to the successful candidate. So once the parish representatives have reached a decision they should let the Patron know. Equally, the Patron will be responsible for informing unsuccessful candidates and debriefing them if appropriate. The Patron will then inform the Bishop of the choice.

7. APPROVAL AND APPOINTMENT

Once the Bishop has received the choice, there are various checks that need to be made. Diocesan policy requires a police check of all clergy and this will be initiated. If the Bishop is not the Patron, he does have the right of veto at this point. He will only tend to exercise the right of veto in exceptional circumstances. Normally the Bishop would arrange to meet the candidate and endorse the appointment. The process for Instituting the new Incumbent will then be set in motion.

8. ANNOUNCEMENT

Confidentiality throughout the process of selection is absolutely vital. There have been embarrassing situations once an appointment has been agreed where someone has 'leaked' the name and it has got back to the prospective Vicar's present parish before the time of the official announcement. This is not a good way to leave! Consequently, the announcement of the new appointment normally made in both parishes on the same Sunday. The Bishop's Chaplain will normally co-ordinate this.

9. OTHER POINTS

The date of the service of Institution and Induction will be arranged and notice given by the Bishop's Chaplain. See chapter 3 for further details.

So, there you are - in the majority of cases, the procedure to appoint a new Incumbent is remarkably simple and things will go smoothly. It almost goes without saying that the PCC

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have an important role to play, and the Parish Representatives a vital one. The pressure to 'get it right' is immense, and the Parish Representatives will need to be sure of the prayerful support of the whole church as they approach their task.

The resulting appointment may not always be what people expect, but then God is always a God of surprises!

Chapter 2 GONE! **What to do when your Vicar has left**

The management of church life without an incumbent can be complicated and onerous. Losing what may be the only full-time worker in the church can have a significant effect on its life. However, there is much that can be of great benefit to the life of the church through this period if it is approached positively and co-operatively by those involved.

GENERAL POINTS ABOUT AN INTERREGNUM

- Look upon an Interregnum as an opportunity for growth - a time for renewal. It may liberate church members to use and develop their administrative, pastoral and other spiritual gifts, call often be a significant development in the life and ministry of a parish.
- Take the opportunity to sort out some of the practical details with the outgoing Incumbent before they leave - how and where Parish records are kept, contact names and numbers of key people, etc. etc.. There may be a wealth of knowledge and information to tap into.
- It's impossible to say how long the interregnum will last. A lot can depend on the Patron. reasonable rule-of-thumb is to pace yourselves for at least six months.
- You are not on your own. Help and advice is available from many places in particular the Area Dean, Archdeacon, Bishop's Chaplain, Diocesan Secretary, and other Churchwardens with recent experience of an Interregnum. Do use them.
- If you have a Curate, their role can become blurred if not rather strange in an Interregnum. He or she will continue to have a pastoral responsibility, but they must not be regarded as a substitute Vicar. The responsibility for managing the Interregnum lies with the Churchwardens and the PCC, not with the Curate.
- Similarly, with Non-Stipendiary Minister and/or Readers, and it is important to clear about their role from the start. Obviously they will have a critical part to play in the Interregnum but try to avoid casting them also in the role of substitute Vicar.
- Be realistic - in your expectations and plans. It may not be possible to do everything as it was before. Some hard decisions may need to be made. Don't flog yourselves or others into the ground. New growth comes from pruning, not from forcing.
- An Interregnum is not the time to make major changes to parish policy, but neither should parish stand still. It can be a time of growth. The growth may be in ways other than the obvious increase in numbers, like new ministries and gifts developing.

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

The paper from the Diocesan Secretary called 'Notes for Churchwardens and Church Treasurers' (See appendix 3) outlines what should happen to all the money which would normally be channelled through the Incumbent. In the Diocese of Sheffield the system is designed for simplicity, and in the majority of cases it avoids large sums of money flowing in to and out the parish (e.g. for fees).

It may be worth opening a separate bank account to deal with the income from fees which will need to be assigned to the Diocese, if such an account does not already exist. Such fees will include the Incumbent's portion for the publication of banns, marriage certificates, churchyard or monument fees, and searches in the Registers. The current rate for such fees can be found in the 'Table of Parochial Fees' published by the Church Commissioners (see www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/fees) and circulated to every church at the start of the year.

SUNDAY SERVICES

This is one of the most significant parts of the Interregnum. Sunday worship is the focus of the Church's life, and the outward sign that the Church is alive and well. There will not be the usual continuity in the minister, so it is probably quite important to retain a continuity to the ministry - in other words, now is not the time for sweeping changes to the liturgy!

The arrangements for covering Sunday Services are the responsibility of the Area Dean and the Churchwardens. Where there is a wider team (e.g. Curate, NSM, Readers etc.) it makes sense to gather everyone together to plan out a 3-month or 6-month programme. Although the primary responsibility for arranging cover rests with the Area Dean in consultation and co-operation with the Churchwardens, in the case of a parish with a Curate NSM or Readers - it may well be an appropriate role for one of them to act as a co-ordinator for any rota which is drawn up.

In drawing up such a rota, it is worth bearing in mind two people to approach in the early stages. Both the Bishop's Chaplain and the Archdeacon would welcome an invitation from parishes. Their participation will enable a feel for Sunday worship to be brought into consideration and enable the Bishop's support to be expressed.

Once a rota to cover Sunday Services has been drawn up, it is important for Churchwardens (or whoever is co-ordinating them) to get in touch with visiting clergy well in advance. The details of the service should be clarified, along with the responsibilities of the visiting clergy. These include:

- What type of service is it and which liturgy is used?
- Are they preaching and presiding at Communion?
- Who will choose readings?
- Who will choose hymns?
- Will there be someone to lead the intercessions?
- Will anyone else be leading part of the service?
- What time is the service and when should they arrive? etc., etc.
- Will vestments be worn?
- What are the arrangements at key points of the service - gospel (procession), offertory, administration of communion etc?

On the day itself, do your best to make visiting clergy as welcome as possible.

Although an Interregnum is not a time for radical changes in churchmanship, visiting clergy will all do things differently, and this should be approached positively. It can be a very broadening experience for a congregation.

It is worth reminding those arranging rotas that it is usual that those authorised to conduct services in the Diocese should be invited to do so. This is licensed clergy, clergy with permission to officiate (i.e. retired clergy) and readers. See the Diocesan Directory for details.

One last thing about Sunday Services. Just occasionally it has been known for visiting clergy not to turn up. In this extremely unlikely event, it may fall to one of the Wardens to conduct morning/evening prayers. So it's worth being prepared!

WEEKDAY SERVICES

It may not be possible to sustain a full programme of weekday services during an interregnum. Celebrations of Holy Communion on regular weekdays, Holy Days and Saints Days, midweek services, 'Pram Services', and services in Residential and Nursing Homes etc. will have to be reassessed. Much will depend on the strength of tradition in a parish, together with the availability of lay and ordained leaders in the church.

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Similarly, it will not normally be possible for other clergy to take Communion to the sick or house bound. Often parishes already have a system in place for this which does not rely on the Incumbent, in which case an Interregnum should not present many problems.

The Area Dean is always able to offer advice to parishes where there are potential difficulties in covering midweek services or 'home communions'.

BAPTISMS AND WEDDINGS

The Church may already have a 'Surgery' when people can call to talk about the arrangements for baptisms, weddings and banns. If not, establish one. Make sure people know about it, and that it is on your noticeboard - the day, time and place, together with a contact number.

The people (2 are recommended, for safety reasons) who run this surgery must be clear on the legal and statutory aspects involved, as well as taking care to implement any agreed parish and Diocesan policies. It may well be a good idea to talk with the Area Dean initially for clarification.

Make sure that a clergyperson is responsible for calling banns on a Sunday, and issuing any Banns certificates necessary. It may make sense for this to be the same person who does the surgery.

In some parishes the various Registers are filled in by a lay person, but in those places where the Incumbent has performed this task you will need to find someone to take responsibility for the Registers.

Each Quarter the Registrar requires a 'Certified Copy' of every wedding held in the previous three months. This must be completed on forms which are usually kept with the Marriage Registers - if you cannot find any, apply to the Registrar for a further supply. If there have not been any weddings, a 'Certificate of Nil Return' must be completed (again, the Registrar can provide these forms). In both cases, these Returns must be signed by a member of the clergy - if no-one obvious is to hand, the Area Dean will do this.

It is generally expected that Baptisms will take place during the main Sunday service, so arrangements to ensure a 'clergy' presence for Baptism Services can be part of the planning for Sunday Services (see above 'Sunday Services').

Cover will also need to be arranged for Weddings well in advance, through the Area Dean in consultation with the Wardens.

These days many parishes have well-established programmes to prepare people for Baptism and Marriage. Hopefully these will continue to operate effectively during an Interregnum.

FUNERALS

There may be people in the Parish who will naturally cover funerals, such as a Curate or an NSM or a Reader who already takes funerals.

Failing this, it may be possible to come to an arrangement with a neighbouring parish or deanery to cover the majority of funerals. Much will depend on the frequency of funerals within the Parish, and the outgoing Incumbent will be able to advise on the 'natural' funeral cover for the Parish. The arrangements for cover need to be clearly communicated to the Funeral Directors, and also to the Area Dean.

PASTORAL AND COMMUNITY WORK

Incumbents are naturally involved in a wide range of work at a pastoral level among the congregation, and within the parish and community. This will range from sick visiting to in-depth counselling, from school assemblies to management committees, from discipleship groups to industrial chaplaincies, and much more in between.

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It may not be possible to sustain the same level of involvement. Some aspects of the work may have to be curtailed during the Interregnum, but much can still be achieved as lay people are given the opportunity to develop and broaden their gifts and abilities. Again, the outgoing Incumbent will be able to advise on the more specific ministries, which may have to be tied up neatly or set aside temporarily. Don't worry if this happens - your new Incumbent will be a different person, bringing new skills and interests, and a change of Incumbent inevitably means a change of emphasis in some aspects of a parish's work.

HOUSE AND GARDEN

The Parish and Diocese should work in partnership to look after the Vicarage during an Interregnum.

Once a new Incumbent is appointed, prior to the Incumbent moving in to the property, the Diocesan Property Manager will inspect the house with the Incumbent to discuss any alterations/improvements necessary - and the financial implications.

Throughout the Interregnum the Diocesan Property Manager will be able to help and advise in any matters to do with the Vicarage. One or two general points may be helpful at this stage:

- If the Churchwardens are not the keyholders, be sure you know who is. Try to arrange for someone to visit the house at least on a daily basis - put lights on, be seen about. Cut the grass and keep the garden tidy.
- Insurance cover on the house drops automatically once it is unoccupied, so try to draw as little attention as possible to the lack of occupancy. The house must be inspected inside and out at least twice per week to maintain the lowest level of insurance.
- During suitable weather when you are at the Vicarage open the windows to keep the house the fresh.
- Don't disconnect the telephone. Before the present Vicar leaves it's a good idea to get the bill put in the name of the PCC, to avoid the possibility of automatic disconnection when the Vicar leaves.
- It's a great help to keep the gas and electricity connected.
- Central heating systems need to be protected properly through the winter. From October to March the system should be drained - the Diocese will pay the bill.
- Make sure the outgoing Incumbent has arranged for redirection of the mail.
- Consider cleaning the house thoroughly before a new Incumbent moves in; and it may be appropriate for the Parish to offer help with decorating, if this would be appreciated.

Chapter 3 HELLO, HELLO, HELLO! **Welcoming a new Incumbent to the Parish**

You're almost there. You've worked your way through the selection procedure and appointed a superb new Vicar; you've done a terrific job of managing an Interregnum; the Church is not only holding together but against all the odds is actually growing (why do we need these clergy anyway?); and you've only the occasional extra grey hair to show for it.

Just one last hurdle to climb – the relationship between Vicar and Parish. The beginning of the relationship will be very important in setting the tone for all that follows.

If the relationship between Parish and its Incumbent is a 'marriage' of sorts, it's very much of the 'arranged variety', and each partner needs plenty of opportunity to get to know the other. On each side, there will be new patterns of behaviour and personality to adjust to, beautiful characters to discover, and annoying habits to work through.

INSTITUTION AND INDUCTION

Before the 'marriage' can begin, it needs a wedding. This takes the form, shortly after the new Incumbent has moved in, of a Service of Institution and Induction. It is only after this service that the Incumbent starts work. He or she may have moved into the Vicarage some weeks previously, but until this service, they shouldn't lift a finger in the Parish! (They are still technically in their previous job until their Institution and Induction.)

This service has two parts – as the name implies. The Institution is done by the Bishop and the Induction by the Archdeacon. The service is a great time to welcome the new incumbent – not just by the congregation, but also by the parish.

The date for the service will be arranged by the Bishop's office and communicated well in advance to the Wardens.

It is the responsibility of the Area Dean to ensure that the parish arranges for the Order of Service to be produced, which must then be submitted to the Bishop and the Archdeacon (normally, 6 weeks before the service) for approval and before the Service booklet is printed.

Once the date for the Institution is set, the Area Dean will contact the Wardens and arrange a meeting to plan the Service. The Area Dean will send in advance of this meeting a copy of the Diocesan Institution Service outlining the variable option, which can then be discussed in greater detail.

It should be stressed that the responsibility for the Service rests with the Area Dean, not with the new Incumbent. It is obviously appropriate to consult the new Incumbent regarding any preferences they may have, but the service is not intended to provide an opportunity for their five favourite hymns! The idea is to hold a service, which reflects accurately where the Parish is at the moment, not where the new Incumbent is.

The Wardens will be responsible for producing an Order of Service, and sending out invitations. This needs to be done with plenty of time. A draft Order of Service should be sent to the Bishop and the Archdeacon one month before the service so that any issues can be sorted out in good time. Prior to the service the Area Dean will arrange a rehearsal to ensure the smooth running of the practicalities. With a fair wind and a good degree of co-operation, the Service of Institution and Induction provides a solemn but uplifting springboard for the future ministry of both the parish and their new Incumbent.

A GROWING RELATIONSHIP

A Parish can do much to welcome their new Incumbent, and the new Incumbent can do much to welcome their new parish. The sharing of food may play a vital part in this process. Opportunities to meet and share a common humanity may be as important as the more obvious 'religious' occasions in the first 6 months, (religious occasions have the habit of setting the

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clergy apart as a different strain of humanity, and may ultimately distance a parish from its Incumbent, rather than strengthen the relationship).

Each parish needs to find the appropriate way to help a new Incumbent settle in quickly, to the home, to the job, to the parish. This is best not rushed, though basic information should be passed on quickly. Things like details of the parish boundaries, PCC members, other key responsible people, electoral roll, details of regular church activities and those involved in running them etc. Much of this can helpfully be provided on paper.

It is also worth remembering that no two incumbents are alike. What the previous one did and wanted to do may well be very different to what the new one will do and want to do. There is great value in early PCC meetings to discuss the direction of the church, and the distribution of responsibilities in the light of the gifts and strengths of the new incumbent and the gifts and strengths of the lay members of the parish.

It doesn't help a new incumbent for those who have carried responsibilities through the interregnum to simply dump it on his or her shoulders the day after the induction. It is well worth considering whether new areas of ministry have emerged through this time that should be encouraged and sustained, rather than reverting to how things were! The new incumbent will be different to the previous one, and so it is appropriate that things work differently.

You have done your job. All that remains is to tender your resignation as Churchwarden at the next Annual Meeting, and put your feet up! Just one word of warning though - as you relax contentedly upon the conclusion of your task, the phone will ring, and it will be a Warden from a church down the road whose Vicar has just announced that they are leaving. What should they do?

Appendices

Appendix 1: Helpful Books and Booklets

- Much of the information on legal procedures is contained in '**A Handbook for Churchwardens and Parochial Church Councillors**' (written by Macmorran and Briden), published by Continuum ISBN 0826481531. The chapter on 'The Patron and Patronage' is particularly important.
- Grove Booklets publish "**Situations Vacant - A Guide to the Appointments Process in the Church of England**", Grove Pastoral Series 65 written by D Parrott and D Field. Price £2.95. It is well worth getting a copy of this for a good discussion of the partnership role between PCCs, Patrons and Bishops.
- An excellent guide '**So the vicar's leaving - the good interregnum guide**' by Mike Alexander and Jeremy Martineau - price £3.50 from Acora Publishing, offers clear and helpful advice on the interregnum.

Appendix 2: PCC Statement

Below is the form that is offered to PCC's for producing their statement. The PCC statement does not have to be in this shape, but it is a helpful one for ensuring that all relevant aspects are covered.

DIOCESE OF SHEFFIELD

PCC STATEMENT (BENEFICE MEASURE)

- | | | | |
|-----|---|----|---|
| 1 | Parish | 2 | Deanery |
| 2a | Patron | | |
| 3 | Population | 4 | Increasing or decreasing?
(When and how much?) |
| 5 | Number on Electoral Roll | 6 | Description of parish (e.g. Inner city,
housing estate, urban, suburban,
Commuter village, rural village) |
| 7 | Description of population
(e.g. age range, social groups
ethnic mix, employment/
unemployment) | 8 | Anglican places of worship
with age of churches |
| 9 | Other places of worship | 10 | Number of baptisms per year |
| 11 | Confirmation candidates per year | 12 | Weddings per year |
| 13 | Funerals per year in church
or crematorium/cemetery | 14 | Parish magazine and number of copies |
| 15 | Average Sunday communicants | | |
| 16 | Sunday services | | |
| (a) | Frequency (every Sunday or 2nd and 4th) | | |
| (b) | Times of service | | |
| (c) | Type and name (e.g. High Mass,
Sung Eucharist, Morning or Evening Prayer) | | |
| (d) | Robes worn by clergy | | |
| (e) | Service Book used (e.g. BCP, Common Worship
Order 1, Order 2, Contemporary, Traditional) | | |
| (f) | Average attendance | | |
| 17 | Name and address of curate(s), parish worker etc | | |
| 18 | Churchwardens | | |

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- 19 PCC Secretary
- 20 Any other assistants (e.g. Lay Reader, retired clergy)
- 21 Details of Church Hall or other place of meeting
- 22 List of Church organisations, where they meet, how many members and when they meet
- 23 Is there a Sunday School? How many children? When and where does it meet?
- 24 Church School? Head teacher. Number of children
- 25 List of hospitals, prisons, homes for the elderly in parish
- 26 Description of the Parsonage House
- 27 Musical tradition. Is there an organist and choir? Give details
- 28 Financial, (Attach to this questionnaire a copy of the most recent accounts)
 - (a) Has there been a Stewardship Campaign? When and with what results?
 - (b) Does the parish pay full expenses of office for the Incumbent? How much?
 - (c) Are there any major debts?
 - (d) Are there any major building or other schemes in hand needing much money to be raised?
 - (e) Has the Quota been paid in full every year? How much is it at present?
 - (f) How much is given to overseas missions and charities?
- 29 Statement of the attributes and qualities that the PCC would wish to see in their new Incumbent i.e. What is the task that the Incumbent should be doing in the parish? What is the Job Description?
- 30 What other potential developments or other pastoral opportunities would the PCC wish to be known?
- 31 Other items the PCC would wish to be included under the heading of "the conditions", needs and traditions of the parish".

(NB A copy of this form will be available and may be disclosed to any prospective Incumbent)

Appendix 3: Notes for Churchwardens and Church Treasurers

The following was current at the time of going to print.

SHEFFIELD DIOCESAN BOARD OF FINANCE

NOTES FOR CHURCHWARDENS AND CHURCH TREASURERS

1. Since the implementation of the Endowments and Glebe Measure 1976 (which took effect on the 1st April, 1978) the Church Commissioners have not been required to make payments of endowment income and glebe rents to Sequestrators during a vacancy. Instead, the Diocesan Board of Finance (DBF) has collected the glebe rents through its land Agent and payment of any guaranteed annuity (relating to former endowments) has been made by the Commissioners to the Diocesan Stipends Fund.
2. The only payments currently received during an interregnum are parsonage house rents (where part of the house is let off to tenants) and any fees which would have been payable to the Incumbent but not collected by the officiating clergy (e.g. where occasional offices are taken by assistant clergy, readers and non-stipendiary ministers). These should be collected by the Parochial Church Council Treasurer and sent to the Diocesan Office at monthly intervals for the credit of the Diocesan Stipends Fund along with a list of the services taken (with dates) - see the remittance form attached.
3. Fees for Parochial Services are not payable to visiting clergy who are in the full-time stipendiary ministry. Retired clergy will be paid the current fee per Sunday Service, on application to the Diocesan Office. Fees are not payable to Non-stipendiary clergy or Readers.
4. Travelling Expenses for parochial services should be paid to all clergy and Readers at the rates recommended by the DBF from time to time for reimbursement of clergy expenses. Expenses are payable from PCC funds and will not be reimbursed by the DBF. Neither are they deductible from any fees.
5. The incumbent's fee for Marriages and Burials may be retained by the officiating stipendiary clergy. Retired clergy may retain two thirds of the fee payable but should remit the remainder (one third, through the PCC Treasurer) to the DBF.

Non-Stipendiary Clergy and readers conducting funerals may retain 2/3 of the fee payable but should remit the remainder (one third) to the DBF.

All may retain any sum paid by Funeral Directors for travel expenses.

6. Upon the occurrence of a vacancy, the Diocesan Secretary will be responsible for the application of any monies received by the Churchwardens (as sequestrators), the Area Dean for the pastoral oversight of the parish and the Churchwardens for taking care of the parsonage house.

7. At the end of the interregnum (i.e. on the institution of a new incumbent or - for all practical purposes - the licensing of a Priest-in-Charge) the balance of any payments held by the PCC Treasurer should be sent to the Diocesan Secretary with a remittance form.
8. The Diocesan Secretary will be responsible for ensuring that:-
 - i) the new incumbent's removal to the parish is carried out at the Diocesan Board of Finance's expense (providing he is coming from an English diocese);
 - ii) a resettlement grant towards carpets, curtains and other expenses incidental to his removal is paid to the new incumbent; and,
 - iii) an internal decorations grant is paid.

If the appointment is the new incumbent's first appointment to a post of incumbent status, he will also qualify for a first appointment grant.

(The new incumbent will automatically apply to the Diocesan Secretary for these grants, having been supplied by the Bishop's Secretary with the necessary Application Form.)

9. On no account should any payments collected on behalf of the incumbent during an interregnum be paid to the new incumbent.
10. The Diocesan Registrar and the Diocesan Secretary may be contacted at:-

The Diocesan Registry
c/o Messrs Wake Smith & Tofields
68 Clarkehouse Road
SHEFFIELD
S10 2LJ

Tel: (0114) 266 6660
Email: andrew.vidler@wake-smith.com

Diocesan Church House
95-99 Effingham Street
ROTHERHAM
S65 1BL

Tel: (01709) 309117
Email: malcolm.fair@sheffield.anglican.org

Appendix 4: Parish Representatives and interviews

These guidelines were produced by Canon Ian Hardaker, who was a Clergy Appointments Advisor.

Some 'Golden Rules' about the interview stage:

- make sure it is a friendly, welcoming environment
- be well acquainted with any details already sent to you about the candidate
- agree a checklist of things you want to cover, and make sure you stick to it
- do not ask questions inappropriately about the candidate's
 - marital status/history
 - sexuality
 - racial background and racial attitudes
 - party political opinions
 - spouse's views and attitudes

i.e. In gaining a rounded impression of the candidate, don't overstep the mark.

- during the interview, listen-and observe, rather than talk. Centre the interview on candidate, e.g. "You say about yourself, could you tell us a bit more about that?"
- ask open questions, who? why? how? what? Questions which allow the candidate to talk about themselves, e.g. "How good are you at ..." (rather than "are you good at...?"), "What experience have you had with...?" (instead of "have you had experience with..")
- be sensitive, caring and tactful. This candidate is human!
- encourage the candidate to ask questions, and try to give as full a picture of your church the parish and its life as possible - keep an open mind about the sort of person you are seeking to appoint.
- approach the whole experience prayerfully.
- reflect together as Parish Representatives on the interview. Attempt to hold a balanced view of the candidate. Look for positives before negatives.
- be clear about the job the PCC has agreed needs to be done, and the sort of person the PCC has agreed it needs to do it. Always have this before you when you are evaluating the suitability of a candidate. Be aware of your own prejudices! In refusing a candidate, the following reasons are not in themselves sufficient or appropriate:

- age
- gender
- sexual orientation
- marital status
- family situation
- physical / mental disability

see also <http://www.cofe.anglican.org/info/caa/goodpractice.doc>- "Towards Good Practice in the appointment of Clergy to Parochial Posts in the Church of England"

Appendix 5: The Ordination of Women to the Priesthood – Resolutions under the measure.

1. Parishes may, if they wish, consider and, if thought appropriate, pass the resolutions below. Parishes may consider these resolutions when a vacancy in the benefice is imminent or current, when the PCC is meeting to consider the parish statement under the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986.
2. Any member of the PCC may ask for either or both of the resolutions to be placed on the agenda of the PCC. The Secretary of the PCC has to give members at least 4 weeks notice of the time and place of the meeting at which the resolution or resolutions are to be considered.
3. The PCC meeting must be attended by at least half of the members of the PCC entitled to attend. If either or both of the resolutions is passed a copy shall be sent to:-
 - (a) the diocesan bishop
 - (b) the area dean
 - (c) the lay chairman of the deanery synod
 - (d) the registrar of the diocese
 - (e) the designated officer
 - (f) the registered patron of the benefice

Only a simple majority (i.e. more than half of the members present and voting) is necessary to pass either of the resolutions. Ex officio and co-opted members of the PCC are full voting members.

Resolution A

That this PCC would not accept a woman as minister who presides at or celebrates the Holy Communion or pronounces the absolution in this parish.

Resolution B

That this PCC would not accept a woman as the incumbent or priest-in-charge of the benefice or as a team vicar of the benefice.

Appendix 6: Suspension of Benefice

Suspension of Presentation

It is important to remember that suspension of presentation means the temporary removal of a patron's right to present an incumbent for appointment to a parish. The Bishop remains responsible for the Cure of Souls, which he will normally exercise by the appointment of a priest-in-charge, who acts as the incumbent but without the freehold.

Under the Pastoral Measure 1983, and the Dioceses, Pastoral and Mission Measure 2007, suspension of presentation is allowed when:

- Pastoral reorganisation is in progress or under consideration
- It is intended that the parsonage house be replaced
- It is intended to staff the parish with a priest who also has a chaplaincy or a diocesan post.

The following points may be of interest:

- Suspension of presentation must be for reasons that apply to the particular benefice being considered. It is not legitimate under the Pastoral Measure to use the provision to undermine the principle of the freehold.
- The assumption must be that the benefice will be filled. Suspension needs justifying each time.
- Suspension is legitimate where there are specific plans for pastoral reorganisation or where such plans are in train.
- It is not legitimate to claim that, as we do not know what the future holds, suspension should be a general policy.
- It is legitimate, for a short period of time, for a deanery to argue that the pressures of falling stipendiary clergy numbers are such that presentation should be suspended to any parish, which becomes vacant. However, there must be specific process in train to produce a deanery plan to deal with this.
- The emphasis must be on restoring the rights of patrons as soon as possible.

Since this is a legal situation, the Bishop needs to be convinced of the need for suspension of presentation in each case. The Secretary of the Mission & Pastoral Committee operates, with the Archdeacons, the process whereby the Bishop must obtain the consent of the Diocesan Mission & Pastoral Committee and also consults with the patron(s), PCC(s) and chairs of the Deanery Synod.

For the most part, the process operates well and those involved accept (sometimes reluctantly) that suspension of presentation is necessary. There may be times when the Bishop is not able to agree to suspend presentation because the reasons given are not sufficiently robust. Similarly, there may be times when the Diocesan Pastoral Committee withholds its consent. In all this process, the relevant Archdeacon is a key figure in assisting parishes, Pastoral Committees and the Bishop in reaching decisions.

Suspension of presentation is an important part of our aim to achieve proper pastoral care of our parishes in an equitable way. It provides time in which parishes can prepare and be prepared for pastoral reorganisation.

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How does it happen?

The Bishop is required under the Measure

- to obtain the consent of the Diocesan Mission & Pastoral Committee
- to consult the Patron, the PCC(s), the Area Dean and the Deanery Lay Chairman.

This is usually formal consultation by letter, giving reasons for the proposed suspension. Any of the persons consulted may, within 28 days, request a meeting with the Bishop (or his representative) to which all consultees must be invited.

NOTE: There are special provisions where the Crown is Patron.

What happens to the benefice during suspension?

The Bishop gives notice of suspension to:

the Diocesan Mission & Pastoral Committee, the Patron, the Area Dean, the Deanery Lay Chairman, the Churchwardens, any sequestrators

NOTE: Sequestrators are usually the churchwardens and Area Dean (and Team Vicars in the case of Team Ministries) who are charged by the Bishop to supervise parish property and cure of souls during a vacancy.

The notice must be affixed at or near the door of the parish church/principal place of worship in the parish.

The Bishop may appoint a Priest in Charge after consultation with the PCC's and the Patron, and taking into account any Resolutions passed under the Priests (Ordination of Women) Measure 1993.

How long will suspension last?

The initial period must not exceed 5 years but it may be renewed for further periods of 5 years provided that the consultations outlined above are undertaken each time.

How does suspension end?

This can be -

- either - by the Bishop giving notice of termination with the consent of the Mission & Pastoral Committee.
- or - by Pastoral Scheme or Order.