

Guidelines for Self-Supporting Ministry in the Diocese of Cyprus and The Gulf

Foreword

I commend these Guidelines for Self-Supporting Ministry in the Diocese of Cyprus and the Gulf and warmly thank all who were involved in researching and preparing them.

Our diocese is faithfully served by both stipendiary and self-supporting clergy and it is most definitely the richer for that mix. Some SSM priest and deacons will be in current full-time or part-time secular or non-parochial and non-diocesan employment. Others will have been so in the past but are now retired. There are those who were ordained within Cyprus and the Gulf, while others came to us from other parts of the Anglican Communion.

Together with their stipendiary colleagues they know that all public ministry in Christ's Church is collaborative and cooperative, and at the same time that it is a privilege and a blessing, whatever the challenges that come along the way.

To all self-supporting clergy in particular I extend thanks on behalf of the whole diocese for their commitment to the flourishing in the Gospel of the Body of Christ.

+ Michael
February 2021

A. Terminology and Definition

A1 These guidelines apply to those clergy in the diocese who fulfil all the following criteria:

- receive no stipend
- operate on the Bishop's Licence (or Bishop's Permission to Officiate)
- are not retired from ministry and normally not older than 70
- do more than occasional cover of services
- reside in the diocese

It does not include those with House for Duty posts.

While this definition is broadly in line with a number of other Anglican dioceses, here it incorporates licensed clergy without a stipend and also those with Permission to Officiate (PtO) provided they meet all the other criteria listed above.

A2 Clergy who do not receive a stipend are to be known publicly in terms of their role (e.g. Associate Priest/Deacon/Minister or an agreed local variation thereof, agreed also with the Bishop).

For some administrative purposes, the term 'Self-Supporting Minister/Ministry' (SSM) may be used. This replaces the former term 'Non-Stipendiary Minister/Ministry' (NSM). It provides a positive, rather than negative, self-definition and is in line with terminology increasingly used within the Anglican Communion.

B. Working Roles: support, encouragement and development

The roles of SSMs are very varied. It is considered important that all SSMs are offered equality of opportunity for ongoing training and ministerial development and are encouraged to apply for different roles, including those of leadership, as appropriate.

In recognition that SSMs can often feel isolated and with little support, the following measures are to be implemented to enhance existing opportunities for support, encouragement and development:

Virtual meetings

B1 Regular online meetings of SSMs across the diocese are to be instigated, primarily for mutual support and encouragement, convened by an SSM.

Archdeaconry clergy meetings

B2i) Archdeaconry meetings of clergy (real or virtual) are to be held quarterly both in Cyprus and in the Gulf; scheduled at times that SSMs can attend; and incorporating regular opportunities for continuing ministerial and spiritual development for all. They will, thereby, offer a forum for support, learning and encouragement as well as for archdeaconry business and the sharing of key diocesan matters.

Attendance at Synod

The opportunity to attend Synod is key in connecting with clergy and lay people across both archdeaconries, and participating in the diocese's life of prayer, learning, development and business.

B2ii) There is a clear expectation across the diocese that parishes/chaplaincies should make every effort to support a rolling programme of SSM attendance to offer all SSMs (including those SSMs with PtO) an opportunity to participate more fully in these important aspects of diocesan life and to feel more highly valued. (Also see C2ii)).

Clergy Reviews

B3i) Regular Clergy Reviews are to be in place for all SSMs, conducted by a senior priest from outside the parish/chaplaincy, in line with best practice for all clergy.

B3ii) Efforts should be made to ensure that the review process and documentation used for all diocesan clergy is 'SSM-friendly', including for example, consideration of time, development opportunities; deployability; and identification of specific skills/experience that may enrich the parish/chaplaincies, archdeaconries and diocese.

Bishop's SSM appointee to the Diocesan Ministry Team

B4i) A specific SSM representative is to be appointed by the Bishop to the Diocesan Ministry Team to ensure that SSM concerns have a definite channel and process towards action, and are placed within a wider ministry perspective. The responsibilities of the appointed SSM include convening peer SSM meetings.

C. Expectations of working practice

C1 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Self-Supporting Ministry

In response to requests for greater clarity of expectation within the SSM context, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Self-Supporting Ministry is being made available.

The MoU clarifies:

- a) local working arrangements, including a clear statement about expenses, fees for occasional offices and honoraria
- b) opportunities for ministerial development
- c) accountabilities of the supervising minister/mentor and SSM, and of the parish/chaplaincy, where relevant.
- d) future review dates

The MoU is intended as a vehicle to encourage discussion and forward planning rather than as a bureaucratic requirement. It has been endorsed for this purpose by current SSMs.

C1i) SSMs and their supervising ministers are encouraged to trial and refine the MoU template.

C1ii) The template will be revised in light of the above and reissued in 2023.

Reimbursement of actual travel and other expenses incurred

It is recognised that not all SSMs are reimbursed for their actual travel and other expenses incurred.

While SSMs consider the giving of their time and gifts in the service of the diocese to be both a privilege and a joy, they should not be disadvantaged financially in so doing.

C2i) There is a clear expectation across the diocese that individual parishes/chaplaincies should offer to reimburse fully SSMs' actual travel and other expenses incurred. It is then for the individual SSM to choose whether he/she wishes to take up the offer.

C2ii) There is a clear expectation across the diocese that parishes/chaplaincies should make every effort in financially assisting SSMs (including those SSMs with PtO) to attend Diocesan Synod on a rolling programme, where SSMs are able to do so.

Honoraria, fees for occasional offices and personal gifts

In some parts of the diocese local arrangements are in place regarding either the giving of an honorarium for a particular purpose or the retention of fees for occasional offices by the SSM.

C3i) The continuation of local arrangements regarding honoraria and the retention of fees for occasional offices will be at the Archdeacon's discretion and can be helpfully incorporated into an individual SSM's Memorandum of Understanding.

C3ii) Any fees received by newly appointed SSMs for conducting occasional offices, as requested by their parish priest/chaplain will be paid to the parish/chaplaincy.

C3iii) As for all clergy, personal gifts given to SSMs, which have been specified as such, may be accepted.

C3iv) SSM clergy retired from ministry and who have PtO are paid fees for occasional offices in the same way as their retired stipendiary colleagues. Such requests will come via their parish priest.

D. Monitoring progress on implementation of the Guidelines

D1 Implementation of these guidelines is to be monitored. Progress will be reviewed in February 2022. The guidelines will be updated as necessary in 2023.