

*A vision without a task is a dream;
A task without a vision is drudgery;
A vision and a task is the hope of the world.*

(DONALD ZIMMERMAN)

CELEBRATING THE MINISTRY OF ALL

CONTENTS

- Introduction and Explanation
- Bible Studies linked with worship
- The Celebration Day
- Talks with questions
- Preliminary Planning
- Select Booklist

These ideas arose from a Celebration planned by the Milton & Blandford Deanery in the Diocese of Salisbury.

INTRODUCTION AND EXPLANATION

This briefing provides ideas for a Celebration involving a CELEBRATION DAY linked with possible preparation in Bible Studies and/or Sunday Worship based the theme of **'Jesus' People'**.

NB: There is deliberately too much material here to do everything. Choose just what is helpful for your deanery or church.

Feel free to photocopy, alter, adapt, and improve for your own situation. An acknowledgement to Parish & People would be appreciated.

JESUS' PEOPLE

AIM - To get as many as possible in the deanery to understand that ministry

1. is supposed to be collaborative (i.e. clergy and laity working together)
2. is not for the benefit mainly of the church but the world
3. includes every Christian playing their part in the Body of Christ, and
4. for each benefice/parish to learn from each other.

BIBLE STUDIES/SUNDAY SERVICES IN LENT

We want to involve as many people as possible in this project – not just those who are prepared to attend Lent Groups.

According to the lectionary we are not supposed to alter the readings in Lent and therefore the themes each week are based upon the official lectionary for year C. One Sunday's Readings, Lent 2, are omitted from the scheme as most groups will only need five sessions in all.

Preachers and worship Leaders are encouraged to take up the themes of the Bible Studies in Worship. This will help to involve those who are not keen to join in small groups. Each service could end with coffee and "Talkback" when people can discuss the theme and the Bible passages.

At the end of the five sessions, we suggest that each small group could provide a brief report containing recommendations for their own parish/benefice or deanery.

ACTION

These sessions are also designed to lead into a Deanery **Celebration of Ministry**. Clergy, PCCs and groups will need to give some thought as to what they might like to include in the **'Ministry Market'**. Each benefice or parish could be asked to introduce at least one activity involving laity that they would like to celebrate.

THE CELEBRATION DAY

There are two aspects to this day:-

1) Each Benefice/Parish/Group (whatever is best locally) is asked to produce a display for a **'Ministry Market'** (*more suggestions below*), or a presentation of some aspect of Collaborative Ministry that they want to share.

The Bible Study Groups provide a focus for initiating these displays or presentations in consultation with incumbents and PCCs.

2) Two talks on the theme: **"The Ministry we Need for the Mission we Have"**

Possible outlines with questions for discussion are included later in this briefing.

SUGGESTED PROGRAMME

- Opening Worship followed by
- Talk One **"The Mission we Have"**
- Ministry Market Stalls and/or presentations
- Lunch (bring your own - drinks provided)
- Talk Two **"The Ministry we need"**
- Closing worship

If desired each talk could be followed by small groups or time for questions and discussion. Questions are included later in this briefing after each outline talk. Speakers are also welcome to make up their own questions.

Our deanery felt strongly that we did not want to detract from the Ministry Market, and there would not be time for small groups.

FOLLOW UP

An important part of this celebration will be **"Where do we go from here?"**

THE FIVE BIBLE STUDIES

Theme: "JESUS' PEOPLE"

Key Book:

"Jesus People - What Should the Church do Next"

by Bishop Steven Croft

SESSION ONE: TEMPTATION

Bible Passage **Luke 4 1-13** **(Gospel for Lent 1)**

All those who try to serve God soon discover that they are not exempt from temptation. (That is just what Ecclesiasticus 2.1 says!) Some temptations are fairly obvious, but there are special problems that arise when we seek to serve God and minister to people. Jesus himself was no exception. Here are four important ways for you to think about 'temptation' as it affects your personal life and the life of your local church:

1. *There are three basic temptations which Jesus faces. What are they? What are the implications for his own ministry?*
2. *What sort of special temptations do we face when we are involved in ministry? e.g.*
 - **Let's give everyone exactly what they want**
 - **If only I were somebody else - or had their gifts**
 - **Let's do something to attract attention**
 - **Tell people exactly what to do or how to behave**

- **Take a strong line - and expect everyone to conform**
- **Take the easy way out - do it all yourself!**
- **Think that you are better at it than anyone else.**
- **Think you know all the answers!**

- *No doubt you can think of others. Are such things always wrong? **Discuss!***
3. *All of us have our own personal failings and weaknesses. When we get it wrong, what do we do about it? What does Jesus suggest you should do about it? **See Matthew 18***
4. *Have a look at your own church community. We are supposed to be communities of loving service to others. Can you think of ways in which we need to change?*

NB: Being the first session you will need to start with introductions. Perhaps on this occasion coffee and biscuits should come first. In later sessions it is probably better at the end. Much useful work is done when the official part of the session is over. Always end your session on time, allowing people to go. Those who wish to stay and chat should be encouraged to do so.

End with time for reflection, confession and prayer.

SESSION TWO: SHARING IN MINISTRY

Bible Passages **Luke 10 1-20**
Isaiah 55 1-9 **(OT Lesson for Lent 3)**

1. *Tell the group about something (not necessarily religious or spiritual) you have enjoyed recently? Why did you choose that particular thing?*
2. *Isaiah gets excited about God and people. Put into your own words what he is trying to say in this passage.*
3. *Jesus was unable to do everything himself. What was his solution to the problem? Is this the way forward for the work of the church today?*
4. *The disciples got excited about their ministry. Do we get excited about the work we do for the Kingdom of God? If not, why not?*
5. *What sort of results should we expect from Christian ministry?*
6. *Traditionally the church has tended to concentrate on individual salvation. Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church of United States, suggests provocatively that this is the "Great Western heresy". What was the ministry of Jesus concerned with? See e.g. Matthew 11.5 and Mark 1.21 – 2.12 and Key book chapter 4). What were the seventy (72) told to do?*

NB: Bishop Peter Ball suggests that the first two chapters of Mark are concerned with "Painting Salvation" - The man with a demon is cut off

from God. The leper is cut off from people. The paralysed man is unable to help himself.

End with a time for encouragement and prayer, especially for each other.

SESSION THREE: FAITH IN THE FAMILY

Bible passages Luke 2 41-50, Luke 14 26-27, Mk 3 31-35
Colossians 3 12-17 (Mothering Sunday reading)

1. Jesus often seemed to be at loggerheads with his family. They found it hard to understand his ministry (see John 7.5). Does this surprise you? How do your family react to you as a Christian?
2. Colossians 3 is one of the passages that are recommended for use at weddings. Can you see why it is so appropriate to family life?
3. The church often creates the impression that ministry is mainly concerned with church matters. It is of course nothing of the sort! Who or what should come first - my family, Jesus, or the church? How do we get our priorities right? Do we spend too much time on "church matters"?
4. What happens when there is conflict in God's Family? How do you deal with it? (Key book pp 40-42)
5. Can you think of things that need doing urgently in your wider community? Try not to just think about the parish or benefice. Most of us move outside that! Do families, the elderly, the underprivileged and the sick feel that they are being cared for? Of course we cannot, & should not, try to do everything; it is a matter of setting priorities.
6. Are there church activities that need to be cut down (or even abolished!) to set Christians free for family life and to minister outside the church?

Time for prayer in particular for family life and those involved in working outside church life (e.g. Relate, Citizens' Advice etc, local leaders and organisations).

SESSION FOUR DYING TO LIVE

Bible passages Luke 9 51-62
Philippians 3 4-14 (Epistle for Lent 5)

In worship our thoughts now turn toward Jesus and his passion. (Lent 5 used to be known as Passion Sunday). Jesus set his face (in spite of opposition!) to go to Jerusalem knowing full well what was likely to happen. Those of us who follow Jesus should not expect "the easy life" - we are called to follow him

1. Have a look at 2 Corinthians 4.7-12. This is Paul's own experience of following Jesus. Is this what we should expect 2000 years later? Can you think of recent events where Christians have come off badly because of their faith?
2. Could we say that, humanly speaking, Jesus was a success? Think about it together!
3. Now turn to the main passage in Philippians 3. What is Paul's aim in life? Are we supposed to be like him - or is this kind of thing just for professional Christians - clergy, missionaries, monks and nuns and a few fanatics?
4. What does it mean to die to self?

This table from "Great Expectations" by Bishop Michael Marshall may help:

SELF CENTRED	GOD CENTRED
CHOICE	OBLIGATION
FICKLE	COMMITTED
SELF SUFFICIENT	INTERDEPENDENT
CRITICAL	TRUSTING
PROUD	HUMBLE
CYNICAL	HOPEFUL
EASY LIFE	DIFFICULT LIFE
POWER	SERVICE
SELF INDULGENT	SELF DISCIPLINED
CONTROLLED BY DESIRES	LED BY THE SPIRIT

5. What things help us to share in the life of Jesus? (Key book pp70-75)

Give thanks for Christ and his life of sacrifice and obedience. Pray for Christians suffering for their faith.

Pray for ourselves - that we may demonstrate Jesus all.

SESSION FIVE: A NEW WAY OF LIVING

Bible passages Luke 19 29-40 Philippians 2 5-11
(Gospel and Epistle for Palm Sunday)

Palm Sunday is the day when the crowds got carried away in their enthusiasm for Jesus. It's easy to go with the crowd - but it was not long before the crowd were screaming for his death.

1. So how about us? It's easy to be a Christian in a Lent group, but what about.....?
2. Philippians 2.5-11 is said to be an early Christian hymn. The early Christians (most could not read and

there was no printing!) had to memorise it. Have a look at the things that Jesus has done for us as outlined in this hymn.

Note - The New RSV translates verse 6 "Though he was in the form of God, he did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited".

- 3. We are encouraged to learn from Jesus what our attitude should be to other people. Read also verses 2-15. What are we supposed to be like? (Key book chapters 2 and 3)*
- 4. Churches will be empty for the most part on Good Friday. On Easter Day more than usual may come. Why is this? It is only when we come to the cross that we can fully experience the real joy of new life and resurrection.*

Pray for those who find it hard to be loyal to Christ. Think about Holy Week to come. How are we going to follow Jesus more closely?

"CELEBRATING THE MINISTRY OF ALL" DAY

Theme:-

The ministry we need for the mission we have

OUTLINES FOR MAIN ADDRESSES.

Obviously speakers will wish to use their own material and set their own questions for discussion.

TALK ONE THE MISSION WE HAVE

The mission we have is actually God's!

- Jesus is sent by God.
- John 3.16: Jesus sends us.
- John 20.21-23: Where to? The world!

To be effective we need to communicate - getting the message through.

- To do that we have first to LISTEN Ezekiel 3 15
- Be INCARNATIONAL - amongst people

NB: not the same as being relevant!

Be prepared to make mistakes and get your hands dirty - like Jesus.

According to John Drane in "After MacDonaldisation" our world is changing rapidly - this is his brief analysis:

- Pre 19 century Agricultural
- 19th century Technological (Industrial revolution)

- 20th century Informational & the Media (The computer - basically anonymous)
- 21st century Conceptual - People crying out for love and relationships

MISSION = SERVICE + EVANGELISM (Douglas Webster)

SERVICE:

Not just the parish. Include Workplace, Hospital, armed forces, prisons etc Networks etc

EVANGELISM:

Telling the good news, is not the same as getting people into church or even getting people to respond to Christ's call.

God has a plan & purpose - creation is going somewhere. This plan starts with creation, continues with redemption, and ends with the fulfilment of his kingdom at the end of the age.

The key person in God's plan is Jesus, who fulfils the Old Testament, and points forward to the new creation at the end of time.

Some key factors in communicating this Good News are

- Witness - both individual and corporate
- Use of buildings - open - attractive.
- Not restricted to worship.
- Attractive loving communities
- Proclamation - parable - story telling ("*tell it slant*" - Bishop Ian Ramsey)
- Fresh Expressions e.g. Alpha, Emmaus, Messy Church, Spex etc.
- Apologetics - giving good reasons for our faith
- Being open to questions & disagreement

FOR SMALL GROUPS TO THINK ABOUT.

- 1. Do you have an adequate overview of the message of the Bible? What is the purpose of creation and redemption? Where is it all leading?*
- 2. How much church activity can be cut down (or even abolished) to set Christians free to go out into the world?*
- 3. Effective mission implies scratching where people are itching - where are people itching?*
- 4. Can you see people or places in your area where a FRESH EXPRESSION of church would be helpful? What support would be needed to carry it out effectively?*
- 5. It has been said that the church is failing to communicate. In fact it is communicating, but the*

message we often send out is not Gospel. Comments please!

TALK TWO: THE MINISTRY WE NEED

Traditionally authorised (Ignatius/Cranmer/C of E):
Bishops, Priests, Deacons

20th century (the laity are re-discovered!)
Clergy assisted by laity (but only if really necessary!)

In Salisbury Diocese now:
The Bishop and Area Bishops, Priests, Deacons (Stipendiary clergy/NSM/LOM), Licensed Lay Ministers (formerly Readers), Lay Pastoral Assistants

We are slowly getting nearer to the New Testament picture of The Body of Christ: 1 Corinthians, chapters 12-14 (including chapter 13!)

Every member ministry: (1 Corinthians 12) Led, Enabled, Trained & Encouraged by the apostles (see Ephesians 4.7-16) and - later in the NT - by presbyter/bishops or elders (see 2 Timothy 2.2 & Titus 1.5)

USEFUL QUOTES

"There can be no widespread evangelisation of England unless the work is undertaken by the lay people".
ARCHBISHOP WILLIAM TEMPLE IN 1944

"We must be careful to ensure that lay leadership does not equate to taking responsibility for more and more jobs in church."
ANN MORISY IN "JOURNEYING OUT"

"Sadly, this recovery of the "Body of Christ" understanding of church has turned the idea of church leadership internally onto the existing community. Leadership in the 21st century missionary church must become focussed outwards to the world..."
ARCHDEACON BOB JACKSON

See also the Key book p 58 - final paragraph.

FOR SMALL GROUPS TO THINK ABOUT.

1. *Should our present day church structures try to copy the New Testament? Jane Williams (Rowan's wife) recently wrote concerning the Acts of the Apostles "It is not always easy to tell when Luke is simply chronicling what his research suggests actually happened, and when he is making theological recommendation" Is St. Paul's picture of the church*

as the body optional, or something demanded as the way all churches should be working?

2. *How can we help clergy to "let go" of things that traditionally they have always done themselves?*
3. *How can we help every Christian understand that according to Paul the church is supposed to function like a body, with everyone having a unique part to play in the ministry?*
4. *How do people discover what gifts they have?*
5. *In your community to whom or where do people turn to for spiritual/practical help?*
6. *Our bishop in Salisbury has already given us an excellent lead in the increase of ordained and other officially recognised ministries. Are there ways in which we can encourage dioceses and parishes to promote the ministry of every Christian?*

PREPARING FOR THE CELEBRATION DAY

PRELIMINARY PLANNING

For this scheme to work well the secret lies in the preliminary planning. The Deanery Synod should probably set up a small working group to oversee the planning.

Pray to be open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit - and be prepared to listen to others in Chapter, PCCs and Synod. Do we want to involve all the local churches as well as the Anglican ones?

THE BIBLE STUDIES

Make these available to clergy and church leaders well in advance of Lent, so they can decide whether they want to use them, or adapt them, in their own situation.

Bible Study Leaders (and others) will find it helpful to have a copy of the *Key Book*.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

The Bible studies are partly based upon the lectionary for year C. As it would be helpful to involve as many church members as possible we suggest that sermons, prayers and hymns might take up the themes of the five Bible Studies (Lent 2 is omitted).

CELEBRATION DAY

A hall, school or church will need to be booked (with easy parking, toilets, catering facilities, and plenty of room for the ministry stalls. (Allow at least 1 hour in advance for setting up.)

SELECT BOOKLIST

Key Book

Jesus People - What the Church should do Next

by Steven Croft (CIO 2009 £7.99)

All Are Called (An important C of E Report)

CIO 1985

Journeying Out - A new approach to Christian Mission

Ann Morisy (Moorhouse 2004)

After McDonaldization (especially Chapter 4)

John Drane (DLT 2008)

A New Way of Working

John Holbrook (Parish & People 2002)

Sharing Local Ministry

Beren Hartless (Parish & People 2009)

Book speaker(s) and arrange for worship, with appropriate music. The speakers do not have to use the outlines above, and they should be encouraged (if necessary) to set their own questions for small group work.

Allow plenty of time for people to go round the various stalls. It is useful for a stall to have cards with names of contacts, addresses, phone numbers and e-mails. A Quiet Room may be helpful.

Arrange people to lay on tea and coffee. It is easiest if people are asked to bring their own lunch.

MINISTRY MARKET STALLS

Each parish or benefice (whatever is best locally) is asked well in advance to lay on a stall concerning some work that they do which will interest others. Take care not to frighten people: "We don't do anything well enough to have stall!" This is best done involving clergy, PCCs etc.

Stalls could include Magazines, youth & children's work, senior citizens, welcoming newcomers, ministry of healing, Lay Pastoral Assistants, Marriage, Baptism and Wedding preparation, the bereaved, sick and hospital visiting, special outreach, small groups, Fresh Expressions, lay ministry, Use of buildings, Local worship leaders, Community service etc. The more imaginative the better!

Should we ask the diocese to bring one or two relevant displays?

WHO WILL COME?

Obviously the stall holders. But we want to make sure that all church members are invited with as many as possible feeling involved.

Should it be open to the general public? In which case there needs to be adequate local advertising. Many people do not understand what the church does. The media give the impression that we are mainly interested in buildings, money and sex!

Do we expect people to come and stay all day? Or can they just drop in and have a look?

FOLLOW UP

The Purbeck Deanery who ran a similar day some time ago produced an attractive report on the day to circulate to all PCCs.

**What are we expecting to happen as a result of all this?
It is sensible to have a plan!**