

A NEW WAY OF WORKING

This was followed by a further presentation by Bishop Colin Fletcher of Dorchester on “**Sharing Life**”.

He asked people to put a date on four scenarios.

- 1) A church in rapid liturgical change, where clergy need help and there is a new interest in spirituality.
- 2) A church facing the challenge of mission and pastoral care, needing new strategies to reach people.
- 3) A church overwhelmed by huge changes in community and society, needing to adapt.
- 4) A church heavily reliant on people not on full pay.

The periods the Bishop had in mind were the 16th & 19th centuries!

Today we face similar challenges, and we need to be asking ourselves the following questions:

Are we using our resources most effectively...

- ⌘ To deepen people’s relationship with God?
- ⌘ To foster Christian discipleship?
- ⌘ In evangelism?
- ⌘ In pastoral care?
- ⌘ To transform society?

INTRODUCTION

Many dioceses now are encouraging Deaneries to produce their own plans for the deployment of clergy.

With the the inevitable reduction in the number of the traditional stipendiary full time priests, it is becoming essential to find the best way of deploying such priests as there are. In the past dioceses used to combine smaller parishes, or those that were struggling, so that they could be covered by one incumbent. That was reasonably satisfactory whilst benefices contained only two or three parishes, with perhaps one church in each.

The situation is now quite different. Some benefices now have up to seventeen villages, and this can only be managed properly when we get away from the traditional model of ministry, one incumbent for a benefice, sometimes assisted by curates or team vicars.

Some dioceses have realised that the best way of deploying the clergy is to consult the locals, who know the situation, taking into account what other resources there are for ministry in the area.

Therefore the Dioceses of Oxford and Salisbury, and probably many others, now leave deployment primarily in the hands of the Deanery, which then makes recommendations to the bishop as to the best way forward.

This involves many factors, not just churches and

populations, but also the availability of Non Stipendiaries and Local Ordained Priests. In addition to those there are now over 10,000 Readers in the Church of England combined with a positive army of Churchwardens, Lay Pastoral Assistants, Church Councillors, not to mention at least a million regular worshippers.

Outlined below is the way one Deanery, Deddington in the Diocese of Oxford, set about planning for ministry in the future.

Many deaneries are already beginning to discover the Ministry of the Laity - or perhaps rediscover would be a better word bearing in mind the New Testament. Deddington Deanery is seeking to re-discover the mission of the laity - the whole people of God

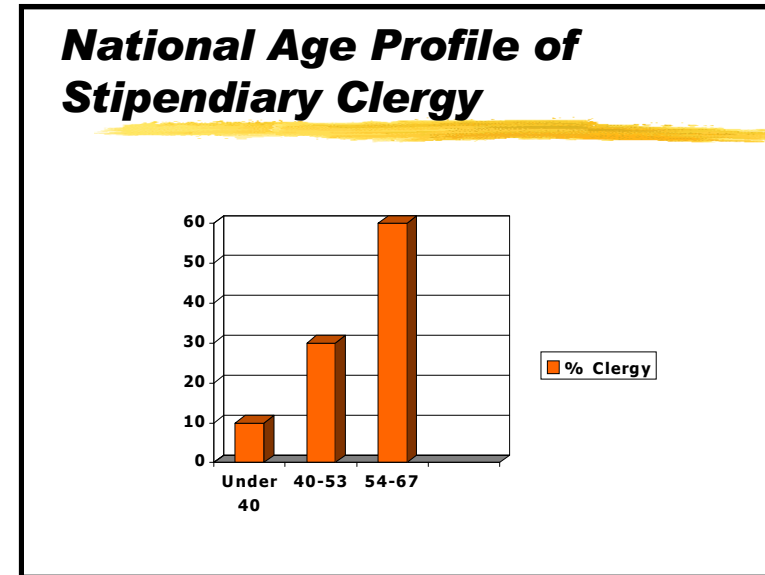
NOTE

The short text is accompanied by many diagrams, which are intended for use as part of a video or ohp presentation.

These are obtainable free in original Microsoft "PowerPoint" form by e mailing pandpeople@aol.com. You will of course need to edit and adapt the information for use locally.

Alternatively you can make you own slides for use with an overhead projector. JJHB

This is a rough Age Profile of the Stipendiary clergy. It doesn't look too good for the church in 25 years time!



Of course it's not as bad as that! The number of vocations is on the increase. And the other very good news is the QUALITY of the people whom God is calling to a great variety of ministries.

If God is not calling people to Stipendiary Ministry in sufficient numbers to sustain the present pattern, it must be because he has an ALTERNATIVE vision. Our task, and it is an exciting one, is to discover what that vision is - and then to help to make it happen.

If that doesn't drive you to drink try this one!

Some Comparisons

The Archdeaconry of Oxford

17,000 members - 103 stipendiary clergy

Alcoholics Anonymous

25,000 members - 3 full time organisers

So this our challenge

Our Challenge

"To discover how to transform the Church into a new instrument in God's hands for its future tasks" (George Palmer)

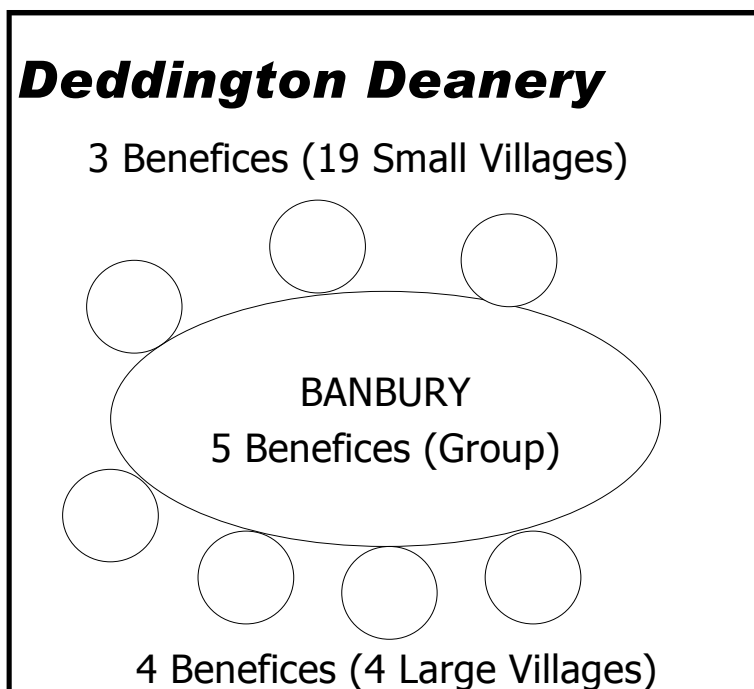
Task

More Ministry & Mission
with fewer Stipendiaries

SHARING LIFE IN THE DEANERY

A presentation on behalf of the Deddington Deanery by Stephen Corsby (Lay chair) and John Holbrook.(Rural Dean)

1) Our Deanery can be shown diagrammatically like this.



The next two slides show the present situation, followed by what we would expect in 15 years time

Present Ministry Resources 2001

⌘ A population of 55,000 are served by;

- ✘ 12 Stipendiary Ministers
- ✘ 5 Non-Stipendiary Ministers
- ✘ 1 Ordained Local Minister
- ✘ 8 Licensed Lay Ministers
- ✘ 1 Youth Worker (IMPACT)
- ✘ 12 Retired Clergy

Proposed Ministry Resources 2016

⌘ A population of 65,000 served by;

- ✘ 2300 Church Members
- ✘ 8 or 9 Stipendiary Ministers
- ✘ A great number and variety of NSM, OLM, LLM and other ministers spread evenly in ministry teams across the Deanery

The Church is only loyal to its calling when it is engaged in mission. A church that does not involve itself in mission will cease to be viable.

The great theologian Emil Brunner states “The Church exists by mission as a fire exists by burning”

Can a church that is not involved in mission really be called a church?

The role of the Deanery in this mission is to support, and encourage local vocations and Ministry Teams. This can be done for example, by training, making resources available, and planning Vocations Conferences.

The role of the Stipendiary clergy is revolutionised. They do not become managers, or consultants, but are akin to ‘episcope’ (the word used in the New Testament meaning ‘oversight’).

Our task now is to plan for MORE ministry and MORE mission with FEWER stipendiary clergy. **We believe we can achieve this.**

Compare our situation with what is happening elsewhere in

Some Comparisons

The Diocese of Oxford
430 stipendiary clergy

The Diocese of Kimberley & Kuruman
30 stipendiary clergy

When are we going to face the need for radical change?

Our Challenge

“To discover how to transform the Church into a new instrument in God’s hands for its future tasks” (George Palmer)

Task

More Ministry & Mission
with fewer Stipendiaries

This is very early days but here is one possible strategy - where I think we’re heading. Long-term planning is essential. Assume no assumptions. No post regarded as sacrosanct. God has new forms of ministry that we’ve yet to imagine.

Our Strategy 2 (embryonic)

- ⌘ To initiate long-term (15 yr) planning. Emerging themes;
- ☒ Assume No Assumptions.
- ☒ Churches will only be viable (agents of mission) with strong local ministry.
- ☒ The Deanery will support the development of Ministry Teams & local vocations.
- ☒ Role of few remaining stipendiaries will be transformed into episcopate.

The Deanery is currently in a fortunate position. There are no immediate plans to cut posts, and this gives us space for long term planning.

Our task is to plan for more “More Ministry & More Mission with fewer Stipendiaries”.

We believe we can achieve this if we do two things

- a) Make every-member ministry a reality not just a slogan
- b) Change the way we see and shape stipendiary ministry

As a Deanery we have begun this process and we are asking ourselves such basic questions as:

“What is the Church?

“What is its Mission?”

“What kind of ministry does it need to fulfil that Mission?”

Is Church like a Football Club?

25 people on the pitch in need of a rest,
watched by 25,000 in need of
exercise!

Task

More Ministry & Mission
with fewer Stipendiaries

These are not new questions. Thirty years ago my predecessor wrote a paper on "The Future of the Deanery". He looked forward to the Ordination of Women, and envisioned the development of Non Stipendiary and Locally Ordained Ministries.

He was thinking towards what we are doing today 30 years

A voice from the past

"I suggest that we have arrived at an impossible situation using the present methods for the deployment of the clergy".

Canon George Palmer - Rural Dean of Deddington Deanery (1972)

ago!

He also predicted with amazing accuracy our current deployment BUT he believed that the position we are in today would represent "meltdown"

He wanted to plan for the futurebut instead we adopted our

Our Strategy 1

~~"To adapt as infrequently and gently as possible in the face of screaming necessity."~~

Please let's abandon this non-principle of forced incremental change which together with vested interest and a lack of imagination have killed almost every visionary attempt to PLAN MINISTRY for MISSION

How close to crisis do we have to be before we act?

My greatest fear is that the present system will NOT collapse, so we'll keep on propping it up. We are fortunate that we have so many and such superb retired priests, whose contribution to the deanery is tremendous and very much appreciated that there is a danger of over-dependence on them. They lead services, even when a priest is not required, and this does not help the development of local ministry or local leadership. I fear that the supply of retired clergy will enable us to prop up the current system for some time. We will run out of churchwardens before we run out of visiting priests!

My Greatest Fear...

⌘ My greatest fear is that the present system **will NOT** collapse.

☒ Good supply of excellent retired clergy.