

SUPPORTING MINISTRY - RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CLERGY APPRAISAL

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Recommendations for Clergy Appraisal

The Final Report of the Working Party on Clergy Appraisal to the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales and the National Conference of Priests

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Part 1: Introduction

Part 2: Theological Reflections on Appraisal

Part 3: Introducing Appraisal

Part 4: Approaches to Appraisal

A. Peer Model

B. Episcopal Model

C. Composite Model

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

Appendix 2: Sample Review Form

Appendix 3: Joint Working Party on Clergy Appraisal

Appendix 4: Acknowledgements

Part 1: Introduction

"We want appraisal, and we want it quickly." These requests came from a recent meeting of priests in a typical English diocese. They faced growing pressure from changes in Church and society. They sensed a need for personal support in developing their strengths and attending to some gaps in their ministry. We recognise that not every priest feels the same.

Our working party was set up by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, at the request of the National Conference of Priests, to see how best to meet these needs of priests and deacons. We looked at what has already been done about appraisal elsewhere in the Church, in other churches, education, social services and industry. Our recommendations are based on the special needs of the Church today in England and Wales.

Appraisal, or 'review' as we prefer to call it, is not entirely new. Our Lord describes it in the parable of the talents. God gives us various gifts to use in serving him and his people. The review is based on what each individual does with the gifts he has. It acknowledges that some have more gifts than others and some are more gifted in particular areas of ministry.

A regular review would help each one to see how to make even better use of his gifts, and to improve his service in areas in which he is not quite happy. It would enable him to ask for courses and formation better suited to his needs. The people he serves, the local church or diocese, and the Church at large, would then benefit from the process.

This review of life and ministry will respect legitimate diversity and personal autonomy and differs notably from appraisal in other professions. However, many of their skills, ideas and words can be helpful to us. You may find it useful to refer to the Glossary where we say what we mean when making use of the words appraisal, review, evaluation, and accountability.

The working party now commends this report to each diocese for careful study as a help in the ongoing formation of the clergy. We also encourage each member of the clergy of England and Wales, both diocesan and religious, to opt for a regular review or appraisal.

Part 2: Theological Reflections on Appraisal

The present situation

The ordained ministry is a vocation. Those of us who have offered ourselves for ordination have acted commonly out of a sense of personal calling. Living out this vocation is our life's work. There is a job to be done in parishes and in schools, working with the young, tending the sick, and caring for those in need. We will preach and teach and celebrate sacraments. It is inspiring work. But all the same, until very recently, the personal element predominated. What we actually did was often dictated by personal preference. If we felt uneasy in schools or uncomfortable in hospitals or awkward with the young, we could leave that particular work to someone else, because there was usually another priest around who would be happy to do what we found uncongenial.

Times are changing. There are fewer priests, while the work must still be done. These circumstances help us to see readily that we are called to serve the People of God, not ourselves, and that our ministry is entirely on behalf of the Church (see Pope John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, nn. 16, 78).

At the same time there is a growing expectation that priests should be accountable for what they do. That expectation need not alarm us. It is not something adopted uncritically from current management practice. Its roots go much deeper. When we think theologically, we realise that calling people to account lies at the heart of our faith story. Our scriptures are littered with examples of those who receive calls and are invited to respond.

Vocation and response

Adam and Eve were created out of love, but expectations were placed on them. When they had eaten the forbidden fruit and heard the Lord God walking in the cool of the day in the garden, they went to hide themselves, because they realised that they were naked, and God called them to account for being in hiding (Gen 3); when Cain killed Abel, God called to him, "Where is Abel your brother?" (Gen 4:9); when Moses struck the rock twice, God called him to account (Num 20:12); when David seduced Bathsheba and caused Uriah her husband to be killed, the Lord sent the prophet Nathan to call him to account (2 Sam 12); and after Elijah had fled into the wilderness, he heard a voice that asked, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:13). Vocation entails responsibilities. Those who accept the call must give an account of themselves. And it is noteworthy that none of these examples is a matter of an individual's private affairs alone, but each - whether symbolically or specifically - has a bearing on their relationship with the community.

What is obviously disturbing about them is their common thread: they challenge weakness and punish wrong-doing. But it is not always so. Young Jeremiah is reluctant to accept his vocation as a prophet, but the Lord reassures him: "I have put my words in your mouth. ... I am watching over my word to perform it" (Jer 1:9,12). This calling to account is not only a matter of challenge; it also offers support. And the Psalms are full of praise for those who place their trust in God: "They are like a tree that is planted beside the flowing waters, ... and all that they do shall prosper" (Ps 1:3); they "will never waver, they will be remembered for ever" (Ps 112:6). These elements of challenge and support are manifest still more clearly in the New Testament.

The good news of Jesus is a proclamation of hope: the kingdom of God is at hand (Mk 1:15). Those who respond must be ready to explain: "Always be prepared to make a defence to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you" (1 Pet 3:15). Accountability here is not the outcome of present fashionable management styles; it lies

at the heart of the Christian response to the message of the Gospel. No Christian can escape its demands. Those who follow the Son of Man who came not to be served, but to serve, must be able to account for the service they offer (see Mk 10:45; Lk 22:27).

Service implies responsibilities: "when you have done all that is commanded of you, say, 'We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty'" (Lk 17:10). The expectation is stark. How do we respond to that challenge? At the same time, the fourth Gospel proposes a different relationship, when Jesus says to his disciples, "No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you" (Jn 15:15). This calling into friendship supplies support to accompany the challenge.

The parable which captures best these twin themes of challenge and support, accountability and accompaniment, is the parable of the talents (Mt 25:14-30; Lk 19:12-28), where a man goes on a journey and entrusts his property to his servants. He gives five talents to one, two to another, and one to a third. On his return he calls them to give an account of their stewardship. He condemns the servant who has neglected to make any use of the talent he was given, but - and this is the point to be noted here - he is as delighted with the servant who had responsibility for the two talents as he is with the one who had the five. The responsibilities inherent in our Christian calling do not refer to some abstraction of perfection, but are related to our skills and our circumstances.

Ministerial diaconate, priesthood and episcopate

The vocation of those who have been ordained involves a particular responsibility not only to use their own talents, but also to help others exercise theirs. It finds expression in the rites of ordination. When a deacon is ordained, the prayer of consecration refers to the Church as "Christ's body," growing "to its full stature as a new and greater temple." At a priest's ordination the given homily declares, "Let the example of your life attract the followers of Christ, so that by word and action you may build up the house which is God's Church." And a bishop-elect is asked, "Are you resolved to build up the Church as the body of Christ?" (See *The Rites of the Church II*, 1979, pp. 56, 63, 92.) But how is this responsibility to be carried out?

Church as communion

The image of the Church as the Body of Christ recalls the Pauline teaching about gifts: everyone is gifted (1 Cor 7:7); gifts make manifest the one Spirit (1 Cor 12:4-11); the various gifts are distinct, but inter-related and necessary to each other for the good of the body as a whole (1 Cor 12:14-26). Gifts build up the Body of Christ which is the Church. This emphasis on gifts points to that understanding of the Church as communion which the Synod Report of 1985 described as "a central and fundamental idea in the documents of the Council" (Extraordinary Synod of Bishops, Final Report, II, c.1).

Communion in this context speaks of our bond with Christ. It takes the communion of God's Trinitarian life as its model and source, and is itself, as relationship with Christ, the means for us to achieve this communion with God: through Jesus in the Spirit we are united to the Father (see Pope John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, n. 18). So through this communion we are drawn into the mystery of God and, at the same time, as a consequence, sent out on mission. Communion, therefore, affirms who we are: it declares what we have in common, our life in Christ, respects the ways in which we are different, the various gifts of the Spirit which we have received, and establishes the relationship within the diversity by recognising that those gifts are connected. Then it indicates what we do: it means that the ministries Christians exercise in the light of their communion, need to be carried out in a way that is correspondingly collaborative in the

sense that it acknowledges unity, respects diversity, and orders the relationships within this diversity.

The challenge of ministerial priesthood

The care of the Church understood as communion is exercised by all the baptised through their participation in the life and mission of the Church (see *Christifideles Laici*, n. 20); however, those who have been ordained have a particular responsibility for this ordering of relationships within the community; indeed, 'holy orders' is the name given to the sacrament they have received. They must not merely gather the gifts together; they must try to coordinate them. And so the apostolic exhortation on the formation of priests describes the priest as, "a servant of the Church as communion because - in union with the Bishop and closely related to the presbyterate - he builds up the unity of the Church community in the harmony of diverse vocations, charisms and services" (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 16).

Pastores Dabo Vobis goes on to speak about the nature of this pastoral leadership (n. 26):

"This munus regendi represents a very delicate and complex duty which, in addition to the attention which must be given to a variety of persons and their vocations, also involves the ability to coordinate all the gifts and charisms which the Spirit inspires in the community, to discern them and to put them to good use for the upbuilding of the Church in constant union with the Bishops."

What makes this statement particularly significant is what follows. After this acknowledgement of the delicacy and complexity of pastoral leadership, it immediately recognises the implications for the priest:

"This ministry demands of the priest an intense spiritual life, filled with those qualities and virtues which are typical of a person who 'presides over' and 'leads' a community, of an 'elder' in the noblest and richest sense of the word: qualities and virtues such as faithfulness, integrity, consistency, wisdom, a welcoming spirit, friendliness, goodness of heart, decisive firmness in essentials, freedom from overly subjective viewpoints, personal disinterestedness, patience, an enthusiasm for daily tasks, confidence in the value of the hidden workings of grace as manifested in the simple and the poor."

To live up to this understanding of priestly life is very challenging and the emphasis at this point is only on the spiritual. Later, the document refers to the human, intellectual, and pastoral dimensions of a priest's life as well. This kind of life cannot be realised all at once; it involves a lifelong search (see *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 46), and it calls for that permanent formation without which maturity cannot be attained (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 70). Moreover, the character of this formation will change at different stages, as priests "continue to be active members for the building up of the Church" (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, nn. 76-77). The ongoing formation they need will not be the same for those more recently ordained, for those in the middle years of their ministry, and for those whose ministry is drawing to a close.

Part 3: Introducing Appraisal

The introduction of appraisal into the life of a diocese is very important. From the beginning, the clergy need to feel that they are part of the process and can contribute to its setting up. Their ideas, their hopes and their anxieties need to be acknowledged and valued. They will have questions that need to be answered. They need to give their consent to what is being suggested because appraisal touches them both at a personal and a ministerial level. If appraisal is seen as something imposed from above or by a pressure group within a diocese, it will not be fruitful.

At an introductory meeting for all the clergy the reasons for appraisal can be given and the different models of appraisal can be explained. Time needs to be given to clarify what is being offered and to answer any questions that may arise. Some may be apprehensive at what is being put forward, and need to have the time to express their concerns and have them addressed. Some may have experienced appraisal in other areas of life such as teaching, social services and industry and have comments that they wish to make as a result of this experience. We recognise that, whereas in some areas of work appraisal is used for career development and pay structures, clergy appraisal is intended as a personal and ministerial support. Its purpose is pastoral and for the well-being of those involved in the process. Through appraisal they should be able to grow as individuals and exercise their ministry more effectively so enabling the communities which they serve to grow in communion and be strengthened in mission.

In every diocese there will be clergy who are eager for appraisal, others who are willing but unsure, others who are reluctant, and some who may not wish to participate at all. Some dioceses might prefer to introduce the process of appraisal by means of a pilot scheme which would involve a group of volunteers. This could involve those who are willing to participate. Their experience can be shared with others and any problems and difficulties that arise in the process can be addressed before a larger number of clergy are involved. Sharing good experiences of appraisal can be a way of involving others who may be holding back until the advantages of such a process can be seen.

Having decided to introduce appraisal into the life of the diocese and also the model best suited to the diocese, it will be necessary to appoint a diocesan coordinator, whose role is to implement the decisions that have been made. This person will probably be a priest or deacon, but need not be. What is essential, however, is that the person holds the confidence of the bishop and the clergy. The diocesan coordinator will need to have an understanding of appraisal and the reason why it has been introduced into the life of the diocese.

An important part of appraisal is the meeting between the person being appraised and the person who is appraising. To ensure that this is a good experience there needs to be a group of people willing to serve and be trained as appraisers or reviewers. These people should also be part of the appraisal process themselves so that they are not thought of by others as a group of "experts" or "outsiders". The appraisers/reviewers will in their turn also be appraisees/reviewees. The number of reviewers necessary will be proportionate to the overall number of clergy in a diocese. Since the reviewers will probably be engaged in some form of full-time ministry themselves, the number of interviews that they can undertake a year is probably between six and ten.

One suggestion is that all the clergy should be trained as "reviewers" and thus available for this particular ministry to their fellow priests and deacons. If a priest or deacon does not want to be a reviewer, he could make his views known to the bishop or diocesan coordinator.

The reviewers, like the diocesan coordinator, need the confidence of the clergy and bishop. They can be nominated or elected by the clergy and approved or appointed by the bishop. They will need initial and ongoing support and training. It is the job of the coordinator to provide this.

The coordinator will need to maintain contact with the group of reviewers as well as being available to any priest or deacon who wishes to ask questions or comment about the appraisal procedure. The coordinator, however, is not to be in possession of any information that is shared between the reviewer and the reviewee, nor to be notified of any agreed plan of action. This is confidential to the reviewer and reviewee and those to whom the reviewee has given his permission to know.

The coordinator will need to set up training sessions for the reviewers which will first ensure that they understand the purpose of appraisal and the model to be used. In addition the reviewers will need the necessary skills in creating a relaxed atmosphere in which the meeting between the reviewer and the reviewee will take place. The reviewer will also need skills in listening, questioning, feeding back information, communicating by letter as well as by word of mouth, and the ability to write up a fair and accurate summary of the discussion with the reviewee, and communicate this positively.

Within all dioceses there are people who have the necessary expertise in running such training days for reviewers but good material and personnel are also available from such bodies as Marriage Care or Catholic colleges. Training days can also be shared with people from other Christian traditions who have operated a system of appraisal for some years.

Appraisal will bring needs of the clergy to the fore. It is important that, as far as possible, there are the resources in place which can meet these needs. Some needs will be picked up by the diocesan director of ongoing formation but there may be more personal and individual needs, such as requests for spiritual directors, supervisors, counsellors or therapists. Each reviewer should have a diocesan list of people who might be helpful in these areas and be able to provide the reviewee with the names and addresses of such people. The need expressed by the reviewee could be different from those referred to above and might be a request for companionship. Again the reviewer could have the names and addresses of clergy and other people who would be willing to offer hospitality to someone who is experiencing loneliness.

Appraisal can only happen if accepted by those who will be involved in its implementation. It certainly needs sufficient resources if it is to work. Appraisal is to be welcomed as a way in which clergy can continue to deepen their commitment to Christ and to the Church.

Part 4: Approaches to Appraisal

The working party recommends three possible models of appraisal. Each diocese would need to choose a model which is the most appropriate for its circumstances. To avoid confusion, one model should be chosen rather than using two or three at the same time.

The three models are: Peer Model; Episcopal Model; Composite Model

A. Peer Model

The peer model aims to enable the priest or deacon to develop his life and ministry with the assistance of a reviewer who may or may not be a fellow priest or deacon. Its primary objective is to offer a structure for support for the clergy.

Central to this model is the use of a questionnaire which invites the priest or deacon to review and set goals for the development of his ministry, ideally twice a year. Being ordained has implications for the whole of life, both personal and professional. In the review the priest or deacon is invited to focus mainly on his work but also on aspects of his life which relate to, inspire and feed his ministry. A basic assumption of the process is that each one of us needs to take individual responsibility for developing our understanding of our vocation and enhancing our ministry. This begins in training and continues throughout priestly or diaconal life.

The review is intended solely for the priest's or deacon's benefit and involves no-one else other than the person who is assisting him. All the information arising from the review is confidential unless the reviewee gives his permission for it to be shared with a third party.

The review scheme is not intended to be a substitute for spiritual direction, although it may be seen as complementary to it. Nor will it fulfil the role of counselling, although sometimes the need for counselling may emerge from the review process. Both the reviewee and the reviewer need to be alert to issues which would be more fully dealt with in regular spiritual direction or counselling.

Introducing the model to the diocese

Appraisal cannot be enforced, nor is it realistic for it to be entirely compulsory. Yet to be effective, it needs to become part of the life and culture of the diocese. Good experience of appraisal will be its best advertisement. The bishop could model good practice by making it known that he personally will be using the review process. It is a "peer" model in the sense that a priest or deacon may choose to be reviewed by another priest or deacon, indeed someone of similar age or experience, although it should not be a close friend.

To introduce the review scheme to the diocese there needs to be a broad consensus of support among the clergy, including the bishop, that this is the way forward. The questionnaire and the process could be distributed and discussed widely in the diocese, at deanery level and at the council of priests. This will take time. In the first instance, support could be given for a pilot scheme.

It would be helpful for the diocese to appoint a diocesan coordinator or facilitator to design a process for introducing the review scheme, to train the reviewers and lead evaluation sessions as the scheme gets under way.

Before the scheme can begin, a team or list of reviewers needs to be drawn up. Reviewers may be members of the clergy, religious or lay people. The diocese may decide that only clergy will be reviewers, and in this case an added benefit of the scheme may be that it builds the unity and fraternity of the presbyterate. This could be an option where there are enough clergy willing to take on the role of reviewing, as well, of course, as being reviewed themselves. Reviewers need not be professional supervisors, counsellors or spiritual directors, although the skills associated with these roles are helpful and relevant. They are not professionals, but need to understand that a professional approach to the review process is necessary. Individual clergy may, having looked at the questionnaire, choose their own reviewers (who must be willing to be trained and be reviewed themselves). Clergy should let the bishop know that they have made a commitment to the scheme and the name of their reviewer.

Selection and training of reviewers

Whoever they are, it is most important that reviewers recognise the qualities and skills involved in the role, and be willing to engage in training and evaluation sessions. Above all, potential reviewers, having seen the questionnaire, should be confident that they are able to listen to the reviewee for an extended period of time and help him come to his own conclusions about the way forward. Other skills include abilities to:

- a)** create a relaxed and friendly environment if the interview takes place outside the home of the reviewee;
- b)** interpret the information in the questionnaire and help the reviewee see underlying issues;
- c)** structure an interview for the time available and lead a productive discussion based on listening, questions for clarification and analysis;
- d)** reflect back to the reviewee the goals he has set for himself and decisions taken;
- e)** respect the distance and boundaries between the reviewee's experience and his own.

Training of reviewers is essential to the process. Such training should stress listening skills, could include role-plays of the interview and discuss practical matters such as the timing and place of the interview.

Resources

The clergy are a most valuable resource of any diocese. It is, therefore, important that the review process be sufficiently resourced with administrative time, training and finance to follow up on needs whether of individuals or the presbyterate as a whole, e.g. for ongoing formation or counselling. If needs emerge which are not responded to, the process will lose credibility and support.

The peer process

- i)** Prayer is a necessary part of the preparation for the interview for both reviewer and reviewee.
- ii)** A commitment is made to a regular meeting, ideally around twice a year, between the reviewer and reviewee. The aim of the interview is for the priest or deacon to receive affirmation for what he is doing, to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas of growth, and set objectives for the short or medium term.
- iii)** The priest or deacon prepares for the interview by reflecting in a prayerful manner on and completing the questionnaire, which is returned to his reviewer at least a week before the meeting. This forms the basis for the interview. The review covers ministry, spirituality, personal life, gifts, identifying of needs and agreed action.
- iv)** During the interview, which could last around two hours, the priest or deacon gives a verbal account of what he has written, while the reviewer listens, asks questions for clarification, feeds back to the reviewee underlying issues or connections, and offers non-directive reflections on what he has heard. Together they agree on a course of action

which will help the reviewee to grow in his ministry and personal life. The objectives need to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed. A short, written action statement is produced which can be used as the basis for the start of the next interview. **v)** The reviewer's role is not to evaluate the reviewee nor to direct what he is setting out to achieve. His responsibility is limited to the preparation for and time of the interview. He returns the review questionnaire to the reviewee and does not keep any records. It is the responsibility of the reviewee to follow through with agreed objectives and goals.

The review form

The review form will vary between dioceses but could cover the following areas:

- a)** liturgy;
- b)** prayer life and retreats;
- c)** parish leadership
- d)** pastoral ministry;
- e)** evangelisation and teaching ministry
- f)** relationships with other Christian traditions and other religions;
- g)** administration;
- h)** relaxation and holidays;
- i)** health and physical fitness;
- j)** worries and concerns;
- k)** relationships with the diocesan personnel and fellow priests;
- l)** ongoing formation.

B. Episcopal Model

The episcopal model aims to enable the priest or deacon to be affirmed as a person and to be helped in the exercise of his ministerial work. These aims are closely interrelated and interdependent.

This model is described as the 'episcopal' approach because it enables the bishop to show his pastoral concern for his priests and deacons and it recognises the traditional lines of authority within the Church. It stresses that there is one presbyterate in the diocese shared by bishop, priests and deacons who together are at the service of the local Church.

The review is intended to enable the bishop and clergy to exercise their joint ministry more effectively (Vatican II, *Christus Dominus*, nn. 16, 28).

Central to this model is the use of a diocesan review form which invites the priest or deacon to review and set goals for the development of his ministry, ideally every two years. (A list of the areas likely to be covered appears later in this section.) Being ordained has implications for the whole of life, both personal and professional. In the review the priest or deacon is invited to focus mainly on his work but also on aspects of his life which relate to, inspire and feed his ministry. A basic assumption of the process is that each one of us needs to take individual responsibility for developing our understanding of our vocations and enhancing our ministry. This begins in training and continues throughout priestly or diaconal life.

The review is intended mainly for the priest's or deacon's benefit. All the information arising from the review is confidential unless the reviewee gives his permission for it to be shared with a third party.

The review scheme is not intended to be a substitute for spiritual direction, although it may be seen as complementary to it. Nor will it fulfil the role of counselling, although

sometimes the need for counselling may emerge from the review process. Both reviewee and reviewer need to be alert to issues which would be more fully dealt with in regular spiritual direction or counselling.

Introducing the model to the diocese

Appraisal cannot be enforced. Yet to be effective it needs to become part of the life and culture of the diocese. Good experience of appraisal will be its best advertisement. The bishop could model good practice by making it known that he personally will be using the review process.

This model could start with an advantage in dioceses where bishops already have an in-depth interview with the priest/deacon as part of parish visitation. A spirit of trust is necessary as well as a sense of confidence and maturity among the clergy, who are all expected to participate.

To introduce the review scheme to a diocese requires a broad consensus of support from the bishop and clergy that this is the way forward. Details of the process could be distributed and discussed widely in the diocese, at both deanery level and the council of priests. This will take time. In the first instance, support could be given for a pilot scheme.

The reviewers will be the bishop or his representatives. This could necessitate a large team of reviewers as normally no reviewer should be asked to undertake more than ten reviews a year. The reviewers are not professionals, but they need to understand that a professional approach to the review process is necessary.

Selection and training of reviewers

Whoever they are, it is most important that reviewers recognise the qualities and skills involved in the role, and be willing to engage in training and evaluation sessions. Above all, reviewers, having seen the questionnaire, should be confident that they are able to listen to the reviewee for a suitable time and help him towards conclusions about the way forward. Other skills include abilities to:

- a)** create a relaxed and friendly environment, if the interview takes place outside the home of the reviewee;
- b)** interpret the information in the questionnaire and help the reviewee to see the underlying issues;
- c)** structure an interview for the time available and lead a productive discussion based on listening, questions for clarification and analysis;
- d)** reflect back to the reviewee the goals set and the decisions taken;
- e)** respect the distance and boundaries between the reviewee's experience and his own.

Resources

The clergy are a most valuable resource of any diocese. It is, therefore, important that the review process be sufficiently resourced with administrative time, training and finance to follow up on needs whether of individuals or the presbyterate as a whole, e.g. for ongoing formation or counselling. If needs emerge which are not responded to, the process will lose credibility and support.

The episcopal process

- i)** Prayer is a necessary part of the preparation for the interview for both reviewer and reviewee.

ii) The review should be regular, ideally at least every two years. The aim of the interview is for the priest or deacon to receive affirmation for what he is doing, to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas of growth, and set objectives for the short or medium term.

iii) The priest or deacon prepares for the interview by prayerful reflection on the questionnaire and completing it. He then returns it to the bishop or his representative at least a week before the meeting. This forms the basis for the interview. The review covers ministry, spirituality, personal life, gifts, identifying of needs and agreed action.

iv) The reviewee meets the bishop or his representative to discuss the issues raised through the review form. Needs are identified and goals are set which need to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed. A short, written action statement is produced.

v) The reviewer writes up a report which he shares with the priest or deacon who then has an opportunity of expressing agreement or disagreement with what has been written. With the consent of both reviewee and reviewer, some of the review may be shared with the bishop, if he is not already the reviewer and, if need be, with others like the director of ongoing formation.

vi) In the light of this, arrangements could be made for ongoing formation, sabbaticals and future appointments.

The review form

The review form will vary between dioceses but could cover the following areas:

- a)** liturgy;
- b)** prayer life and retreats;
- c)** parish leadership
- d)** pastoral ministry;
- e)** evangelisation and teaching ministry
- f)** relationships with other Christian traditions and other religions;
- g)** administration;
- h)** relaxation and holidays;
- i)** health and physical fitness;
- j)** worries and concerns;
- k)** relationships with family, friends, diocesan personnel and fellow priests;
- l)** ongoing formation.

C. Composite Model

The composite model aims to combine the strengths of the peer model and the episcopal model. It covers both personal and ministerial development. As in the peer model, the personal review concentrates more on how the reviewee is in himself. As in the episcopal model, the ministerial review concentrates more on the reviewee's specific duties as priest or deacon.

This model is intended to offer personal support and affirmation, to show care and concern for the reviewee, to celebrate his gifts and to identify areas of growth and of future personal development. It is also an expression of his accountability to the wider Church for the quality of his ministry, recognising that priests and deacons do not work in isolation from the rest of the Church. The reviewee's accountability is to the bishop, his fellow clergy and to the people he is sent to serve.

Central to this model is the use of the questionnaire which invites the priest or deacon to a major review and to set goals for the development of his ministry, ideally every three years, but with a yearly assessment to ensure that goals set are being met. Being ordained has implications for the whole of life, both personal and professional. In the review the priest or deacon is invited to focus not only on his ministry and work within the diocesan presbyterate but also on aspects of his life which relate to, inspire and feed his ministry. A basic assumption of the process is that each one of us needs to take individual responsibility for developing our understanding of our vocations and enhancing our ministry. This begins in training and continues throughout priestly or diaconal life.

The review is intended for the priest's or deacon's benefit. All the information arising from the personal part of the review is confidential unless the reviewee gives his permission for it to be shared with a third party.

The review scheme is not intended to be a substitute for spiritual direction, although it may be seen as complementary to it. Nor will it fulfil the role of counselling, although sometimes the need for counselling may emerge from the review process. Both reviewee and reviewer need to be alert to issues which would be more fully dealt with in regular spiritual direction or counselling.

Introducing the model to the diocese

Appraisal cannot be enforced. Yet to be effective it needs to become part of the life and culture of the diocese. Good experience of appraisal will be its best advertisement. The bishop could model good practice by making it known that he personally will be using the review process.

To introduce the review scheme to a diocese requires a broad consensus of support from the bishop and clergy that this is the way forward. Details of the process could be distributed and discussed widely in the diocese, at both deanery level and the council of priests. This will take time. In the first instance, support could be given for a pilot scheme.

In the composite model, it will be necessary to appoint a diocesan coordinator who will have sufficient time and requisite secretarial help to put into action a process that can be time-consuming and complex, but which is very worthwhile. The coordinator may plan the process of implementing the review scheme, training the reviewers and leading evaluation sessions. The coordinator will need to be in regular contact with the reviewers, to have easy access to the bishop and diocesan personnel, to have the confidence of the clergy and to ensure that all engaged in the process will retain their confidence.

Before the scheme can begin, a team of reviewers needs to be set up. Reviewers may be members of the clergy, religious or lay people, approved by the bishop after consultation, with nominations from those to be reviewed. The reviewee would be free to choose from the list of names. This may involve a large team of reviewers; experience in other churches shows that reviewers are able to carry out seven or eight interviews a year when engaged in other work. The reviewers are not professionals, but need to understand that a professional approach to the review process is necessary.

Selection and training of reviewers

Whoever they are, it is most important that reviewers recognise the qualities and skills involved in the role, and be willing to engage in training and evaluation sessions. Above all, reviewers, having seen the questionnaire, should be confident that they are able to listen to the reviewee for a suitable time and help him towards conclusions about the way forward. Other skills include abilities to:

- a)** create a relaxed and friendly environment, if the interview takes place outside the home of the reviewee;
- b)** interpret the information in the questionnaire and help the reviewee to see the underlying issues;
- c)** structure an interview for the time available and to lead a productive discussion based on listening, questions for clarification and analysis;
- d)** reflect back to the reviewee the goals set and the decisions taken;
- e)** respect the distance and boundaries between the reviewee's experience and his own;
- f)** write a fair and accurate summary of the discussion and communicate this in a positive way both to the reviewee and diocesan personnel where necessary.

Resources

The clergy are a most valuable resource of any diocese. It is, therefore, important that the review process be resourced with sufficient administrative time, training and finance to follow up on needs whether of individuals or the presbyterate as a whole, e.g. for ongoing formation or counselling. If needs emerge which are not responded to, the process will lose credibility and support.

The composite process

- i)** Prayer is a necessary part of the preparation for the interview for both reviewer and reviewee.

- ii)** The review should be regular, ideally at least every three years, with a yearly assessment to ensure that goals set are being met. The aim of each interview is for the priest or deacon to receive affirmation for what he is doing, to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas of growth, and set objectives for the short or medium term.

- iii)** The priest or deacon prepares for the interview by prayerful reflection on and completing the questionnaire, which is returned to the reviewer at least a week before the meeting. This forms the basis for the interview. The review covers ministry, spirituality, personal life, gifts, identifying of needs and agreed action. For those who agree, it can also include reports from others such as parishioners or fellow workers nominated by the reviewee to the reviewer who is responsible for making contact with them. A firm promise must be given that all information shared by parishioners or fellow workers with the reviewer is confidential and not to be shared further. Any written material should be destroyed immediately after the initial interview.

- iv)** During the interview, which could last around two hours, the priest or deacon gives a verbal account of what he has written, while the reviewer listens, asks questions for clarification, feeds back to the reviewee underlying issues or connections, and offers reflections not only on what he has heard but on information provided by others. Together they agree on a course of action which will help the reviewee to grow in his ministry and personal life. This should cover the two areas of personal and ministerial development. The objectives need to be specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timed.

- v)** The reviewer writes up a report which he shares with the priest or deacon, who then has an opportunity of expressing agreement or disagreement with what has been written. This should cover the two areas of personal and ministerial development. The personal part, covering areas such as physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual well-being, remains the property of the reviewee. The agreed action statement can be used as the basis for the next interview within a year.

vi) The ministerial part of the review can be submitted to the appropriate diocesan bodies such as the bishop, or the director of ongoing formation. It would state the reviewee's gifts and talents and could be useful in making sensitive appointments or where particular skills are required. The director of ongoing formation would be helped to see the current needs to be addressed.

vii) The reviewer returns the self-review form to the priest or deacon and destroys all other material he may have obtained.

The review form

Each diocese will adopt review forms which best suit its needs. An example of a self-review form, adapted, drawn up and already revised in the light of experience, and now being used by an English diocese, is reproduced in Appendix 2.

Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms

Appraisal

Appraisal is the process which involves a review and evaluation of the life and ministry of the clergy, as a means of supporting them and facilitating their development. It will always respect their legitimate diversity and personal autonomy. It takes into account each person's different capabilities, performance, and needs. (Note: The aim of appraisal is primarily to be of service to the clergy and, in the second place, to enable the diocese to know their needs better in order to provide more appropriate ongoing formation that will help them. It is not intended for use in disciplinary matters or, except when a priest or deacon is willing for the diocese to have information, to help in making appointments.)

Review

Review involves reflection with a priest or deacon on his life and ministry and leads to an agreed plan of action.

Evaluation

Evaluation is the agreed conclusion of both the reviewer and the reviewee about how the person is carrying out the whole of his ministry, including any plan of action previously agreed. (Note: The evaluation is sought only to help the individual priest or deacon and not to compare him against any 'norm' or with others.)

Accountability

The primary meaning is a priest's or deacon's duty to be responsible to God and others for using his gifts and talents in his ministry, office and other tasks entrusted to him. Under God, to whom all are responsible, a priest or deacon is directly responsible to his bishop for the way he exercises his ministry, and the ways in which he carries out his office and other tasks, e.g. a parish priest's responsibility to the bishop for his parish. He also has responsibility to others.

In the wider sense, accountability includes giving explanations to those for whom his ministry and/or office make him responsible. Modern examples include a reasonable expectation that a new parish priest will respect the present arrangements in the parish and also its legitimate differences from his previous experience.

Appendix 2: Sample Review Form

The following review form, in use in the Diocese of East Anglia, is offered as a sample. Other sample review forms are available to diocesan coordinators from the General Secretariat of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales. Dioceses may decide to use one of these samples or devise one of their own.

Professional Development & Appraisal Scheme

Revised November 1998

1. Ministers of the liturgy

"Christ gives the dignity of a royal priesthood to the people He has made His own. From these, with a brother's love, He chooses men to share His sacred ministry by the laying on of hands. He appoints them to renew in His name the sacrifice of our redemption as they set before Your family His paschal meal. He calls them to lead Your holy people in love, nourish them by Your word, and strengthen them through the Sacraments. Father, they are to give their lives in Your service and for the salvation of Your people as they strive to grow in the likeness of Christ and honour You by their courageous witness of faith and love."

(Preface of Priesthood)

During this process there are some questions to score; we would like to use the following heading and numbers for scoring, indicating which one reflects most closely your feeling in each case.

1. Confident / 2. Comfortable / 3. Uncertain / 4. Uncomfortable

How comfortable are you with the celebration of the sacraments/liturgy of the Church?

Baptism

Preaching

Eucharist

Reconciliation

Confirmation

Marriage

Sacrament of the Sick

Funerals

Prayer of the Church

Regular Communions

How are others involved in the celebration and preparation?

In the celebration of the sacraments what do you perceive to be your strengths and weaknesses?

How could you develop strengths and address weaknesses in this?

2. Priest as pastor

"This is the Chair from which you will gather together the People of God for prayer and sustain them as they go forth to carry out the mission of the Church to the world. Are you ready to pray with the people, as well as for them, and to lead and encourage them in their apostolate to the world?"

"It is the Priest's privilege and duty to sustain and guide his people along the way to unity with all Christians and to seek the gifts of unity and peace for the world. Are you willing to work zealously to overcome division and to seek the unity for which Jesus prayed?"

(Rite of Induction of Parish Priest)

Relationships with the Parish

How do you perceive your pastoral relationships with the following identifiable groups?
Please score these using the form given above.

1. Children
 2. Youth
 3. Married people
 4. Parents
 5. Single people
 6. Elderly persons
 7. Religious
 8. The poor
 9. The sick and dying
 10. Other Christians
 11. Wider community
 12. Women
- With which do you feel most at home/least at home?

Relationship with the Bishop

"Are you resolved, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to discharge without fail the office of priesthood in the presbyteral order as a conscientious fellow worker with the bishops in caring for the Lord's flock?"

(Rite of Ordination)

What is your relationship with the Bishop?

How do you feel this should be developed on your part and on the part of the Bishop?

Relationship with other priests in the deanery/diocese

"Presbyterate thus appears as a true family, as a fraternity whose ties do not arise from flesh and blood but from the grace of Holy Orders."

(Pastores Dabo Vobis)

"So the sum total of the priests of my diocese adds up to an entity in its own right, a new thing, something more than the sum of its parts, something sacramental. This is all very well, as a theological statement. But Holy Orders will not create fraternity, as if by magic."

(Tony Philpot, Priesthood in Reality)

What is your relationship with the Deanery/Diocese?

How should your relationship be developed?

Do you welcome other priests?

Do you feel welcomed by other priests?

Relationships with those with particular responsibility

"Finally, conscious of sharing in the work of Christ, the Head and Shepherd of the Church, and united with the bishop and subject to him, seek to bring the faithful together into a unified family and to lead them effectively, through Christ and in the Holy Spirit, to God the Father. Always remember the example of the Good Shepherd who came not to be served but to serve, and to seek out and rescue those who were lost."

(Rite of Ordination)

How do you perceive your relationships with the following people who have responsibility in the parish? Please score these using the form given above.

1. Assistant priests
2. Deacons
3. Religious
4. Liturgical ministers eg. Readers, Eucharistic Ministers, welcomers, musicians, organists, etc.
5. Catechists
6. Finance Committee
7. Liturgy group
8. Parish Council
9. Parish employees
10. Servers
11. Parish groups
12. Parish volunteers

Comment on the relationship you find most difficult in this list.

Chaplaincy

Please score these using the form given above.

Primary School Pupils
Primary School Staff
Primary School Governors
Secondary School Pupils
Secondary School Staff
Secondary School Governors
Hospital Patients
Hospital Staff
Prison Inmates
Prison Officers
Others

Care for yourself

Do you take a regular day off each week?

When was your last holiday?

Do you find time for physical exercise?

How do you cope in situations of conflict/stress/difficulty?

Do you have any plans for personal development? A sabbatical?

How long have you been in your present parish and how do you feel about that?

Appendix 3: Joint Working Party on Clergy Appraisal

The decision to establish a Joint Working Party and its terms of reference

The decision to establish a joint working party on clergy appraisal was made by the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales in 1996 at its November meeting. The bishops were responding to a request for this project from the National Conference of Priests which had studied and discussed the matter of appraisal at its three previous conferences (1994, 1995 and 1996). In 1995 the NCP proposed the setting up of a working party on the subject of appraisal, or of a pilot scheme (Resolution 5). In preparation for further discussion at the 1996 conference a Position Paper on an "Appraisal Scheme" for priests was drawn up by Dr Michael Carroll, the Rev Dr Michael Doyle and Elizabeth Mann. The 1996 NCP endorsed the following resolution:

"We accept that an appropriately designed programme of appraisal for clergy in pastoral ministry will be of service to priests and people of God alike. We therefore propose the formation of a working party in collaboration with the Bishops' Conference. Its purpose would be to identify aims and methods of appraisal conducive to the nurture and support of our brother priests. This project would include a study of proven approaches to appraisal developed over many years in education, industry, the forces and in other fields where care and affirmation of the individual has reached a high level of development."

The Bishops' Conference agreed in principle to the value of appraisal for clergy and agreed to establish a working party jointly with the NCP to examine all aspects of appraisal for diocesan clergy. It was decided that the working party would be fairly small, would have two bishops to represent the Bishops' Conference - Bishop James O'Brien and Bishop Hugh Lindsay - and from six to eight members to include representatives of the National Conference of Priests, a deacon and lay people. One of the priests would chair the working party and it was hoped that it would be able to complete its work, in the shape of a report to the Bishops' Conference, fairly quickly over a period of a year or so and in about five to seven meetings, held at the General Secretariat in Eccleston Square, London.

The following terms of reference, drawn up in January 1997, were designed to be descriptive rather than prescriptive. It was understood that they might well be modified as the group proceeded with its work.

Terms of reference for joint working party on appraisal

i. Aim

The aim of the working party is to consider how best to introduce appraisal for clergy and to recommend models, methods and resources which dioceses might use to establish appraisal adapted to their own needs and circumstances.

ii. Objectives

The working party will achieve this aim by:

- examining the needs of clergy in relation to appraisal;
- listening to fears and concerns which some might feel, and recommending how appraisal might be proposed in a way which addresses these concerns;
- examining models and methods of appraisal from other churches and other professions to see what can be learned which is relevant to the distinctive life and ministry of Catholic clergy;
- explore the practical implications, including the implications for resources and time, of introducing appraisal in a diocese for both priests and deacons;
- outlining a theological and ecclesiological rationale for appraisal;
- proposing aims, models and methods of appraisal which would be appropriate for Catholic dioceses to use for priests and deacons.

iii. Ways of working

The working party will consult as they judge appropriate, but generally on a small scale. The working party will be free to seek the advice of experts or practitioners in aspects of their work.

iv. Timing

The working party will report back to the Bishops' Conference within two years.

Appointment, composition and modus operandi of the working party

In February 1997, Pat Jones, then Assistant General Secretary of the Bishops' Conference, contacted those who might be willing to become members of the working party, sending with the invitation a copy of the terms of reference. By the end of the month eight of those approached had agreed to serve and replies were expected from two more.

The final list of members was as follows:

Bishop James O'Brien (Bishops' Conference)
Bishop Hugh Lindsay (Bishops' Conference)
Mgr Declan Lang (Portsmouth), Chairman of Working Party
Deacon Patrick Byrne (Wrexham)
Fr Paul Crowe (Liverpool)
Sr Helen Forshaw SHCJ, Secretary of Working Party
Fr Martin Hayes (Westminster and NCP)
Dr Deirdre Morrod (One Plus One)
Mgr Arthur Roche (General Secretary, Bishops' Conference)
Fr Roderick Strange (Shrewsbury and chair of NCP).

The inaugural meeting of the working party took place at Eccleston Square on Friday 21 March 1997. The pattern for subsequent meetings was then established.

There were thirteen meetings, all except two held at Eccleston Square. The exceptions were the second meeting, held at Archbishop's House, Westminster and the fifth meeting, held at St Joseph's College, Upholland.

Owing to the pressures of other work or to changed circumstances, the working party was effectively reduced to seven members for the last few months of its existence, by which time the bulk of the research work and the first drafts of the report had been accomplished.

The working party was provided with copies of appraisal schemes in use in a variety of professions as well as schemes already in place in the Canadian Catholic Church and in the Anglican and Methodist Churches in England and Wales. Further information was gathered by members of the group so that by the second meeting there was plenty of material to work on. After this initial research the working party began to draft the different sections of the final report, largely by preparing papers between sessions, then discussing and refining them in the meetings.

Input was sought and gratefully received from others. After the sixth meeting, Pat Jones, Vicky Cosstick and Fr Jim O'Keefe were sent the papers that had been produced by that date and invited to comment on them, which they did in writing. At the same time the materials were also sent to Fr Philip Sumner and Fr Ray Lyons of the NCP, and to Dr John Sullivan, educational management consultant at St Mary's, Strawberry Hill, and they were invited to attend the seventh meeting as consultants. Both Fr Ray Lyons and Dr

John Sullivan were able to come to the meeting, present their observations in person and join in general discussion on the content and presentation of the various models of appraisal.

An interim progress report was sent to the bishops to consider at their Low Week meeting 1998 and to the NCP Standing Committee. The working party subsequently received very helpful comments from individual bishops and priests which contributed to the final drafting of the various sections of the report.

Mgr Declan Lang and Sr Helen Forshaw met at Mayfield, Sussex, in November 1998 to put the sections together in report form. This draft document was then presented to the rest of the working party for final editing. The process concluded at the thirteenth meeting on 2 March 1999.

Appendix 4: Acknowledgements

The working party owes a debt of gratitude to many people who responded willingly to requests for information and advice as we embarked on our task. The net was cast very wide in the early stages and it is not possible to list every person and institution here but they know how grateful we were and are.

We received help, encouragement and valuable resource material from the following individuals, dioceses and churches:

Ms Vicky Cosstick, Formation and Facilitation;
Ms Pat Jones, Deputy Director, CAFOD;
Fr Ray Lyons, Executive Secretary, National Conference of Priests;
Fr Jim O'Keefe, President, Ushaw College;
Dr John Sullivan, Education Management Consultant, St Mary's University College, Twickenham;
Dr James Whiston, Financial Secretary, Diocese of Middlesbrough.
Mgr Kieran Conry, Director, Catholic Media Office;
Mr Tom Horwood, Press Officer/Production Editor, Catholic Media Office;
Dr Jim McDonnell, Director, Catholic Communications Centre.
The Archdiocese of Brisbane, Australia;
The Dioceses of Clifton, East Anglia and Liverpool;
The Anglican Dioceses of Portsmouth and St Albans.

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Federation of Councils of Priests for their handbook *Enhancing Your Ministry* (1996);

The Church of England's Advisory Board of Ministry for the paper *Ministerial Review: its Purpose and Practice* (1994);

The Anglican Church in Wales and the Methodist Church in Wales for relevant documents on ministerial review/appraisal.

Finally, we thank the staff of the General Secretariat of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales for their helpfulness and efficiency in duplicating and distributing reams of documentation for us, sometimes at short notice, and for their unflinching and cheerful hospitality.