

Chaplaincy in the Context of the New Evangelisation

I thank Fr. John Lee, the chaplaincy teams and all our chaplains in the field, lay and ordained, for all they do. I thank Caroline Virgo and those who have organised this Chaplaincy Day, and I thank all of you for being here this morning. The title given is “Chaplaincy in the Context of the New Evangelisation” and the organisers have asked me to speak about the Bishop’s vision for the chaplaincy services of the Diocese of Portsmouth. The focus here is on pastoral care services: to the sick and housebound, the homeless, the differently abled, the dying, the bereaved, the mentally ill, but also on chaplaincies to prisons, hospitals and the military, as well as on the chaplaincies to the many ethnic communities of the Diocese. However, what is said will also be relevant to the youth chaplaincy services of the Diocese: the Youth Mission Team, school and university chaplaincies and those working in youth ministry. But the main focus will be on the services under the heading “Chaplaincies” on the left-hand side of the Framework diagram, in the Department for Clergy under the Vicariate for Vocation. The location of these chaplaincy services at that place in the Framework diagram is richly significant, as should become clear later.

So, first by way of background, some notes on new evangelisation and the Framework and then, the theological vision that should underpin our chaplaincy services.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 The Call to New Evangelisation

Since becoming a priest 30 years ago, I have worked in a number of dioceses and contexts, both here and in the US, in which fellow-clergy and laity would often say things like: “We don’t know where we’re going! We have no vision! The diocese needs a plan!” Since becoming Bishop just over two years ago, I have been trying to give a plan: the work of new evangelisation (NE), an evangelisation “new in its ardour, new in its methods and new in its expression.”¹ The aim is not to dragoon people, forcing them into a mould; people travel at different speeds. But in saying the plan is NE, the aim is to set a direction of travel, one that, God-willing, will release energy and creativity, enabling the Church in our Diocese to flourish with new hope.

To this end, we established four Diocesan Priorities: that each person, each community, each parish, Pastoral Area and Deanery, every school and every ministry within the Diocese is called

- to seek out and draw in the un-churched and the unbelieving;
- to develop life-long discipleship, spiritual growth and a living relationship with

¹ See John Paul II “The Task of the Latin American Bishop” in *Origins* 12 (March 24, 1983): 659-62. The occasion was a discourse to an assembly of CELAM in Port-au-Prince on 9th March 1983. Cf. R. Fisichella *The New Evangelisation* (Gracewing, Leominster: 2012) 8f

Jesus Christ, above all, in the Holy Eucharist;

- to discern the gifts, charisms and vocations □ God has given us; and
- to form and support existing and new ‘creative apostolates’.

The key to this is prayer, a transforming experience of God’s love and salvation in our lives. We need to put all the resources of the Diocese at the service of helping people to pray, to find God, to experience the love of God, to commit to God, to learn the art of praying, to develop a personal-passionate friendship with Jesus Christ, to grasp in our lives the meaning of His death and resurrection, and to have a sense of being personally chosen by Him to be His disciple. As Catholics, we have huge resources for this in two millennia of spiritual theology, in the wisdom and lives of the saints, and in our rich, profound and diverse Catholic Tradition.

Essentially, NE means a new and transforming encounter with the Person of Jesus Christ and a renewed sense that He is calling us to be His disciples within His Body, the Church. St. Paul said, “life to me is Christ” (Phil 1: 21); the “life I live now in this body I live in faith, faith in the Son of God who loved me and who sacrificed Himself for my sake” (Gal 2: 20). St. Bernadine of Siena put it like this:

“The Catholic Faith consists in knowing Jesus Christ and receiving illumination from Him. He is the light of the world, the door to life, and the foundation of eternal salvation.”²

For many Catholics today, a change of mind-set is needed. In the past, clergy often became ‘chaplains to the Catholic community’ and the faithful, ‘consumers of sacraments.’ Now, every member of the Church is called to become a missionary-disciple, with the clergy acting as mission-directors. The purpose is not *doing* new things, but doing things with a new heart-and-mind-set, a new attitude, a new approach. Before, the focus was on lay ministries in the parish, building up the Church of the Lord. Today, the focus is on the Lord of the Church and the apostolate to the world. Pope John Paul II once said, there needs to be a full recovery of the secular nature of the mission of the laity.³ The laity are to witness in the world so that all may have a chance to hear the Gospel, to come to faith, to receive salvation.⁴ This is a shift

² *Sermo 49, art. 1: Opera Omnia IV, 495.* Extract from the Divine Office, Office of Readings for the optional memorial of The Most Holy Name of Jesus (3rd January) in *ICEL The Liturgy of the Hours Supplement (Grey Book) Optional and Obligatory Memorials added to the General Roman Calendar from 1984 to 2004* (Washington, April 2014)

³ See John Paul II *Christifideles Laici* 15 (London, CTS: 1998). Cfr. Congregation for the Clergy *Instruction on Certain Questions regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of the Priest* (Vatican City, Libreria Editrice Vaticana: 1997) p. 7

⁴ It would be difficult to overstate the crucial role of the laity in this, the Church’s mission. According to *Lumen Gentium*, it is the laity’s “special vocation . . . to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and directing them according to God’s will. . . . There they are called by God that, being led by the spirit to the Gospel, they may contribute to the sanctification of the world, as from within like leaven, by fulfilling their own particular duties. . . . It pertains to them in a special way so to illuminate and order all temporal things with which they are so closely associated that these may be effected and grow according to Christ and may be to the glory of the Creator and Redeemer” (LG 31). This task is not for the clergy, since they are neither qualified for, nor capable of, such activity. Only the laity, because of their skills in the world, in culture and everyday life, can do this. As the Vatican II Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity *Apostolicam Actuositatem* puts it: “the effort to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws, and structures of the community in which one lives, is so much the duty and responsibility of the laity that it can never be performed properly by others” (AA 13).

from maintenance to mission, from inward-looking to being outward-looking. The total population of the area served by Portsmouth Diocese is about 2.5M, of which maybe 200,000 are Catholics, of which in turn 40,000 might be termed ‘practising.’ This means reaching both the 160,000 non-practising as well as the 2.3M others. So ask yourself: Is our parish community inward-looking or outward-looking? Is it in maintenance-mode or mission-mode? Is it always the same people at Mass, or do parishioners often bring new people, friends and neighbours? Is everyone getting old, or are there lots of youngsters? Is the focus on protecting the community, the holy-huddle, or is it on reaching out to the wider world, the lost, the non-churchgoing?

Last summer, Sherry Weddell from the Catherine of Siena Institute launched in the Diocese the Called and Gifted Programme. The Called and Gifted Programme is designed to help ordinary Catholics in the parishes to reflect on their relationship with God, to have a stronger sense of the centrality of Christ in their lives, to become an intentional or missionary disciple, and to discern the gifts, talents and charisms the Holy Spirit has given them for service. Our diocesan Called and Gifted Team has 10 teachers and 20 interviewers, and 12 parishes have now signed up for 2015. The hope in time is to reach thousands of people across the Diocese, to identify and release their gifts for service at home, at work and play, in the parish and in the Framework.

1.2 The Framework and the Threefold Mission of Christ

Now, a word about the Framework, which is designed to facilitate this work of NE.

The Gospel of Mark begins: “The beginning of the Good News about Jesus *Christ*, the Son of God” (Mk 1: 1). Jesus is called Christ, the Messiah, the ‘Anointed One;’ as St. Peter asserted, when the Lord asked him, “You are the *Christ*, the Son of the living God” (Mt 16: 13-16). Anointing was an act of consecration, of setting a man apart in a unique way for God’s work, of being given the Holy Spirit, of being endowed with power and authority to perform the task required. In the Gospels, Jesus is the One anointed by the Father with the power of the Spirit to be humanity’s Priest, Prophet and King. The early Church took these three archetypes of priest, prophet and king from the Old Testament. As the *Catechism* says, Jesus fulfilled the Messianic hopes of Israel in His three-fold office of priest, prophet and king (CCC 436).

- As Priest, Jesus is the One Who through His death and resurrection, unites us with God and enables us to become holy.
- As Prophet or Teacher, Jesus is the One Who reveals to us the Truth about God, about being human, and about the meaning of life.
- As King or Shepherd, Jesus is the One Who loves and leads us, Who cares for us, and Who sends us out into the world to work for the Kingdom of God.

Christ is humanity’s Priest, Prophet and King. This is why in Mt 2: 12, the Magi offer the infant Jesus “gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh”: incense for a priest, myrrh or oil for a prophet’s burial, gold for a King. But if Jesus has a three-fold mission or ministry - sometimes referred to by the Latin term *munus*, an office or duty, the triple *munera* – so too does every Christian through baptism. Christ has called each one of

us to represent Him, to be in Him a priest, a prophet and a shepherd, and to share through the anointing of the Spirit, His priestly, prophetic and shepherding mission.

In early 2013, we restructured the curia of the Diocese and its central services, setting up the Framework for Collaboration as on the diagram. These are the diocesan teams that serve and animate the clergy and people of the parishes, schools, Pastoral Areas and deaneries of the Diocese. The Framework is both a reality and an aim: some of it is already in place now; other parts are aspirations. The restructuring aimed to focus everything on the Person of Jesus Christ and his three-fold mission as Priest, Prophet and King, the triple office of sanctifying, teaching and shepherding, and to invite as many people as needed to join the teams and to serve the Lord by putting their gifts and talents at His service. So there are now three Vicariates (Vocation, Education and Evangelisation), each with two Departments, sub-departments and teams:

- The Department of Vocation helps to support Christian discipleship and discern vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and religious life. It promotes the spiritual development of the Diocese and its liturgical life;
- The Department for Clergy includes the Bishop's Support of the Clergy and facilitates the various chaplaincy care-services of the Diocese;
- The Department for Schools is concerned with schools;
- The Department for Educational Chaplaincies coordinates youth ministry and both secondary and tertiary level chaplaincies;
- The Department of Administration looks after finance and property; and
- The Department for New Evangelisation supports mission and outreach, justice, peace and social responsibility, diocesan charities, the formation of children and adults for mission, communications, and the various dialogues with fellow-Christians, the other religions and people of good will.

These Vicariates, Departments and teams are the central services of the Diocese. They exist to serve, enthuse and support people, policies and projects at local, pastoral area and deanery level. They are formed of people working out in the field but gathered together to plan and coordinate matters centrally at diocesan level. The hope in time is that eventually every parish, every pastoral area and every deanery will adopt an analogous structure, a simplified version of the Framework, to direct its own work.

The three Vicariates represent the three strands or moments of Christian discipleship: the call of the disciple, the formation of the disciple and the mission of the disciple. The *call* of the disciple invites him/her to *formation* in the life and teaching of Christ, and this in turn leads to them *being sent* on mission. On the diagram, the direction of travel is from left to right, with the outcome in mission and evangelisation. The aim is to enable everyone to shift from looking inwards to looking outwards, from a static to a dynamic model, to be less top-down and more trans-directional.

The most difficult message to communicate is the spirit of this new diocesan structure. The Framework is about collaboration, clergy and people working together, under the direction of the Bishop. The issue is not primarily about tasks but about formation, about teams of people being formed in Faith, forming themselves and forming others. The real work (e.g. chaplaincy) is done at the local level; the Framework is about

central planning and coordination. Teams identify needs, set priorities, establish policies and devise or enable projects. The aim is to discuss, plan, shape, form and develop creative ideas to deepen faith in ourselves and to reach out to others. Think of a university seminar, a think-tank, a task-force, formed of practitioners sharing their experience and expertise. The methodology here is important. Teams should comprise carefully chosen members, fully compliant with the Team Descriptors and every team-meeting must devote at least 25% of its time and energy to prayer and formation.

2015 is the tenth anniversary of the Diocesan Assembly and its document, *Go Out and Bear Fruit* (GOBF). GOBF, which remains the historic document giving direction to the Diocese, underlined communion and mission, collaboration, stewardship and ongoing formation for all, clergy and laity. These pointers are central to the Framework. The Framework will take maybe 5-10 years to fully embed and it will change in the process. Some parts might never get off the ground; others might develop considerably. The point is, the Framework seeks to provide the Diocese of Portsmouth with a theological vision centred on the Person of Christ, a structure that is sound yet flexible, a project to work at, one responsive to the needs of the new evangelisation.

2. FOREGROUND

Now to chaplaincy services. In 30 years of priesthood, nobody has ever defined for me what is meant by ‘being a chaplain’ – not that that has ever stopped the bishop appointing me as a chaplain. I have been chaplain to primary and secondary schools, to prisons and care homes, and once, to an airport. For three years, I was the full-time assistant chaplain to a university (Cambridge) and for three years, the whole-time Catholic chaplain to a massive hospital. Chaplains are usually Tradition-specific - Catholic, Anglican, URC – or religion-specific: Muslim, Jewish, Baha’i. But today, the concept of an ecumenical or even a generic chaplain is gaining ground, particularly in healthcare and education. Chaplains are voluntary or stipended, either by their religious authority or the institution they serve. They are practitioners ranging from casual volunteers to full-time professionals. Being a chaplain can mean anything from being a counsellor, a “shoulder to cry on,” to “being Christ for others” or one who serves 24/7 the demanding spiritual and sacramental needs of their clients.

Here, we limit ourselves to Catholic chaplains and Catholic chaplaincy services. In a diocese, it is ultimately the Bishop who is responsible for organising pastoral care and so, even in those cases where an institution employs a chaplain, such as in a school, s/he needs from the Bishop a ‘canonical mission’ if they are to offer a Catholic chaplaincy service. They need to be commissioned. In Canon Law, the term chaplain means a priest entrusted with the care of a particular community or group of the faithful, such as immigrants or those in prison (CIC 564). The term chaplain is thus reserved to an ordained minister, although nowadays, since many laypersons are being appointed, the term ‘lay chaplain’ has come into use to recognise this.⁵

⁵ The *Instruction on Certain Questions regarding the Collaboration of the Non-Ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of the Priest* states categorically that it is “unlawful for the non-ordained faithful to assume titles such

A further consideration is that whilst Catholic chaplaincy services are directed first to Catholics – in a hospital, the Catholic chaplain serves the needs of Catholic patients – obviously, Catholic chaplaincy services operate in a context that is not only ecumenical but interreligious, and also secular. Consequently, Catholic chaplaincy services usually collaborate with other denominational and religious chaplaincy services. Moreover, the services that the Catholic chaplaincy offers are never limited to Catholics but are directed to anyone of good will, who is in need or who requests them. This is exactly the scope of NE, the Church on mission to everyone.

So two points: first, chaplaincy and the three-fold mission of Christ; and secondly, the chaplaincy services listed in the diocesan Framework.

2.1 Chaplaincy and the Threefold Mission of Christ

The key to being a chaplain and to Catholic chaplaincy is the three-fold ministry of Christ as Priest, Teacher and Shepherd. First and foremost, the person of the chaplain and those associated with their ministry, must represent and *re-présent* the Person of Jesus Christ. A minister is never a functionary; s/he must *be* Christ to others. Indeed, if the purpose of NE is to help people come to a life-changing encounter with Our Lord, then whilst sacramentally, God is at work *ex opera operato* through the chaplain, still in practice it is the holiness and authenticity of the minister her- or himself that can make all the difference. To be a chaplain, you need to be a saint! You need to be holy. This is why, as was said before about all the Framework teams, but it applies especially to those in chaplaincy services, prayer and formation are crucial.

But the three-fold mission of Jesus Christ as Priest, Teacher and Shepherd also gives a theological vision to Catholic chaplaincy. It forms a fundamental organising principle not only for the chaplain and his/her work but for chaplaincy itself. Chaplaincy, in the context of new evangelisation, is about leading people towards a transforming encounter with Christ with a renewed sense of being called to discipleship in the Church. Consequently, in ways dependant on the service, all Catholic chaplaincy is about the call to discipleship, formation in faith, and sending on mission.

Essentially, this means administering the sacraments, preaching the Gospel, and caring for those in need. Take as an example prison chaplaincy. First, this will involve administering the sacraments with the Holy Eucharist as the centre, the source and the summit of everything. It means leading staff and prisoners to fuller communion with Christ in the Mass, helping them to love and adore the Lord in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, so as to be transformed by him, and thus to bring His love into daily life. It means teaching people to pray, praying with them, deepening their spiritual life, offering liturgical blessings, saying prayers for healing, and leading private and

as ‘pastor’, ‘chaplain’, ‘coordinator’, ‘moderator’ or other such similar titles which can confuse their role and that of the Pastor who is always a Bishop or Priest” (Practical Provisions: Article 1, 3).

communal prayers. It means helping everyone unite themselves, their gifts and their talents to the death and resurrection of the Lord, for the salvation of the world.

Secondly, preaching the Gospel. This means sharing the Word of God with prisoners, staff and relatives, evangelising, catechising and deepening faith, hope and love, and offering formation that seeks to renew the grace of baptism. It means, where possible, creating opportunities to study the Bible and the Catechism, and to deepen knowledge and love for the Church's Tradition and the Church's teaching.

And thirdly, caring for the needy, announcing to the Gospel, ministering to them the love of Christ, being a friendly and loving support to prisoners, prison staff and families, relatives and loved ones. This care includes encouraging a deeper insertion into the life and work of the Church through conversion, moral renewal and repentance. It also includes promoting justice, reconciliation and the values of the Kingdom, helping everyone to respect difference, and reaching out ecumenically.

The three-fold ministry of Christ as Priest, Teacher and Shepherd, then, is a fundamental organising principle for a Catholic chaplaincy service. It is a theological vision for the triple *munera* or duties that a chaplain performs. This is most evident in prison, hospital and military chaplaincies, and also in schools and universities. It also applies to ethnic chaplaincies and in a different way to the pastoral care services of the sick and housebound, the homeless, the differently abled, the bereaved and so on. Every chaplain will find in this schema a helpful organising principle and check-list.

(To mention in brackets: the three-fold ministry of Christ is also the foundation of the theological vision of a parish in the context of new evangelisation and our parishes need to re-vision themselves more as 'chaplaincies to the local community' – although exploration of this is for another occasion).

2.2 Chaplaincy Services and the Framework

And so what of the chaplaincy services in the Framework? There are, as just mentioned, different types of chaplaincy and pastoral care service, basically three:

- institutional chaplaincies, such as those to prisons and remand homes, hospitals and the military, and by extension to care homes, sports clubs, transport nodes, business complexes, shopping centres and civic entities;
- ethnic chaplaincies, such as those to the Filipino and Chinese communities, the Syro-Malabar and families of Catholic Oriental Rites, and then, by extension, all the other communities not yet listed here: the Poles, the Portuguese, the Nigerians, and so on; and
- the pastoral care services. These look after those with special needs: the sick, the elderly, the housebound, the homeless, the disadvantaged, the disabled, the dying, the mentally ill, and then, by extension, many other categories of persons not yet listed, for instance, the visually and aurally impaired.

The Church of England does impressive work in all these chaplaincy fields and note should be taken too of the many ecumenical chaplaincies now operating. But the situation in the Diocese of Portsmouth varies enormously. In most cases, local clergy and parishioners simply “get on with it.” Some major institutions have dedicated Catholic chaplains, lay or ordained, such as the hospitals in Southampton, Reading and Portsmouth. Mention might be made here in brackets of the chaplains to schools and universities. But other Catholic chaplaincy services have not yet been formalised or the coverage is patchy. There are many fields of ministry still as yet undeveloped or under-developed, not least chaplaincy to the social sectors mentioned above such as civic institutions and transport services.

The reality of chaplaincy in the Diocese is one thing; incorporating chaplaincy services in the Framework is another. The aim of this was in the first place to embed a sound theological vision.⁶ Chaplaincy services are on the left-hand side of the Framework. Within the triple mission of calling, forming and sending, chaplaincy services are chiefly about the call to discipleship. (The educational chaplaincies have a slightly different mission, which is why they are under a different Vicariate.) Their purpose, then, is to sanctify their recipients, to insert them more deeply into the life of Christ and His Church, and thus to make them open to formation and free for the mission Christ calls them to. This is crucial: not chaplaincy *for* but chaplaincy *to*. The aim is not to serve the needs, say, of the Polish community (chaplaincy *for*), but rather to enable Poles to be inserted more profoundly into the life of Christ and His Church (chaplaincy *to*). Again, not chaplaincy *for* the housebound, as if the housebound were passive recipients of our pastoral care, but rather chaplaincy *to* the housebound, a chaplaincy that enables them to take a fuller mission in Christ’s Body the Church, uniting their sufferings with Christ and offering them up for the salvation of the world. The purpose is to release the gifts: not ministry *to* the sick, but the ministry *of* the sick. Or again, not chaplain *of* the hospital but chaplain *to* the hospital. This is a subtle but important point, one to reflect on.

The reality of chaplaincy is one thing; incorporating chaplaincy services into the Framework is another. Chaplaincy services are done in the field, that is, in institutions and parishes. Their practitioners simply “get on with it.” However, the intention to establish specific teams in the Framework was to effect a better coordination of this across the Diocese: to identify what was happening, to establish priorities, to plan and develop policies, to encourage good practice, and to sponsor and enable projects.

⁶ “The sub-department of Chaplaincies seeks to promote the welfare and support of all the sick, the differently abled, the housebound, the bereaved, the dying, the mentally ill and anyone with special needs across the diocese, spiritually and practically (e.g. the visually or aurally impaired). It seeks to incorporate them more fully into Christ and His Church so that their gifts can be released and their ministry enabled. The sub-department seeks to network, support and incorporate the various ethnic groups of Catholics present in our diocese for prayer and social gatherings. It facilitates associations of those in special ministry such as prison and hospital chaplains, as well as forging links with military groups, the provision of Other Rites and with the Ordinariate. It also seeks to oversee the provision of liturgical rites in the Extraordinary Form, where these are needed” Bishop Philip *Framework and Team Descriptors (August 2014)* online at www.portsmouthdiocese.org.uk

The character of each Framework team depends on the chaplaincy service. The teams of hospital, prison and military chaplains comprise all the chaplains, lay and ordained, working in those fields across the Diocese. The teams exist for the support and formation of the chaplains themselves. For instance, hospital chaplains meet once or twice a year for prayer, discussion and mutual support, the sharing of information, the development of good practice, the impact of changes within the NHS, the building of better ecumenical relationships within hospital chaplaincy, and to discuss the moral and theological issues arising within the medical field, relevant to chaplaincy.

Each ethnic chaplaincy-team is a service-team that exists to network its ethnic group and to help integrate persons of that ethnicity into the life of the parish and the Diocese. Ethnic chaplaincy teams too meet once or twice a year for prayer, discussion and mutual support, to promote the spiritual and practical welfare of individuals, groups and categories within the ethnic community, the sharing of information, the establishment of self-help, and to organise or sponsor spiritual and social gatherings.

The Pastoral Care Services team, and its sub-teams, is a group of practitioners who seek to promote the welfare of those in various needs, both spiritual and practical. It seeks to insert them as disciples more fully into the life of the Church, and to release their gifts for ministry. It prays for the sick and the needy, and promotes prayer across the diocese for all those in need. The team has a role of coordination: to identify what is happening or what is needed across the Diocese (e.g. for the disabled), to establish priorities, to develop policies, to encourage good practice and to sponsor projects.

CONCLUSION

Enough for now! In this paper, I have sought to set out a vision for Catholic chaplaincy in the context of the new evangelisation. I have sought to do so in light of the diocesan Framework. The foundation of that vision is the Person of Jesus Christ, Our Lord and Saviour, in his three-fold mission as Priest, Prophet and King. He has called each one of us to be His disciple, to be formed in His Word and to be sent out on mission, offering to all the Good News of salvation. Already His Spirit is at work in the heart of every child, woman and man in the Diocese, wooing them towards full communion with Christ in His Body, the Church. So let us pray for those who generously labour in our chaplaincy services, that those they serve may find in the Heart of Christ that TGLHH& F for which they long.