

Ad Clerum from the Bishop of London. Remembrancetide 2007.

Dear Friends,

The Senior Staff Team of the Diocese went to Chartres for its residential session in late September. We stayed with the community of the Chemin Neuf. The atmosphere in the house and worship in the Cathedral with a final eucharist in St Fulbert's crypt specially authorised by the Bishop combined to make a significant contribution to a very fruitful meeting both spiritually and practically.

We examined the opportunities offered by contemporary London and confirmed the London Challenge as the Mission Action Plan for the whole Diocese. As the distillation of the wisdom and aspirations of communities throughout the eighteen boroughs we serve, the London Challenge reflects the determination of the Church in the Diocese to set our sights not on the self fulfilment or maintenance agenda but to go beyond ourselves.

Given our more stable financial situation and the ever changing face of London we are not planning for cuts but we are looking for ways of redeploying our resources so that the spirit and story of Jesus Christ may be better known to the very large numbers of Londoners who at present have little contact with the Church. I attach a schedule of some of the issues we addressed together and hope that you will take them into your prayers.

As the discussion unfolded it became painfully clear that the College of Bishops is not well enough resourced to implement those aspects of our work together which embrace the Diocese as a whole. In particular it is obvious that the team working from the Old Deanery needs to be reinforced.

Janet Laws my Personal Assistant, and Frances Charlesworth who looks after the diary, already work harder and more effectively than anyone has a right to expect. They remain as the first point of contact with me on day to day work and communication. The areas where more help is needed include the implementation of the "capital investments" in the London Challenge such as the pledge to recruit and train 2012 young ambassadors for Jesus Christ by the time of the London Olympics together with the large amount of casework which is inseparable from my work in Parliament and in London life generally.

I am glad to say that a number of gifted colleagues in the Diocese have agreed to offer their services as "caseworkers" and that in particular the Reverend Stephen Heard after a distinguished career in the Civil Service has been appointed as Bishop of London's Parliamentary Chaplain.

The most significant change however is the new role for the Reverend Nick Mercer. He will be moving his place of work to the Old Deanery before the end of the year. He will retain in his new role some of his present responsibilities including the implementation of the Taylor Report on Training and the development of the College of St Mellitus but the focus of his new work will be on assisting the College of Bishops to develop and carry out its corporate policy. It would be natural to call such an executive officer the "Vicar General" but that of course is one of the titles held by the Chancellor of the Diocese. As Vicar General learned in the law our own Chancellor Nigel Seed QC undertakes legal

duties on behalf of the Bishop of London as Diocesan such as discharging some of the bishop's responsibilities in respect of marriage law. Nick will be a "Vicar General for the London College of Bishops" to preserve the distinction between his role and that of the Chancellor.

Work is currently in hand to effect an orderly transfer of Nick's other work as Director of Ministry and I am very much looking forward to welcoming him as a colleague at the Old Deanery.

With thanks for our partnership in the Gospel.

The Rt Revd & Rt Hon Richard Chartres DD FSA

Ad Clerum November 14th

A new ministry for Bishop Michael

The Bishop of Kensington will be installed as a Canon of St Paul's Cathedral on April 20th next year.

After eleven very fruitful years leading the Kensington Area into growth and a serviceable confidence Bishop Michael indicated to me that he would relish a fresh ministerial challenge. As a priest whose disciplined life of prayer and Eucharistic worship has been faithfully maintained in the sometimes isolated circumstances of a bishop's ministry, Michael has often talked of the privilege of Cathedral work with its ordered round of communal worship. With the encouragement of the Dean of St Paul's I have invited Michael to occupy the stall vacated by Philip Buckler's appointment to Lincoln Cathedral.

The ministry of St Paul's as a high place of pilgrimage, worship, and Christian reflection is too significant to use residentiary Canonries as convenient bases for priests whose principal work is elsewhere. Michael will retain his chairmanship of ALMA and develop the worldwide network of clergy with London links who serve in other parts of the Anglican Communion but in consultation with the Dean and Chapter, Michael and I have agreed that he should be largely free to devote himself to Cathedral work.

I am delighted that he will be remaining in the Diocese as a trusted senior colleague whose episcopal ministry in Kensington has left both Area and Diocese spiritually enriched and strengthened. I am also glad that he has agreed to play a part in senior staff ministerial reviews from his new vantage point at St Paul's.

After Christmas we shall embark on the consultation process leading to the identification of a new Bishop of Kensington but for the moment I hope that you will join me in praying for Michael, Cynthia, Edward and Aidan as they prepare for their move to Amen Court.

With thanks for our partnership in the Gospel.

The Rt Revd & Rt Hon Richard Chartres DD FSA