

**Protocol for Priest and Bishops The primary aims of these Guidelines are:**

- To follow orders given by the Patriarch of The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and to follow under the guide lines of the Canons.
- to encourage the clergy – priests and bishops – to aspire to the highest possible standards of conduct throughout a lifetime of ministry;
- to identify certain basic minimum standards of behavior;
- to seek to ensure the welfare and the protection of individuals and groups with whom the clergy work, and of the clergy and their families;
- to provide safe and effective boundaries for clerical ministry;
- to encourage personal and corporate ministerial development.

**Calling**

1 Priests are to set the example of the Good Shepherd always before them as the pattern of their calling.

1.1 The three orders of ordained ministry play a central role in the mission of the Church which Jesus Christ entrusted to his Apostles, to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28.19-20).

1.2 Ordained ministers bear the privilege and responsibility of being servants and leaders in the ministry of the Church. As pastors, spiritual guides and representatives of the Christian faith, they are in a position of trust in their relationships with those for whom they have pastoral care.

1.3 The compassion, care and kindness of the Good Shepherd should be the hallmarks of the clergy. Unworthy behavior disgraces the Church and undermines the gospel.

1.4 All personal and professional conduct is bounded by law and legal sanction. For the clergy, who swear the Oaths of Canonical Obedience and Allegiance, and make the Declaration of Assent, this will include ecclesiastical law as well as secular law. Thus nothing in these Guidelines should be read as suggesting that clergy stand outside the rule of criminal or civil law. Indeed, any concern about possible criminal behavior, and in particular any information about abuse or risk of abuse will be reported by the Church authorities to the police.

**Care**

2 They are to sustain the community of the faithful by the ministry of word and sacrament. Priests are called to be servants and shepherds among the

people to whom they are sent. They are to be messengers, watchmen and stewards of the Lord.

2.1 Caring for one another is the responsibility of the whole Church and is an extension of the justice and love of the Incarnate God disclosed in Jesus Christ. Compassion is essential to pastoral care. The clergy should enable other members of the worshipping community to share in this pastoral care, ensuring that they are recruited safely, and have the appropriate training and supervision for the tasks involved, including current training in safeguarding in accordance with the guidance issued by the House of Bishops. Clergy should seek to ensure that churchwardens, The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan and the wider congregation understand their responsibilities and roles in making every church a safe place for all.

2.2 In their ministry, pastoral care and working relationships, the clergy should offer equal respect and opportunity to all. They should be unbiased in their exercise of pastoral care, especially when caring for one party in a dispute between two or more people. In some cases they may need to ask another appropriate person to provide pastoral care to one of the parties.

2.3 The clergy should discern and acknowledge their own limitations of time, competence and skill. They will need to seek support, help and appropriate training and, on occasion, to refer to specialist agencies. The clergy should be aware of the help available from accredited agencies so that it can be commended where appropriate.

2.4 Clergy should always be conscious of the power dynamics involved in their pastoral care, noting both the position of trust which they hold and the power which they exercise. See also Sections 12 and 14.

2.5 The distinctions between the various roles in which the clergy exercise oversight and care are always to be recognized and acknowledged. Ministers need to be clear with those with whom they are dealing. At no time should they provide formal counseling for those in their pastoral care, even when they are accredited as counselors in other settings. Those who wish to work as accredited counselors should seek appropriate advice about how to maintain proper boundaries between this and their role as ordained ministers.

2.6 Similarly, where the clergy are supervising employed members of staff, or mentoring or coaching church members, there needs to be absolute clarity about the role in which they are engaging with them. The responsibility for pastoral care must not be confused with any other role.

2.7 There is risk in all pastoral work. The appropriateness of visiting and being visited alone, especially at night, needs to be assessed with care. The same

assessment should also apply to other “out of hours” contact (especially through telephone calls and social media).

Consideration should be given to:

- the place of the meeting;
- the proximity of other people;
- the arrangement of furniture and lighting; and
- the dress of the minister, appropriate to the context

– which are important considerations in pastoral care. The perceptions of others need to be considered at all times, taking particular care to assess the extent to which others may experience or perceive behavior to be inappropriate.

At times it may be appropriate to advise a third party in advance of any appointments which have been made. Keeping accurate records of appointments is helpful and good practice.

2.8 It is essential in pastoral care to acknowledge appropriate physical, sexual, emotional and psychological boundaries. Inappropriate touching or gestures of affection are to be avoided. The clergy need to be aware of what is appropriate when meeting people from different cultural traditions.

2.9 The clergy should be aware of the dangers of dependency in pastoral relationships. Manipulation, competitiveness or collusion on either side of the pastoral encounter should be avoided. Self-awareness should be part of the relationship. The responsibility for maintaining appropriate boundaries always rests with the clergy, however difficult or challenging the pastoral relationship may prove to be.

2.10 The clergy must always put first the interests of those for whom they are pastorally responsible, and act to protect them even where this requires them to override personal and professional loyalties. It is their duty to raise concerns where they believe that someone’s safety or care is being compromised by the practice of colleagues, or by those in authority, or by the systems, policies or procedures with which they are expected to work. They must also encourage and support the development of a culture in which they and their colleagues can raise concerns openly and honestly. Those in authority should listen carefully to their concerns and act upon them where they are justified, enabling those who have the best interests of others at heart to raise concerns without fear of detriment to themselves.

2.11 The clergy are required to have appropriate and current training in safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. Failure to participate may result in action being taken under the Clergy Discipline Measure. The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan policies, guidelines and requirements must be known and observed. If they become aware that someone known to have a conviction for offences against children or vulnerable adults attends their church, they must follow the guidelines for ministering to such offenders.

2.12 Clergy should be clear about the circumstances in which information about abuse of all forms, or the risk of abuse, must be reported to the statutory authorities (that is, the police or local authority children's or adult services). Children or adults who provide information about abuse need to know that their concerns will be taken seriously and that the clergy will work with them in making the referral, in order that a proper investigation can be undertaken and appropriate help be obtained.

2.13 It is essential that clergy maintain an accurate and factual written record of any safeguarding concerns or actions. They should be aware of the dangers of glossing over the conduct of fellow clergy, or even of collusion with it.

2.14 All the clergy should be aware of the circumstances in which information can and should be disclosed to third parties. To that end, they should refer to The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and its diocesan policies. When preparing for such a disclosure, the clergy should seek appropriate legal and other specialist advice, for example from the Diocesan Patriarch. Whenever a referral is made, clergy should always inform the Diocesan Patriarch.

2.15 Similar requirements apply if the conduct of a colleague appears inappropriate, when advice should always be obtained and action taken.

2.16 The clergy should ensure that all communications they may have with or about children or vulnerable adults are appropriate in their tone and that they comply with relevant national and diocesan policies and guidance. This refers to the use of any means of communication, written, spoken or electronic. Anything published online is public and visible to everyone.

2.17 The clergy should take care to observe appropriate boundaries between their work and their personal life just as much in the use of social media as in "real life" encounters. They should recognize the importance of knowing themselves and their own emotional needs. Working with a spiritual director or pastoral supervisor can greatly help the development of this insight, which is difficult to achieve when working alone.

### **Reconciliation**

3 They are to teach and to admonish, to feed and provide for his family, to search for his children in the wilderness of this world's temptations, and to guide

them through its confusions, that they may be saved through Christ for ever. They are to call their hearers to repentance and to declare in Christ's name the absolution and forgiveness of their sins.

3.1 The ministry of reconciliation, as an extension of Jesus' own ministry, lies at the heart of this vocation. It is to be exercised gently, patiently and undergirded by mutual trust. It may include spiritual or godly counsel as appropriate and as requested by those concerned; it may include mediation between those who have found themselves at enmity with one another.

3.2 Where it is freely sought by a penitent, a priest may exercise the formal ministry of absolution.

3.3 The ministry of absolution may only be exercised by the minister who has the cure of souls of the place in question or by another priest with that minister's permission, or by a priest who is authorized by law to exercise ministry in that place without being subject to the control of the minister who has the cure of souls.

3.4 Before undertaking the ministry of absolution a priest should receive appropriate training and be familiar with any guidelines published by the House of Bishops that relate to the exercise of this ministry.

3.5 A clear distinction must be made between pastoral conversations and a confession that is made in the context of the ministry of absolution. Where such a confession is to be made both the priest and the penitent should be clear that that is the case. If a penitent makes a confession with the intention of receiving absolution the priest is forbidden to reveal or make known to any person what has been confessed. This requirement of absolute confidentiality applies even after the death of the penitent.

3.6 If, in the context of such a confession, the penitent discloses that he or she has committed a serious crime, such as the abuse of children or vulnerable adults, the priest must require the penitent to report his or her conduct to the police or other statutory authority. If the penitent refuses to do so the priest should withhold absolution.

3.7 The canonical duty of absolute confidentiality does not apply to anything that is said outside the context of such a confession. In particular, if information about abuse that was disclosed when seeking the ministry of absolution is repeated by the penitent outside that context the priest must follow the established procedures for reporting abuse of children or vulnerable adults.

3.8 However confidentiality extends far beyond the specific situation of the ministry of absolution. People have to be able to trust clergy with their stories, their fears, and especially their confidences. The duty of confidentiality relating to

the ministry of absolution sets a standard for our ministry against which all other instances should be set and judged. Those to whom we minister must know that they can depend upon us not to disclose information which they have shared with us in confidence.

## **Mission**

4 They are to tell the story of God's love ... they are to unfold the Scriptures, to preach the word in season and out of season, and to declare the mighty acts of God. They are to baptize new disciples in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and to walk with them in the way of Christ, nurturing them in the faith ... they are to preside at the Lord's table and lead his people in worship, offering with them a spiritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

4.1 Mission belongs to the whole church worldwide and is a primary calling of the clergy. Parish priests are charged with the "cure of souls", not solely the chaplaincy of congregations. As such, they have a clear responsibility, with their people, to develop appropriate practices of mission and evangelism in their parish.

4.2 The clergy should ensure that services are thoughtfully and thoroughly prepared, matching the need and culture of the parish or institution within the Anglican tradition. Where appropriate, they should involve others in leading worship, having ensured that they are equipped to do so by providing training and preparation as necessary to support them.

4.3 The clergy should ensure that appropriate and accessible courses and discussion groups on all aspects of the Christian faith are available at regular intervals to parishioners seeking to explore, deepen or renew their faith.

4.4 Suitable preparation for Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage is a primary responsibility for the clergy.

4.5 The clergy should recognize, affirm and encourage the ministry and witness of lay people. This should include acknowledging their mission in workplaces and communities.

4.6 All schools, along with other institutions within a parish, may provide opportunities for mission and ministry, and a church school is a particular responsibility for the clergy. The clergy should seek to enhance opportunities for themselves and appropriately gifted and trained laity to contribute to the worship, religious education, pastoral care and governance in local schools and colleges.

4.7 In an increasingly "mixed economy" Church, which fosters pioneer ordained ministry and Fresh Expressions of Church as well as traditional parish ministry and mission, ministers who lead such pioneering mission are subject to the same call, responsibility and accountability.

## Ministry at times of deepest need

5 They are to bless the people in God's name. They are to resist evil, support the weak, defend the poor, and intercede for all in need. They are to minister to the sick and prepare the dying for their death.

5.1 The clergy have a particular responsibility to minister sensitively and effectively to the sick, the dying and the bereaved. Ministry to those near to death should never be delayed.

5.2 The clergy should be familiar with and follow the current House of Bishops' Guidelines for Good Practice in the Healing Ministry. Existing diocesan regulations should be followed. Professional boundaries with health care professionals and chaplaincies should be observed. All reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the safety of the person receiving the healing ministry, including by ensuring that satisfactory arrangements are in place for training and accountability for those undertaking this ministry.

5.3 The clergy should be aware of and respect the boundaries between the ministry of healing and the deliverance ministry. People have a right to know what is being provided and how they will be ministered to: no one should be ministered to against their will.

5.4 Deliverance is an area of ministry where particular caution needs to be exercised, especially when ministering to someone who is in a disturbed state. The current House of Bishops' guidelines on the deliverance ministry which are known as The House of Bishops' Guidelines for Good Practice in the Deliverance Ministry should be followed and cases referred to the diocesan advisers for the deliverance ministry when necessary. The Patriarch special expertise should be used in order to help as effectively as possible those who think they need this ministry.

5.5 The ministry of exorcism and deliverance may only be exercised by priests who have been specifically and personally authorized by the bishop, normally for each instance of such a ministry. If this ministry is sought in connection with a child or vulnerable adults, the Diocesan Patriarch must be involved and may need to ensure that a referral to the statutory authorities is made, in accordance with national and diocesan Patriarch policies.

## **Servant Leadership**

6 Guided by the Spirit, they are to discern and foster the gifts of all God's people, that the whole Church may be built up in unity and faith.

6.1 The clergy are called to servant ministry and leadership within the Church and the wider community.

6.2 They should develop this gift of leadership within their own ministry through prayer and training, being aware of their own natural leadership style.

6.3 The clergy should recognize and affirm lay ministry that already exists and encourage new ministries, both lay and ordained. They should be ready to assist others in discerning and fulfilling their vocation. They should actively prompt and encourage new vocations in the Church and in the world.

6.4 At times as we seek to hear God's call for the Church in this generation, the clergy will hold different views. However, all debate should be had in a spirit of respect and love, and ministers should always be willing to work with each other, whatever views are held on current topics of debate.

6.5 The clergy should promote good ecumenical relationships and encourage respect for all people of good will.

6.6 Upon resignation or retirement, the clergy should relinquish their responsibilities and should cease professional relationships with those formerly under their pastoral care. Any exception to this guideline should be formally negotiated with the bishop.

6.7 Having resigned or retired, the clergy may not minister in a former church, parish or institution unless invited by the clergy with pastoral oversight or with their express permission. Ministry in retirement is subject to the bishop granting a Licence or Permission To Officiate, and subject to the completion of safeguarding clearance and training.

### Learning and Teaching

7 Will you be diligent in prayer, in reading Holy Scripture, and in all studies that will deepen your faith and fit you to bear witness to the truth of the gospel? Will you lead Christ's people in proclaiming his glorious gospel, so that the good news of salvation may be heard in every place?

7.1 The given daily prayer of the Church (the Daily Office) is one of the essential foundations of confident ministry centred on Christ, using the resources of the Church such as the Book of Common Prayer, Common Worship, or other authorized forms of the office.

7.2 The life of prayer, although personal, includes the praise and prayer offered in Christ's name in his church, both on earth and in heaven. Clergy should therefore seek to offer the daily prayer of the church with other members of the community in which they serve.

7.3 To pray for others in thanksgiving for the benefits of Christ is a common duty of Christians, and is a particular privilege of the ordained ministry. To

intercede whether in public or in private belongs to the ways God accomplishes in his church that which he wills.

7.4 The use of conversation with a chosen companion such as a spiritual guide or with others sharing the ordained ministry is commended, recognizing the different ways in which God has called his people to relate to him, and enabled them to do so.

7.5 It is part of the mission of the clergy to teach those whom they serve both the ways and the delight of prayer, being open to learning these things as they do so.

7.6 Continued theological learning is an essential discipline for preaching and teaching, as well as for personal growth.

7.7 The clergy should set aside time for continuing ministerial education and development, including the consideration of contemporary issues and theological developments, so that their faith engages with the perceptions and concerns of this generation.

7.8 Keeping abreast of a whole variety of communicating skills is crucial to the effective and ongoing proclamation of the gospel.

7.9 Part of the clerical vocation in both preaching and teaching is a prayerful openness to being prophetic and challenging as well as encouraging and illuminating.

7.10 Great care should be taken that illustrative material from personal experience does not involve any breach of confidentiality.

## Faith

8 Do you accept the Holy Scriptures as revealing all things necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Jesus Christ? Will you faithfully minister the doctrine and sacraments of Christ as The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan has received them, so that the people committed to your charge may be defended against error and flourish in the faith?

8.1 The clergy are required to make the Declaration of Assent at their ordination, and at the inauguration of any new ministry within The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan. All should ensure that they know and understand the significance of the statements to which they have publicly given their assent, and that they can accordingly only use the forms of service authorized or allowed to be used in The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan.

8.2 The basis of The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan understanding of doctrine and of the sacraments is set out in the Declaration of Assent, and the

Preface which precedes it. The Church's clergy should uphold this understanding, having declared their commitment to it formally and publicly at the start of their ministry.

8.3 Ministers who for whatever reason find that they are unable any longer in conscience to believe, hold or teach the Christian faith as The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan has received it, should seek advice and help in deciding whether or not they should continue to exercise a public ministry in which they represent the Church.

### **Public Ministry**

9 Will you, knowing yourself to be reconciled to God in Christ, strive to be an instrument of God's peace in the Church and in the world?

9.1 The reputation of the Church in the community depends to a great extent on the integrity and example of its clergy, who should recognize their role as public representatives of the Church. Their lives should enhance and embody the communication of the gospel.

9.2 The clergy should ensure a reasonable level of availability and accessibility to those for whom they have a pastoral care. A prompt and gracious response to all requests for help demonstrates care. This response should be in the context of appropriate boundaries, so as not to put at risk the clergy, members of their household, or the Church.

9.3 Reconciliation lies at the heart of the gospel: "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Corinthians 5.19). The clergy should promote reconciliation in the Church and in the world wherever there are divisions, including those which exist between people of different faiths.

9.4 The call of the clergy to be servants to the community should include their prophetic ministry to those in spiritual and moral danger.

9.5 It is appropriate for the clergy to play a positive part in civic society and politics, promoting the kingdom values of justice, integrity and peace in public life, calling attention to the needs of the poor and to the godly stewardship of the world's resources.

9.6 Ministers must not be members or active supporters of any political party or other organization whose constitution, policies, objectives, activities or public statements are incompatible with the teaching of The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan, as defined by the House of Bishops, in relation to the equality of persons or groups of different races.

9.7 There are a number of situations where the clergy may have a conflict of interest and they should declare it, whenever that is appropriate, withdrawing

from the situation if required. It is a delusion to think we can be impartial when there is a conflict of interest.

### **Life and Conduct**

10 Will you endeavor to fashion your own life and that of your household according to the way of Christ, that you may be a pattern and example to Christ's people?

10.1 The clergy are called to an exemplary standard of moral behavior. This goes beyond what is legally acceptable: a distinction can be made between what is legal and what is morally acceptable. There is no separation between the public and home life of the clergy: at all times and in all places they should manifest the highest standards of personal conduct.

10.2 The clergy should set an example of integrity in relationships, and faithfulness in marriage. Marital infidelity is regarded as "unbecoming or inappropriate conduct" for the purposes of the Clergy Discipline Measure. The House of Bishops.

10.3 Those who are called to marriage should never forget that this is also a vocation. It should not be thought to be of secondary importance to their vocation to ministry. Being a parent is likewise a holy calling and so ordained ministry should not take priority over bringing up children with Godly love, care, time and space. Similar considerations may apply to caring for other members of the family.

10.4 All should guard themselves and their family against becoming victims of harmful levels of stress. It is the calling of all Christians, whether married or not, including those with a vocation to celibacy, to take the necessary steps to nurture in holiness their lives, their friendships and their family relationships.

10.5 Good administration enables the work of ministry. Dealing promptly with correspondence and enquiries with efficiency and courtesy is essential.

10.6 The keeping of parochial registers and records to a high standard is legally required.

10.7 The clergy need to ensure that all their financial activities, whether personal or corporate, meet the highest ethical standards. There must be strict boundaries between church finance and personal moneys in order to avoid the possibility of suspicion or impropriety.

10.8 The clergy should never seek any personal advantage or gain by virtue of their clerical position. Those who receive personal gifts should keep a record in case of later misunderstandings or false accusations.

10.9 The clergy should take care of their physical well-being. They should not undertake any professional duties when medically advised against it, and avoid the influence of alcohol or drugs. Those who find themselves in difficulty with addictions of any kind should seek appropriate help.

10.10 Blasphemous, violent or offensive language or behavior is unacceptable at all times. Clergy should manifest the fruit of the Spirit: see Galatians 5.22-23.

### **Discipline**

11 Will you work with your fellow servants in the gospel for the sake of the kingdom of God? Will you accept and minister the discipline of this Church, and respect authority duly exercised within it?

11.1 The clergy should know how ecclesiastical law shapes their exercise of office and ministry, and should respect such regulations as are put in place by the Church. They should familiarize themselves with The Canons of The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan, and with any regulations made by the bishop of the diocese in which they serve.

11.2 The authority of church wardens and lay people elected or appointed to office in the local church is to be respected and affirmed.

11.3 *The clergy serve under the authority of the Patriarch Archbishop in the ministry to which they have been appointed, and in the diocese as a whole. At their ordination and at every new appointment they take an Oath of Canonical Obedience, committing themselves to live within the framework provided by scriptures, creeds, historic formularies, canons and legislation which govern their ministry within The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan.*

11.4 They should participate actively in the life and work of chapter, deanery, archdeaconry, and diocese, giving support and respect to ordained and lay colleagues and to those who exercise the responsibility of oversight and leadership.

11.5 Any member of the clergy who is arrested for an offence, however minor, and whether or not charges are brought, is required by the Clergy Discipline Measure to report this fact within 28 days to their bishop. However, clergy who are questioned by the police in relation to a possible arrest should also report that fact.

11.6 Any ordained person who is the subject of an allegation of misconduct in relation to a child or vulnerable adult or of domestic abuse, whether in their public ministry or in their home life, must report this fact straight away to their bishop.

11.7 Clergy whose marriages break down and who are divorced, or have an order of judicial separation made against them, on grounds of their adultery,

unreasonable behavior or desertion by them of their spouse can have a penalty under the Clergy Discipline Measure imposed on them as a result. Any member of the clergy who is a party to a divorce petition or an application for an order for judicial separation should therefore obtain legal advice in respect of their position under the Clergy Discipline Measure before any steps are taken in the matrimonial proceedings.

11.8 Clergy are under a duty to inform their bishop when they are divorced, or have an order of judicial separation made against them.

11.9 The highest standards are expected of the clergy in respect of their personal relationships, not least in respect of their relationships with those in their pastoral care. In particular, the clergy must never have sexual or inappropriate relationships with those aged 16 or 17, or vulnerable adults. A breach of this requirement, in addition to being treated as a disciplinary matter, will be referred to the local authority designated officer. In some cases it may constitute a criminal offence. Anyone found guilty of a criminal or disciplinary offence of this kind is likely to be removed from office and referred to the Disclosure and Barring Service which has power to bar them from work with children and/or vulnerable adults.

11.10 Discretion should be used in all forms of communication including when sending messages by email or text, or when visiting social networking sites or blogs, or holding conversations using cameras or microphones via the internet, much of which relies upon insecure forms of data transmission.

It is advisable for clergy to maintain a distinct email address for their ministry which is not shared with others in the household, and email correspondence received should be accessible only to the person to whom it is sent.

Confidentiality in all forms of correspondence must be respected and maintained whether written or electronic.

11.11 The clergy must remember that they are public figures whose opinions when proffered have weight and significance. In using social media ministers should always assume that anything they post or contribute is in the public domain and will be shared. The power of the internet for doing harm as well as good must always be borne carefully in mind and weighed before saying anything which may prove be damaging to oneself as well as to others.

11.12 Close attention must be given to secure all forms of data, including traditional paper records. In particular, data held on mobile or desktop computing equipment and on mobile devices should have secure passwords and up-to-date security software.

## **Trust**

12 In the name of our Lord we bid you remember the greatness of the trust that is now to be committed to your charge. Remember always with thanksgiving that the treasure now to be entrusted to you is Christ's own flock, bought by the shedding of his blood on the cross. It is to him that you will render account for your stewardship of his people.

12.1 The development of trust is of primary importance for honest relationships within ministry.

12.2 The clergy are placed in a position of power and authority over others, in pastoral relationships, with lay colleagues, and sometimes with other ministers. In all forms of ministry, in leadership, teaching, preaching and presiding at worship, the clergy should resist all temptation to exercise power inappropriately. This power needs to be used to sustain others and harness their strengths, and not to abuse, bully, manipulate or denigrate.

12.3 Pastoral care should never seek to remove the autonomy given to the individual. In pastoral situations the other party should be allowed the freedom to make decisions that may be mistaken unless children or vulnerable adults are thereby placed at risk in which case the advice of the Diocesan Adviser must be sought.

12.4 The clergy should thankfully acknowledge their own God-given sexuality. They should not seek sexual advantage, emotionally or physically, in the exercise of their ministry.

12.5 A person seeking pastoral guidance and counsel has the right to expect that the minister concerned will not pass on to a third party confidential information so obtained, without their consent or other lawful authority. Exceptions to the general position include information concerning the commission of a crime or other misconduct, where there is a requirement that the information be disclosed. If a minister has grounds for considering that that exception may apply, or that the disclosure reveals a risk to children or vulnerable adults, he or she should consult the diocesan registrar and, in cases involving safeguarding issues, the Diocesan Adviser.

12.6 Unless otherwise agreed, the clergy are accordingly not at liberty to share confidential information with their spouses, family or friends.

12.7 The content and process of a pastoral relationship may need to be shared with certain other people, such as a supervisor or supervisory group, consultant or other involved colleagues. Such sharing needs to be carefully restricted so that it does not involve any breach of confidence.

12.8 It is important to safeguard the right of parishioners to share personal information with one minister and not another. In a team situation, it may be advisable to create a policy to avoid the danger to ministers within a team of being manipulated and divided by the sharing of personal information with one and not another.

12.9 Ministers who handle personal information about individuals are under the same legal obligations to protect that information under the Data Protection Act 1998 as anyone else. When help or advice is being sought, any note-taking should be mutually agreed wherever possible. If notes contain any information about a living individual which is capable of identifying that individual.

12.10 The minister of a parish is required by law to provide for the publication of the banns of marriage and the solemnization of holy matrimony for those within their cure, subject to any impediments which may exist in law to their union. The minister to make inquiries as to the existence of any reasons which may prevent the marriage from taking place, and should seek appropriate advice from the diocesan registrar or the civil authorities in any case of doubt. The clergy should also be aware of the House of Bishops' Guidance on the Marriage and the requirement to follow that guidance.

12.10 There is much helpful advice in Anglican Marriage in The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and diocesan

12.12 It is the duty of every parochial minister to officiate at the funerals or interment of those who die within their cure, or any parishioners or persons whose names are entered on the church electoral roll of their parish whether deceased within their cure or elsewhere. This obligation includes not only funeral services which take place at the parish church, but those which are held in a crematorium or cemetery. Others will also be involved in the care of the bereaved, including funeral directors and cemetery and crematorium staff. The clergy should maintain good professional relationships with all such to ensure appropriate care for the relatives of those who have died.

12.13 Ministers must not officiate or otherwise exercise ministry outside the area of the benefice to which they have been instituted or licensed without the consent of the minister with the cure of souls. This is subject to a statutory entitlement of the minister of a parish to perform a funeral service in any crematorium or cemetery that is situated in another parish without consent provided that the deceased died or was resident in the minister's own parish or was on the electoral roll of that parish at the time of his or her death.

12.14 When officiating at weddings and funerals the clergy should ensure that only those fees prescribed by the Archbishops' Council in a Parochial Fees Order, reasonable travel expenses and genuine extras are requested from those

with whom they make arrangements. When a marriage service or funeral service is being conducted only statutory fees and genuine extras (such as payments to organists, singers and bellringers) may be charged.

### **Well-being**

13 You cannot bear the weight of this calling in your own strength, but only by the grace and power of God. Pray therefore that your heart may daily be enlarged and your understanding of the Scriptures enlightened. Pray earnestly for the gift of the Holy Spirit.

13.1 The clergy minister by grace through their own broken humanity, being aware of their own need to receive ministry.

13.2 In exercising their ministry, the clergy respond to the call of our Lord Jesus Christ. The development of their discipleship is in the discipline of prayer, worship, Bible study and the discernment of the prompting of the Holy Spirit. The clergy should make sure that time and resources are available for their own personal and spiritual life and take responsibility for their own ongoing training and development.

13.3 Spiritual discernment can be facilitated by sharing the journey of faith with another person. A minister should have someone outside the work situation to whom to turn for help.

13.4 Ministers holding office under common tenure have a legal obligation to cooperate in arrangements made by the diocesan bishop for ministerial development review, and to participate in appropriate continuing ministerial education. Ministers who are not subject to common tenure should also, as a matter of good practice, ensure that arrangements are in place for their ministry to be reviewed on a regular basis and for their ongoing ministerial education.

13.5 Both formal ministerial development review and discussion with a spiritual director or companion should offer the opportunity for the clergy to reflect on whether they are giving sufficient time and attention to family life, friendship, recreation and renewal and to consider any health issues.

### **Care for the Carers**

14 Brothers and sisters, you have heard how great is the charge that these ordinands are ready to undertake ... Will you continually pray for them? Will you uphold and encourage them in their ministry?

14.1 "Care for the carers" is fundamental. The clergy need to be supported and the laity have a particular and significant role in the pastoral care of the clergy.

The clergy and those who support them should be aware of the Ministry Division publication *Dignity at Work* (2008) and its recommendations concerning bullying, harassment, and accusation at work.

14.2 The bishop takes responsibility for the welfare of the clergy when receiving the oath of canonical obedience. This responsibility is shared with suffragan and area bishops, archdeacons, and rural and area deans.

14.3 Care of the clergy is a responsibility shared between The Abyssinia Apostolic Church and Diocesan Authorities.

14.5 Power is exercised and experienced in many ways, and the clergy should beware of the potential of using their position to bully others. Equally those who have the responsibility of caring for the clergy should be aware that bullying can be exercised both by church authorities and by parishioners.

14.6 The clergy should be encouraged to develop opportunities for mutual support and pastoral care within chapters, cell groups, or other peer groupings. All the clergy should also be encouraged to have a spiritual director, soul friend or confessor to support their spiritual life and help to develop their growth in self-understanding. If required, help should be given in finding such a person.

14.7 *In ministries where the clergy have both a sector and a parochial responsibility, there should be a clear understanding between diocese, parish and the minister concerned about where the boundaries lie.*

14.8 Support and advice on the practical, psychological and emotional issues involved should be readily available to clergy approaching retirement and to their families.

14.9 The bishop and those exercising pastoral care of the clergy should both by word and example actively encourage the clergy to adopt a healthy lifestyle which should include adequate time for leisure, through taking days off and their full holidays, developing interests outside their main area of ministry, and maintaining a commitment to the care and development of themselves and their personal relationships. Helping the clergy understand and overcome unrealistic expectations needs to be a priority.