

**CONFERENCE *of* RELIGIOUS**

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England & Wales

# **INTEGRITY IN MINISTRY**

**Document of Principles and Standards for Religious  
in England and Wales**

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## Introduction

For some years now, following the publication of the Report of the Cumberlege Commission, 'Safeguarding with Confidence', in 2007 the Bishops of England and Wales, together with the Conference of Religious, have been exploring how best to implement Recommendation 2 of 'Safeguarding with Confidence': The Conference of Bishops and the Conference of Religious should develop Codes of Conduct for all clergy, non-clergy religious. The report states in paragraph 2.35: We, in particular, commend the Australian version 'Integrity in Ministry'.

They had in mind to produce a guide to assist and support Clergy and Religious by setting out in a straightforward and readable way the main principles and standards by which those engaged in Ministry seek to live and work. To that end, a working party developed a consultation document based on the document with a similar name produced by the Bishops and Religious of Australia. That Australian document is widely recognised as a model of good practice. The consultation document also made extensive use of 'For the Greater Good', which is an adaptation of the Australian document, which is an adaptation of this document by the British Province of the Society of Jesus. Permission to use and adapt both of these documents in the consultation document was generously granted and duly acknowledged.

In his introduction to the original consultation document, Archbishop Peter Smith wrote: "One important benefit of a guide of this kind is to allow us to situate the procedures and protocols relating to child protection and the protection of vulnerable adults, which we are all bound to follow, in a wider professional context. This document, as you will see, is grounded theologically in terms of a concept that lay at the heart of Jesus' mission, koinonia, or "communion", and provides a framework for understanding our life and ministry as priests and religious at the service of men, women and young people in Britain today. None of us as Clergy or Religious can or should work in isolation, and this document is, I hope, also a useful aid to enabling us all to deepen our personal care for each other and all those we are sent to serve".

Following the consultation it was decided by the Bishops' Conference in April 2013 that they would prefer a more focused document written specifically for clergy. Following the decision by the Bishops, the Conference of Religious has developed their own document with a particular focus on the Religious Life which, with minor changes, is largely consistent with the original draft written by the working party.

## Preamble

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### For whom is this document intended?

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*Integrity in Ministry* is a code of conduct for Religious engaged in ministry in the Catholic Church in England and Wales. It has been written for the guidance of those in ministry and for the information of those people with and among whom Religious exercise their ministry. The values inherent in this document apply also to lay people who have been engaged to carry out formal ministries alongside Religious in the Catholic Church.

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### Context

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The ecclesiology of Vatican II provides the framework from which principles for pastoral practice and religious life are drawn in this document. After each principle, an illustrative list of behavioural standards is suggested. The commitment to provide a positive and holistic context for standards prevents this document appearing simply as a list of forbidden behaviour. It also means that behaviour that supports good health or spiritual growth is found on the same page as behaviour that guard against acts of professional misconduct. Different contexts will call for different degrees of compliance. Responses to non-compliance will also vary widely, from loving support, to formal and even legal procedures depending on the nature and severity of the particular issue.

While acknowledging fully the harm caused by the misconduct of some Religious, this document begins from the recognition that the majority of those appointed or ordained for service in the Church live in a committed effort to follow and serve the mission of the Church faithfully.

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### Aim

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The aim of this document is to support Religious and others who work or minister alongside them on behalf of the Church in their effort to live dedicated and committed lives. It seeks to offer them an ecclesial context for measuring their behaviour as witnesses and ministers of the Church's mission. While conscious of the need to protect against harm, its goal is to provide positive guidelines both for healthy lives among Religious, and for the highest standards of pastoral practice.

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### Objectives

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The objectives of this document are:

- ◆ to offer a theology of the Church as the context for shaping and measuring behavioural standards;
- ◆ to encourage Religious in their vocation as witnesses and ministers of the reign of God through lives of respect, service, integrity and selfless love;
- ◆ to help Religious to care for themselves and one another;

- ◆ to support Religious in their efforts to be visibly accountable as witnesses and ministers of the Church's mission;
- ◆ to support Religious in their concern to protect children and adults from all abuses of power, including sexual, physical, psychological abuse, neglect and harassment;
- ◆ to support the Church in responding to instances of sexual or any form of abuse and professional misconduct, in the best interests of those who have been harmed, the wider community, and the offender.

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## Structure

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- ◆ A brief outline of the theological background to the document is offered on the following page.
- ◆ Each chapter of the document begins with a summary of the ecclesial vision relevant to its particular topic, signified by italic script.
- ◆ A number of principles that flow from that vision relevant to the life and ministry of Religious are then outlined, signified by bold print.
- ◆ Below each principle an illustrative list of behavioural standards is provided. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, but to suggest a number of key behavioural standards that follow from the principle. As already noted, standards range from those that promote good health, through those that support the highest levels of pastoral practice, to those that guard against professional misconduct.
- ◆ The degree of compliance required, and the nature of the response to non-compliance, will vary from standard to standard. Those with which it is essential to comply are presented in bold type.
- ◆ The final chapter outlines the current policies for responding to instances of non-compliance.

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## Legislation

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- ◆ Religious covered by this document are subject to both canon and civil law. The civil law in England and Wales covers such areas as privacy, prevention of harassment, protection of personal information, and the professional duty of care, besides the protection of children and other vulnerable people. Religious also have canonical responsibilities **some of which are alluded to in different sections**. We note too that Religious may be involved in different Church structures in regard to professional conduct and safeguarding.

The safeguarding policies and procedures in England and Wales are contained on a website for The Catholic Safeguarding and Advisory service at [www.csas.uk.net](http://www.csas.uk.net).

# An Outline of the Theological Context of this Document: Communion and the Image of God

## ***The Foundation***

Created in the image of God, human beings are by nature body and spirit, men and women made for one another, persons oriented towards communion with God and with one another, wounded by sin and in need of salvation, and destined to be conformed to Christ, the perfect image of the Father, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

According to this conception each person is not an isolated individual but a relational being, created to be in right relationship with others. For a Christian this is most clearly seen in the person of Jesus Christ, for it is Jesus who shows us the face of God, one in essence and Triune in persons. The Bible affirms that each human person exists in relation with other persons, with God, with the world and with himself.

“God is love – Father love – Son love – Holy Spirit love”<sup>1</sup>

It is within this communion of love revealed by Jesus Christ that the mystery of all being, as embraced by God, finds its fullest meaning.

This understanding of our essential relational nature, rooted in our relationship with the Triune God, means that the essence of the Church is a *communio*. In this way, relationship is integral not only in terms of our human reality but also in terms of ecclesial reality. It is integral to our vocation; therefore we can only become truly ourselves in relationship with others and we are summoned to form a community with them.

The Church, as the sacrament of salvation, points to this fundamental truth about human beings; “Catholic in bringing together people of every race and culture; One, in being the symbol of the unity of the living community ruled by God; Holy, sanctified herself by the power of the Holy Spirit and sanctifying all peoples through the sacraments; and, Apostolic, in continuing the mission given by Christ to accomplish progressively the divinely willed unity of the human race”.<sup>2</sup>

We can see from this that communion establishes a basis for the lives and actions of all the baptised, particularly Religious, who hold positions of leadership in the Church.

## ***The Ethics of Communion***

A spirituality of communion means that we know how to make room for our brothers and sisters, bearing “each other’s burdens” (Galatians 6) and resisting the selfish temptations which constantly beset us and provoke competition, careerism, distrust and jealousy. In

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<sup>1</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, Homily, 18th May, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> “*Communion and Stewardship*”, International Theological Commission, 2003

contemplating new structures for good practice in our relationships with one another and in accountability, “let us have no illusions: unless we follow this spiritual path, external structures of communion will serve very little purpose. They would become mechanisms without a soul, “masks” of communion rather than its means of expression and growth”.<sup>3</sup>

So each person is to be treated with the respect that is their due by virtue of each one being made in the image of God and by virtue of being called to the self-realisation according to this image which is unique, singular, and unrepeatable precisely because this image of God is inexhaustible. Indeed the whole of the Church’s work is governed by her belief in a universal call to holiness of every person, as every person “expresses and is called to express a particular aspect of the thought of God.”<sup>4</sup>

As Pope Benedict XVI indicated during his Apostolic Visit to Great Britain, such an understanding directs the Church on a journey where, “each of us has a mission, each of us is called to change the world, to work for a culture of life, a culture forged by love and respect for the dignity of each human person.”<sup>5</sup> Indeed, reflecting on that visit, the Bishops of England and Wales reminded us that the Holy Father himself by “his gentle, courteous, humble and open hearted approach....models for us a way in which we can share this vision with others.”<sup>6</sup>

### ***The Vocation to Communion***

It is, then, in recognising the call to holiness of every person that we also recognise that there exists a specific vocation for each person. Our relationships with one another within the Church are precisely to serve and call forth the vocation of each one, for this is the providential thought of the Creator for each of his creatures, “it is his idea-plan, like a dream found in God’s heart, because the creature is found in His heart. God the Father wants this to be different and specific for each living person.”<sup>7</sup>

In this way, as Pope Benedict XVI indicated in his visit to us, faith in God is not a problem to be solved but a gift to be discovered afresh. Through our participation in the Triune communion of God, and in our service of that communion in the Church, we too can reclaim and bear witness to a gentle, courteous, humble and open hearted living of the Christian faith and so, proclaim the Gospel through the “beauty of holiness”, “the splendour of truth” and “the joy and freedom born of a living relationship with Christ.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *Novo Millennio Inuente*, Par 43

<sup>4</sup> *In Verbo tuo*, New Vocations for a New Europe, 1997, par 13

<sup>5</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, Address, Hyde Park Vigil, 18th September 2010)

<sup>6</sup> Statement of the Catholic Bishops Conference on the Anniversary of the Visit of Pope Benedict XVI, 18th September 2011

<sup>7</sup> *In Verbo tuo*, New Vocations for a new Europe, 1997, Par 13

<sup>8</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, Homily, Westminster Cathedral 18th September 2010

## 1. A Communion of Love

*By daily acts that often surprised his contemporaries, Jesus made God's love for every human person very clear. He made a special effort to make it clear in the case of those who might have doubted it the most: the poor, the vulnerable, the sick, the young and those publicly regarded as sinners. He showed to them in particular that they were invited into the communion of God's love. For this reason the Church also, in all of its actions, makes clear the dignity and value of every human person, especially those most vulnerable. The Church is committed to protect and respect the rights of all persons, among them children, youth, members of cultural and ethnic minorities and all whose rights and dignity are devalued or at risk.*

*Religious, in their particular ministries, have a responsibility to protect, honour and advance the dignity of every human person. They are often welcomed into the lives of people at sensitive and important moments, when people are more than usually vulnerable. Their relationships with people in these moments are guided by a spirit of love, sensitivity and personal disinterest that has the well-being of the other as its foundation. Sometimes the desire for personal relationship or nourishment will be set aside for the sake of a greater love.*

*Care for others is expressed in many ways: words, silence, presence and touch - all might convey love and solidarity.*

*The area of physical touch calls for great sensitivity. Throughout his life Jesus held, embraced, reached towards and laid hands on those he loved. God is pictured as holding people against a cheek or in the palm of a hand, and nursing them within folded arms. Touch can communicate healing, love and respect. Touch may also be ambiguous, confusing, even threatening to those who are vulnerable. It can be used as a means of control, harassment or abuse. The use of touch in pastoral relationships needs to be guided by prudent judgment that has the deepest well-being of the other as its basis.*

### **1.1 In their lives and ministries Religious witness God's love for every human person by sensitivity, reverence and respect in their relationships.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ treating all to whom one provides pastoral support with respect and courtesy;
- ◆ actively discouraging in others, especially those who work for us and with us, and avoiding in oneself, all forms of harmful discrimination and expressions of prejudice;
- ◆ honouring the equality of women, men and children;
- ◆ resolving disputes through respectful dialogue, negotiation and/or professional mediation.



To safeguard integrity, and to preserve clarity of sexual and professional boundaries with regard to this principle, it is essential that Religious:

- ◆ avoid any behaviour that could reasonably be interpreted as harassment;

harassment encompasses a broad range of behaviour, including but not limited to:

- physical, verbal, written or psychological abuse
- displays of inappropriate material
- bullying
- racial and religious insults
- derogatory ethnic slurs
- unwelcome touching and inappropriate behaviour
- sexual jokes and comments
- requests for sexual favours

Harassment can occur as a result of a single incident or a pattern of behaviour where the purpose or effect is to create a hostile, offensive humiliating or intimidating environment.

## **1.2 Religious witness to the inclusive embrace of God's love.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are (this is not an exhaustive list):

- ◆ reaching out to all people, especially those who feel alienated or marginalized;
- ◆ being sensitive to the diverse forms of spirituality and theology in the Church;
- ◆ responding sensitively to the issues that arise when different cultures meet, and respectfully welcoming minorities;<sup>9</sup>
- ◆ encouraging inter-church and inter-faith dialogue.

## **1.3 Religious witness and minister God's nurturing love for every person.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are, at least:

- ◆ behaving in ways that nurture the growth and vocation of all;

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<sup>9</sup> cf., Vita Consecrata, art.80.

- ◆ behaving and speaking in ways that indicate a respect for the role and function of all;
- ◆ working in ways that respect different charisms, spiritualities, qualifications and ministries;<sup>10</sup>
- ◆ avoiding every impulse to 'lord it over'<sup>11</sup> those whom they serve;
- ◆ avoiding the fostering of dependency or subservience by encouraging collaboration and mutual respect.

#### **1.4 Pastoral love requires that Religious respect the physical and emotional boundaries appropriate to relationships with adults and minors.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are, at least:

- ◆ exercising sensitivity with regard to the physical and emotional space others require in pastoral encounters;
- ◆ exercising a prudent judgment, that has the well-being of the other as its goal, in initiating and responding to physical contact, such as giving a comforting hug or an affirming touch;
- ◆ exercising prudent judgment in the expression of affection and regard and in the giving of gifts.
- ◆ providing pastoral ministry only in places that offer a sufficiently safe environment where there is openness and visibility; **(under no circumstances providing pastoral ministry in the sleeping quarters/bedrooms of one's community house, of the presbytery/parish house-retreat centre or in the room of another)**

#### **1.5 Religious witness to God's care for the most vulnerable by their concern for the dignity and safety of children and youth.<sup>12</sup>**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are, at least:

- ◆ avoiding any form of over-familiarity or inappropriate language;
- ◆ ensuring, in accordance with local codes of practice, appropriate monitoring by another adult when providing pastoral ministry to a minor;

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<sup>10</sup> cf. 1 Cor 12:12-27

<sup>11</sup> Matt.20:25ff.

<sup>12</sup> John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 27.

- ◆ avoiding, whenever reasonably possible, being alone with a minor or group of minors in sleeping, dressing or bathing areas and making sure to exercise prudent judgment and behaviour when another adult cannot be present;
- ◆ familiarising oneself with the causes and signs of child abuse or neglect, the steps to be taken for the protection of children, and the procedures to follow if abuse or neglect is suspected or observed;
- ◆ familiarising oneself with the procedures outlined in local codes of practice and the documents of the relevant safeguarding authorities.

To safeguard integrity, and to preserve clarity of sexual and professional boundaries, **it is essential that Religious** in the exercise of their ministry follow the codes of practice in force in each particular work, ensuring that those codes adequately protect them as well as those whom they seek to serve:

- ◆ **behave with due prudence, never staying overnight unaccompanied in the same room as a minor or vulnerable person unless it is impossible to avoid. In that circumstance every provision needs to be made to provide a safe environment, e.g. the permission of a parent or guardian, and appropriate openness and visibility;**
- ◆ **never administer corporal punishment;**
- ◆ **use electronic and print media responsibly;**
- ◆ **never use the internet for sexual purposes;**
- ◆ **do not supply or serve alcohol or any controlled substance to a minor.**

## 2. At the Service of Communion

*Jesus served God's plan by serving the men and women of his time. He came 'as one who serves'<sup>13</sup>, and he invited those who followed him to do the same, 'washing each other's feet'<sup>14</sup> as he had done. His followers would not 'lord it over'<sup>15</sup> one another, but each would count themselves least of all for the sake of the others. The lost would be sought, the wounded healed, the sinful forgiven, the walls of division brought down, so that 'all may be one'<sup>16</sup> in the communion of love that unites human beings. Religious witness to a spirit of service by their way of life and by their pastoral conduct.*

**2.1 Religious are called to witness to a spirit of service. Because of the trust they are given and the visibility of their witness and leadership, they are conscious of the unique power and responsibility they have in pastoral relationships.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ relating to all people in a spirit of humility, reverence and respect, with a commitment to the deepest well-being of the other;
- ◆ creating cooperative and harmonious relationships in the communities in which one lives and works;
- ◆ respecting the call to collaborative effort between women and men in accord with the Gospel;
- ◆ encouraging and supporting all members of the community in the fulfilment of their vocations;
- ◆ consulting widely, seeking consensus and providing feedback where possible, before making important decisions;
- ◆ exercising caution in the use of one's status or institutional power, never using these for one's own advantage;
- ◆ taking up leadership and service in a community with respect for the life, customs, history and vision of the persons who already make up that community;
- ◆ seeking opportunities to share decision-making responsibilities;
- ◆ discouraging the development of personality cults centred on oneself;
- ◆ creating environments where others feel confident to offer constructive criticism.

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<sup>13</sup> Luke 22:27.

<sup>14</sup> John 13:1-20.

<sup>15</sup> Matt 20:25ff

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. 17:21.

**2.2 In addition to their own professional development and formation, Religious Superiors and others in positions of responsibility are called to a service of support to those for whom they exercise pastoral care.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle would be the provision of:

- ◆ educative and support structures that assist Religious to achieve the standards set out in this document;
- ◆ selection and initial formation processes that support their Religious Congregations to address the concerns and issues in this document, in *Vita Consecrata*, and in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, and in keeping with their particular charism within the life of the Church
- ◆ opportunities for formation, development and renewal;
- ◆ clear communication concerning roles, expectations and outcomes;
- ◆ fair and consistent treatment;
- ◆ healthy and safe working and living conditions;
- ◆ appointment procedures which are impartial and in response to the needs of their Religious Congregations, and are consultative according to the norms of those Congregations, and which serve the communion and mission of the Church;
- ◆ personnel management practices based on fairness and equity;
- ◆ appropriate grievance procedures;
- ◆ structures that ensure adequate human and financial support.

**2.3 Religious serve the communion of the Church by service in a number of ministries, including presiding at prayer, sacraments and the Eucharist. In all these moments they are at the service of a community of active and equal persons, seeking to enable the best and fullest expression of the community's prayer, praise and communion with the life of God.<sup>17</sup>**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ preparing for and participating in liturgies and services of prayer, either as president or minister, with reverence, humility and respect for all persons in the community;<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> cf., *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art.14.

<sup>18</sup> cf., *Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, art.47.

- ◆ supporting and participating in processes that prepare and assist people to celebrate, in prayer and in the sacraments, as fully as possible;
- ◆ in the case of Religious priests, celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation in ways that respect penitents' right to privacy and to a safe environment. This will include providing options for openness and visibility for those who desire them, or where it is required by local codes of practice;
- ◆ continuing development of one's knowledge of liturgical norms, theology and practice;
- ◆ preparing carefully, and developing skills for all the occasions in which the word of God is preached or proclaimed.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 762; 769;

### 3. Ministers of Communion: A Life of Commitment

*Following in Jesus' footsteps, Religious promise their lives to the service of God's plan, to 'reconcile all things to him, everything in heaven and on earth, by making peace through his death on the cross.'<sup>20</sup> They are, by the witness of their way of life and their pastoral work, ministers of communion. This is a vocation and a way of life that continually invites openness, growth, humble reverence and ongoing commitment.*

#### **3.1 Led by the Spirit, Religious continually open themselves in response to a vocation that comes from God and is lived in the midst of the Church and the human community.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ faithful commitment to prayer, meditation, spiritual reading, scripture and the celebration of the sacraments;
- ◆ commitment to a life of faith, hope and love;
- ◆ prayerful reflection on, and commitment to, the Evangelical Counsels lived according to their vocation and way of life<sup>21</sup>;
- ◆ reflection on and commitment to their vocation as Religious, as expressed in the writings of their founder, their Constitutions and more recent documents of their Congregations;
- ◆ participation in the process of spiritual direction;
- ◆ undertaking annual retreats and ongoing spiritual formation;
- ◆ development of one's knowledge and understanding of scripture, theology, Church teaching and tradition.<sup>22</sup>

#### **3.2 As part of their vocational commitment Religious also continue to develop the pastoral and professional skills their ministries require.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle would be:

- ◆ participation in support processes such as, for example,
  - a specially formed support group
  - an existing group or programme – e.g. community meetings, province meetings, province retreats and renewal programmes on offer from time to time
  - a one-to-one support relationship with a colleague

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<sup>20</sup> 1 Col 1:20.

<sup>21</sup> See *Vita Consecrata* par 88f

<sup>22</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 663§3.

- participation in continuing education programmes;<sup>23</sup>
- ◆ participation in regular spiritual direction;
- ◆ professional supervision where appropriate
- ◆ establishing processes to evaluate the quality of one's work, including assessment by one's peers and those one serves;
- ◆ engaging in guided self-appraisal;
- ◆ participation in local and national or professional associations of one's peers;
- ◆ implementing the outcomes of such reflection and evaluations.

**3.3 It is healthy for Religious to develop relationships beyond those of their pastoral relationships wherever that is possible, so that pastoral relationships do not bear the burden of providing affirmation and affective support to the minister.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ the development of a network of supportive peers and friends with whom one has no formal pastoral relationship;
- ◆ cultivation of a sensitivity to the inequalities and risks that might accompany a personal relationship with any person with whom one has or had a pastoral relationship; exercise of similar care with regard to establishing a pastoral relationship with a close friend;
- ◆ ensuring that one's actions serve the wellbeing of the other in the situations described above;
- ◆ reflecting on any such relationships with one's support person, or group or local or provincial superior as appropriate, to review how effectively the boundaries between the pastoral and the personal have been maintained.

**3.4 Commitment to one's vocation as a minister of communion means that Religious will act with integrity in all their human relationships.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ establishing relationships that are able to develop and mature within the context of gospel values;
- ◆ establishing and maintaining relationships that are characterised by openness, honesty and integrity;

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<sup>23</sup> *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, Chapter VI; cf *Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, Chapter III; *Vita Consecrata*, art.69.



- ◆ not establishing a relationship through an abuse of power.

**3.5 By virtue of their commitment, Religious give witness to a way of life that respects the dignity and worth of everyone they meet in the exercise of their ministry. Consequently, they act with integrity in all their relationships and interactions with others.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle:

- ◆ avoidance of all actions or language that could reasonably be interpreted as sexually provocative;
- ◆ never seeking to initiate sexual behaviour;
- ◆ rejection of any invitation to participate in sexual behaviour;
- ◆ as far as reasonably possible, avoidance of situations and relationships that place undue stress on one's ability to remain committed to chastity.

**3.6 As ministers committed to the proclamation of the Gospel, Religious will act with integrity in their use of the newer forms of Social media.<sup>24</sup>**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ recognition that, by virtue of their vocation, they have made the move from private to public person
- ◆ whilst recognising the benefits of the new social media for communication, be disciplined in the amount of time they devote to it especially when at the expense of person-to-person relationships
- ◆ a consciousness that the focus of evangelisation for them is that identified in their appointment, work or mission
- ◆ never speak disparagingly about another person on social websites or blogs as it is against natural justice and charity
- ◆ take professional advice in regard to the setting up of social networking accounts so as to ensure appropriate confidentiality
- ◆ recognise that all information placed in social media can ultimately become public and therefore to exercise prudence in talking about self, others or the Church
- ◆ never use photos, videos, or personal information of another without written permission of the person concerned
- ◆ write about others with respect and courtesy

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<sup>24</sup> Cf. Pontifical Council for Social Communications "The Church and the Internet" February 2002

## 4. Ministers of Communion: Developing and Maintaining Competence

*The Spirit leads Religious in various ways into the service of God's reign of love, to witness and to minister the healing and communion God desires for creation. Because of this many people are drawn to us in the hope that their 'grief and anguish'<sup>25</sup> might find healing. They come to the Church's ministers in trust and vulnerability, and are received with a love that has their deepest well-being as its goal.*

*In addition to love and faith, many of these situations call for the pastoral application of professional skills. 'Professional skills' indicates recognised competence in areas such as psychology, social work, spiritual direction and counselling. In keeping with their vocation, Religious develop and maintain the skills their particular ministry or way of life requires. The demand of love also means that ministers recognise the limitations of their skills, and ensure that those in need have access to the best possible resources and care when their own limit is reached.*

### **4.1 In response to their vocation, Religious are committed to develop and maintain the pastoral skills that their particular ministry or way of life requires.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ keeping abreast of literature in the area of pastoral care;
- ◆ attending seminars/in-service programmes related to pastoral care;
- ◆ reflecting regularly on one's pastoral practice with a competent supervisor or colleague, with one's religious superior
- ◆ ongoing development of one's knowledge and understanding of Scripture, Church tradition and teaching;
- ◆ remaining updated in the social sciences and disciplines that contribute to pastoral skill.

### **4.2 Similarly, Religious develop and maintain the professional skills their particular ministry or way of life requires.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ regularly undertaking appropriate professional development;
- ◆ keeping up-to-date with the literature and developments relevant to their ministry, vocation and state of life
- ◆ active membership of relevant professional associations.

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<sup>25</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, art. 1.

**4.3 Out of desire for the well-being of those who come to them, Religious recognise the limits of their own skills. While often called upon to give advice, they should offer counselling only when professionally qualified to do so.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ clarifying the context, purpose and expectations accompanying a request for spiritual direction, counselling, support or advice;
- ◆ understanding the processes of counselling and spiritual direction, and recognising one's limitations in those areas;
- ◆ maintaining an awareness of the professionals to whom one can refer people with specific needs;
- ◆ assessing the needs of a person who seeks assistance with any complex personal or relationship problem, and, when necessary and in a pastorally sensitive manner, then referring the person on to an appropriately qualified professional;
- ◆ not using psychological tools or tests unless accredited and supervised in their use;
- ◆ not acting as a spiritual director or counsellor unless appropriately trained and supervised, especially in being able to recognize and respond appropriately when one is out of one's depth

**4.4 The vocation to serve as ministers of healing means that Religious will be sensitive to the risks in accompanying relationships in which professional and personal lines are blurred. In such relationships, the well-being of the other, the avoidance of any risk of exploitation, and the maintenance of professional judgment will determine the ministers' decisions.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ being careful to avoid potential conflicts of interest when called upon to advise family members, employees and close friends; refraining from entering into formal counselling relationships with family members, employees and close friends;
- ◆ avoiding, as far as possible, close business relationships with persons to whom one is providing intensive and/or one-to-one pastoral ministry;
- ◆ exercising prudent judgment before ministering in a situation where a conflict of interest may arise, e.g. when offering counselling, advice or spiritual direction to more than one person from the same family;

- ◆ exercising prudent judgment in the giving and receiving of gifts;
- ◆ keeping relevant, appropriate, dated notes and records when providing counselling, advice or emotional support.

**4.5 Pastoral care requires that a pastoral relationship be terminated when it becomes reasonably clear that the person seeking support is not benefiting. In such a case the person will be offered help to find another source of assistance.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ reviewing pastoral relationships with a colleague or supervisor to assess their effectiveness when that is in doubt;
- ◆ developing and maintaining a referral network;
- ◆ being clear about the limits of pastoral relationships when they commence.

To safeguard integrity, and to preserve clarity of sexual and professional boundaries with regard to this principle, it is essential that Religious:

- ◆ seek professional advice and review of pastoral relationships where one is aware of:
  - feeling continually frustrated or angry in the relationship
  - being sexually attracted to the person one is supporting
  - projecting one's own feelings and issues on to the other person or persons in the pastoral relationship;
- ◆ seek professional advice and review of pastoral relationships where the person one is supporting:
  - acts in a sexual manner
  - is continually angry or frustrated in the context of the support relationship
  - shows no movement towards resolution of the issues at hand. In some cases the appropriate response will be to terminate the relationship, making an appropriate referral to another suitably qualified professional.

**4.6 Keeping appropriate records is an aspect of pastoral care.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ keeping an accurate diary of appointments, written and/or electronic, ensuring that those kept electronically are backed up;

- ◆ retaining one's written/electronic diaries;
- ◆ keeping a record of significant phone calls and other communications;
- ◆ making and retaining confidential notes of any events in the course of a pastoral relationship that provoke concern in you; with such notes to include a record of the date, time and matter of concern;
- ◆ Some confidential records may need to be retained if these provide evidence of maintaining appropriate boundaries and relationships;
- ◆ Preserving employment records and correspondence;
- ◆ Preserving all records relating to students of past or present schools and colleges in our care;
- ◆ storing all records securely.

## 5. Ministers of Communion: Commitment to Justice

*There is a thread of revelation that runs through the Old Testament reminding the people of God that their ritual and activities are incomplete if they do not live and act justly as a community. The prophet Amos expresses this clearly: 'I hate, I scorn your festivals, I take no pleasure in your solemn assemblies ... but let justice flow like water, and uprightness like a never failing stream.'<sup>26</sup> Jesus took up the same message many times in his stories and actions. The reign of God is revealed when the hungry are fed, the naked are clothed,<sup>27</sup> the poor and the outcast are gathered back into the communion of God's love and receive their just share in the gifts of creation.*

*For the Church which is committed to be a sign and an agent of God's reign, justice is central to its way of life and mission.*

### 5.1 Religious serve as witnesses and agents of God's justice by living and ministering justly in all things.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ living a life committed to 'act justly, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with God';<sup>28</sup>
- ◆ supporting one's community to live justly in its own relationships and structures and in its relationships with the wider community;
- ◆ encouraging one's community to support local, national and world-wide actions for justice;
- ◆ living in an ecologically responsible way: e.g. paying attention to recycling, to means of travel, to the use of energy, to researching more energy and environmentally friendly ways of lighting and heating, to carbon off-setting;
- ◆ collaborating with other Christian churches, faith groups and other organizations;
- ◆ knowing and promoting the social justice teachings of the local, national and universal Church;
- ◆ encouraging just action among those to whom one ministers.

### 5.2 Religious, who exercise authority in the Church or who have responsibility to supervise the work of others, witness to justice by ensuring just working conditions.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

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<sup>26</sup> Amos 5:21-24.

<sup>27</sup> cf., Matt 25:31-46.

<sup>28</sup> Micah 6:8.

- ◆ ensuring that all employment procedures are based on principles of justice and equity, appropriate to each particular situation;
- ◆ negotiating clear, documented, agreed descriptions of each person's roles, responsibilities and duties, including one's own;
- ◆ providing safe and healthy working conditions;
- ◆ providing adequately resourced access to training, professional development, and appropriate supervision;
- ◆ making accessible to employees and volunteers copies of "Integrity in Ministry";
- ◆ providing just rates of remuneration for skill, responsibility and performance;
- ◆ implementing appropriate grievance procedures against improper or unreasonable administrative acts;
- ◆ ensuring that all legislation regarding terms and conditions of employment are observed.

**5.3 Religious act with integrity and fairness when they deal appropriately and promptly with complaints of sexual, physical or psychological abuse. (cf. Section 8 below)**

## 6. Ministers of Communion: Integrity in Administration

*While the experience of Pentecost was still fresh among them, the first Christians developed a way of life and prayer together that expressed their communion in Christ: 'The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, as everything they owned was held in common.'<sup>29</sup> It was a first attempt to exercise stewardship of the community's goods in a way that nurtured ecclesial communion. They followed their Jewish heritage in believing that the gifts of creation and the fruits of human effort were to be used in the service of God's plan and for the good of all people.*

*Religious who have responsibility for property and finance recognise that they are stewards, not owners of those goods. In the spirit of the first disciples, they administer their responsibilities with justice and integrity.*

### **6.1 Religious who share responsibility for the administration of property and finance exercise their responsibilities in the service of communion and in the light of Church tradition.<sup>30</sup>**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ exercising their administration in the light of the Gospel, and in the spirit of their vocation and way of life;
- ◆ exercising their administration in conformity with the Church's teaching regarding its mission and call to justice;
- ◆ observing the rules of office relating to administration of property and finances as set out in Canon Law and/or in their constitutions and statutes.
- ◆ fulfilling the obligations of Charity and Civil law

### **6.2 As an aspect of integrity and the living of their commitment to simplicity of life, Religious plan and review their stewardship of property and finance.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are the following examples:

- ◆ exercising responsible stewardship and accountability;
- ◆ where appropriate, making sure that the canonical requirements for having a parish finance committee is fulfilled
- ◆ drawing up a budget of income and expenditure each year for the community or work or presbytery for which one is responsible;<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> Acts 4:32.

<sup>30</sup> cf., *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, art. 2451.

<sup>31</sup> cf., *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 1284§3.



- ◆ keeping accurate records of income and expenditure where expected;<sup>32</sup>
- ◆ having all accounts of a community or work or parish audited or monitored each year;
- ◆ if responsible for a work, providing financial statements and reports on property administration and maintenance at least annually to a board of governors, a management or finance committee, benefactors and stakeholders, as appropriate;<sup>33</sup>
- ◆ complying with all reporting and accountability laws as required by national and Church legislation, with special reference to the policies of the diocese or religious congregation as appropriate.

### **6.3 As an aspect of integrity and justice, Religious avoid using their positions to seek or obtain any financial or other personal advantage.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ recording, by the issuing of receipts, the acceptance of all financial gifts or benefits for and on behalf of the ministry in which one is engaged;
- ◆ refusing gifts, rewards or benefits which might compromise the integrity of one's ministry;
- ◆ not soliciting gifts, rewards or benefits for oneself;
- ◆ retaining personal gifts according to the norms of one's Religious Congregation;
- ◆ as appropriate, diligently recording and celebrating Masses for which one has received a stipend and passing on any binated mass stipends to those designated by one's Religious Superior
- ◆ if responsible for a work, exercising prudent judgment in the giving of gifts or benefits;
- ◆ not borrowing or misappropriating money from accounts;

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid. Canon 1284§3.

<sup>33</sup> cf., Ibid, Canon 1284§2:8°.

## 7. Ministers of Communion: Responsibility for Personal Well-Being

*The Gospel commands us: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'<sup>34</sup> The Church is a communion of persons who, in love, care deeply for themselves and for one another. Each recognises in themselves and in each other the 'image of God' and a 'temple of the Spirit.'<sup>35</sup> Because of this we are moved to care for ourselves and one another, recognising that our physical, emotional and spiritual health are gifts from God.<sup>36</sup>*

### 7.1 For the sake of their own well-being, and for the service of the Gospel and the people of God, Religious strive to maintain their spiritual health.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ regularly nourishing oneself through scripture, daily Eucharist, and the regular reception of the sacrament of reconciliation;<sup>37</sup>
- ◆ following a regular discipline of reflective reading, prayer, spiritual direction and other spiritual practices;
- ◆ making an annual retreat;<sup>38</sup>
- ◆ participation in ongoing formation;
- ◆ nurturing one's understanding of, and commitment to, one's vocation lived according to the vows of poverty, obedience and chastity.

### 7.2 Religious exercise a stewardship over their own physical and emotional health.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ regularly having a personal conversation with one's Superior or delegate
- ◆ making full use of spiritual direction and, if possible, appropriate, supervision;
- ◆ periodically discussing one's physical and emotional health with one's Superior or delegate;
- ◆ seeing that one's overall health is regularly checked by appropriately qualified persons;

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<sup>34</sup> Luke 10:27ff.

<sup>35</sup> cf., 1 Cor 6:19-20; 15:44-45.

<sup>36</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, art. 14:1; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, art. 2288.

<sup>37</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 276§2;663§2.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* Canon 276§2:4°; 663§5.

- ◆ seeking timely professional help and the support of a superior or spiritual director, trusted colleague or friend, when in difficulty in one's pastoral or personal life.

### **7.3 Out of reverence for the gift of life and well-being, Religious seek to live healthy lives.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ taking regular balanced meals, regular exercise and adequate sleep;
- ◆ giving time to those with whom one lives in a community and taking an interest in the welfare and work of our Religious colleagues;
- ◆ taking scheduled days off and annual holidays;
- ◆ moderate and appropriate use of alcohol and prescribed medicines;
- ◆ nurturing friendships apart from one's pastoral relationships;
- ◆ supporting colleagues who appear to be in difficulty in their pastoral or personal life.

### **7.4 The Religious Superior and local superiors have a responsibility to promote and encourage the health and well-being,<sup>39</sup> of Religious in their care.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ providing resources and opportunities, in communities and/or places of work, in parishes, to support the spiritual, physical and emotional health of Religious;
- ◆ providing specific opportunities for those who express a desire or need to address issues concerning their health;
- ◆ monitoring issues of stress, isolation, and other risks to health among the Religious in a Province;
- ◆ addressing health as a topic in the exercise of their pastoral care towards individuals and those who work with and for a Religious Congregation;
- ◆ providing opportunities for ongoing formation and education in the challenges of living out our commitment
- ◆ ensuring just working conditions by applying, where appropriate, the behavioural standards as set out in paragraph 5.2;
- ◆ providing resources and opportunities for professional development and professional supervision for Religious

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<sup>39</sup> cf., *Christus Dominus*, art.16.

and those who work with and for us, in accordance with paragraphs 3.2, 4.1 and 4.2.

## 8. When Communion is Broken

It is essential to the life of the Church that its members live in communion with each other. Modelled on the life of the Trinity, her members seek to build up and live in relationships of love which build trust and confidence for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Responsibility for nurturing and sustaining this communion lies with the whole community and, in a particular way, with all those in positions of leadership and responsibility.

At the same time the fragility of human nature means that communion is often damaged and sometimes broken by ministers of the Church. There are many ways in which this occurs and which relate to the earlier sections of this document. Such actions cause serious and sometimes irreparable damage to those who are victims. They also cause grave scandal which weakens the faith of the whole community. As people place great trust in bishops, priests, deacons, religious and others engaged in the ministry of the Church, this is particularly serious. When communion has been broken in any way, those in positions of leadership and responsibility will do everything possible to restore communion as quickly and fully as possible.

It is essential to distinguish between the different situations when communion is damaged, compromised or broken. It is important that the healing of relationships occurs as soon as possible in a spirit of compassion, healing, forgiveness and justice before this damage escalates and leads to a permanent break. For very serious issues, such as the sexual abuse of a child or vulnerable adult, there are mandatory procedures to be followed – see 8:2 below.

The first concern of the Church is for the care and, as far as possible the healing, of those who have been hurt by the Church's ministers. Secondly, the concern is for justice, the healing of the wider community, the Church, and for those who have caused damage by their behaviour. A process of healing and reconciliation often takes time and requires the elements of repentance and contrition, restitution and amendment and forgiveness.

### **8.1 In all situations of serious damage and abuse all Church leaders should:**

- ◆ have serious concern both for those who have been directly harmed and for others who have been affected, including parents and family of those harmed, and the community where the violation has occurred.
- ◆ do everything possible to heal the harm that has been done to the victims.
- ◆ take all necessary steps to avoid any harm in the future.
- ◆ offer appropriate support and assistance to those who have been harmed.

- ◆ in dealing with different situations, the severity of the case needs to be examined.

**8.2 When the complaint involves an allegation of abuse of a child or vulnerable adult then, the statutory authorities, the Church's Safeguarding Office, and the Congregation's Safeguarding Officer must be informed immediately and their advice strictly followed. All sections of the Catholic Church, whether in paid employment or in a voluntary capacity, must follow the Church's safeguarding procedures in all situations. In responding to such complaints, it is essential that Religious:**

- ◆ respond to information promptly and seriously, and with pastoral sensitivity, making sure that the individual or individuals feel listened to and taken seriously;
- ◆ in no circumstances conduct, or allow anyone employed by us or otherwise working with us to conduct, an investigation himself or herself. This may have serious legal consequences.

#### **A note on Legal Compliance.**

**It is essential that Religious abide by the requirements of mandatory reporting and other relevant civil legislation. They also take care to ensure that the proper processes of law are neither interfered with, nor hindered. Notwithstanding the civil law requirements, Religious are required to alert Church authorities in cases where referral to statutory authorities has been made. See: [www.csasprocedures.uk.net](http://www.csasprocedures.uk.net)**

**8.3 In other serious situations when the matter is of a criminal nature, the statutory authorities must be informed immediately. The Religious Superior must also be informed.**

Examples include

- ◆ intimidation or violence
- ◆ exploitation [including financial exploitation].
- ◆ serious misuse of communication technology
- ◆ fraud and other misuse of finances.

**8:4 Relationships between a minister and a person may be damaged in other ways in any of the vast variety of settings where the Church's ministry is carried out. This can often occur when people are tired or busy with important liturgical or celebratory events, or when false expectations have begun to develop about friendship or relationship with a minister.**

- ◆ all complaints, no matter how small they may appear, must be taken seriously. Written or verbal acknowledgements and/or responses should be made as soon as possible.

- ◆ in a spirit of forgiveness the two parties should try to settle their differences by meeting and talking through the issues. It is preferable that this happens as soon as possible.
- ◆ in some cases a third party may be necessary to facilitate such a conversation. If this is not possible then the situation may be referred to the appropriate higher authority.
- ◆ E.g. a new person is asked to do the Christmas crib; the person who previously had responsibility for this feels hurt and bypassed. The problem may be that identity has been tied into this activity.

**8:5 When one is dealing with more serious damage to persons or relationships, and in situations of injustice, exploitation or other serious inappropriate behaviour, recourse needs to be made to the Congregational leader or to the person with overall responsibility for the particular ministry.**

Religious Orders and all Church institutions should have procedures in place to deal with serious complaints and help resolve disputes. Examples would include

- ◆ a suspicion that a Religious is drinking heavily.
- ◆ a suspicion of harassment of others by an employee.

## APPENDIX 1

### *Integrity in Ministry and the Code of Canon Law*

The provisions of *Integrity in Ministry* go beyond the provisions of the Code of Canon Law and yet they are based on the Code.

Canons No. 208-223 set out the basic obligations and rights of all Christ's faithful. The first of these reads: 'Flowing from their rebirth in Christ, there is a genuine equality of dignity and action among all of Christ's faithful' (Canon 208). *Integrity in Ministry* indicates a number of the elements of this 'equality of dignity and action.'

In a similar way *Integrity in Ministry* points to elements that might be considered in interpreting and applying several of the following canons, e.g. 212 (the right to make known spiritual needs to pastors and to express views), 213 (the right to the word of God and the sacraments), 214 (the right to one's own form of spiritual life), 220 (the right to a good reputation). In this manner it can help to make these canons more alive within the Church.

The same may be said of those canons that speak of the obligations and rights of clerics (273-289), bishops (381-402), and religious (662-672). In relation to clerics *Integrity in Ministry* indicates useful elements in relation to canons 275 (promoting the mission of the laity), 276 (seeking holiness), 277 (observing celibacy and chastity), 282 (following a simple way of life), 284 (wearing suitable dress), 385 (avoiding whatever is foreign to their state). In relation to bishops there are provisions concerning care for everyone in the diocese (383), special care for priests (384), being an example of holiness in charity, humility and simplicity of life (386). In relation to religious, one may usefully point to canons 663 (contemplation and prayer), 664 (community life), 668 (poverty and the use of temporal goods).

In a quite different field, canon 1741 sets out the reasons for which a parish priest can lawfully be removed from his parish. They include 'a manner of acting which causes grave harm or disturbance to ecclesiastical communion' and 'the loss of the parish priest's good name among upright and serious minded parishioners.' It could never be a matter of simply checking a priest's conduct against this or that particular provision of *Integrity in Ministry*, but taken as a whole the document will assist in giving objectivity to the study of 'a manner of acting which causes grave harm.' It will help in determining whether parishioners are being 'upright and serious minded' in deciding whether a priest has lost his good name.

In short, *Integrity in Ministry* is not in itself canon law and it does not take the place of canon law. At the same time, it will be of assistance in implementing, interpreting and applying canon law. It will do this in cases of perceived misconduct, but its more important role will be to help us fulfil our roles in the Church and to know that these are being fulfilled to the highest possible standard.



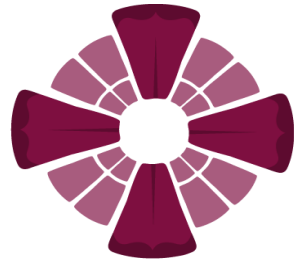
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- The Conference of Religious of England and Wales* [www.corew.org](http://www.corew.org)
- The Conference of Religious for Scotland* [www.religiousordersscotland.org](http://www.religiousordersscotland.org)
- Australian Catholic Bishops Conference:* [www.acbc.catholic.org.au](http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au)
- Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes:* [www.aclri.catholic.org.au](http://www.aclri.catholic.org.au)



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