

## MINISTRY OF DELIVERANCE – GUIDELINES FOR CLERGY

1. Take the problem seriously. Treat the situation as you might any pastoral issue. Maintain a sense of calm – these situations feed on panic.
2. Listen carefully to the person(s) involved. Let them tell the story. Be supportive and explain that help takes time. Do not feel rushed into any sudden actions or responses as these may aggravate the problem.
3. Do not collude with people's interpretation of events either by what you say or in the use of prayer. Keep ministry to a minimum until the situation has been thoroughly explored and, where appropriate, you have discussed it with others – see note 5. This is especially important if the situation might appear to require exorcism, though such occasions are likely to be rare, and, in any case, should not be performed without permission from Bishop Alistair or, if he is unavailable, from Bishop Anthony. The general dictum is to focus firstly on what is good and right, seeking to strengthen and bless that, rather than focus too quickly on what is evil and wrong.
4. It is helpful to find out:-
  - a) who has experienced precisely what and when
  - b) who first experienced it
  - c) any recent crises, worries, mental health problems
  - d) any medical treatment
  - e) possible natural explanations
  - f) any contacts with the occult

It is advisable to make notes of the information you are given. This will help you clarify matters with the person(s) involved, and if facts are later disputed.
5. There is a diocesan network of authorised, trained and experienced people, clergy and other professionals who can assist you. Contact the Diocesan Co-ordinator, Peter Bellamy (01584 841 511), or if he is unavailable Bishop Alistair's office (01588 673 571).
6. Brief records are required of us as a diocese in accordance with good practice and to address issues concerning child protection and the care of vulnerable adults.
7. Clergy should not delegate this ministry to other people except those authorised by the diocesan bishop.
8. As with any healing ministry it is wise to have a supportive praying group who for reasons of confidentiality will not know the details, but can hold the situation in prayer.
9. Normally this ministry is never undertaken alone and is best done in pairs. Attention needs to be given to the gender of the person affected, and group dynamics. For advice see note 5.
10. Curates in training posts should not engage in this ministry without the supervision and presence of the incumbent or, in his/her absence, another senior priest.
11. Avoid and discourage all publicity.

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