

To all Licensed Clergy, Clergy with PTO, Licensed Lay Ministers, Focal Ministers & PCC Secretaries

Date: Monday 3rd March 2025

Our ref: MJS/jrp-bp5048

Lent 2025

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

As we begin another Lent, we are writing with two brief requests.

Prayer and Fasting

A number of people have written to us to suggest that, in view of all that has been happening in the Church of England, we should devote ourselves to prayer and fasting for the diocese and wider church. Initially, we were unsure about this – after all the safeguarding crisis is absolutely not about the church – it is first and foremost about victims and survivors of abuse. However, on reflection, we have concluded that it is right to invite the diocese to spend this season of Lent in prayer and fasting, acknowledging the multiple challenges that we face and the effect they are having on the morale and wellbeing of many people in our churches.

Our proposal is to ask at least one person to sign up for each day of Lent – you can do this by clicking [HERE](#) and selecting a date. How you spend the day is entirely up to you. You might choose to take an individual retreat, or you might choose to gather with others in your church, or you might simply mark the beginning and ending of the day in prayer. However you choose to do it, you might find the following themes helpful.

- Monday: prayer for all victims and survivors of abuse, and for all those who work to make our churches safe for children and vulnerable adults.
- Tuesday: prayer for all who are anxious or lonely, particular those who feel they can no longer be part of the Church of England.
- Wednesday: prayer for the appointment of a new archbishop, and for all those dioceses seeking to appoint a new bishop, and for all bishops, priests, deacons and lay ministers that we may persevere in our calling.
- Thursday: prayer for parish and diocesan finances, that God would supply all our needs, and make us generous in giving to others.
- Friday: prayer for the Living in Love and Faith process that we may learn to live well together in our differences.
- Saturday: prayer for all those exploring their vocation to ministry in the church – and for many more people to come forward in response to God's call.
- Sunday: thanksgiving for all God's good gifts, particularly the gift of God's Son Jesus Christ – may we be formed in the character of Jesus Christ. Prayer for the Bishops' Lent Appeal for the Leprosy Mission (more details please visit [HERE](#))

If you want further resources for Lent, please visit [HERE](#).

Diocesan Chrism Eucharist - Maundy Thursday, 17th April 2025 - 11am at Leicester Cathedral

In keeping with the above invitation to participate in prayer and fasting, this year's Chrism Eucharist will include an extended time of prayer, engaging with some of the stations of the cross through scripture, art and poetry, which will be exhibited in the Cathedral by Mark Cazalet and Richard Leaf. The stations will be in the Cathedral for all of Lent to visit freely.

We very much look forward to seeing you on Maundy Thursday as deacons, priests and bishops, as we gather to renew our ordination vows. This service is open to anyone, so please do extend a warm welcome to others,

including church officers and lay ministers. It would be lovely to have a full Cathedral and to express our mutual support for one another.

Robing will be in the Kempe & Heyrick rooms on the ground floor of St Martins House. The 'dress code' is alb and white stole, but cassock, surplice and scarf are also acceptable. All Readers, Associate Ministers and Lay Ministers are welcome to attend and robe in your cassock, surplice and blue scarf. Please make sure you are robed by 10.40am at the latest. Lunch will be served at St Martins House, following the service. In order to help with numbers, robing, seating and catering, **please book by clicking [HERE](#)**.

During this service, we will also bless the oils for use in ordination, initiation and healing. Oils will be available for collection after the service so please bring empty, suitable containers with you.

We would appreciate, that if driving, you car-share with others where possible, or take other means of transport as we continue our ministry as an Eco Diocese.

If you would like to sing with the scratch choir for this service (with a rehearsal on the day at 9.30am), please email Hannah Merritt, the Cathedral's Liturgy and Music Administrator, on cathedral.music@leicestercofe.org, indicating which voice part you usually sing, by Friday 4th April.

Living in Love and Faith

In the coming days, all licensed clergy will be receiving a complimentary copy of my latest booklet regarding the national LLF process. We are sending out a complimentary copy in the hope that it will be helpful in your reflection on this process. It is not intended to provide a 'solution' to our disagreements (as if such a thing were possible) but it is an encouragement to think and act in a fresh way. If any licensed Lay Ministers, Clergy with PTO or church officers wish to request a copy, please contact my office on bishops.office@leicestercofe.org, noting that we have limited supply.

We had intended to have a Diocesan Synod meeting in March devoted to LLF. However, in view of the extended timetable now agreed by the House of Bishops, we are instead looking to have an extra Synod in September to discuss LLF. However, if your deanery or you PCC want to look at the booklet together ahead of the Diocesan Synod, you could then feed into the diocesan discussions, which in turn will feed into the national process. If you would like any help in this, Matthew Gough has kindly agreed to act as Advocate for LLF discourse and can be contacted on goughx5@outlook.com

If having read the booklet, you would like to feed back to Martyn directly, feel free to email at bishops.office@leicestercofe.org

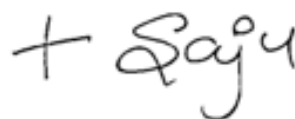
May you have a blessed and holy Lent, and be ready to be renewed in joy at Easter.

With continued thanks and prayers for your ministry,

Yours in Christ,



The Rt Revd Martyn Snow
Bishop of Leicester



The Rt Revd Saju Muthalaly
Bishop of Loughborough