

Diocesan Evangelists in the Diocese of Wakefield

Those with the specific gift and calling of evangelist may be recognized, trained and authorized for the ministry of a Diocesan Evangelist. Their ministry may be used in their local area, or across the Diocese of Wakefield. Guidelines for the working practice of Diocesan Evangelists will be made available.

Before a person, lay or ordained, can be recognized a Diocesan Evangelist they will need:

- A track record of God using them in evangelism in deed and in word beyond the boundaries of their local parish networks.
- Willingness for their ministry to be available throughout the diocese, and a respect for the traditions and leadership of places where they work that are outside their local setting.
- A recommendation for consideration as a potential Diocesan Evangelist by a member of the Evangelism Group, or a member of the Bishop's Council, or their parish priest (in the case of lay people) or their Rural Dean (in the case of clergy).
- Willingness to be interviewed about their vocation and calling, and be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of their evangelistic ministry.
- To be able to demonstrate:
 - a love of people;
 - a spiritual life founded upon Christ;
 - a regular spiritual discipline and study of the scriptures;
 - an enthusiasm for sharing the good news with others, both in word and action;
 - an enthusiasm to encourage and develop others in their witness and evangelism;
 - a rootedness in a local church, and a willingness to work under the leadership of others;
 - an understanding of how the gospel relates to their own context at work and at home;
 - a warm and relaxed personality with a sense of humour;
 - a flexibility of approach to, and respect for, different people and situations;
 - an understanding of failure in themselves and others.

Notes:

1. Diocesan Evangelists will be available for use in evangelism and evangelism encouragement throughout the Diocese.
2. The gift and calling of an evangelist needs to be demonstrated and tested in real-life situations of ministry. To be considered as a Diocesan Evangelist these situations need to be outside of a person's normal networks. It is envisaged that people will *emerge* as Diocesan Evangelists through the on-going mission of the Church, rather than be recruited.
3. In order to be considered for accreditation as a Diocesan Evangelist a person needs to receive a letter of support from their Vicar and PCC (or Rural Dean in the case of clergy), and from at least one other person who has used them in an evangelistic situation outside the parish. These should be sent to the Diocesan Missioner, and will trigger a selection and training process. It is envisaged that in most circumstances people will be invited to consider this wider ministry rather than the Diocese receiving requests to be considered.

4. Following from the letters of recommendation each candidate would have a selection interview with two members of a panel approved by the bishop. The aim of this would be to ascertain a candidate's:
 - Understanding of how people come to faith.
 - Understanding of the Gospel.
 - Understanding of the role of an evangelist, both a doer of evangelism and an encourager and enabler of others.
 - Understanding of their own spiritual health and need.
 - Understanding of the breadth and diversity of the Church of England.
 - Understanding of the effects and implications of this ministry for family and working life.
5. If selected, accreditation is dependant upon a contract of training. This is based upon the needs of the candidate. Training would normally include the 'Introduction to Evangelism' module of the Church Army Certificate in Evangelism Studies, or similar. Evidence would be required that this training has been satisfactorily completed.
6. After training there would normally be at least one more interview with the Bishop or Archdeacon, and then the person would receive a Letter of Commendation from the Bishop of Wakefield. This would be presented at an appropriate occasion.
7. Evangelism is often more 'process' than 'event', and all Diocesan Evangelists will be expected to place their ministry within the ongoing mission of the church or churches where they involved.
8. Diocesan Evangelists are called to make known the gospel. But they also should see their vocation as being one of encouragement to others in their witness and evangelism. Their calling as an evangelist is not to "do the evangelism on behalf of others", but to work with others in their evangelism and witness.

APPENDIX A

"Good News People: recognizing Diocesan Evangelists" (CHP, 1999, page 47) helpfully identifies the following characteristics of an 'evangelist', who may be a person lay or ordained, male or female:

- Who goes where the church is not.
- Proclaims and lives the gospel: the way in which this 'proclamation' takes place is essentially contextual, and is by no means limited to preaching or even to verbal communication.
- Who interprets the Church to the world and the world to the Church.
- Who comes from the centre of the Church and feeds from its riches and is accountable to it as well as challenging it.
- Who encourages the whole Church in its work of evangelism, not least by communicating the gospel to those inside as well as outside the Church.

APPENDIX B

The following Code of Conduct is taken from the General Synod Report 'Good News People: Recognising Diocesan Evangelists', adopted by Wakefield Diocesan Synod on 14 October 2000.

Code of conduct for the Church in relation to evangelists

If an evangelist is recognized by the Church there should be a mutual accountability by which the church supports the evangelist as someone gifted by God in the communication of the gospel. This will include:

- helping the whole church to honour and respect the evangelist and his or her particular ministry and informing the church so that it is aware of his or her work;
- encouraging both public and private prayer for the evangelist; ensuring that the church is aware of the particular gifts of the evangelist and that they are used to the full;
- providing clarity of accountability so that the evangelist knows to whom he or she is primarily responsible. There should be regular times for appraisal, and for discussion of the most appropriate forms of support;
- ensuring that the evangelist has a spiritual director, mentor, support group or similar means of encouragement, prayer and guidance;
- giving the evangelist the greatest degree of freedom so that, subject to the accountability structure that has been established, he or she is free to experiment and venture into new areas of ministry;
- providing suitable initial training and subsequent continuing opportunities for learning, together with appropriate funding;
- ensuring that all appropriate expenses are paid promptly; ensuring that the evangelist has sufficient time for relaxation and
- for his or her family. In particular, the evangelist should not be burdened by tasks within the life of the church that hinder his or her evangelistic ministry.