

## Sources of Support

**Local Colleagues-** We are brothers and sisters in Christ, with a responsibility to support and encourage each other. One advantage of the move to a Ministry Area structure is the opportunity to develop positive supportive relationships within our local ministry area leadership teams. We can lean on each other and alert each other to signs of over-stress.

**Spiritual Direction-** It is good practice for clergy to have a discipline of receiving spiritual direction, or having a "soul friend" - a wise, trusted Christian able to listen, offering prayerful response and guidance in your faith, discipleship and ministry. The diocesan spirituality advisor can offer help in finding a spiritual director.

**Mutual Support Groups-** Many clergy participate in "cell" groups which are not geographically based, allowing a space where challenges of ministry - a community of prayerful reflective practice. We can be mutually accountable, honest with each other about signs of stress, and responsive to trusted counsel.

**The Diocese-** Senior colleagues are available to help understand and manage the variety of burdens that clergy bear. It can feel hard to admit to finding things difficult, but senior colleagues - Ministry Area Leaders, Area Deans, Archdeacons, the Bishop - will be familiar with the stresses of ministry, and will have experience, wisdom, and practical help to bring to bear.



Lord,

you know me through and through.  
Help me find all that I need to  
serve you well.

When I feel stretched too far, give  
me the strength to seek support.

Guard me, guide me, and bless me  
with companions in the way. In  
Jesus' holy name.

Amen.



**Esgobaeth Llandaf  
Diocese of Llandaff**

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# Clergy Wellbeing





## Good Practice

Clergy are certainly not the only ministers in the life of the Church.

However, whether stipendiary or otherwise, clergy often find themselves shouldering a complex array of responsibilities particular to their calling. Many other ministers, such as Readers or Evangelists, will nonetheless recognise much of this content as pertinent to their experience.

Ministry is usually intensely rewarding: serving God and serving our neighbours can bring great joy.

It also stressful, in all kinds of ways and for all kinds of reasons. It bears the weight of the expectations, hopes and concerns of all those we encounter – the church community, the wider local community, the wider Church, and society at large.

Most of the time, most of us are able to manage the array of joys and challenges that ministry presents. Most clergy also experience the reality of being overstretched; most clergy will sometimes feel unable to cope.

It is essential to know how to get help, and then to get the help, whenever necessary.



- Attend to your spiritual well-being: prayer, Scripture, the holy sacraments – ensure that these remain a source of nourishment for you, and are not just something that you facilitate for other people.
- Attend to your personal health care: rest, sleep, exercise, diet – these all help to keep you physically, emotionally and spiritually well.
- Observe a discipline of making a spiritual retreat each year. It may be possible to receive some financial assistance towards this if need be.
- Observe a regular rest day (a personal sabbath) and develop a personal discipline of rest and renewal which is respected by colleagues and parishioners.
- Structure your working days with space for necessary personal time and rest.
- Be careful to take the full leave allowance in the Clergy Terms of Service: ***The annual holiday entitlement is four weeks to include four Sundays per annum plus those Bank Holidays which do not fall on Christmas Day and Good Friday. In addition a Cleric is also entitled to two periods of six days holidays to be taken after Christmas and Easter.*** When on holiday, leave the demands of ministry behind.

## Useful Resources

- **Cynnal**, provides an excellent completely confidential counselling service for all ministers of religion and their families. [www.cynnal.wales](http://www.cynnal.wales) or 0779 646 4045
- **The Clergy Support Trust** supports Anglican clergy in all kinds of ways, including financial grants and counselling. [www.clergysupport.org.uk](http://www.clergysupport.org.uk)
- **St Luke's For Clergy** is dedicated to helping the psychological well being of clergy and their families. [www.stlukesforclergy.org.uk](http://www.stlukesforclergy.org.uk) 020 4546 7000
- **The Samaritans** provide a national 24-hour confidential helpline for anyone in need – dial 116 123

### Reading

- **What Do You Seek?** John-Francis Friendship, Canterbury Press 2021
- **Overcoming Stress** Tim Cantopher, Westminster Knox 2015
- **How Clergy Thrive**, Liz Graveling, CHP 2020
- **Tools for Reflective Ministry** Sally Nash & Paul Nash, SPCK 2009

