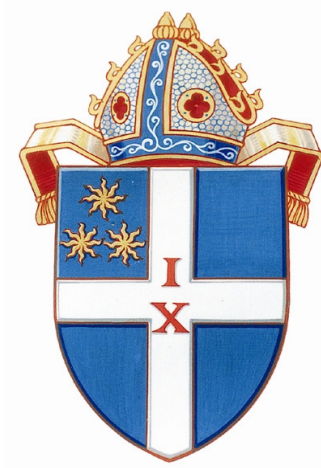


# THE ANGLICAN CHURCH IN AOTEAROA, NEW ZEALAND AND POLYNESIA

## DIOCESE OF CHRISTCHURCH



## ETHICAL GUIDELINES

- 3.1 The Ethical Guidelines are hereby adopted as the ethical guidelines of the Diocese.
- 3.2 The Ethical Guidelines shall be binding on all Clergy, Lay Workers and Members of the Church holding positions of responsibility within the Diocese or a Local Ministry Unit.

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The purpose of Christian Ministry is to serve people at their points of need in the selfless way in which Christ serves. These Ethical Guidelines are offered in support of this service.

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## **PREAMBLE**

- The guidelines are offered for all who minister in the Diocese, not just for the ordained. The term “minister” will be used to include both lay and ordained.
- These guidelines are guides for ethical behaviour between ministers and those they minister to. They are not intended as a statement of Christian moral teaching.
- These guidelines indicate acceptable ethical behaviour. It is recognised that all who minister will at times fail to live up to all aspects of the guidelines. Those who minister and those they minister to, together with all Christians, are called to offer each other reconciliation and forgiveness when appropriate.
- These guidelines deal explicitly with pastoral ministry. However they are applicable wherever there is a ministry relation between two people.
- Ministry situations are more complicated than are other helping situations in that ministers do not just meet those they serve in counselling sessions. Ministers and those they minister to, meet regularly in many different settings.
- It is often difficult in ministry to distinguish between “professional” and “personal” relationships. This can make it very difficult to establish appropriate boundaries in ministry relationships.
- Ministry covers a wide range of activities - from informal pastoral care schemes to structured counselling situations.
- People sometimes expect information shared informally to be as confidential as information shared in a formal counselling/ confessional situation.
- A ministry relationship cannot be “terminated” as can a counselling relationship. Ministers normally have ongoing relationships with those they serve.
- The variety of networks within parishes and the information sharing between them make the ethical questions more complex.

## **PRINCIPLES**

1. Every human being has infinite worth and a unique value as a child of God, irrespective of origin, ethnicity, sex, age, beliefs, social or economic status, contribution to society or present psychological, physical or spiritual state.
2. Each individual has the God-given right of self-fulfilment and maximum development of their potential to the degree that it does not encroach upon the same rights of others.
3. All activities of ministry regardless of their form, should serve the best interests of those who receive them.

- 4 Those who minister have the responsibility to devote objective and disciplined knowledge and skill to aid individuals within the church and wider social setting in their progress in the faith and in the development of their God-given potential as human beings.

## **1. RESPONSIBILITIES TO THOSE BEING SERVED:**

- 1.1 We maintain the right of the people to whom we minister to a relationship of mutual trust, to privacy and confidentiality and to the responsible use of information. All information divulged by people is the property of those people and their informed consent must be sought if it is to be passed on to any person or organisation. This includes passing on information within the ministry team. When people request us not to discuss them with others, we will honour this request unless others are in danger.
- 1.2 We acknowledge that under the guise of caring and sharing, information which is incorrect or which is not public property is often passed on within the church. We recognise the need to guard against careless talk and to beware of accepting second-hand information at face value.
- 1.3 People should be informed about the limits of confidentiality. Confidentiality is required to be breached when there is a clear danger to the safety of the person or to any other individual or group. Those we minister to will normally be informed beforehand if confidentiality is to be broken. If permission is not given to reveal it, information given in the course of a confession is exempt from this provision, in keeping with the rubrics on pg 750 of A New Zealand Prayer Book, He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa and the Evidence Amendment Act 1980, section 31.
- 1.4 We will not abuse our position by taking advantage of those we minister to for purposes of personal, institutional, political or financial gain.
- 1.5 Those we minister to should be free from the possibility of sexual exploitation or sexual harassment of any kind. It is recognised that those exercising ministry are in a position of power relative to those to whom they minister. This power means that sexual relations within any ministry relationship by definition cannot be equal.
- 1.6 We will encourage those to whom we minister to move towards self-determination under God and towards taking appropriate responsibility for their own lives.
- 1.7 We will acknowledge the limits of our competence and refer those to whom we minister to others when this proves necessary or desirable.

## **2. RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE CHURCH:**

- 2.1 We recognise our membership of the Body of Christ, i.e. the Church.
- 2.2 We will contribute our unique professional expertise (lay or ordained) to the development of the ministry and policies of the Church of which we are a member.
- 2.3 We will uphold professional standards of practice in ministry and work for their advancement.

- 2.4 We will act to prevent discrimination in access to ministry where this discrimination is based on colour, race, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, religious or political belief.
- 2.5 We will be professional in the time we give to the ministry of the Church, guarding against both over-commitment and avoidance of responsibility.

### **3. RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHER MINISTERS:**

- 3.1 We will treat colleagues with respect, consideration, fairness and good faith.
- 3.2 We will recognise the abilities, expertise and views of colleagues in ministry and value the contributions they make.
- 3.3 We will respect the professional confidences of colleagues.
- 3.4 We will seek mediation when important conflicts with colleagues or others require to be resolved. Legal procedures are provided within the Church's structures where this is deemed necessary.
- 3.5 When appropriate we will work and co-operate with colleagues and social service agencies of the Church and Society to serve the best interests of the people to whom we minister.
- 3.6 We will respect the time constraints of those (ordained and lay) who minister in a non-stipendiary capacity.

### **4. RESPONSIBILITIES TO OURSELVES**

- 4.1 We will acknowledge that there are limits to the ministry we can properly provide and that respect for our own health in ministry relationships and appropriate self-care should be upheld.
- 4.2 We recognise our own need for recreation, refreshment and renewal for which at times we will need to call on the support and expertise of other ministers and professionals.
- 4.3 We will use regular professional supervision for review, learning, personal and spiritual growth to maintain a high standard of ministry.
- 4.4 We recognise that our knowledge needs to be continually extended and enhanced. In addition to personal study, we will regularly attend courses, retreats, lectures, seminars and schools of ministry to learn and be encouraged in our ministry.

### **Appendix to the Guidelines**

We offer the following guidelines as a further resource. Although Kelsey is speaking specifically of spiritual direction and in-depth counselling, these guidelines are relevant to wider ministry situations as well.

From: Kelsey, M. (1984) Companions on the Inner Way, Crossroad, New York, pp 176, 177.

1. Recognize the incredible power of this experience of transference-love-sexuality.

2. *Those who think that they are not vulnerable to this experience are sitting ducks for it. Pride goeth before the fall.*
3. Do not enter into deep one-to-one counselling or pastoral relationships unless willing to deal with transference.
4. Recognise that within each of us is the desire to be the “divine” giver of love, and also the deep need to be satisfied by having another provide this love for us.
5. Although touch is at times very healing, important and necessary, it can be very dangerous in the private, continuous, one-to-one relationship and can turn into something quite different than was intended. It is so easy for people to want to give us what we have not consciously recognised that we desired.
6. It is essential that any of us who are in a relationship that involves transference keep a running reflection in our journals of our own honest reactions and feelings.
7. Counsellors need to be quite clear that they come into the counselling situation to give rather than to receive, and when this is not true there is a great need for careful reflection. We need to be as aware as possible of both our conscious and unconscious expectations in regard to those with whom we relate in depth.
8. Every person (seldom do I use the word every) involved in depth counselling or in continuous one-to-one relationships needs to have peers with whom he or she can discuss *all* aspects of these relationships and seek objective guidance. The director requires direction if the blind are not to lead the blind.
9. Once relationships have been established in depth, particularly when the transference is directed toward the counsellor-director, it is simply immoral to break these relationships without a full discussion of the situation with the individual concerned and if possible a totally mutual agreement as to its resolution.
10. Whenever possible, those who are going to be involved in close pastoral relationships need to be provided supervised pastoral experience. It is within this setting that the problems unique to each of us can be handled most creatively. I am grateful that God does not need perfect instruments to further his kingdom, for then only the unconscious and psychotics would be able to apply.”

COMPANIONS ON THE INNER WAY by Morton T. Kelsey.

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