



## Ministry Development Team: God's Good News

This document contains information for the priest and AMD Advisor (or other facilitator) to help with the Ministry Development for the God's People theme.

### **Date, location and participants**

Ideally, the Ministry Development Team should take place about two weeks after the Clergy College. It lasts about *90 minutes* and should be held in a comfortable environment.

The Ministry Development Team involves a core group of between six and 12 people. The priest identifies and invites participants. They can include clergy, Readers, Local Worship Leaders and Pastoral Workers, and Church Wardens.

### **Aims of the Ministry Development Team**

The aims of the Ministry Development Team are:

- to form a bridge between the learning that takes place during the Clergy College and the Ministry Development; and
- to form a group that is aware of and understands the theme of Ministry Development and can help support the priest in its delivery.

The Ministry Development Team will also be a chance to remind people about how AMD works, to talk about the Clergy College and to help build a common understanding of what you're trying to achieve. Creating an AMD team is important.

### **Content of the Ministry Development Team**

The structure of the Ministry Development Team will usually be as follows (timings are a guide only, but try not to run over unless you aim to reduce another section in advance):

- A Welcome and Prayer led by priest, facilitator or others: *5 minutes*
- B Outline of Ministry Development and discussion led by priest or facilitator: *25 minutes*
- C Input by priest on a topic from the Clergy College and discussion: *25 minutes*
- D Appreciative Inquiry of the church exploring 'God's Good News' led by facilitator: *25 minutes*
- E Summary of discussions and Concluding Prayers: *5 minutes*

The following pages contain further resources for each of these sections.

- Depending upon the time of day it may be good to provide suitable refreshments.
- Arrange the room so that everyone can participate in the conversations.
- If you are using Powerpoint, or other visual aids, ensure everyone can see properly and prepare the equipment (laptop and projector) in advance.



## A: Welcome & Prayer

- Welcome:
  - ❖ explain that this is the third of several Ministry Development Teams
  - ❖ check that everyone knows each other – especially important if churches have recently started working together and/or new people are involved
  - ❖ outline the aims of the Ministry Development Teams (see Aims above)
  - ❖ outline what will happen during the session (see Content above)
- Prayer:
  - ❖ use an appropriate form of prayer, focussing on God's Good News. *5 minutes for both*

## B: Outline of the Parish Programme

[NOTE – it would be possible to spend much more than 25 minutes on this theme and you may decide to reduce one of the other sections, e.g. the priest's input, in order to allow this to happen]

- State the theme: 'God's Good News.'
- Another word for 'Good News' is 'Gospel', which comes from the Greek word *euangelion*, from which (via Latin) we get our word 'evangelism.' Some of us have positive experiences and ideas of 'evangelism'; some of us have more negative views.
- But the essence of sharing the Good News is being able to explain why we are Christians.
  - ❖ St Paul was having a difficult time and was being persecuted for his faith. Misunderstood and facing adversity he wrote to Timothy saying: "I know the one in whom I have put my trust." (2 Timothy 1.12)
  - ❖ And St Peter wrote this: "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." (1 Peter 3.15)
- The reality is that we often have amazingly little time to respond if someone asks a question about faith, perhaps only one minute before the conversation returns to the latest soap or football result.
- So we need to put ourselves where the other person is, responding with appropriate language and context, not with a dense or complex 'theology of everything.'

ASK: 'Why are you a Christian?'

- We are going to spend the next few minutes thinking about what we might say if we're asked this question.
  - ❖ Individually: to think about this question on your own *5 minutes*
    - Draft an answer to the question 'Why are you a Christian?' that lasts no longer than one minute (in other words, you've got one minute to get your answer across).
  - ❖ In pairs: share your answers to the question 'Why are you a Christian?' *5 minutes*
    - Share your one minute answer with another person (in pairs)
    - If you are the 'hearer,' note the key points that you heard in the other person's statement.
    - Swap roles.
  - ❖ In pairs: evaluate what you have heard using the following questions *5 minutes*
    - What was the core message communicated?



- Was the message coherent? Why / why not?
- What questions might the message provoke?
- ❖ All together: allow most people to comment, guiding the conversation with the following questions *8 minutes*
  - Discuss how it felt to give an answer to the question 'Why am I a Christian?'
  - Comment upon how it felt to be evangelised
  - Think about how what was said was 'Good News'
  - Identify lessons for our evangelism
- ENCOURAGE – a recent writer on evangelism says: “Anything worth doing is worth doing badly—until one can do it better” Brad Kallenberg, *Live to Tell: Evangelism for a Postmodern Age* (Baker, 2002), p.124.
- REMIND – at the root of sharing the Good News is St Peter’s exhortation: “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” (1 Peter 3.15) *2 minutes*
- This should lead nicely to the priest’s input.

### C: Input by priest

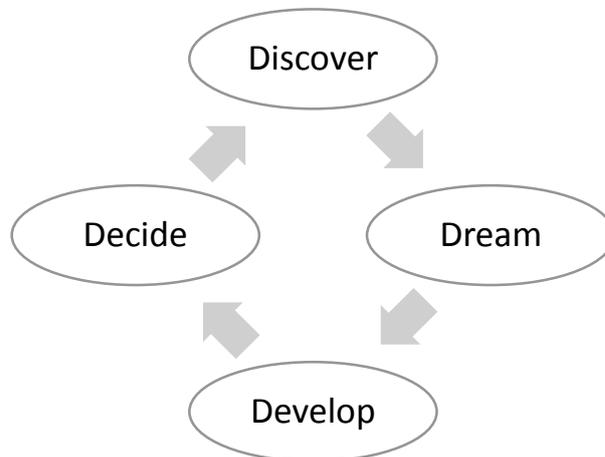
- The priest should select a topic that really interested him/her at the recent Clergy College.
  - ❖ It can be anything from the Clergy College, not necessarily something relevant to the theme of God’s Good News. As a suggestion, you could discuss the nature, aim and message of evangelism, perhaps using materials from the Parish Programme so that the group is familiar with the topic before it is introduced more widely.
  - ❖ Please provide any learning resources you require; feel free to copy anything provided at the Clergy College if that’s helpful to the group or take an idea from the Parish Programme resources, e.g. a video or website story or something that you would wish to do with the youth or children. *maximum of 10 minutes*
- Discuss the topic and its relevance for the church
  - ❖ You may like to suggest questions for the group to discuss or ask them to participate in a creative activity—remember that different people have different learning styles, so even if you decide to focus upon discussion this time, think about another way to present your topic at the next Ministry Development Team. *around 15 minutes.*
- Conclude the discussion
  - ❖ Try and conclude on a positive note, which will lead well into ‘Appreciative Enquiry’.

### D: Appreciative Inquiry

- Appreciative Inquiry is a way of asking questions that helps people focus upon what has been good about the past and the positive aspects of our present. It leads a group to think about building upon what has worked well rather than becoming preoccupied about what’s going wrong.
  - ❖ If you are interested in finding out more about Appreciative Inquiry the Accompanied Ministry Development team can suggest some resources, although the following website: [www.clergyleadership.com](http://www.clergyleadership.com) contains a useful summary
- There are various elements to Appreciative Inquiry. Typically they are:



- ❖ Discover – Appreciate what is present when things go well
  - ❖ Dream – Imagine the features of a flourishing future
  - ❖ Develop or Design – Identify what you will do
  - ❖ Decide – Create this future
- The cycle looks like this:



- As part of the Ministry Development churches will concentrate upon the ‘Discover’ element of Appreciative Inquiry; the other elements could be very suitable topics for PCC meetings, for example.
- If there are more than six people present, it’s best to divide into smaller groups so that everyone has an opportunity to speak. If only a few people are present, stay as one group. The structure of this part of the Ministry Development Team is as follows
- ❖ Ask people to reflect for two minutes on their experiences of sharing the Good News, both as a church and more widely as individuals. *2 minutes*
  - ❖ Try and think about what makes sharing the Good News work best for the hearers. And also how God is involved in the sharing of his Good News. *10 to 12 minutes*
  - ❖ Come together as a whole group and in the light of what has been said, ask everyone to give two hopes for how your church might be Good News for the community. *5 to 10 minutes*

## E: Summary and Concluding Prayer

- Thank people for coming
- Conclude with prayers for the church and for each other and for any other pressing issues in your community and the wider world. *5 minutes*