

Ad Clerum 1.7

DEPLOYMENT OF SELF-SUPPORTING MINISTERS (SSMs) AFTER ORDINATION

NB: SSMs were formerly known as 'Non-stipendiary Ministers – NSMs. The new terminology of SSM is used throughout this paper).

Introduction:

It is important in a Church (or denomination) which is not congregationalist but claims itself to be 'part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church' that SSMs should be seen as having been called by God to serve Him and His world as representative figures of that Church. For SSMs, as for stipendiaries, ordination is to the service of God and the world, and not simply to a particular parish. The minister, through ordination, explicitly makes himself or herself available to the Church to serve where the needs are greatest.

Deployment:

Careful consideration needs to be given to the most appropriate situation in which a title post should be served.

1. It is recognised that for SSMs deployability will be limited. If it is appropriate that the title should be served in a parish other than the individual's 'home parish', the following considerations will need to be weighed:
 - a) The parish should normally be within a maximum radius of ten miles from the individual's home.
 - b) The incumbent must be not only willing to take on the training role required but be seen to possess the skills required.
 - c) There must be sufficient opportunities available to provide a suitable range of experience.
 - d) The PCC must be willing to welcome an SSM, to recognise the constraints on their availability, and to ensure that all reasonable expenses of office are paid.
2. In some instances it may be appropriate that an individual be deployed to the home parish. The following may constitute circumstances indicating the propriety of such a deployment:
 - a) The candidate comes from a Church where there are significant numbers of people from minority ethnic groups, where the new SSM may be seen as having a key role in enabling members of those groups to discover their own capacity to exercise ministry.
 - b) The candidate may have particular experience and local knowledge, or an existing role in the locality, which indicates that it would be important that they continue to be part of the Church's presence and mission there.

- c) The candidate may already be using existing skills in some crucial aspects of the Church's mission in the locality where it would be deemed significantly more helpful if they remain.
 - d) The candidate's personal and family circumstances indicate that at the present moment it would be inappropriate for them to be deployed elsewhere.
3. Where deployment to the home parish is proposed, it follows that the incumbent must be willing to take on the training role, that there are sufficient opportunities to provide a range of experience or there is clear understanding that these can be offered in other settings, and that the PCC is willing to take on its responsibilities.

Conclusion:

It will be seen that this policy is designed to emphasise the importance of our understanding of the Church and of ordination and also to establish that SSM ministry, whether that be focussed in a parish or a workplace, is an expression of a mission of the whole Church. There is no doubt that SSM ministry can be very demanding. It is earnestly hoped that these arrangements will further strengthen and support individual priests and ministers in the life of the Church as a whole.

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