

GENERAL SYNOD 2009

MOTION No 10 – CODE OF DUTY & CONDUCT

Proposed by the Reverend Maria Jansson, Diocese of Ferns

EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

**That Standing Committee report to General Synod 2010 on progress
on a Code of Conduct and Duty for all ministering in the Church of Ireland.**

Your Grace, Members of Synod,

As ministers we conduct our ministry relying totally on the grace of God to give the wisdom, skill and guidance in all that we do. This great service needs to be articulated in a manner that shows how seriously we take this sacred charge. People have a right to know that we seek to live, behave and conduct our work in an ethical way, that there are standards to which commit ourselves as individuals and as a church and for which we will be held accountable, *in this life* as well as in the next. Our function is to bear witness to Christ and engage with people in a manner that reflects his care for them. When people meet with the opposite, there needs to be a grievance protocol that calls the offending behaviour to task.

In engaging with the ministry of the church, a person has the right to:

1. Confidentiality, except in cases where what is revealed puts another at risk;
2. Respect: To be free from ridicule, demeanment, harassment or bullying;
3. Dignity: Be free from racist, homophobic, ageist, sexist or xenophobic attitudes or conduct;

4. Boundaries: That the relationship not be exploited emotionally, socially or sexually;
5. Security: That the relationship not be exploited financially: that no assets or money be accrued or inherited by the minister more than one week's wages and that be declared to the Ordinary;
6. Transparency: That money donated for charitable purposes be processed through the parish treasurer;
7. Prayer: A clear distinction must be made between the abundant free gift of God's grace and the church heating bill. Donations to parish must be clearly separated and distinct from the pastoral offices of the church.
8. Accountability: That all records, vestry lists be kept securely and confidentially and disposed of according to diocesan regulations and data protection regulations;
9. Service: That clergy work for no less than 40 hours a week and no more than 60 hours usually;
10. Sincerity: That clergy conduct their personal lives in a manner that does not give offence to Christ or to the church;
11. Intelligent Faith: That clergy pray, read scripture and engage in life long learning on matters of our faith, striving ever to minister with greater understanding.
12. Compliance: that all ministering adhere to statutory and ecclesiastical requirements in matters of Heritage, Tax, Civic Responsibility and Charity Law

Many churches in the Anglican Communion have developed Codes of Duty and Conduct for ministers, we do not have one and that is simply not acceptable in this day and age. We have one specific code of practice in Safeguarding Trust. However, given that

ministers have unsupervised access to people often when at their most vulnerable we must ensure that that sacred trust is made explicit and upheld.

I propose the motion that Standing Committee report to General Synod 2010 on progress on a Code of Conduct and Duty for all ministering in the Church of Ireland.