

**GENERAL SYNOD 2011**

**MOTION NO 7**

**Proposed by Archdeacon Robin Bantry White, Diocese of Cork**

**EMBARGOED UNTIL DELIVERY**

**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY**

**Speech proposing Motion on Code of Duty and Conduct. Ven R.E.B.White, CC&R  
Embargoed until 16.30 on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> May 2011.**

Your Grace,

The General Synod of 2009 resolved on a motion of the Revd Maria Jansson and the Bishop of Limerick that the Standing Committee report to the General Synod of 2010 on progress towards a Code of Duty and Conduct for ministering in the Church of Ireland. This we did, asking for further time for work on the matter. This has culminated in our report to this Synod of 2011. Appendix H on pages 278-9 of the Book of Reports applies

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During our deliberations we have studied two areas. First, we have looked at such provision as already exists in the law of the Church of Ireland. Revd Stephen Farrell produced a wide-ranging study, amounting to 42 pages, setting out such provision from the Canons and Constitution, from liturgy and especially from rubrics and rules contained in the Book of Common Prayer. It also set forth the implications for duty and conduct deriving from existing codes, such as Safeguarding Trust. The other trust of our work was to study some of the many such codes now common throughout the Anglican Communion. We were greatly helped, in this respect by Professor Norman Doe of the University of Cardiff and Mrs Karen Phillips of the Church in Wales. What we now propose is that a committee be appointed to produce such a code for us.

Now it may be questioned, is this necessary, with our already rich provision to have such a code. I think it is. It is the very diffusion around the Canons and the Prayer Book that

makes it necessary to have a succinct statement. Furthermore, in most aspects of life, this is the sort of thing that is now almost universal. It would also be a helpful guide for both those who minister and those who are ministered-to and a protection for both. In my opinion it should be a relatively brief document, dealing with those aspects of ministry that matter most or over which there can be so easily disagreement or misunderstanding. It may be objected that it will only provide a stick with which to beat the clergy. I don't think that will be so. Clarity is so important in any relationship or situation. It will also be a document that will be educative of all concerned, reflecting in a clear way the rich diversity of ministerial experience and practice it has evolved in the Church of Ireland.

So we now propose a committee that reflects the seriousness of task. But this is not the end of the matter for the General Synod. Next year, hopefully, we will have the product of their deliberations as a concrete proposal. It will then be our choice as a Synod whether to accept what is provided. But today's proposal in this motion is a necessary step in our discernment over this important process.