



From the Bishop of Salisbury

To the Clergy, LLMs, Churchwardens, Deanery Synod members, Church safeguarding officers of the Deaneries of Jersey and Guernsey

Epiphany, 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Happy new year and the Feast of the Epiphany. I hope you have been able to celebrate Christmas joyfully in these strange and challenging times. Christmas this year was undoubtedly different. The comfort and joy God gives in Jesus continues to strengthen us. Some have found that a simpler, smaller and less consumerist Christmas has been better focussed. In some ways the virus is a summons to faith. It is making us think about who and how we are, our beliefs and values. None of us knows how long the impact of this will continue but I hope the New Year will bring us what for Jews is 'shalom', the wellbeing of peace and good health for all the world.

When David Pain, our Diocesan Secretary, and I visited last January to meet the Standing Committees and clergy Chapters of both island deaneries, we met a strong desire to get on with the recommendations of the Archbishop's Commission and begin a new and settled relationship with the Diocese of Salisbury. Progress has been steady but slow. The Deans and I have concluded the Memorandum of Understanding as recommended by the Commission. <https://www.salisbury.anglican.org/whos-who/about-us/channel-islands>

There is also an operational memorandum to support the day to day working relationship to be developed between the deaneries and the diocese. We are excited by the way this has begun and, God willing, will develop.

Without in any way pre-empting the legislative processes still to be completed, a number of functions have already transferred to Salisbury. Safeguarding and work to support the nurture and discernment of vocations has begun and is already working well. Thanks to Zoom the Deans have attended Bishop's Council and Bishop's Staff. Clergy and Reader files have been received from Canterbury. Our Diocesan Cycle of Prayer includes your churches in the first quarter of the year.

To be clear, Bishop Trevor retains legal responsibility until the legislative processes are complete. However, with the agreement and support of both Deans, +Trevor and I have agreed that the new year is a good time for the episcopal oversight and pastoral responsibility for the Church of England in the Channel Islands to be passed from him to me as Bishop of Salisbury. We want to move forward in developing the new relationship between the island Deaneries and Salisbury that is starting to emerge.

Because of the pandemic travel is impossible at the moment but with me, my colleagues in the diocese look forward to our shared life and work in Christ and we welcome your attachment to the Diocese of Salisbury. We hope and pray this will best serve the mission and ministry of the Church and be to the mutual benefit of the Deaneries and the Diocese of Salisbury.

Yours faithfully,

**The Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam**  
**Bishop of Salisbury**