

Vacancy in See Update

The Dean of Salisbury, Nick Papadopoulos, writes:

I am delighted to bring you this update on the process for identifying and appointing the next Bishop of Salisbury.

We are under way! The statutory Vacancy in See Committee, comprising lay people and clergy drawn from every corner of the Diocese and from every strand of Diocesan life, has met twice, and has begun its work. Details of the Committee's membership are available [here](#).

The Committee's first task is to write a Statement of Need, setting out what it believes the Diocese needs in its next Bishop. Members of the Committee have embarked upon a wide-ranging consultative process, approaching clergy, laity, and those outside the Church, and seeking their views as to what our new Bishop should be and do. It may be that you have already been asked to contribute your views, but if you have not then the Committee would like to hear from you. Please send your responses to the following four questions to: vacancy.in.see@salisbury.anglican.org:

- 1). What do you think a Bishop is for?*
- 2). What difference do you think a new Bishop of Salisbury should make?*
- 3). Which 3 words best describe the Bishop you might need?*
- 4). Please put into one sentence anything else that you would like to say to those appointing the next Bishop of Salisbury.*

This is not your only opportunity to have your say. In mid-May the Archbishops' Appointments Secretary and the Prime Minister's Appointments Secretary will hold a public meeting for the Diocese, probably via a Zoom call, and all will be entitled to attend and contribute. I will publicise details of this as soon as they are available.

When the Statement of Need has been written and the Committee has a clear sense of what the Diocese is looking for, we will elect 6 of our number to serve on the Crown Nominations Commission. It's the Commission – not the Vacancy in See Committee – that interviews candidates for the role of Bishop of Salisbury, and it's the Commission that ultimately sends a name to the Prime Minister for recommendation to Her Majesty the Queen.

This is because a Diocesan Bishop is a leader in the national Church as well as the local Church. The Crown Nominations Commission comprises 6 representatives of the General Synod as well as our 6 Diocesan representatives. The Archbishop of Canterbury chairs the Commission and the Archbishop of York attends its meetings. It is envisaged that the Commission will meet in November, and we hope that the name of our new Bishop will be known by Christmas. Other formalities follow, and we would not expect the new Bishop to join us before Easter 2022.

I hope that is clear, and helpful. There is, of course, another way in which you can contribute to this vital process. It is through prayer. What we are engaged in is a process of discernment – that is, of seeking after God's will and God's purpose for us in the next stage of our life together. Please pray as you involve yourself in the process and answer the questions; please pray for the members of the Committees as they shape and sift your responses; and please pray that the Spirit might stir us all to profound and faithful listening.