

Shrewsbury Diocese Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility

Commission Purpose and Procedures

(As reviewed and agreed at a Commission meeting held on 2nd February 2013)

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February 2013

Shrewsbury Diocese Commission for the Promotion of Justice, Peace and Social Responsibility

Vision and Purpose of the Commission

Vision: A Diocese fully engaged with the call of God to be a people of justice and peace.

Purpose: As Christians, we are called to try to live out God's will. God calls us to act for the common good and the goodwill of all creation. The main task of the members of the Commission is to answer that call personally and to engage the Diocese in doing likewise, in the light of Scripture and Catholic social teaching.

Commission Prayer

We come together
in love and fellowship
to proclaim
the Good News
that promises
freedom for all people,
freedom in justice,
freedom in peace,
freedom to thrive and flourish.

Mindful of our responsibility
as stewards of creation,
let us tread lightly
on the earth.

Rooted in faith
and supported by one another,
may we bring
God's peace and justice
to our families and friends,
our communities,
our world.

Amen.

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Commission Members: Attributes & Requirements

Preamble

The Commission was set up in the early 1980s by Bishop Gray to promote the theology, spirituality and practice of justice and peace throughout the Diocese.

Commission members are appointed by the Bishop, usually on the recommendation of the sitting Commission. Most members will be practising Catholics, but the Commission has benefited from the membership of fellow Christians. The appointment is for a term of four years, but may be extended.

The Commission normally meets four times a year in parishes around the Diocese. The day-to-day business is undertaken by officers and a Core Group which meets every four to six weeks. The Core Group consists of the four officers, namely Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer, and any other Commission member who may wish to attend. Minutes of Commission and Core Group meetings are sent to every member of the Commission.

Attributes and Requirements of Commission Members

- Resident or active in the Diocese
- Normally a practising Catholic but may be an active member of another denomination
- Knowledge and understanding of justice & peace issues
- Commitment to and experience of working for justice and peace
- Awareness of the scriptural tradition of peace and social justice
- Awareness of the Catholic Church's Social Teaching
- Commitment to serve on the Commission for at least four years
- Willingness to attend at least three meetings of the Commission per year if possible
- Willingness to contribute to discussions at Commission meetings
- Willingness to assist in implementing Commission decisions
- Willingness to participate and assist in Commission activities
- Willingness to contribute to the development of the Commission's work.

It is expected that, outside Commission meetings, each Commission member will feed back to the officers information about justice and peace activities in which they have been involved and where they feel this information should be disseminated to a wider audience.

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Commission Meetings: Timing, Frequency, Location and Content

Timing and frequency of meetings

There are normally four meetings a year, two of which are Saturday meetings and two evening meetings. The Saturday meetings are held in the Autumn and Winter, allowing time to deal with the formulation of plans for future work and activities or the more detailed exploration of a specific issue or topic. The evening meetings are held in the Spring and Summer.

Location

It is difficult to find a venue convenient for every member, but St. Anne's, Nantwich, is considered to be the most reasonably central for the Diocese. This will normally be retained for evening meetings with other locations being chosen for the Saturday meetings.

Content

The evening meetings have a business like agenda whilst the Saturday meetings cover more general matters. The Autumn meeting will normally be an open meeting to which non-members involved in Justice and Peace activities in the Diocese are invited to inform Commission members of their needs and concerns, whilst it is the intention that a speaker will be invited to the Winter meeting. The June meeting is the annual business meeting to consider the annual accounts, to set the budget and to hold elections for the officer positions (Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer).

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Work Undertaken at Commission Meetings and Core Group Meetings

Commission meetings

Significant policy direction and decision
Formulation and adoption of plans for future work and activities
Receipt of reports on the work of the Core Group
Approval of annual budget
Receipt of annual accounts
Annual election of officers (except Chairman who is appointed by the Bishop)
Discussion of current issues
Allocation of individual responsibilities

Core Group meetings

Authorisation of expenditure
Implementation of plans and activities
Arranging for action on decisions made at Commission meetings
Planning scope of study days and events
Receiving reports from officers/members on work
Considering significant correspondence
Overseeing production of MouthPeace and E-bulletin
Overseeing content of Website

General

- The composition of the Core Group is the officers of the Commission together with any other members of the Commission who wish to attend.
- The basic functions of the Core Group are to serve the Commission and to implement its plans and activities.
- The quorum for policy decisions at Commission meetings is a minimum of one more than half the current Commission members.

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Duties and Responsibilities of Officers of the Commission

Chair – appointed periodically by the Bishop

- To be prepared to give the Commission high priority
- To lead the Commission in accordance with the wishes of the Bishop
- To initiate/develop the policy/priorities of the Commission
- To approve the agenda for Commission meetings, including Core Group meetings
- To chair meetings of the Commission, normally four times per year
- To approve/correct draft minutes of all Commission meetings prior to circulation
- To represent the Commission in contacts with other bodies when appropriate
- To chair meetings of the Core Group (Committee), normally monthly
- To liaise with the other Officers of the Commission concerning Commission business
- To recommend to the Bishop persons considered suitable for appointment to the Commission
- To keep the Bishop informed of any matters arising that are likely to be of concern to him.

Vice-Chair – elected annually by the Commission members

- To be available to stand in for the Chair when necessary in all duties
- To support the Chair in conducting the business of the Commission
- To attend meetings of the Commission and its Core Group
- To undertake particular duties on behalf of the Chair as required
- To advise the Chair of the Commission of any matter that requires his/her attention.

Secretary – elected annually by the Commission members

- To attend meetings of the Commission and its Core Group
- To draft agendas for meetings of the Commission and the Core Group for approval by the Chair
- To issue the approved agenda with any relevant papers to be considered at a meeting to all members of the Commission several days prior to the date of a meeting.
- To take minutes at meetings of the Commission and the Core Group and prepare a draft for the Chair to consider
- To produce a final version of the minutes of Commission and Core Group meetings as agreed by the Chair
- To ensure that copies of the final minutes are issued to all members of the Commission
- To ensure that all decisions taken at meetings of the Commission are implemented
- To receive and send correspondence on behalf of the Commission except where it is specifically allocated to another officer or member of the Commission
- To liaise with the Chair in conducting the business of the Commission
- To advise the Chair of the Commission of any matters that requires his/her attention.

Treasurer – elected annually by the Commission members

- To be responsible for the finances and accounting of Commission monies
- To keep an up to date record of all financial business of the Commission
- To keep all records of Gift Aid declarations and donations as set out by the Diocese and HM Revenue & Customs
- To prepare and submit Gift Aid returns annually to the Diocesan Planned Giving and Gift Aid Department
- To attend meetings of the Commission and its Core Group
- To report to all meetings of the Commission and Core Group about the current financial position
- To prepare a draft budget every Spring for consideration/approval by the Commission
- To prepare accounts at the end of every financial year for consideration by the Commission
- To draft bids to other bodies for grants for the approval of the Commission
- To ensure that payments to or by the Commission are implemented properly and promptly
- To advise the Chair of the Commission of any matters that requires his/her attention.