

## Training

Training for Ordained Local Ministry in the diocese of Manchester takes place over 3 years, on the 'Learning for Mission and Ministry course' of the Southern North West Training Partnership. This is a Foundation degree course validated by the University of Chester and Liverpool Hope University. Course members meet for one evening a week for 24 weeks in each of the 3 years, plus 6 residential weekends each year and one residential week. Students need to spend an average of about 12 hours per week on their studies.

Students are trained for ministry in their particular Ministry Profile, as well as in Theology, Biblical Studies, Ethics, etc., which all ordained ministers need. The course is designed to train for ministry people from a wide range of educational backgrounds, and to develop the full potential of each student. It is a rigorous course, which has the approval of those responsible centrally for the oversight of ordination training.

What is vital for a student is a desire to learn and a willingness to be formed as one of the Church's ordained ministers. The costs of training are met from central Church funds. But if your parish has an OLM ordinand, your PCC is expected to meet all the travelling costs and other necessary expenses.

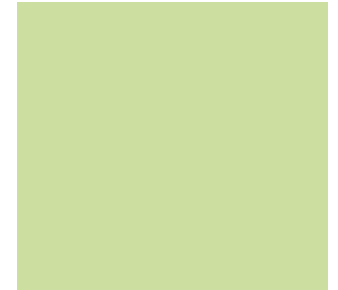
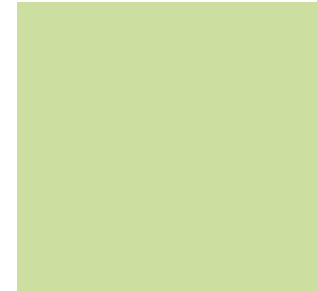
The Course Staff and external assessors assess each student regularly during the training.

Assuming that all goes well for your ordinand, and that a recommendation for ordination is made to the Bishop, at the end of 3 years your parish will have an Ordained Local Minister living and working in it.

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# Ordained Local Ministry and your parish





## What is Ministry?

**‘Lord, you have now  
no hands but our hands,  
no feet but our feet;  
and ours are the eyes  
through which you look out  
with compassion on the world’.**

This well-known prayer of the 16th Spanish mystic, Teresa of Avila, sets out well a broad understanding of Christian ministry. The word ‘minister’ means ‘servant’ and ministry means ‘service’; thus ministry in the Church derives from Jesus’ words about himself at Mark 10.45: “The Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve.”

Ministry is, firstly, about the service of God, offering God the praise and thanksgiving which is God’s due. The Church is called to give glory and honour to God, in public worship and private prayer, and this is ministry. It is bringing people, in all their varied circumstances and situations, before God.

Ministry is, equally and secondly, about serving God’s people in God’s world. It is about continuing today the work that Jesus started during the 3 years of his public ministry during his lifetime. It is being with people who are on the margins of society. Ministry is about sharing the good news of God’s love with all, high and low, rich and poor, who need to know in their lives the assurance of that love. So ministry is the work of the Church in the widest sense, as it seeks to obey Jesus’ command to love God, and our neighbour as ourselves. Ministry is, in the vivid picture of Teresa’s prayer, being the eyes and ears, the hands and feet, of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is being Christ in the world.



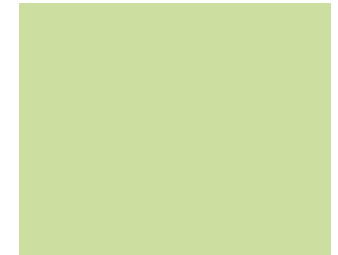
## Nomination and Selection

Let’s say that your parish has been accredited for collaborative ministry by the Diocesan Scheme and decides to pursue OLM. The next stage is for your PCC to nominate the person(s) it wants to call to take responsibility for the agreed Ministry Profile(s). You will be looking for people well established in the parish and who are not likely to move for some years. Normally they will be between the ages of 30 and 60 at the start of training, or older at the Bishop’s discretion.

Sometimes it is clear from the outset who the appropriate person(s) might be. Sometimes it is right for the PCC to nominate someone who, on the face of it, seems an unlikely candidate. In either case it is important that the person(s) concerned make the call that has come from the PCC their own, and realise that in reality it is God who is calling them to OLM.

Because ordination is to the ordained ministry of the whole Church, even if it is to be exercised locally, it is necessary that nominated candidates go forward into the formal diocesan selection procedures. This will include a series of interviews, the taking up of references and attendance at a Bishop’s Advisory Panel.

At this Conference representatives of the wider Church are present, and they hold in-depth interviews with each candidate. The purpose of this Conference is to ensure that national standards for the ordained ministry of the Church are upheld. Assuming that the selectors so advise, the Bishop recommends your candidate(s) for training for OLM.



## Where do we go from here?

You have heard about OLM, you have read this leaflet, perhaps you have experienced in a neighbouring parish the ministry of an OLM. You and your PCC feel you would like to explore OLM further for yourselves - what do you do?

First of all, contact the OLM Scheme (details at the end of the leaflet) and arrange for an informal visit to your PCC by the Local Ministry Officer. At this meeting the principles of OLM will be explored and any questions answered.

If you want to proceed further, the PCC will then be asked to make a formal answer to some detailed questions about ministry in the parish. These questions are designed to enable representatives of the Scheme to gain a deep insight into your parish and the way it works. They also give you the chance to begin to explore your ministry needs.

Representatives of the OLM scheme then meet the PCC and discuss your answers to these questions. On the basis of this discussion a decision is made about accreditation for collaborative ministry. If the decision is favourable, your PCC then proceeds to nominate a person for OLM as outlined on page 7. Alternatively, the PCC may choose to explore other ministry options.

## For more information please contact:

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## Who are the Ministers?

If it is true that ministry is the work of the Church in the world, then ministry must be the work of all Christian people. Ministry is the way all Christians live their lives day by day. God calls and commissions all Christians for ministry in the Church and in the world. Baptism is the sacramental sign, at the start of a person's journey towards God, by which God gives that person their commission for service.

However, from the earliest days, the Church, whilst recognising that ministry is the work of all the people of God, has set aside some for particular functions and duties within the Body of Christ. These are the representative ministries of Bishop, Priest and Deacon. Ordination is the way the Church commissions people to exercise these particular ministries. The special functions for which the Church ordains its clergy are the ministries of Word and Sacrament.

It is a pity that, certainly until recently, popular parlance has equated 'ministry' with 'ordained ministry'. People have tended to think that the ordained are the only ministers in the Church, and this has had the effect of undervaluing the rightful role of the 99% of God's people who are not ordained.

Church people have also, perhaps inevitably, expected their ordained ministers to be omniscient. In addition to their proper ministries of Word and Sacrament, they have had to be administrators, pastors, building maintenance workers, and the parish's general dogsbody.

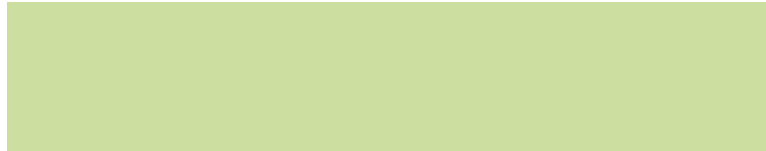
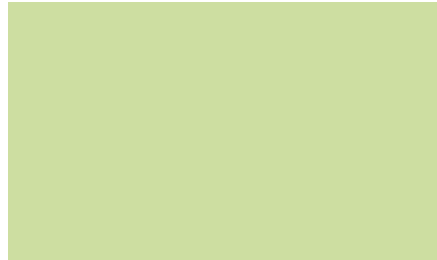


## Collaborative Ministry

One of the exciting developments in the life of the Church at the end of the 20th century has been the re-discovery of this understanding of ministry as the calling of all God's people - whilst recognising that the ordained have, and will continue to have, a particular role to play in the life of the Church. Some of the signs of such an understanding by parishes and congregations - which in the Church of England we call Collaborative Ministry - are:

- a shared vision in the church community, with agreement about priorities and developments;
- commitment to spiritual nurture, corporate and individual; clergy and laypeople sharing in the leading and planning of worship, sharing in decision-making and the shaping of ideas;
- a consultative style of leadership at all levels;
- affirmation of a wide variety of gifts and skills;
- support of people in their daily lives beyond the gathered congregation;
- good communication between groups and individuals;
- continuing learning, corporate and individual;
- flexibility and openness to change, balanced with stability.

*(taken from Stranger in the Wings, a report on Ordained Local Ministry, published by the General Synod's Advisory Board of Ministry in 1998.)*



## Ordained Local Ministry

Do you recognise this as a picture of your parish?

It may not be a complete description, but perhaps it will ring some bells for you. In parishes where Collaborative Ministry is a reality, or is on the way to becoming real, God may be calling people to the particular style of ordained ministry we call Ordained Local Ministry (OLM).

Such people, who may be priests or deacons, work in their local setting, their 'home parish', but the Church will not pay them. They will continue in their normal employment after ordination. Their ordination is exactly the same as those ordained to stipendiary or non-stipendiary ministry. It is to a ministry of Word and Sacrament, like the ministry of all clergy. But in addition, each OLM has a particular task within the parish, called the Ministry Profile (a sort of 'Job Description'). This covers an area of work, identified by the PCC, for which the OLM will have a special responsibility.

This might, for example, be in the area of baptism preparation and follow-up; or, at the other end of life, in bereavement counselling. An OLM might liaise with local youth groups, or have a particular ministry in the schools of the parish. Always, though, the OLM serves as part of a team of lay and ordained ministers in the parish or community setting.

One major difference between the OLM and other ordained ministers is in the area of calling to ordination. Prospective candidates for OLM do not offer themselves for ordination. Instead, the Parish nominates and calls them, as being suitable people to undertake that particular area of work that the PCC has identified.

