

The Virger

Winter 2018
Issue 301



- LEICESTER CATHEDRAL -

Picture: © Newenglish Design



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The Official Magazine of the Church of England Guild of Vergers





Welcome to the Winter 2018 edition of *The Virger*. Items for inclusion should be sent to the Communications Officer by the Deadline Date below.

PLEASE NOTE THAT ANY ARTICLES ETC... SUBMITTED AFTER THE DEADLINE MAY BE HELD OVER UNTIL THE NEXT EDITION TO AVOID DELAYS IN PRODUCTION! ALL E-MAILED ARTICLES SHOULD BE SENT AS MICROSOFT WORD FILES ONLY & ANY PHOTOGRAPHS IN SHOULD BE JPEG FORMAT, TEXT & IMAGE FILES SHOULD BE ATTACHED TO E-MAILS SEPARATELY!

THE MAGAZINE IS UNDERGOING A COMPLETE REVAMP AND RELAUNCH. OVER THE COMING EDITIONS YOU WILL SEE CHANGES IN PRESENTATION AND FORMAT, ALSO IN THE WAY THINGS ARE REPORTED. THESE CHANGES WILL HELP IN PUBLICIZING THE WORK OF THE GUILD TO OUR WIDER AUDIENCE AS WELL AS TO OUR MEMBERSHIP. THIS IS A VERY EXCITING TIME FOR THE GUILD AS WE LOOK TO OUR FUTURE.

Marek J Barden, OLJ

Saint Gregory's Vicarage, Filton Road, Horfield, Bristol BS7 0PD

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PLEASE NOTE

**THE DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT EDITION IS:
SATURDAY 16th February 2019**



SAVE THE DATE - CANTUAR PROVINCE FESTIVAL 2019



Leicester and Peterborough with Derby Branch Committee extend a very warm welcome to you all to attend this Festival which is being held on the Thursday 19th of September at the Cathedral Church of Saint Martin, Leicester

A taster of the program includes:

Easy access by Train /Motorway M1 - Junction 21

Accommodation will be available at the New Diocesan Hotel - Saint Martins Lodge, Cathedral Gardens, offering 28 rooms; other Hotels/Lodges within 5 minutes walk of the Cathedral

Visits/Tours to include:

**The Richard III Story and Exhibition Centre,
the Kings Tomb and stunning windows by Tom Denny in the Cathedral
The Church of Saint Mary de Castro, where Geoffrey Chaucer was married
The Church of Saint Nicolas, the oldest Church in the City
Join us on Wednesday 18th at 7 p.m. Compline in Saint Nicholas Church
Stay over on Friday 20th for a tour of Taylors Bell Foundry in Loughborough,
if enough people are interested**

Picture: © Newenglish Design

The views and opinions expressed in the articles and letters in this edition of The Virger should be taken as those of the author unless it is specifically indicated that the Central Council of the Church of England Guild of Vergers has given its endorsement.

The Central Council of the said Guild accepts no responsibility for the accuracy or otherwise of statements, or for any offence caused by any of the articles or letters published herein.



NATIONAL CHAIRMAN'S ROUND-UP



Before our Annual Training Conference, there is always a flurry of hectic activity from the National Officers in preparation of papers, service sheets and all the last-minute stuff that is expected. We have a fantastic week of fellowship at the side of the Malvern Hills and this year was no exception.

We leave conference feeling invigorated, refreshed and renewed in our work as Vergers.

We look forward to the next National event and this year this was the Festival Lite in Sussex. Four locations on our bus route gave us lots to see and experience. Our next Guild event would be our individual branch occasions around Christmas meals and

AGM's then we hurtle towards a gathering in May and so the cycle goes on.

This gives us a sense of security and stability, however, sometimes, we receive a jolt that knocks us slightly out of our comfort area. This year is one such year. Canon Maureen has made it clear that the time has come to step down as our National Chaplain after this term of office is over. So, the process is now underway to find her successor. A working group has been formed and all the necessary paperwork has now been finalised ready for the recruitment process to begin.

Having got over that news, Dr Andrew Page also announced his desire not to stand again as National Treasurer. Andrew has announced his desire to step down in the summer of 2019, not to far away. So, the search is on for a new Treasurer. IF anyone knows of either a vergers or person within your church who would love to take on this role, either contact Andrew for further information or pass on there contact details to the General Secretary.

Finally, just when you all thought that things are now stable, the Central Council was made aware of a document to restructure the management of the Guild of Vergers. This having now been circulated to the current Area Leaders to disseminate down to Branches.

The paper has been drawn up and discussed by Fellows of the Guild, Central Council and Standing Committee. It is now on its fifth draft and is still a work in progress. That being said, it is hoped that it can be finalised by the summer of 2019 and implemented following the Annual General Meeting. Coupled with this, a new constitution is also in draft stage to reflect the changes and will also be out for consultation.

Now before huge panic sets in around the country, the changes will not affect the current branch structure or management. This should be stressed at every level of discussion. The current Branches that are around the country, provide local fellowship and much needed support to vergers in their areas.

Sadly, due to our changing population, some Branches have closed, and others have merged. So, there has been already some change at grass root levels in quite a few areas. This has spurred the need for change further up in the Guild.

The main changes are at the Area Leader level upwards. There will be some new names to committees, and voting procedures introduced. It is proposed that there will be four new Regional Representatives and four Deputies. The Four Regional Reps will be on the governing body, known as the Executive Group. This is the group that will manage the affairs of the Guild as a whole.

I hope that at your next Branch meetings, your Area Leader will explain the changes clearly and if you have some queries, they will be suitably addressed and passed back to Central Council which will meet in March 2019. During this time of change and prayerful activity, please remember the National Officers as they continue to work for the Guild to ensure its survival as we work towards our Centenary year.

As I am finishing writing this update, news has just come in about the passing of Jeanne Scott, a former General Secretary and stalwart member of the Guild. I am sure others will be writing more about her, but I wanted to add my condolences to Jeanne's family and all who cared for her.

John Kirby-Shearer

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NATIONAL CHAPLAIN'S LETTER



Dear Friends, Greetings!

November is the month for 'remembering' – and this year made more poignant by the commemoration of the end of the First World War.

The commemorations seem to be daily in the headlines, everything from the lighting up of the Tower of London with torches to the many and varied local celebrations in our Cities, Cathedrals and Churches, not to mention the bombardment by the media of stories, plays and the programmes about the War. There is among some a 'compassion fatigue' for the

constant reminders.

Here in Hereford, each day this week, we have a ceremony of reading the names of the Fallen at 4.30 p.m. every afternoon before Choral Evensong. The Cathedral had a good congregation yesterday though I think we were sad that very few stayed for Evensong. The altar is draped in a scarlet cloth, and there are poppies and neatly folded uniforms to remind us of those who were killed. Remembrance Sunday, being the Centenary of the actual date when the guns fell silent, will, I know, have a very special significance for so many who lost loved ones in the war.

The commemoration of the Fallen is a very special 'remembering' but we also celebrate the Feast of All Saints, those men and women who have inspired us to try to live lives closer to our Lord Jesus.

Three of my favourites are Julian of Norwich, a contemplative anchoress who spent her life in prayer and listening to others and advising them as to how they too could live closer to Christ; Francis of Assisi who gave his life to care for the poor and sick, especially those with the scourge of leprosy. In addition, he saw his ministry to the whole created order and calls us to respect and care for all life: plant, animal and human; then there is Oscar Romero, who was recently given sainthood, the Archbishop of San Salvador who was murdered while he celebrated Mass because he promoted justice and care for all people. These are just three men and women out of the vast company of saints who have served and loved the Lord Jesus and inspire us to do the same.

We have also commemorated the faithful departed on the Feast of All Souls. These are men and women who have no memorial and yet in their daily lives did their best to follow Christ faithfully and prayerfully, serving others to the best of their abilities.

As we remember there seems to be no end to the suffering of humanity. The 'war to end all wars' certainly did not live up to its name. We look at the world and see the countless refugees, the increasing number of hungry and thirsty people, the civil strife, the greed for power and we contemplate the suffering of Jesus as he hung on the cross for love of humanity.

I think Dietrich Bonhoeffer expressed the situation when he wrote:

And God draws near to people in distress, Feeding their souls and bodies with his bread;
Christian or not, for both he's hanging dead, Forgiving, from the cross, their wickedness.

God grant that we work for peace and justice as we live in love and remember!

With every blessing for a thought-provoking Remembrance-tide and Advent, and with my love as you begin the busy time leading to the Incarnation of our Lord.

Canon Maureen



PRAYER REQUESTS



If you know of someone for whom prayers would be of benefit or someone who has been prayed for and has recovered or shown improvement, please inform the NATIONAL CHAPLAIN or the NATIONAL WELFARE OFFICER.

Our prayers are asked for:

*Blackburn, Chester & Manchester: **Tony Hales, Freda Murphy, Patricia Platt & Margaret Scott***

*Chichester, Guildford & Portsmouth: **Marilyn Lee***

*Gloucester, Hereford & Worcester: **Joy Birkin***

*Ipswich: **Marjorie Wakeling & Val Pizzey***

*Oxford: **Gerry Knight***

*Saint Albans: **Peter Hudson***

*Somerset & Avon: **Pat Dawes, Lionel & Mary Holway, & Trevor Llewellyn***

*York: **George & Doreen Cook***

And everyone not specifically mentioned who need love, counsel and the grace of our Lord

R.I.P

*Oxford: **Jeanne Scott***



THE DIPLOMA COURSE



The Central Council of the Guild, at the recommendation of General Synod, formulated a course to cover the work and ministry of the Verger. The course is formulated in four units set in two stages:

The first stage is the **Foundation** Unit, which comprises of sixteen assignments, covering preparation for worship, care of the building, record-keeping, and archives, care of the churchyard, and caring for the people of God.

The second stage comprises of the other three units:

The Verger as **Pastor** covers the individual's personal development, their relationship with the people and God, care for others, and for Church resources.

The Verger as **Historian** covers the history of church building, architecture, and the history of worship, including the Book of Common Prayer, and the Bible.

The Verger as **Administrator** covers communication, forms and registers, and the structures of the Church.

Students who complete the course successfully receive a diploma, an academic hood, and the right to use the post-nominal letters '**Dip.GV**'.

If you are interested in learning more about the Course, please contact the **Training Registrar: Susan Ansell** or the **Training Officer: Robert Beattie**.



THE GUILD SHOP



The Guild Shop has Guild branded articles available to Fellows, Full and Associate Members. (Non-Members are invited to make contact with the General Secretary about joining the Guild: CEGVGenSec@gmail.com)

These will add a little something to every Verger's uniform, whether it's a Guild Fleece or a Guild Gown Badge to spice up your official Vergers robes. The Shop has something for you. For more information on the shops products, to order a catalogue or place an order contact:

The Shop Manager - Mrs Angela Hamilton - 21 Saffron Garth, Patrington, Hull, Yorkshire HU12 0RF
or e-mail direct: CEGVGuildShop@gmail.com



FROM BARABARA TAYLOR



To all my friends in National Guild of Vergers and beyond.

I would like to say a Big Thank You to all for your prayers, condolences and cards during my Husbands Sudden Death in May, also for the card you all signed at the Conference, it uplifted me no end.

Yes, it was very sudden when Chuck passed away, it was less than 7 hours of being admitted to hospital at the Great western Hospital, Swindon.

I still can not come to terms with his passing; I keep expecting him to come through the door at any moment. I have very good support from friends, neighbours and my Church family and my Sisters who live up north, without them I do not know how I would have managed.

I was fortunate enough to have one of Chuck's old RAF RC Padres come to the scattering of his ashes, on Bailey's Hill, this is where he played as a child with his friends, it was a lovely sunny day just like it was at his funeral; just as we were scattering the ashes a C17 came flying over, which was quite touching really.

Well I missed you all this year, but I do endeavour to come next year, I am going to send my deposit to Margaret. So, I hope to see you next August.

Wishing you all every Blessings for a Happy Christmas.

Love to you all.

Babs
Salisbury Branch Vice Chairman

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CANTERBURY & ROCHESTER

A big thank you to Rochester for hosting our AGM this year in their lovely Cathedral. We were given a very warm welcome and then a fascinating tour. The crypt has been brilliantly transformed into three areas, a spacious glass enclosed chapel, a tea room and a separate function room.

Later in the year we were warmly welcomed to Saint Nicholas Church, Pluckley for a delicious cream tea and some beautiful music.

Setting aside the lunches and teas, spiritually uplifting prayers and services that we have enjoyed, the unforgettable memory of these events was the welcome received as we stepped into God' House. At Canterbury our mission statement is 'To show the Face of Jesus.'

It wasn't until I joined Canterbury Cathedral as a Virger that I was able to appreciate all the work that was done by faithful men and women to put that statement into practice.

When I joined the Guild and met other Vergers, I began to see all the work that was put in behind the scenes in our local parish churches to make these words possible.

At our Cathedral we are fortunate to have a team, but so often I found it was only one or two vergers 'polishing the step' that kept their churches running smoothly, to ensure that lovely reception.

That is why the Guild of Vergers is so important to me, because we share, support and encourage one another in our work.

In the Summer we had a Quiet Day at Minister Abbey, a Benedictine place of worship and Prayer for centuries. No ceremony or service needed, just a time for prayer and reflection to recharge our batteries. That day showed us the Face of Jesus.

Margaret Ovenden
Vice Chairman

GLOUCESTER, HERFORD & WORCESTER

On Wednesday 10th October, Branch members enjoyed a highly successful visit to the famous firm of organ builders, Nicholson's in Malvern. A rare chance to see how organs are build and played was not something to be missed and we were certainly not let down. Many of us had met earlier for a first-class pub lunch and a chance to catch up with members who are not normally able to attend these events.

Following on from the magazine's recent remit to expand on the number of pictures I'll let the attached photographs explain themselves.



On 23rd November there is a chance for members to join Carl Burrows at the Link Room, Saint Matthias Church in Malvern for what should be a fun evening entitled 'Why do we say that?' A fascinating illustrated insight to the origins of about sixty everyday expressions.

Tuesday 18th December at 7 p.m. will be our Christmas Dinner, the venue this year is the Great Malvern Hotel in central Malvern. Please confirm your bookings with Robert Beattie asap.

Our AGM will be held in January 2019 – (date tbc).

Our annual Quiet Day will hopefully take place on the 30th April at the House of the Open Door, Childswickham.

Philip A M Dunne
Branch Correspondent



IPSWICH

What a difference a day makes....” – Monday was grey/damp a cold miserable day, but come Tuesday 16th October, our Branch meeting – sunny/dry/warm, a day for shorts and tee shirts. We met at Saint Augustine’s Church for our last meeting of the year, where we also got the chance to see their new community room (which replaced a much older darker room):



The meeting, as usual, went along at quite a pace, all business covered, and news forwarded on to members.

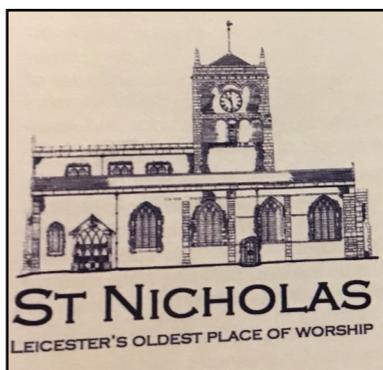
After the meeting we retired to the new ‘Lantern Room’ for our shared lunch. Briefly the room is full of light from both the large picture windows and glass roof. The room itself is multi-functional catering for wide and varied groups, all on the level, no steps, it has very much enhanced the Church family in many ways. Our guest speaker after lunch was the Venerable Archdeacon Ian Morgan, who had us in stitches recalling memories of his late Verger and other anecdotes of his time being in the role of Archdeacon (nothing that can be related here!). We certainly left with smiles on our faces and the feeling of a really good time together.

We do not meet up now until next January for our annual ‘New Year’s Lunch’. We wish all Branches a very Happy (and peaceful) Christmas and New Year.

Until next time, God Bless.

Jean Cobb

Branch Correspondent



LEICESTER & PETERBOROUGH WITH DERBY

COME ON AND CELEBRATE

Our August branch meeting held at the Church of our Lady and Saint Nicholas, Wanlip, Leicester, coincided in the week that two of our members Brian and Mary Mosley celebrated their Golden wedding, so it was fitting that our service of Holy Communion was also a celebration of the married life together.

The service included their wedding hymns, so after the service it was Forth in thy name we retired to the Church Hall for a reception and fellowship with members of the congregation and enjoyed the delicious Wedding Cake. We congratulate them on this milestone in their marriage and pray God’s blessing on the years ahead.

UP, UP, AND AWAY OR SHOULD IT BE ‘NEARER MY GOD THE THEE’

Our Branch Chaplain, Reverend Canon John Tonkin, had reached his 90th Birthday in September and to celebrate it his family arranged for him to go skydiving at the Milton Keynes wind tunnel. John was joined by his grandchildren and family. It was a once in a lifetime experience not to be repeated but enjoyed it and recommends the experience.

In September we met at Holy Apostles Church, where Canon John had been a former Vicar. Sadly this may be the last time we are able to meet in the present building as it is proposed to demolish it soon as part of its construction is concrete which has now out lived its life Excitedly a New Church Plant will replace it in due time. It was with great sadness that the Parish Verger, Ann Anderson, who had arranged the evening was unable to attend as Ken her Husband was ill and very sadly passed away a few days later. Four members along with Canon John and his wife attended a thanksgiving service for Ken. We support Ann with our Prayers and pray for the repose of Kens Soul.

Leicester Cathedral Vergers

Cathedral Verger, John Dilkes, who has given 20 Years’ service to Leicester Cathedral retired in October. John had done two stints as Verger at the Cathedral interspersed with a time as Verger at St Alban’s Church Holborn, We say “Well done thou good and faithful Servant” and thank him for his dedication to both Congregations and wish him well.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Congratulations to Les Mitchelmore, our Branch Area Leader, who has been appointed to the team of Vergers at Leicester Cathedral. Joining are Bev Farrand and Jo Mungovin.

Les Mitchelmore
Area Leader



LIVERPOOL

I don't know how it is for other Branches, but here at Liverpool, we sometimes struggle with attendance at Branch meetings. We have tried to make them more interesting this year by inviting members to take the floor and give a short talk to the rest of the group. This has been great, and we have so far heard from two of our members, Graham Hodson and Stephen Holland.



For our October meeting however, we voted as a Branch to go on a trip. I instantly thought of Hayes and Finch, as they are based here in Liverpool, and we asked members whether they would like to go. The answer was a very enthusiastic yes and so I called up Hayes and Finch to ask about a factory tour. Andrew Ware, one of the company's Directors, called me straight back and could not do enough to help us out. We agreed a date and time, 9th October at 2 p.m., and everything was set in motion.

We had sixteen members in total who contacted me, interested in going, and so we arranged to meet at Saint Giles Church, Aintree, the Church of one of our members, Richard Lavery, where we had some tea and coffee, and then all headed over to the factory. We were warmly met by Andrew and Ann who welcomed us to Hayes and Finch, took our tea and coffee orders for after the tour, gave us a few notes on health and safety in the factory before we were off to see how it all works.

No area of the factory was off limits to us and Andrew's knowledge, (stemming from over 20 years working for Hayes and Finch), of every part of the place was truly incredible. We met a lot of the people who work so hard to make our Church silver and brass, candles, woodwork, chairs and vestments, and each of them was welcoming and friendly, (some having worked there for over 40 years!), taking the time to stop what they were doing to explain to us, and show us what goes into all that they do. After an hour and a half of seeing the factory in was back to the show room for tea and coffee, and a few purchases, before we all parted company.

As a Branch, we will now keep the October meeting as our annual trip, and I already have one request to do a behind the scenes tour of a crematorium! I will put it to the vote in March when we next meet as a branch and see what everybody else thinks.

Tracey Rogers - Branch Secretary

LONDON & SOUTHWARK WITH CHELMSFORD

WE WELCOME OUR NEW CHAPLAIN

In Croydon on Monday 10th November, members shared a very happy early dinner at a local restaurant with our Chaplain Elect, Canon John Ackland. We then proceeded to Croydon Minster where we had a lovely and peaceful Eucharist celebrated by Father Tom Cameron, assistant to the National Chaplain. During the service Father Tom formally admitted Canon John as Branch Chaplain after being presented by our Denise Mead. The Guild Constitution required the consent of three Bishops to enable us to appoint Canon John to our Branch. We received consent of course.



Canon John Ackland has led an interesting life. From being a Junior City Broker, he then joined British Airways as a Steward. He then climbed the ranks to senior management with responsibility for Concorde aircraft operation and Customer Service worldwide. During all this time, John was studying for Ordination. John then left BA and set up a Consultancy Company in the USA. This was followed by attachment to Southwark Cathedral. After a few years John successfully applied for full-time stipendiary ministry at Southwark Cathedral and remained there until his retirement. More recently he has been helping Croydon Minster through a very long interregnum, which is now thankfully at an end. Our branch is excited and honoured to have such a warm, lively and eminent Chaplain.

Stephen Haude - Branch Secretary



OXFORD

On the second of this year's Quiet Days at Douai Abbey, which was held on Tuesday 4th September, (for which the theme was: 'Go down to the Potter's House'), we were (once again), privileged to have as our Guest Speaker, the Guild's Chaplain, Canon Maureen Palmer.



After leading us in a service of Holy Communion, Canon Maureen's first session reminded us of our brokenness and how we could be moulded, by God, into realness.

She gave examples, including experiences in her own life, of Him moulding us, as the potter moulds the clay, into worthwhile individuals. We needed to leave behind the baggage of our daily lives thereby allowing us to concentrate on being ourselves, each one of us being deeply loved and chosen by God, all being made from the same clay in His image – Jesus's response to Philip 'If you have seen me you have seen the Father'.

There is no escape from God, but we have to invite Him into our lives. This session ended with the reading of a prayer written by Nelson Mandela.

A time for quiet reflection before joining the Brothers for their Midday Service in the Chapel, followed by lunch taken in the Refectory and further free time before reassembling for the afternoon session – 'fractured to become real'.

We all suffer or have experienced, brokenness in one way or another and it is through our need to be mended that we become closer to God and His will for each one of us.

There are numerous examples of this in the Bible, for instance, the exile of the Israelites to Babylon – which was a form of punishment for their complacency and 'losing their way' but eventually, through God's never-failing love, their brokenness was mended by reconciliation to their homeland. Also, Peter's denial of knowing Jesus – a challenge that he failed and was broken but eventually became strong and formed the rock upon which the Christian Church was founded. Detailed leaflets were provided by Canon Maureen for further study on the day's proceedings.

Once again, we were left with much to think about and relate to our own lives and, as always, we are much indebted to Canon Maureen for inspiring us and giving her time to be with us, in this way – thank you. (Based upon a fuller report prepared by Molly Payne – Branch Vice Chairman).

Footnote. (1). Those attending having indicated their wish to continue with our Quiet Days, and at this venue, dates for 2019 have been arranged: Tuesdays, 26th March and 10th September, to which members of other Branches would be welcomed.

For further details please contact Miss. Heather Ringrose – Social Officer, at heatherringrose8@btinternet.com

(2) During the day we welcomed Rebecca Smith to our fold as a Full Member – she will be 'officially' admitted at a later date.

Heather Ringrose
Branch Correspondent.



R.I.P JEANNE BASRBARA SCOTT



The Oxford Branch wish to inform the Guild membership of the death of Jeanne Barbara Scott.

Jean was a founder member of this Branch, an Officer for many years and General Secretary of the Guild for 8 years, (in recognition of which she was made a Life Member of the Guild).

A full Obit will be forthcoming. May she rest in peace.



The York Province Festival 2019 will take place on Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd May 2019 in Liverpool

This 2 day Festival will give you a chance to meet in fellowship with other Guild members in the largest Anglican Cathedral in the world

- ◆ **Join us in worship (Thursday)**
- ◆ **Take a tour of the Liverpool Cathedral (Thursday)**
- ◆ **Explore the city of Liverpool (Thursday)**
- ◆ **See the Metropolitan Cathedral of Christ the King (Thursday)**
- ◆ **Travel to Chester to see the beautiful Cathedral, have a tour, or visit the city and the historic walls. (Friday)**

You will need to book your own accommodation, of which there is plenty in Liverpool with some great deals online. You can either eat at the Cathedral as a part of the package price, or find your own places to eat and drink.

If you would like to book, see a full itinerary, or you want some more details then please fill in the Booking Form and send it back ASAP and we will send you details of how to pay.

We look forward to welcoming you to our beautiful city and Cathedral.

All bookings to be made no later than 31st January 2019

A Booking Form is included in this edition of The Virger



*On behalf of the National Officers
& the Members of the Central Council may we wish all our
Members & Friends, at home and abroad,
a very Joyful and Blessed Christmas
and a Prosperous & Happy New Year*



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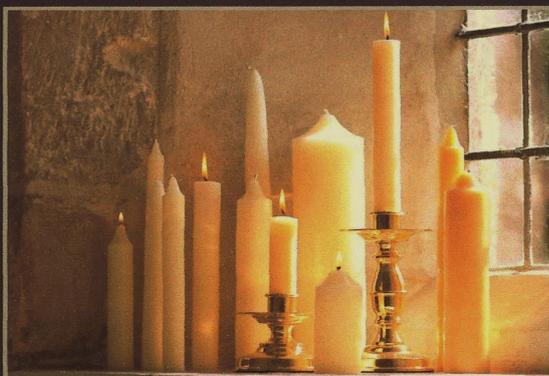
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2019**

THEME: THE VERGER IN MINISTRY

**Monday 12th to
Thursday 15th August**

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**BOOK YOUR PLACE BY 31st JANUARY 2019
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