

The Archbishop of York, Stephen Cottrell has accepted the invitation to be Patron of the Sodality of Mary, Mother of Priests (SMMS). He will officially take up the role during a virtual Zoom gathering on 17 September at 4pm where he will take time to chat with members about their ministries within the Anglican Communion.

Today, a special day in the Church's calendar, the Anglican Church celebrates the Birth of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As well as announcing Archbishop Stephen as Patron, new members will be welcomed in to the Sodality as it continues to grow in numbers since its beginning in 2016.

Archbishop Stephen said, "I am delighted to accept the invitation to be Patron of the Sodality of Mary, Mother of Priests. As we celebrate the gift of priestly ministry may we remain faithful to the charge we have been given, and rooted in our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Working in partnership with each other, may the unconditional, ever flowing grace of God help us to love and give us the healing balm of a merciful heart."

Fr Richard Peers, Superior said, "We are thrilled that Archbishop Stephen has agreed to be our first Patron. We look forward to having a relationship of prayerful support for each other. Joy in the wonderful gift of priestly ministry is at the heart of our vocation as a community and Archbishop Stephen has always demonstrated such great joy in his ministry, it is a model for many of us."

Notes

The Sodality arose out of a need in the Church of England for an organisation open to all priests, that is unapologetically Anglo-Catholic in its spirituality and practices. In particular Sodalists rejoice in a community which offers a rigorous and energising rule of life lived out by secular priests in parochial and sector ministry. This is supported by friendship for one another and a deeply Jesus centred spirituality of mission and ministry.

The Sodality spent a year in formation before officially coming into existence on the 16th February 2016 with the first admission of members at the shrine of St Simon Stock, Aylesford Priory.

Members are priests from across the worldwide Anglican Communion, men and women, married, civilly partnered and single. Their aim is to grow in holiness by sharing in a pious association of prayer and devotion.

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