

Synod, let me start this run of farewell speeches by staying close to home as we say a Synod farewell to Glyn Webster who I suspect is one of a very small number of clergy who have served their entire ministry in one diocese – the Diocese of York. This is perhaps especially remarkable given that Glyn is a Lancastrian!

Ordained deacon in 1977 and retiring 44 years later, he has served as curate, vicar, rural dean, residentiary canon, acting dean and suffragan bishop all in the same diocese.

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Glyn's background as a nurse and his eighteen years in hospital chaplaincy formed a significant basis for his pastoral ministry which he has demonstrated so admirably throughout his ordained ministry. As we've been reminded during the current pandemic, our NHS workers and hospital chaplaincies see all too often the realities of suffering and grief and yet can offer the faith, hope and love which are so desperately needed in these situations. ^ ^

It was my predecessor, but two, Archbishop Habgood who spotted Glyn's qualities and he became an honorary canon of York Minster and Rural Dean of York. Glyn of course is no stranger to synodical proceedings having served as a member of clergy for the York diocese whilst still in his role as hospital chaplain. ^

As the years went on, Glyn became a canon of York Minster, twice serving as Acting Dean ensuring worship, good governance and pastoral care continued. For most of this time, he was also Prolocutor of the Lower House of the Convocation of York and a member of the Archbishops' Council. Glyn's insightful contributions to our ecclesial committees have been of huge benefit to the Church. He is also an extrovert, meaning he gets his energy from people. This prepared him well for his ministry as a bishop. Glyn became Bishop of Beverley in 2013 and he has served with whole hearted commitment, huge care and pastoral wisdom the 100 or so Parishes that look to him for sacramental and pastoral care across the Province of York.

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Many of these parishes are in some of the most deprived areas the Church of England serves. Glyn's ability to maintain good relationships with the bishops and senior staff of nine different dioceses multiplies the complexity of the task involved but also witnesses to the mutual flourishing we spoke of earlier today. ^ But he has done it with great faithfulness. It hasn't always been easy and there have been challenges along the way. Glyn has navigated these with great dignity. ^

However, throughout his ministry, Bishop Glyn has not lost his sense of humour. The twinkle in his eye and pomposity busting aside has lightened many an awkward or potentially stuffy occasion. Glyn has never forgotten that the bishop is first and foremost a pastor: to his people as well as to his clergy. And this, his primary vocation, has been nurtured by the daily disciplines of prayer and the renewal of his life and ministry around the altar. This spiritual rootedness in Christ is evident to all who know him. He is a leader who knows how to be led. He is one who is known by his priests and people. Glyn, we will miss you hugely but I look forward to our partnership in the gospel continuing.

Glyn, thank you and God Bless you in all that lies ahead.

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ENDSÂ

The Rt Revd Glyn Webster will be retiring from his role as Bishop of Beverley at Epiphany, 6 January 2022.

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