

An open letter to the people of Guernsey from the Dean and Vice Deans of Guernsey

25 April 2021

The Vice Deans, Penny Graysmith and Jon Honour, and I were shocked and dismayed when we read the report in the *Guernsey Press* on Saturday morning about the behaviour of our former colleague, John Moore.

We are truly sorry that the actions of our former colleague have caused distress and harm to another person. Our calling as leaders of the Church is to protect and respect everybody, especially the vulnerable, and we feel a great sense of shame that we have failed to do this on this occasion. Sexual abuse is a deeply selfish act which is morally contrary to Christian teaching.

We wish to reassure the people of Guernsey, whom we are called to serve, that we are committed to the highest standards of behaviour. We offer the following extracts from the Church of England's **Guidelines for the Professional Conduct of the Clergy** for reflection by the whole community of the people of God in the Deanery of Guernsey.

- The solemn reminder about trust that is in the ordination vows confronts all the ordained with the privilege and responsibility entailed in their particular ministry. We know that the Church of God expects high standards, but it also remains true that society at large expects high standards of the clergy. This is true of both those who profess faith in Jesus Christ and those who do not. A failure in meeting the standard expected results in profound disappointment, and a deep sense of being let down.
- The reputation of the Church in the community depends to a great extent on the integrity and example of its clergy, who should recognize their role as public representatives of the Church. Their lives should enhance and embody the communication of the gospel.
- The clergy are called to an exemplary standard of moral behaviour. This goes beyond what is legally acceptable: a distinction can be made between what is legal and what is morally acceptable. There is no separation between the public and home life of the clergy: at all times and in all places they should manifest the highest standards of personal conduct.

The Guidelines leave no room for doubt about what is expected of clergy. Even though we are all sinners, who get things wrong and make mistakes, we state our commitment to the Guidelines for our personal and professional conduct. We are sorry for what has happened.

We are in no doubt that much is asked of those of us who are called to minister as clergy. We ask for prayers for all the clergy who serve in the Deanery of Guernsey, that we may be worthy of the trust placed in us.

We feel it appropriate to let you know that none of us was aware either that John Moore had returned to Guernsey or that he had appeared in the Magistrate's Court last Friday until the Dean was invited to comment on the verdict on Friday afternoon.

We are conscious that many will have found it distressing to read the difficult news on Saturday morning. Many, including those to whom John Moore had ministered during his

time in Guernsey, will feel the force of the statement above: 'A failure in meeting the standard expected results in profound disappointment, and a deep sense of being let down.'

If you have been affected in any way by this news and wish to speak about it, we offer links to two websites which may be helpful:

- <https://www.churchofengland.org.gg/safe-spaces>
- <https://www.safespacesenglandandwales.org.uk/>

Tim Barker
Dean of Guernsey