

Bishop's consultation with Diocese. March 13,

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11 MAR 2013

Dear Bishop Nicholas.

You will I hope forgive me for not divulging my name and address to this note. Its not going to be one of those awful anon letters. Rather this is a case of not wanting to pin point a particular parish or its clergy.

I was asked to attend your recent meeting in the Heytsbury Deanery but declined. Having lived in this part of the Diocese for much of my life and having in my time served on PCC. Dio Synod & Deanery Synod I have heard the same old message many times. I am so sad that increasingly I find myself more and more disheartened at what is going on in local church circles.

In my particular deanery the church increasingly appears as very much an inward looking group hell bent on self preservation. Some of the full time clergy seem increasingly lazy, much of what used to be expected of them performed by lay folk and part time badly trained mass priests. One wonders what some of our local clergy do all day? I can recall vicars utterly dedicated when a cleric had what was called a vocation. Today those I observe see it as just another job, must have our day off, dont do too much on a Sunday, plenty of hol's The examples we are set does little to enthuse or inspire those of us in the pew and, as I say, I among several I know are increasingly put off. I think it was Ghandi who once said, 'Jesus I love I wish he had not brought with him his leperous bride.'

Increasingly we are being asked to give more and more money to prop up the establishment and on top of this it costs more than we can raise to maintain the ancient buildings. What a lot one is expected to give in order to be able to say ones prayers in church on a Sunday. If we saw some vigorous mission and caring by our clergy, in return we might be the more enthusiastic ourselves and willing to dig deeper. As it is I increasingly have been prompted to direct my giving to caring concerns rather than propping up what to me alas is an increasingly non vocational group of clergy. To this I add that attending church is of little help. I know we go to give as well as to get but one so often nowadays sit in services conducted by part time, poorly trained priests. Sermons, weak and patronising. I thus lack the enthusiasm I once had for my Sunday worship.

I love my old C of E with all my heart and I trust 'My God' But if people like me are to be inflamed and inspired its the local clergy that need to be awakened especially in this neck of the woods.

You are doing your tour of the Diocese to seek opinions for a new way forward. I would be too coward to express the above at a meeting and would not wish to undermine a local Vicar. However if we are expected to give until it hurts at least we should expect our clergy, particularly those who we pay for, to set us an example

From one who dearly loves his church and its traditions  
and who has tried to serve it in many ways these past 50 years.