

# *Integrity in Ministry*

A Document of Principles and Standards for  
Catholic Clergy & Religious in Australia

June 2004  
(Reprinted April 2010)



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*(A committee of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and  
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**ISBN 0 949258 13 X**

Typeset & Design: Rivergum Marketing Pty Ltd.

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## Foreword

Conscious of the privilege it is for clergy and religious to be called to minister among the People of God, the committee members appointed to revise *Integrity in Ministry* hope that this new edition of the document will serve to renew and enhance the ministry of deacons, priests and religious throughout the Catholic Church in Australia.

A code of conduct formulated for any profession aims to breathe freedom and energy into practitioners of that particular profession as they interact with the people who come to them seeking to benefit from their expertise. A code of conduct is not intended to restrict or stifle the conduct of those professionals to whom it applies. Rather, it is a set of behavioural standards to ensure that professionals themselves preserve their own dignity and respect the human dignity of all to whom they relate in the exercise of their profession.

*Integrity in Ministry* has been compiled to serve as a resource for those preparing for ministry in the Catholic Church and as a code of conduct and guide for reflection for those already involved in ministry. It sets out behaviour for clergy and religious to integrate into their day-to-day ministry and serves as a check-list against which they can review the quality of the ministerial activities in which they engage. It is likewise a valuable resource for those whose particular ministry is the formation of men and women preparing for ministry.

Church ministers are not exempt from the inadequacies and failures to be found among other professions. Religious and clergy sometimes fall short of the behavioural standards they set for themselves. Chapter 8 of *Integrity in Ministry*, entitled *When Communion is Broken*, outlines procedures to be followed when a serious breach of the code of conduct is brought to the notice of a Church Authority. As part of the process of dealing with the misconduct, Bishops and Congregational Leaders are to seek advice from the same Consultative Panel established under the guidelines of *Towards Healing*.

The Revision Committee is grateful to all who provided critical and constructive comment on various aspects of the previous edition of *Integrity in Ministry*. Such comment has been invaluable to the Committee as it has gone about its work of shaping this new edition of the document.

The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference and the Australian Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes have jointly agreed that this revised edition of *Integrity in Ministry* shall take effect immediately and will apply to all clergy and religious in ministry until the next planned revision scheduled for the latter part of 2010. May it be an instrument that facilitates faithful and effective collaborative ministry among the People of God throughout Australia.

Archbishop Philip Wilson DD JCL  
Co-Chair  
National Committee for Professional Standards

Br Michael Hill fms  
Co-Chair  
National Committee for Professional Standards

# Preamble

## For whom is this document intended?

Integrity in Ministry is a code of conduct for clergy and religious engaged in Ministry on behalf of the Catholic Church in Australia. It has been written for the guidance of those in Ministry and for the information of those people with and among whom clergy and religious exercise their Ministry. The values inherent in this document apply also to lay people who have been engaged to carry out formal ministries in the Catholic Church.

Note: Throughout the document bishops and leaders of religious institutes are included in references to clergy and religious.

## Context

The ecclesiology of Vatican II provides the framework from which principles for pastoral practice and religious life are drawn in this document. After each principle an illustrative list of behavioural standards is suggested. The commitment to provide a positive and holistic context for standards prevents this document appearing simply as a list of forbidden behaviours. It also means that behaviours that support good health or spiritual growth are found on the same page as those that guard against acts of professional misconduct. Various behaviours will call for different degrees of compliance. Responses to non-compliance will also vary widely, from loving support, to formal and even legal procedures depending on the nature and severity of the particular issue.

While acknowledging fully the harm caused by the misconduct of some clergy and religious, this document begins from the recognition that the majority of those professed or ordained for service in the Church live in a committed effort to follow and serve the mission of the Church faithfully.

## Aim

The aim of this document is to support Australian religious and clergy and others who work or minister on behalf of the church in their effort to live dedicated and committed lives. It seeks to offer them an ecclesial context for measuring their behaviours as witnesses and ministers of the Church's mission. While conscious of the need to protect against harm, its goal is to provide positive guidelines both for healthy lives among clergy and religious, and for the highest standards of pastoral practice.

## Objectives

The objectives of this document are:

- ◆ to offer a theology of Church as the context for shaping and measuring behavioural standards for religious and clergy;
- ◆ to encourage clergy and religious in their vocation as witnesses and ministers of the reign of God through lives of respect, service, integrity and selfless love;
- ◆ to support clergy and religious in their efforts to care for themselves and one another;

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Structure

- ◆ to support religious and clergy in their efforts to be visibly accountable as witnesses and ministers of the Church's mission;
- ◆ to support clergy and religious in their concern to protect children and adults from all abuses of power, including sexual abuse and harassment;
- ◆ to support the Church in responding to instances of sexual abuse and professional misconduct, in the best interests of those who have been harmed, the wider community, and the offender.
- ◆ A brief outline of the theological background to the document is offered on the following page.
- ◆ Each chapter of the document begins with a summary of the ecclesial vision relevant to its particular topic, signified by italic script.
- ◆ A number of principles that flow from that vision relevant to the life and ministry of clergy and religious are then outlined, signified by bold print.
- ◆ Below each principle an illustrative list of behavioural standards is provided. The list is not intended to be exhaustive, but to suggest a number of key behavioural standards that follow from the principle. As already noted, standards range from those that promote good health, through those that support the highest levels of pastoral practice, to those that guard against professional misconduct. The degree of compliance required, and the nature of the response to non-compliance, will vary from standard to standard.
- ◆ Behaviours necessary to safeguard integrity and clarity around issues of sexual and professional boundaries are signified by a shaded background. These call for a high degree of compliance.
- ◆ The final chapter offers some guidance for responding to instances of non-compliance.

Legislation

- ◆ In view of the frequent changes to legislation which relates to *Integrity in Ministry*, the National Committee for Professional Standards has decided not to list all the relevant legislation in force in the various jurisdictions throughout Australia. However, the Committee reminds those to whom *Integrity in Ministry* applies of their serious obligation to comply with legislation relating to such matters as Privacy, Discrimination, Harassment and the Protection of Children. It is incumbent on clergy and religious to familiarize themselves with the relevant legislation and to abide by such legislation.

## An Outline of the Theological Context of this Document

### Theology of Communion

*Integrity in Ministry* has been written on the foundation of a theology of communion. It is an understanding of the Church and its mission that has its origins in Jesus' life and teaching, which consciously directed the life of the Church in its first ten centuries, and has been reemphasized in the teaching of Vatican II.

This notion, so central to the life of the Church, shapes the lives of all the baptised, and offers a reference by which the ways clergy and religious live and minister may be evaluated.

In *Integrity in Ministry* the word 'communion' is always used to translate the Latin word *communio*, or the Greek word *koinonia*.

Throughout the first millennium the concept of communion held a central place in the Church: the development of the Christian Scriptures, creeds and doctrine all served to establish and safeguard communion. Communion between various local churches, under the care of the Church of Rome, was signified and celebrated by mutual admission to Eucharistic communion. Vatican II has shown how communion can contribute to the Church's self understanding in the modern world.

How can such a large and significant notion be simply defined? At its broadest level it refers to God's plan for the whole of creation. God 'missions' the Son and the Spirit into the world to heal the wounds of sin and division. The world God wants is a world where all brokenness is mended, where all divisions are reconciled, where *shalom* (unity and peace) prevail throughout creation, and every human person is loved, respected and honoured as a son or daughter of God. Creation itself awaits its "share in the glorious freedom of the children of God."<sup>1</sup> On that day when God's plan is fulfilled to "bring all things together under Christ"<sup>2</sup>, the whole of creation will share in God's own life as a perfect communion in love.

Through the Church Christ's mission in the world is continued in two particular ways. Firstly, each day the members of the Church seek to live a life of communion in love as completely as they are able and at the Eucharist share sacramentally in the perfect communion of the Father with the Son and the Holy Spirit. Secondly, the members of the Church live a service of love in the world to build communion and *shalom* among men, women and children everywhere.

The Church is to be a "sign of unity, and an instrument of God's peace."

It could be said that the mission of the Church, its nature and its way of life are one: a communion of love committed to the love of God, humanity and God's creation, and to the healing of all hurt and division.

The lives and actions of all the baptised, and particularly clergy and religious who hold positions of leadership and trust in the Church, are to be evaluated in the light of this understanding of the Church's nature and mission.

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<sup>1</sup> Romans 8:21

<sup>2</sup> Ephesians 1:10

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When clergy and religious live and minister in ways that contribute to the healing of creation, and to the love, honour and respect due to all God's children, they honour their vocation and build up the communion of the Church.

When clergy and religious live and minister in ways that contribute to the brokenness of the world, and damage the love, honour and respect due to all God's children, they dishonour their vocation and fracture the communion of the Church. In those moments communion is broken and needs to be restored.

Communion lies at the heart of Jesus' mission and his understanding of the reign of God. The first words spoken by Jesus in the gospel of Mark are these: *'The time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is close at hand. Repent and believe the gospel.'*<sup>3</sup> In the description of the day that follows Jesus gathers disciples to share his mission, proclaims the word of God, heals men and women of physical and spiritual illness, and spends time in prayer. The day models life under the reign of God, where women and men are healed and gathered together in a communion of faith, hope and love.

Luke begins Jesus' public ministry with the quote from Isaiah: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord.'<sup>4</sup>

Throughout Luke's gospel Jesus reveals the meaning of God's rule when he heals, mends, reconciles, teaches, forgives and restores life to the men and women of his time. The 'kingdom of God is among us'<sup>5</sup> when women and men are restored to communion with one another and with God.

The Acts of the Apostles shows the Church continuing the mission of Jesus and the Spirit by becoming both a sign and an instrument of God's rule of love in the world. The Church brings good news, proclaims liberty, ministers healing and announces God's favour.

It is a mission that transforms the ordinary values of the world. It grows slowly, from small beginnings, often unnoticed but always carried forward by the powerful Spirit of God.<sup>6</sup> Its foundation is love: *'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind'; 'You must love your neighbour as yourself.'*<sup>7</sup> In fact the mission to live the reign of God is a commitment to a way of love. *'I give you a new commandment; love one another; you must love one another just as I have loved you. It is by your love for one another that everyone will recognise you as my disciples.'*<sup>8</sup>

When the Spirit of love rules in the hearts of the men and women of the Church they are not just formed as a human community but they share in the communion of God's own life as Trinity: *'May they all be one, just as, Father, you are in me and I am in you, so that they also may be in us...'*<sup>9</sup> St. Paul speaks of this as the great mystery of God's plan, *'that he would bring everything together under Christ as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth.'*<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Mark 1:14f.

<sup>4</sup> Luke 4:18f.

<sup>5</sup> cf., Matt 12:28.

<sup>6</sup> cf., Matt, chp 13.

<sup>7</sup> Luke 10:27f.

<sup>8</sup> John 13:34f.

<sup>9</sup> John 17:21.

<sup>10</sup> Eph 1:10.

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There is no division here between the mission of the Church and its way of life. It is a communion of love, committed in love to the mending of divisions, the healing of wounds, the praise of God, and the celebration of faith, hope and love. The relationships between the women and men of the Church, and their relationships with the world, are in this sense the very mission of the Church. Out of love we desire the deepest well being of one another.

We commit ourselves to relationships that embody respect, love and service: *'You know that among the gentiles the rulers lord it over them, and the great men make their authority felt. Among you this is not to happen. No; anyone who wants to become great among you must be your servant, and anyone who wants to be first among you must be your slave...'*<sup>11</sup>

The Church, by its life, mission, relationships and worship, strives to be a sign and an instrument of the communion that is God's plan for creation.

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<sup>11</sup> Matt 20:25-27

## 1. A Communion of Love

*By daily acts that often surprised his contemporaries, Jesus made God's love for every human person very clear. He made a special effort to make it clear in the case of those who might have doubted it the most: the poor, the vulnerable, the sick, the young and those publicly regarded as sinners. He showed to them in particular that they were invited into the communion of God's love. For this reason the Church also, in all of its actions, makes clear the dignity and value of every human person, especially those most vulnerable. The Church is committed to protect and respect the rights of all persons, among them children, youth, members of cultural and ethnic minorities and all whose rights and dignity are devalued or at risk.*

*Clergy and religious, because of their particular ministries, have a responsibility to protect, honour and advance the dignity of every human person. They are often welcomed into the lives of people at sensitive and important moments, when people are more than usually vulnerable. Their relationships with people in these moments are guided by a spirit of love, sensitivity and personal disinterest that has the well being of the other as its foundation. Sometimes the desire for personal relationship or nourishment will be set aside for the sake of a greater love.*

*Care for others is expressed in many ways: words, silence, presence and touch all might convey love and solidarity. The area of physical touch calls for great sensitivity. Throughout his life Jesus held, embraced, reached towards and laid hands on those he loved. God is pictured as holding people against a cheek or in the palm of a hand, and nursing them within folded arms. Touch can communicate healing, love and respect. Touch may also be ambiguous, confusing, even threatening to those who are vulnerable. It can be used as a means of control, harassment or abuse. The use of touch in pastoral relationships needs to be guided by prudent judgment that has the deepest well being of the other as its basis.*

### **1.1 In their lives and ministries clergy and religious witness God's love for every human person by sensitivity, reverence and respect in their relationships.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ treating all to whom one provides pastoral support with respect and courtesy;
- ◆ actively avoiding all forms of harmful discrimination;
- ◆ honouring the equality of women, men and children;
- ◆ resolving disputes through respectful dialogue, negotiation and/or professional mediation.

To safeguard integrity, and to preserve clarity of sexual and professional boundaries with regard to this principle, it is essential that clergy and religious:

- ◆ avoid any behaviour that could reasonably be interpreted as harassment;

Harassment encompasses a broad range of behaviours, including but not limited to:

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- physical, verbal, written or psychological abuse
- bullying
- racial and religious insults
- derogatory ethnic slurs
- unwelcome touching and inappropriate behaviour
- sexual jokes and comments
- requests for sexual favours
- display of pornographic materials.

Harassment can occur as a result of a single incident or a pattern of behaviour where the purpose or effect is to create a hostile, offensive humiliating or intimidating environment.

## **1.2 Clergy and religious witness to the inclusive embrace of God's love.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ reaching out to all people, especially those who feel alienated from or marginalised within the Catholic Community;
- ◆ being sensitive to the diverse forms of spirituality and theology in the Church;
- ◆ responding sensitively to the issues that arise when different cultures meet, and respectfully welcoming minorities;<sup>12</sup>
- ◆ encouraging inter church and inter faith dialogue.

## **1.3 Religious and clergy witness and minister God's nurturing love for every person.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ behaving in ways that nurture the growth and vocation of all;
- ◆ behaving and speaking in ways that indicate a respect for the role and function of all;
- ◆ working in ways that respect different charisms, spiritualities, qualifications and ministries;<sup>13</sup>
- ◆ avoiding every impulse to 'lord it over'<sup>14</sup> those they serve;
- ◆ avoiding the fostering of dependency or subservience by encouraging collaboration and mutual respect.

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<sup>12</sup> cf., Vita Consecrata, art.80.

<sup>13</sup> cf. 1 Cor 12:12-27

<sup>14</sup> Matt.20:25ff.

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**1.4 Pastoral love requires that clergy and religious respect the physical and emotional boundaries appropriate to relationships with adults and minors.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ exercising sensitivity with regard to the physical and emotional space others require in pastoral encounters;
- ◆ exercising a prudent judgment, that has the well-being of the other as its goal, in initiating and responding to physical contact, such as giving a comforting hug or an affirming touch;
- ◆ providing pastoral ministry only in places that offer a sufficiently safe environment where there is openness and visibility;
- ◆ exercising prudent judgment in the expression of affection and regard, and in the giving of gifts.

To safeguard integrity, and to preserve clarity of sexual and professional boundaries with regard to this principle, it is essential that clergy and religious:

- ◆ do not provide pastoral ministry in the sleeping quarters/bedrooms of one's community house or of the presbytery/parish house.

**1.5 Religious and clergy witness to God's care for the most vulnerable by their concern for the dignity and safety of children and youth.<sup>15</sup>**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ avoiding any form of over-familiarity or inappropriate language;
- ◆ ensuring whenever reasonably possible that another adult is present or close by when providing pastoral ministry to a minor;
- ◆ avoiding, whenever reasonably possible, being alone with a minor or group of minors in sleeping, dressing or bathing areas, making sure to exercise prudent judgment and behaviour when another adult cannot be present;
- ◆ familiarising oneself with the causes and signs of child abuse or neglect, the steps to be taken for the protection of children, and the procedures to follow if abuse or neglect is suspected or observed;
- ◆ familiarising oneself with the procedures outlined in the document *Towards Healing*.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, 27.

<sup>16</sup> See *Towards Healing: Principles and Procedures in Responding to Complaints of Sexual Abuse Against Personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia* (2010)

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To safeguard integrity, and to preserve clarity of sexual and professional boundaries, it is essential that clergy and religious in the exercise of their ministry:

- ◆ behave with due prudence, not staying overnight in the same room as a minor or vulnerable person unless it is impossible to avoid. In that circumstance every provision needs to be made to provide a safe environment, eg the permission of a parent or guardian, and appropriate openness and visibility;
- ◆ never administer corporal punishment;
- ◆ use electronic and print media responsibly;
- ◆ do not supply or serve alcohol or any controlled substance to a minor without the express permission of a parent or guardian.

## 2. At the Service of Communion

*Jesus served God's plan by serving the men and women of his time. He came 'as one who serves'<sup>17</sup>, and he invited those who followed him to do the same, 'washing each other's feet'<sup>18</sup> as he had done. His followers would not 'lord it over'<sup>19</sup> one another, but each would count themselves least of all for the sake of the others. The lost would be sought, the wounded healed, the sinful forgiven, the walls of division brought down, so that 'all may be one'<sup>20</sup> in the communion of love that unites human beings. Religious and clergy witness to that spirit of service by their way of life and by their pastoral conduct.*

### 2.1 Religious and clergy, among them religious leaders and bishops, are particularly called to witness a spirit of service. Because of the trust they are given and the visibility of their witness and leadership, they are conscious of the unique power and responsibility they have in pastoral relationships.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ relating to all people in a spirit of humility, reverence and respect, with a commitment to the deepest well being of the other;
- ◆ creating cooperative and harmonious relationships in the communities in which one lives and works;
- ◆ respecting the call to collaborative effort between women and men in accord with the Gospel;
- ◆ encouraging and supporting all members of the community in the fulfillment of their vocations;
- ◆ consulting widely, seeking consensus and providing feedback where possible, before making important decisions;
- ◆ exercising caution in the use of one's status or institutional power, never using these for one's own advantage;
- ◆ taking up leadership and service in a community with respect for the life, customs, history and vision of the persons who already make up that community;
- ◆ seeking opportunities to share decision-making responsibilities;
- ◆ discouraging the development of personality cults centred on oneself;
- ◆ creating environments where others feel confident to offer constructive criticism.

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<sup>17</sup> Luke 22:27.

<sup>18</sup> John 13:1-20.

<sup>19</sup> Matt 20:25ff

<sup>20</sup> John 17:21.

**2.2 In addition to their own professional development and formation, bishops and leaders of religious institutes are called to a service of support for those clergy and religious towards whom they exercise pastoral care.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle would be the provision of:

- ◆ educative and support structures that assist clergy and religious to achieve the standards set out in this document;
- ◆ opportunities for formation, development and renewal;
- ◆ selection and initial formation processes that support students to address the concerns and issues of *Integrity in Ministry*;
- ◆ clear communication concerning roles, expectations and outcomes;
- ◆ fair and consistent treatment;
- ◆ healthy and safe working and living conditions;
- ◆ open and consultative appointment procedures, which are impartial and in response to the needs of the communion and mission of the Church;
- ◆ personnel management practices based on fairness and equity;
- ◆ appropriate grievance procedures;
- ◆ structures that ensure adequate human and financial support.

**2.3 Clergy and many religious serve the communion of the Church by ministering or presiding at prayer, sacraments and eucharist. In those moments they are at the service of a community of active and equal persons, seeking to enable the best and fullest expression of the community's prayer, praise and communion with the life of God.<sup>21</sup>**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ preparing for and participating in liturgies and services of prayer, either as president or minister, with reverence, humility and respect for all persons in the community;<sup>22</sup>
- ◆ supporting and participating in processes that prepare and assist people to celebrate in prayer and sacrament as fully and well as possible;
- ◆ celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation in ways that respect penitents' right to privacy and to a safe environment. This will include providing options for openness and visibility for those who desire them;
- ◆ continuing development of one's knowledge of liturgical norms, theology and practice;
- ◆ preparing carefully, and developing skills for all the occasions in which the word of God is preached or proclaimed;<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>cf., *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, art.14.

<sup>22</sup>cf., *Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, art.47.

<sup>23</sup>*Code of Canon Law*, Canon 762; 769;279§3.

### 3. Ministers of Communion: A Life of Commitment

*Following in Jesus' footsteps, religious and clergy promise their lives to the service of God's plan, to 'reconcile all things to him, everything in heaven and on earth, by making peace through his death on the cross.'<sup>24</sup> They are, by the witness of their way of life and their pastoral work, ministers of communion. This is a vocation and a way of life that continually invites openness, growth, humble reverence and ongoing commitment.*

#### 3.1 Led by the Spirit, religious and clergy continually open themselves in response to a vocation that comes from God and is lived in the midst of the Church and the human community.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ faithful commitment to prayer, meditation, spiritual reading, scripture and the celebration of the sacraments;
- ◆ commitment to a life of faith, hope and love;
- ◆ prayerful reflection on, and commitment to, the virtues of poverty, chastity and obedience in ways appropriate to one's way of life;
- ◆ reflection on and commitment to the charism of one's religious community;
- ◆ participation in the process of spiritual direction;
- ◆ the undertaking of annual retreats and ongoing spiritual formation;
- ◆ development of knowledge and understanding of scripture, theology, Church teaching and tradition.<sup>25</sup>

#### 3.2 As part of their vocational commitment clergy and religious also continue to develop the pastoral and professional skills their ministries require.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ participation in support processes such as:
  - a specially formed support group
  - an existing support group or programme, such as community meetings, clergy fraternity, or the *Ministry to Priests* programme
  - a one-to-one support relationship with a colleague

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<sup>24</sup> 1 Col 1:20.

<sup>25</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 279§1;663§3.

- ◆ participation in continuing education programmes;<sup>26</sup>
- ◆ participation in regular professional supervision;
- ◆ establishing processes to evaluate the quality of one's work, including assessment by one's peers and those one serves;
- ◆ engaging in guided self appraisal;
- ◆ participation in local and national associations of one's peers;<sup>27</sup>
- ◆ implementing the outcomes of such reflection and evaluations.

**3.3 It is healthy for religious and clergy to develop relationships beyond those of their pastoral relationships wherever that is possible, so that pastoral relationships do not bear the burden of providing affirmation and affective support to the minister.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ the development of a network of supportive peers and friends with whom one has no formal pastoral relationship;
- ◆ cultivation of a sensitivity to the inequalities and risks that might accompany a personal relationship with any person with whom one has or had a pastoral relationship; exercise of similar care with regard to establishing a pastoral relationship with a close friend;
- ◆ ensuring that one's actions serve the well being of the other in the situations described above;
- ◆ reflecting on any such relationships with one's support person or group when that is appropriate, to review how effectively the boundaries between the pastoral and the personal have been maintained.

**3.4 Commitment to one's vocation as a minister of communion means that religious and clergy will act with integrity in all their human relationships.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ establishing relationships that are able to develop and mature within the context of gospel values;
- ◆ establishing and maintaining relationships that are characterised by openness, honesty and integrity;
- ◆ not establishing a relationship through an abuse of power.

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<sup>26</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 279 § 2, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, Chapter VI; cf *Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, Chapter III; *Vita Consecrata*, art.69.

<sup>27</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 278

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**3.5 By virtue of their commitment, religious and clergy give witness to a way of life that respects the dignity and worth of everyone they meet in the exercise of their ministry. Consequently, they act with integrity in all their relationships and interactions with others.<sup>28</sup>**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle:

- ◆ avoidance of all actions or language that could reasonably be interpreted as sexually provocative;
- ◆ never seeking to initiate sexual behaviour;
- ◆ rejection of any invitation to participate in sexual behaviour;
- ◆ as far as reasonably possible avoidance of situations and relationships that place undue stress on one's ability to remain committed to celibacy.

These standards also apply to relationships between married clergy and anyone other than their spouses.

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<sup>28</sup> Cf., Presbyterium Ordinis art. 16 & Code of Canon Law, Canon 599 & Perfectae Caritatis article 12.

## 4. Ministers of Communion: Developing and Maintaining Competence

*The Spirit leads clergy and religious in various ways into the service of God's reign of love, to witness and to minister the healing and communion God desires for creation. Because of this many people are drawn to them in the hope that their 'grief and anguish'<sup>29</sup> might find healing. They come to the Church's ministers in trust and vulnerability, and are received with a love that has their deepest well-being as its goal.*

*In addition to love and faith, many of these situations call for the pastoral application of professional skills. 'Professional skills' indicates recognised competence in areas such as psychology, social work, spiritual direction and counselling. In keeping with their vocation, religious and clergy develop and maintain the skills their particular ministry or way of life requires. The demand of love also means that ministers recognise the limitations of their skills, and ensure that those in need have access to the best possible resources and care when their own limit is reached.*

### 4.1 In response to their vocation clergy and religious are committed to develop and maintain the pastoral skills that their particular ministry or way of life requires.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ keeping abreast of literature in the area of pastoral care;
- ◆ attending seminars/in-services related to pastoral care;
- ◆ reflecting regularly on one's pastoral practice with a competent supervisor or colleague;
- ◆ ongoing development of one's knowledge and understanding of Scripture, Church tradition and teaching;
- ◆ remaining updated in the social sciences and disciplines that contribute to pastoral skill.

### 4.2 Similarly religious and clergy develop and maintain the professional skills their particular ministry or way of life requires.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ regularly undertaking appropriate professional development;
- ◆ keeping up-to-date with the literature and developments relevant to their ministry;
- ◆ active membership of relevant professional associations.

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<sup>29</sup> *Gaudium et Specs*, art 1.

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**4.3 Out of desire for the well-being of those who come to them, religious and clergy recognise the limits of their own skills. While often called upon to give advice, they should offer counselling only when professionally qualified to do so.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ clarifying the context, purpose and expectations accompanying a request for spiritual direction, counselling, support or advice;
- ◆ understanding the processes of counselling and spiritual direction, and recognising one's limitations in those areas;
- ◆ maintaining an awareness of the professionals to whom one can refer people with specific needs;
- ◆ assessing the needs of a person who seeks assistance with any complex personal or relationship problem, and then referring the person on to an appropriately qualified professional;
- ◆ not using psychological tools or tests unless accredited and supervised in their use;
- ◆ not acting as a spiritual director or counsellor unless professionally qualified and supervised.

**4.4 The vocation to serve as ministers of healing means that clergy and religious will be sensitive to the risks accompanying relationships in which professional and personal lines are blurred. In such relationships the well-being of the other, the avoidance of any risk of exploitation, and the maintenance of professional judgment will determine the ministers' decisions.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ being careful to avoid potential conflicts of interest when called upon to advise family members, employees and close friends; refraining from entering into formal counselling relationships with family members, employees and close friends;
- ◆ avoiding as far as possible close business relationships with persons to whom one is providing intensive and/or one-to-one pastoral ministry;
- ◆ exercising prudent judgment before ministering in a situation where a conflict of interest may arise, e.g. when offering counselling, advice or spiritual direction to more than one person from the same family;
- ◆ exercising prudent judgment in the giving and receiving of gifts;
- ◆ keeping relevant, appropriate, dated notes and records when providing counselling, advice or emotional support.

**4.5 Pastoral care requires that a pastoral relationship be terminated when it becomes reasonably clear that the person seeking support is not benefiting. In such a case the person will be offered help to find another source of assistance.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ reviewing pastoral relationships with a colleague or supervisor to assess their effectiveness when that is in doubt;
- ◆ developing and maintaining a referral network;
- ◆ being clear about the limits of pastoral relationships when they commence.

To safeguard integrity, and to preserve clarity of sexual and professional boundaries with regard to this principle, it is essential that clergy and religious:

- ◆ seek professional advice and review of pastoral relationships where one is aware of:
  - feeling continually frustrated or angry in the relationship
  - being sexually attracted to the person one is supporting
  - projecting one's own feelings and issues onto the other person or persons in the pastoral relationship;
- ◆ seek professional advice and review of pastoral relationships where the person one is supporting:
  - acts in a sexual manner
  - is continually angry or frustrated in the context of the support relationship
  - shows no movement towards resolution of the issues at hand. In some cases the appropriate response will be to terminate the relationship, making an appropriate referral to another suitably qualified professional.

**4.6 Keeping appropriate records is an aspect of pastoral care.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ keeping an accurate diary of appointments, written and/or electronic, ensuring that those kept electronically are backed up;
- ◆ retaining one's written/electronic diaries;
- ◆ keeping a record of significant phone calls and other communications;
- ◆ making and retaining confidential notes of any events in the course of a pastoral relationship that provoke concern in the minister, with such notes to include a record of the date, time and matter of concern;
- ◆ collating, maintaining and disposing of personal and sensitive information in accordance with the National Privacy Principles. Some confidential records may need to be retained if these provide evidence of maintaining appropriate boundaries and relationships;
- ◆ storing all records securely.

## 5. Ministers of Communion: Commitment to Justice

*There is a thread of revelation that runs through the Old Testament reminding the people of God that their ritual and activities are incomplete if they do not live and act justly as a community. The prophet Amos expresses this clearly: 'I hate, I scorn your festivals, I take no pleasure in your solemn assemblies ... but let justice flow like water, and uprightness like a never failing stream.'<sup>30</sup> Jesus took up the same message many times in his stories and actions. The reign of God is revealed when the hungry are fed, the naked are clothed,<sup>31</sup> the poor and the outcast are gathered back into the communion of God's love and receive their just share in the gifts of creation.*

*For the Church which is committed to be a sign and an agent of God's reign, justice is central to its way of life and mission.*

### 5.1 Clergy and religious serve as witnesses and agents of God's justice by living and ministering justly in all things.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ living a life committed to 'do justice, to love tenderly, and to walk humbly with God';<sup>32</sup>
- ◆ supporting one's community to live justly in its own relationships and structures and in its relationships with the wider community;
- ◆ encouraging one's community to support local, national and universal actions for justice;
- ◆ collaborating with other Christian churches, faith groups and other organizations;
- ◆ knowing and promoting the social justice teachings of the local, national and universal Church;
- ◆ encouraging just action among those to whom one ministers.

### 5.2 Religious and clergy who have responsibility to supervise the work of others witness justice by ensuring just working conditions.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ ensuring that all employment procedures are based on principles of justice and equity, appropriate to each particular situation;
- ◆ negotiating clear documented agreed descriptions of each person's roles, responsibilities and duties, including one's own;
- ◆ providing safe and healthy working conditions;

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<sup>30</sup> Amos 5:21-24.

<sup>31</sup> cf., Matt 25:31-46.

<sup>32</sup> Micah 6:8.

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- ◆ providing adequately resourced access to training, professional development and professional supervision;
- ◆ making accessible to employees and volunteers copies of *Integrity in Ministry* and *Towards Healing*;
- ◆ providing just rates of remuneration for skill, responsibility and performance;
- ◆ implementing appropriate grievance procedures against improper or unreasonable administrative acts;
- ◆ ensuring that all State and Commonwealth legislation regarding terms and conditions of employment are observed.

**5.3 Clergy and religious act with integrity and fairness when they receive complaints of sexual, physical or psychological abuse.**<sup>33</sup>

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ responding to information promptly and seriously, and with pastoral sensitivity;
- ◆ promptly informing the relevant church authority;
- ◆ alerting the complainant to the existence of the *Towards Healing* process and providing relevant contact and referral details;
- ◆ working with the complainant to identify what needs to be done immediately to ensure that he or she feels safe from further abuse;
- ◆ explicitly assuring those who allege abuse that immediate assistance can be made available to provide independent support;
- ◆ in collaboration with the church authority, supporting the healing of others who, as well as the victims, have been seriously affected by incidents of abuse – family, friends and community of both the alleged victim and offender.

**Legal Compliance**

It is essential that clergy and religious abide by the requirements of mandatory reporting and other relevant civil legislation.<sup>34</sup> They also take care to ensure that the proper processes of law are not interfered with, nor hindered. Notwithstanding the civil law requirements, clergy and religious are required to alert Church authorities in accordance with section 5.3.

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<sup>33</sup> cf., *Relevant Legislation on Mandatory Reporting*. cf., *Towards Healing*, clause 37.5

<sup>34</sup> cf., *Relevant Legislation on Mandatory Reporting*

## 6. Ministers of Communion: Integrity in Administration

*While the experience of Pentecost was still fresh among them, the first Christians developed a way of life and prayer together that expressed their communion in Christ: 'The whole group of believers was united, heart and soul; no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, as everything they owned was held in common.'<sup>35</sup> It was a first attempt to exercise stewardship of the community's goods in a way that nurtured ecclesial communion. They followed their Jewish heritage in believing that the gifts of creation and the fruits of human effort were to be used in the service of God's plan and for the good of all people.*

*Religious and clergy who have responsibility for property and finance recognise that they are stewards, not owners of those goods. In the spirit of the first disciples they administer their responsibilities with justice and integrity.*

### 6.1 Clergy and religious who share responsibility for the administration of property and finance exercise their responsibilities in the service of communion and in the light of Church tradition.<sup>36</sup>

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ exercising their administration in the light of the Gospel, and the spirit and charism of their religious community;
- ◆ exercising their administration in conformity with the Church's teaching regarding its mission and call to justice;
- ◆ observing the rules of office relating to administration of property and finances, as set out in Canon Law and/or in their constitutions and statutes.

### 6.2 As an aspect of integrity, religious and clergy plan and review their stewardship of property and finance.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ exercising responsible stewardship and accountability;
- ◆ drawing up a budget of income and expenditure each year;<sup>37</sup>
- ◆ keeping accurate records of income and expenditure;<sup>38</sup>
- ◆ having all accounts audited or monitored each year;
- ◆ providing financial statements and reports on property administration and maintenance at least annually to stakeholders;<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Acts 4:32.

<sup>36</sup> cf., *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, art. 2451.

<sup>37</sup> cf., *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 1284§3.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. Canon 1284§7.

<sup>39</sup> cf., Ibid, Canon 1284§2:8<sup>0</sup>.

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- ◆ complying with all reporting and accountability laws as required by church, state and national legislation.

**6.3 As an aspect of integrity and justice, clergy and religious avoid using their positions to seek or obtain any financial or other personal advantage.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ recording, by the issuing of receipts, the acceptance of all financial gifts or benefits for and on behalf of the ministry in which one is engaged;
- ◆ refusing gifts, rewards or benefits which might compromise the integrity of one's ministry;
- ◆ not soliciting gifts, rewards or benefits for oneself;
- ◆ exercising prudent judgment in the giving of gifts or benefits;
- ◆ not borrowing or misappropriating money from accounts.

## 7. Ministers of Communion: Responsibility for Personal Well-Being

*The Gospel commands us: 'You shall love your neighbour as yourself.'<sup>40</sup> The Church is a communion of persons who, in love, care deeply for themselves and for one another. Each recognises in themselves and in each other the 'image of God' and a 'temple of the Spirit.'<sup>41</sup> Because of this we are moved to care for ourselves and one another, recognising that our physical, emotional and spiritual health are gifts from God.<sup>42</sup>*

### 7.1 For the sake of their own well being, and for the service of the Gospel and the people of God, religious and clergy strive to maintain their spiritual health.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ regularly nourishing oneself through scripture, eucharist, and the sacrament of reconciliation;<sup>43</sup>
- ◆ following a regular discipline of reflective reading, prayer, spiritual direction and other spiritual practices;
- ◆ making an annual retreat;<sup>44</sup>
- ◆ participation in ongoing formation;
- ◆ nurturing one's understanding of and commitment to celibacy.

### 7.2 Clergy and religious exercise a stewardship over their own physical and emotional health.

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ periodically discussing one's physical and emotional health with a colleague or appropriate support person;
- ◆ seeing that one's overall health is regularly checked by appropriately qualified persons;
- ◆ seeking timely professional help and the support of a trusted colleague or friend when in difficulty in one's pastoral or personal life.

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<sup>40</sup> Luke 10:27ff.

<sup>41</sup> cf., 1 Cor 6:19-20; 15:44-45.

<sup>42</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, art. 14:1; *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, art. 2288.

<sup>43</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, Canon 276§2;663§2.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* Canon 276§2:4<sup>∞</sup>; 663§5.

**7.3 Out of reverence for the gift of life and well being, religious and clergy seek to live healthy lives.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ taking regular balanced meals, regular exercise and adequate sleep;
- ◆ taking scheduled days off, and annual holidays;
- ◆ moderate and appropriate use of alcohol and prescribed medicines;
- ◆ nurturing friendships apart from one's pastoral relationships;
- ◆ supporting colleagues who appear to be in difficulty in their pastoral or personal life.

**7.4 Bishops and religious leaders share a responsibility for promoting and encouraging the health and well being,<sup>45</sup> just working conditions and professional development of the clergy and religious in their Dioceses and Congregations.**

Among the behavioural standards that follow from this principle are:

- ◆ creating structures, resources, environments and opportunities in their communities or dioceses to support the spiritual, physical and emotional health of those in their care;
- ◆ providing specific opportunities for those who express a desire or need to address issues concerning their health;
- ◆ monitoring issues of stress, isolation, and other risks to health among the members of their community and/or clergy;
- ◆ addressing health as a topic in the exercise of their pastoral care and accountability towards individual clergy or community members;
- ◆ providing opportunities for ongoing formation and education in the challenges of living out their celibate commitment;
- ◆ ensuring just working conditions by applying, where appropriate, the behavioural standards as set out in paragraph 5.2;
- ◆ providing structures and environments and providing resources and opportunities to support the professional development and professional supervision for clergy and religious in accordance with paragraphs 3.2, 4.1 and 4.2.

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<sup>45</sup> cf., *Christus Dominus*, art.16.

## 8. When Communion is Broken

*When from time to time communion is broken by the harmful misconduct of one to whom the Church has entrusted leadership and responsibility, then the Church will seek to restore communion as quickly and fully as possible. That responsibility lies with the whole community, and in a particular way with the bishops and religious leaders of the Church. Their first concern is for the healing and care of those who have been hurt by the Church's ministers. Their next concerns are for justice and the healing of the community of the Church, its relations with the wider human community, and for the healing and well-being of those who have caused damage by their behaviour.*

*This will always mean full cooperation with civil authorities and processes in the cases where that is required, and will sometime mean that a cleric or religious is relieved of pastoral duties and responsibilities, depending on the nature of the harm that has been done.*

### 8.1 Where there is a complaint of a serious violation of the principles and standards set out in this document, it is essential that:

- ◆ the responsible Church authority ensure that it is listened to fully and compassionately;
- ◆ the responsible Church authority act promptly, on advice from the Consultative Panel,<sup>46</sup> to determine how the complaint should be investigated.

Options for dealing with the matter include:

- reporting to the police
- referral to be dealt with under *Towards Healing*
- appropriate industrial procedures, where applicable
- investigation in accordance with canon law (e.g. canon 1717)
- referral to conflict resolution processes.

### 8.2 Where there is a complaint against a bishop or religious leader, the complaint should be referred to the person designated as the appropriate Church authority for the case in accordance with *Towards Healing* Clause 35.3.2<sup>47</sup> and the footnote of Clause 35.3.2<sup>48</sup>.

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<sup>46</sup> *Towards Healing* Clause 35.8

<sup>47</sup> *Towards Healing* Clause 35.3.2

<sup>48</sup> *Towards Healing* Footnote of Clause 35.3.2

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**8.3 In cases of proven violation of the principles of this document, Church authorities should have as their first concern the care and healing of those who have been harmed by ministers of their community.**

To express the primacy of this concern, it is essential that Church authorities:

- ◆ have a concern both for those who have been directly harmed and also for others who have been affected, eg the parents and family of those harmed and the community where the violation has occurred;
- ◆ be concerned both to heal any harm that has been done and to prevent future harm;
- ◆ offer support and assistance, as appropriate, to those who have been harmed.

**8.4 In determining the appropriate response to be made to the parties concerned on completion of the investigation, the Church authority shall have regard to advice from the Consultative Panel.<sup>49</sup>**

**8.5 In cases of proven violation of the principles of this document, Church authorities also have a concern for the care and healing of the cleric or religious concerned.**

To express this concern, it is essential that Church authorities observe towards the person involved the same standards of care as are set out in 2.2 in relation to all clerics and religious.

**8.6 Since this document applies to all clergy and religious, bishops and religious leaders ensure that they themselves are subject to its provisions. They submit themselves to all the principles, standards and procedures of *Integrity in Ministry*.**

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<sup>49</sup>*Towards Healing* Clause 35.8

# APPENDIX 1

## Integrity in Ministry and the Code of Canon Law

The provisions of *Integrity in Ministry* go beyond the provisions of the Code of Canon Law and yet they are based on the Code.

Canons No. 208-223 set out the basic obligations and rights of all Christ's faithful. The first of these reads: 'Flowing from their rebirth in Christ, there is a genuine equality of dignity and action among all of Christ's faithful' (Canon 208). *Integrity in Ministry* indicates a number of the elements of this 'equality of dignity and action.'

In a similar way *Integrity in Ministry* points to elements that might be considered in interpreting and applying several of the following canons, e.g. 212 (the right to make known spiritual needs to pastors and to express views), 213 (the right to the word of God and the sacraments), 214 (the right to one's own form of spiritual life), 220 (the right to a good reputation). In this manner it can help to make these canons more alive within the Church.

The same may be said of those canons that speak of the obligations and rights of clerics (273-289), bishops (381-402), and religious (662-672). In relation to clerics *Integrity in Ministry* indicates useful elements in relation to canons 275 (promoting the mission of the laity), 276 (seeking holiness), 277 (observing celibacy and chastity), 282 (following a simple way of life), 284 (wearing suitable dress), 385 (avoiding whatever is foreign to their state). In relation to bishops there are provisions concerning care for everyone in the diocese (383), special care for priests (384), being an example of holiness in charity, humility and simplicity of life (386). In relation to religious, one may usefully point to canons 663 (contemplation and prayer), 664 (community life), 668 (poverty and the use of temporal goods).

In a quite different field, canon 1741 sets out the reasons for which a parish priest can lawfully be removed from his parish. They include 'a manner of acting which causes grave harm or disturbance to ecclesiastical communion' and 'the loss of the parish priest's good name among upright and serious minded parishioners.' It could never be a matter of simply checking a priest's conduct against this or that particular provision of *Integrity in Ministry*, but taken as a whole the document will assist in giving objectivity to the study of 'a manner of acting which causes grave harm.' It will help in determining whether parishioners are being 'upright and serious minded' in deciding whether a priest has lost his good name (Canons 694-704 deal with the procedures for dismissal of members of Religious Institutes.).

In short, *Integrity in Ministry* is not in itself canon law and it does not take the place of canon law. At the same time, it will be of assistance in implementing, interpreting and applying canon law. It will do this in cases of perceived misconduct, but its more important role will be to help clerics and religious fulfill their roles in the Church and to know that they are fulfilling their roles.

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### Website Address:

*Australian Catholic Bishops Conference: [www.acbc.catholic.org.au](http://www.acbc.catholic.org.au)*

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