

To: All Diocesan Secretaries

Stephen Slack

*Head of the Legal  
Office, Chief Legal  
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Archbishops' Council  
and the General  
Synod and Official  
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Commissioners*

10<sup>th</sup> December 2014

Dear Diocesan Secretary

**GENERAL SYNOD  
PROMULGATION OF AMENDING CANON NO. 33**

I enclose a copy of Amending Canon No.33, which was enacted at the November group of sessions. I also enclose a copy of the instrument of enactment.

The Amending Canon should be proclaimed at the next meeting of the diocesan synod. There is no need for the Canon, the Royal Assent and Licence or the instrument of enactment to be read out. Instead, the following form of words is suggested for use by the chair:

*"I give notice that, at its November 2014 group of sessions, held in London, the General Synod resolved that Amending Canon No.33 be made, promulgated and executed.*

*Amending Canon No. 33 amends Canon C 2 so as to allow women to be consecrated to the episcopate. It also amends Canon C 4, and repeals Canons C 4A and 4B, so that there is now a single canon relating to ordination to the diaconate and the priesthood, which applies equally to both men and women alike. Lastly, it inserts a new Canon C 28, which requires the House of Bishops to make Regulations prescribing a procedure for resolving disputes arising from the arrangements for which the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests makes provision."*

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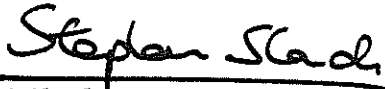
*The Archbishops' Council (1074857), the Church Commissioners (1140097) and the Church of England Pensions Board (236627) are registered charities*

Whilst writing, I would draw your attention to the fact that the House of Bishops' Declaration, the Guidance Note from the House of Bishops and the Regulations made by the House under the new Canon C 28 (the Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests (Resolution of Disputes Procedure) Regulations 2014) can all now be accessed on a single page on the Church of England website, which you can find here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/about-us/structure/general-synod/about-general-synod/house-of-bishops/declaration-on-the-ministry-of-bishops-and-priests.aspx>

Copies of this letter and its enclosures go to your diocesan bishop and diocesan registrar.

Yours sincerely

  
S Slack

**Registrar and Chief Legal Adviser**

## GENERAL SYNOD

### AMENDING CANON No. 33

**(Of the consecration of bishops, Of the quality of such as are to be ordained deacons or priests, Of women deacons, Of women priests, Of ministers exercising their ministry, Of admission and institution, Of the House of Bishops' Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests)**

1. Canon C 2 (Of the consecration of bishops) is amended as follows –
  - (a) The following paragraph is inserted at the beginning –

“1. A man or a woman may be consecrated to the office of bishop.”;
  - (b) Paragraphs 1 to 5 are re-numbered 2 to 6; and
  - (c) For paragraph 6, as re-numbered there is substituted the following paragraph –

“6. In the forms of service contained in *The Book of Common Prayer* or in the Ordinal words importing the masculine gender in relation to bishops are construed as including the feminine.”.
2. Canon C 4 (Of the quality of such as are to be ordained deacons or priests) is amended as follows –
  - (a) The following paragraph is inserted at the beginning –

“1. A man or a woman may be ordained to the office of priest or deacon.”;
  - (b) Paragraphs 1 to 4 are re-numbered 2 to 5;
  - (c) At the end there are added the following paragraphs –
    - “6. A deaconess who is licensed or holds a bishop’s permission to officiate, and in either case satisfies the requirements of this Canon as to the persons to be ordained as deacons, may apply to a bishop for his or her consent to her ordination as a deacon for service in the diocese of that bishop, and the bishop may give that consent notwithstanding –
      - (a) that she has not after applying to be so ordained been further examined concerning her knowledge of Holy Scripture or of the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Church of England, or
      - (b) that she has not exhibited to the bishop any certificate or other document which is required to be so exhibited under Canon C 6.
7. Where a bishop is ordaining a woman according to the Order for the Making of Deacons in the Ordinal attached to *The Book of Common*

*Prayer* it is lawful for the bishop to use the variations to that service set out in the schedule to this Canon.

8. The Archbishops of Canterbury and York may jointly authorise forms of service for deaconesses to be ordained deacon, being forms of service which in both words and order are in their opinion reverent and seemly and are neither contrary to, nor indicative of any departure from, the doctrine of the Church of England in any essential matter.
9. In the forms of service contained in *The Book of Common Prayer* or the Ordinal words importing the masculine gender in relation to priests or deacons are construed as including the feminine.

### **The Schedule**

1. For the prescribed Epistle, namely either 1 Timothy 3.8-13 or Acts 6.2-7, there may be substituted either Isaiah 6.1-8 or Romans 12.1-12 or such other lections as may from time to time be duly authorised.
2. For the prescribed Gospel, namely Luke 12.35-38, there may be substituted Mark 10.35-45 or such other lection as may from time to time be duly authorised.”.
3. Canons C 4A (Of women deacons) and C 4B (Of women priests) are revoked.
4. In Canon C 8.2(a) (Of ministers exercising their ministry) all the words after the word “officiates” are omitted.
5. In Canon C 10 (Of admission and institution) paragraph 2A is omitted.
6. After Canon C 28 there is inserted the following Canon –

*“Canon C 29 (Of the House of Bishops’ Declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests)*

- (1) The House of Bishops shall be under a duty to make Regulations prescribing a procedure for the resolution of disputes arising from the arrangements for which the House of Bishops’ declaration on the Ministry of Bishops and Priests makes provision.
- (2) The House of Bishops may, by Regulations, amend any Regulations made under sub-paragraph (1).
- (3) Any Regulations made under sub-paragraph (1) shall be laid before the General Synod.
- (4) Any Regulations made under sub-paragraph (2) must be approved by a majority of two-thirds of each House of the General Synod present and voting.”.

## GENERAL SYNOD OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

**CONSTITUTIONS AND CANONS ECCLESIASTICAL**, maturely treated upon by the Archbishops, Bishops, Clergy and Laity of the General Synod of the Church of England in their Synod begun at Westminster in the Year of Our Lord Two thousand and ten and in the fifty-ninth year of the Reign of Our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth the Second by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Her Other Realms and Territories Queen Head of the Commonwealth Defender of the Faith being a Canon entitled "Amending Canon No. 33" which received Her Majesty's Royal Assent and Licence on the tenth day of November Two thousand and fourteen.

We, being the Presidents, the Prolocutor of the Convocation of Canterbury, the Prolocutor of the Convocation of York and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the House of Laity of the said Synod do hereby declare and testify Our Consent to the said Canon entitled "Amending Canon No. 33" And in testimony of such Our Consent We have hereunto subscribed our names as hereafter followeth:

Dated this seventeenth day of November in the Year of Our Lord two thousand and fourteen and in the sixty-third year of the reign of Our Sovereign Lady Queen Elizabeth the Second

*+Justin Cantuar:*

**President**

*+Sentamu Eboracensis*

**President**

*Christine Hardman*

**Prolocutor**

*Cherry Vann*

**Prolocutor**

*P. J. Giddings*

**Chair, House of Laity**

*T. C. Hind*

**Vice-Chair, House of Laity**

*Stephen Slack*

**Registrar**

