



NADAWM

National Association of Diocesan Advisors for Women's Ministry

Press Release - 14th May 2008 for immediate release

Women Clergy Message to Bishops: "Yes" to Women Bishops, but not at any price

In an outspoken statement sent this week to all bishops in the Church of England, around a quarter of all serving women clergy called for no further delay on women bishops, but also, for no further discrimination written into the legislation.

The statement, drawn up by leading women priests, states: "We believe that it should be possible for women to be consecrated as bishop, but not at any price. The price of legal 'safeguards' for those opposed is simply too high, diminishing not just the women concerned, but the catholicity, integrity and mission of the episcopate and of the Church as a whole."

It goes on to say: "We cannot countenance any proposal that would, once again, enshrine and formalise discrimination against women in legislation." None of the 15 Anglican provinces which have voted for women bishops have included discriminatory legislation

The statement challenges any suggestion that those who want the simplest statutory provisions do not care for those who remain opposed to women's ordained ministry, and points to "strong relationships" and to the possibility of a code of practice that make "the passing of a single clause measure realistic in today's Church, as well as theologically and ecclesiologically cohesive."

The statement declares that "all bishops should work within clear expectations and codes of practice. The language of "protection" and "safeguard" is offensive to women, and we believe the existing disciplinary procedures are enough for women or men to be brought to account if they behave inappropriately."

The covering letter, dated 11th May 2008, is signed by **Jane Hedges**, Canon Steward at Westminster Abbey, **Rosemary Lain-Priestley**, Secretary of the National Association of Diocesan Advisors in Women's Ministry and **Lucy Winkett**, Canon Precentor at St Paul's Cathedral and **more than 500** other ordained women. Since then a further **213** women priests have added their names to the statement, representing around a quarter of all serving women clergy in the Church of England.

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