

DIOCESE IN EUROPE

THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

Diocesan Bishop:
The Right Reverend Dr Geoffrey Rowell
Bishop of Gibraltar in Europe



THE EAST NETHERLANDS GROUP OF CHAPLAINCIES

The East Netherlands Group of Chaplaincies, consisting of the Chaplaincy of Arnhem-Nijmegen and the Twente Chaplaincy, is part of the Archdeaconry of North-West Europe of the Diocese in Europe. The chaplain is required to participate, along with the representatives, in the life of the Archdeaconry. There is an annual meeting of the Archdeaconry Synod, normally held residentially for 2-3 days. The Archdeacon of the North-West Europe Archdeaconry is currently the Venerable John de Wit who is also chaplain of Holy Trinity Utrecht.

In the diocese either the Diocesan Bishop or the Suffragan Bishop is Lead Bishop for a given archdeaconry, providing pastoral care for the clergy and congregations, oversight of routine vacancy and appointment processes, care of title curates, consultation with mission agencies, strategic direction, mission planning and new initiatives. The Diocesan Bishop is the Lead Bishop for the Archdeaconry of North- West Europe.

This group of Chaplaincies became vacant in July when the priest-in-charge, the Reverend Sam Van Leer, moved to be associate chaplain of Utrecht, and to develop new work in Groningen.

Although these chaplaincies have for some years been linked together as the East Netherlands Group, it should be stated at the outset that it is in some ways a rather tenuous grouping, not least because of distance as well as character. Much work has gone into forging a trusting relationship between the two chaplaincies, most notably by the previous priest-in-charge and the archdeacon. However the grouping is not set in stone and the priest appointed should be aware of the need to review, as a matter of priority, whether this grouping is appropriate and, if not, whether any alternative pattern is financially and pastorally sustainable. It is therefore essential that the new priest-in-charge is an excellent listener who can understand why different churches and congregations have their own identity and even why they would want to be apart – even better, why they could grow together!

A major challenge for the new priest-in-charge is to address the issue of generosity in giving. In particular this is a priority in the Arnhem-Nijmegen Chaplaincy where finances, rightly or wrongly, have been tight.

The appointee should have relevant ecumenical experience. The church in Arnhem uses a church building belonging to the Old Catholic Church and relationships have been good. Though Anglicans and Old Catholics are in full communion, both Churches come at certain moral issues in different ways. The priest-in-charge will need to be at ease with these creative tensions. Certainly there is so much more that binds us together than draws

us apart and the Old Catholic Church is always open to helping Anglican clergy new to the Netherlands to understand the religious and cultural context.

The congregation in Nijmegen is set in the context of a university city and a number of students attend services regularly.

The congregation at Twente – at some distance from Arnhem and Nijmegen in the eastern part of the province of Overijssel – meets in St Mary's Chapel at Weldam, in a typical English Victorian church, which is the family chapel of Count Alfred Solms who is a generous and devoted supporter. Currently this is the largest of the three congregations, even though it is difficult to access by public transport.

The historic right of nomination for Arnhem and Nijmegen is exercised by ICS; the nomination to Twente belongs to the Diocesan Bishop. At this vacancy ICS is leading.

This is an exciting post for an experienced priest who delights in pastoring and bringing people together in the name of Christ, by word and sacrament, by building up the Body of Christ and by missional outreach into the international community of the surrounding areas.

+Geoffrey Gibraltar