

ENABLING WOMEN?
ANGLICAN CLERGYWOMEN AS VICARS
AND MINISTRY ENABLERS

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ABSTRACT

In the twenty-five years since women have been ordained to the priesthood in the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia, clergywomen have become an accepted and valued part of the church scene. This research project has, through a survey and interviews, gathered the stories and experiences of one hundred and fifteen of these clergywomen.

Women vicars share many positive experiences of the vicar role, and how they see themselves transforming it into a more collaborative model, but they still experience sexist attitudes which are a drain on their ministry. Clergywomen are also finding fulfilling ministries as local priests and deacons, and ministry enablers in local shared ministry models, although ministry enablers' conditions mean this ministry has not yet reached its full potential.

Despite these advances, the institutional church must address the fact that still very few women are choosing to be vicars, that the largest percentage of clergywomen are in assistant roles, and that three-quarters of these are in non-stipendiary ministry.

Clergywomen must continue to stand together and advocate for equal opportunity and equitable conditions of ministry if they are to stand tall in ministry. For this church, this is a matter of justice that we may fully reflect the image of God and the wholeness the gospel promises to women and men.

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INTRODUCTION

The year 2002 marks the 25th anniversary of the first ordinations of women to the priesthood in the Anglican Church of Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. It is often considered that, although clergywomen now represent approximately 25% of Anglican clergy in *tikanga pakeha* (the cultural stream of the Anglican Church on which I will focus), there are still very few women vicars (the ordained minister leading a parish in the traditional parish structure) and perhaps fewer than in the earlier years following these ordinations. Hence part of my research involves gaining statistical evidence to see whether this received wisdom is backed up by data, as compared with statistics compiled in 1989 and 1990.

One hypothesis for why there seem now to be fewer women vicars is that clergywomen are drawn to more collaborative and less hierarchical forms of ministry, for example in Local Shared/ Mutual Ministry models, which have been developing over the last fifteen years in six of the seven dioceses of *tikanga pakeha* of the Anglican Church. While evolving differently in each diocesan context, these models involve in broad terms the development in a faith community of a Ministry Support Team, consisting of licensed lay ministers and local priests and deacons, to enable the ministry of all the baptised. They are supported by a Ministry Enabler, usually (but not always) an ordained person who acts as a consultant, often to a number of faith communities, on a contracted, usually stipendiary basis.

I have aimed to test this hypothesis by undertaking interviews with women clergy who have been both vicars and ministry enablers, exploring their reasons for undertaking these ministry roles and their experiences of these roles. One aspect of this was determining whether their choices have been informed by a commitment to feminist theology and ecclesiology.

Alongside these interviews, I have undertaken a wider survey of clergywomen, both to gain statistical evidence in relation to the ministry roles of vicar and ministry enabler, and to ascertain reasons for undertaking (or not) these ministry roles.

For example, other reasons for not undertaking vicar roles might be family or lifestyle choices, or unwillingness to take on a nomination system to vicar positions which, for reasons of conservatism or theological positions, still favours male clergy.

Other reasons contributing to taking on a ministry enabler role might be that women clergy have been channelled by nomination processes into financially marginal parishes which are often those moving into local shared ministry models and so have had more experience in these sorts of parishes; or that part-stipended ministry enabler positions are taken on as adjunct to part-stipended vicar positions to make up a full stipend.

Following a review of the literature related to my research areas in chapter one, I will outline the methodology I used for the research project in chapter two. Chapters three and four contain my analysis of the research material attained through the survey and interviews. In chapter three, I discuss the experiences of clergywomen as ministry enablers in local shared ministry contexts. Chapter four looks at the experiences of clergywomen as vicars in parish contexts.

In my conclusions in chapter five, I will comment on what ministry roles clergywomen are undertaking now and how they see their ministry in the future, and the place of personal choice and systemic and institutional factors in relation to this. I will also discuss how the development of alternative modes of ministry, such as non-stipendiary ordained ministry and local shared ministry, is impacting on the ministry of clergywomen, and suggest some issues that need to be addressed as we face the future.

CHAPTER 1

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review has been formulated into three sections, reflecting the major areas of study that are relevant to my research. My analysis of the current literature within these sections is driven by my own research focus on the ministry experience of clergywomen, with side foci on the influence of feminist ecclesiology, and developments within local ministry models.

1.1 Clergywomen

There is a considerable body of literature, some polemic in style, on *whether* women should be ordained, which I do not propose to address here, rather accepting the ordination of women in the Anglican Church as a given, which it has been in New Zealand for the past twenty-five years.

The journey towards women's ordination in the Anglican Church in New Zealand is surveyed from a historical perspective in Angela Webber's thesis, "An Easy Passage? The Evolution of an Anglican Female Priesthood in the Church of the Province of New Zealand" (1994). She cites as primary sources official church reports, such as "The Report of the Provincial Commission on the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood" of The General Synod of The Church of the Province of New Zealand, 1972. This report concluded: "The whole Commission is agreed that these studies (biblical evidence, tradition and history, theological issues, biological, psychological and anthropological considerations) provide no reason why the church should not proceed to ordain women to the priesthood."¹ Legislation enacting this recommendation was finally passed at General Synod in

¹ *The Report of the Provincial Commission on the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood* The General Synod of the Church of the Province of New Zealand, 1972 cited in Rosemary Neave, (ed.), *The Journey and the Vision: A Report on Ordained Women in the Church of the Province of New Zealand* (Auckland: Women's Resource Centre, 1990), 3-5.

1976 and a year was allowed for an appeal procedure. Such an appeal was lodged, as recorded in “Ordination of Women to the Priesthood : An Appeal to the Tribunal...,” The General Synod of The Church of the Province of New Zealand, 1977; but this appeal was dismissed, and the first ordinations took place in December 1977.

Official church records are helpfully balanced and interpreted through the experiences of clergywomen themselves, recounted and compiled in Rosemary Neave’s *The Journey and the Vision: A Report on Ordained Women in the Church of the Province of New Zealand* (1990). This document is valuable in recording the voices of some of the women who were instrumental in working towards the ordination of women, several of whom were involved in the Deaconess order, and giving their perceptions of the legislative changes happening at Synod level, a personal perspective we do not get in the somewhat dry records of the proceedings of Synod.

Neave’s report also tells the story of the 1989 Ordained Anglican Women’s Conference, including extracts of the experience of ordained Anglican women gleaned for this conference, and the results of a questionnaire on how ordained women’s ministry had been received to that point. It is noteworthy that, at this still relatively early stage of the experience of ordained women in New Zealand, the focus of the questionnaire was on the reception of their ministry by others, rather than on how they were experiencing it themselves. It is this latter perspective which I hope to address in my research.

Literature documenting the experiences of the first clergywomen often tends to be written in an anecdotal, narrative and sometimes journalistic style – for example, from the USA, Mary Donovan’s *Women Priests in the Episcopal Church - The Experience of the First Decade* (1988); and, from the United Kingdom, Liz and Andrew Barr’s recent *Jobs for the Boys? Women Who Became Priests* (2001), which comprises stories of a dozen women priests, compiled from

interviews. *Voices of this Calling: Experiences of the First Generation of Women Priests* (2002) , edited by Christina Rees, has just been published in the United Kingdom to mark the tenth anniversary of the passing of the legislation to admit women to the priesthood in the Church of England. This collection of the experiences of forty-six women as priests over the last ten years is at least written by the women themselves, along with accounts by nine male priest supporters, and contributions by Bishop Penny Jamieson of Dunedin, New Zealand, and Archbishop Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury-elect.

While such accounts will have value in the future as oral history sources and case studies, books have also been written based on quantitative research on a wider scale through surveys, for example: in the USA,² Carroll et. al.'s *Women of the Cloth: A New Opportunity for Churches* (1983), followed up and augmented by Barbara Zikmund's *Clergywomen: an Uphill Calling* (1998); in England, Helen Thorne's thesis, "Journey to Priesthood : An In-depth Study of the First Women Priests in the Church of England" (2001); in Australia, Janet Scarfe's paper, "Lip Service is Still a Problem : The Ordination of Women in the Anglican Church of Australia since 1992"; and in New Zealand, Roger Pym's thesis, "Crumbs from the Mitre : A Comparison of the Ministry Experiences of Ordained Women and Men in the Church of the Province of New Zealand (commonly called Anglican)" (1992). While Thorne's, Scarfe's and Pym's studies are all confined to the Anglican church, Carroll's and Zikmund's works survey clergywomen in nine and fifteen Protestant denominations respectively.

Most of these studies seem quite wide-ranging in the topics they survey, including personal life circumstances, selection, training, leadership styles, earnings differences, career paths and nomination (to ministry) processes.

² I established the search parameters of the USA-based research on clergywomen with a similar length of experience to New Zealand, and Australia and England-based writings on research where there has been a shorter (but not uncontroversial) experience of clergywomen.

As Pym comments, “It was also envisioned that the [survey] would provide...a broad base for future studies.”³

This is a basis I hope to build on in my own research, but the broad based focus of the above studies means that at times the comments are quite general, with less depth of focus or analysis than one might like to see. For example, Pym’s conclusion, “The study found that ordained women in the Anglican Church (NZ) do not enjoy equal opportunity within the church,”⁴ typifies a major focus of many of these early studies of clergywomen’s experience, that of comparison with male clergy experience. A recent New Zealand study, Francie Coventry’s “Men’s Response and Reaction to Ordained Women, Especially in Liturgical, Pastoral and Administrative Leadership in the Parish and the Diocese” (2000), also has this focus.

This is a valid concern, but one that can tend to override the value of women expressing and interpreting their own experience, rather than seeing it always as expressed through a filter of men’s experience. For this reason, while I hope my research will build on the earlier research of Neave and Pym for the New Zealand context, my focus will be more circumscribed, targeting clergywomen’s experiences in various ministry roles in order to give the opportunity for their voices to be heard in their own right.

1.2 Feminist Theology and Ecclesiology

Books that have been foundational in the conceptualisation of an ecclesiology according to feminist praxis are Letty Russell’s *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church* (1993) and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza’s *Discipleship of Equals: A Critical Feminist Ekklesia-logy of Liberation* (1993).

³ Roger Pym, “Crumbs from the Mitre: A Comparison of the Ministry Experiences of Ordained Women and Men in the Church of the Province of New Zealand (commonly called Anglican),” Master of Arts Thesis, University of Auckland, 1992, 39.

⁴ Roger Pym, Abstract.

These I would see as key texts. Russell evokes a change of paradigm of church from “a household ruled by a patriarch to...a household where everyone gathers around the common table to break bread and share ‘table talk’ and hospitality”⁵ – particularly those ‘on the margins’, which is where the patriarchal church has placed women. For Russell, ministry and leadership are functional, collaborative enterprises.

It perhaps comes as a surprise that the feminist theologian Schüssler Fiorenza is not supportive of women’s ordination from the perspective of it being just “the incorporation of some women into the patriarchal pyramid of domination.”⁶ Rather, what she sees as necessary is “the conversion of the whole church to the discipleship of equals that Jesus initiated and the apostolic communities initiated,”⁷ but which she feels was subverted when the church soon adopted Greco-Roman patriarchal structures of leadership.

But how does this ‘discipleship of equals’ work out in feminist practice, or praxis? Lynn Rhodes, also coming from a feminist perspective, addresses issues of vocation relevant to clergywomen in her book *Co-creating: A Feminist Vision of Ministry* (1987). Based on her conversations with clergywomen, Rhodes articulates how notions of call and vocation for many such women are not so much tied to individual career paths but rather are linked to the call and vocation of every Christian believer and have a strong element of communal discernment and endorsement.

Thus clergywomen have a greater sense of fluidity about how their call and vocation will be expressed in ministry throughout their lives. In my research, I want to test out whether clergywomen here express similar views and how much this is a chosen perspective, rather than a fluidity imposed by the uncertainty of

⁵ Letty Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 35ff.

⁶ Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Discipleship of Equals: A Critical Feminist Ekklesia-logy of Liberation* (London: SCM Press, 1993), 241.

the clerical job market and fostered by attitudes to nomination which still discriminate against clergywomen.

Feminist thinking impacts on the issues of gender and leadership in Musimbi Kanyoro's *In Search of a Round Table: Gender, Theology and Church Leadership* (1997), a compilation of papers from a Lutheran consultation seeking "new directions to experience equality and partnership between men and women in our societies and churches."⁸ It is notable that two-thirds of these contributions are from non-Western writers. A number of these papers discuss the need to redefine notions of power in leadership from a patriarchal "power over" to "power with."⁹

This is a discussion taken up by Penny Jamieson in her *Living at the Edge: Sacrament and Solidarity in Leadership* (1997). Jamieson became the Bishop of Dunedin, New Zealand in 1990, the first woman Diocesan Bishop in the Anglican Communion. Jamieson explores the tension she lives with in episcopal leadership. On the one hand, she lives and theologises from the edge, from the margins, as women bishops are still a tiny minority within the Anglican episcopate world-wide, and so are placed "less firmly in the centre, more on the boundary of patterns of power."¹⁰ At another level, however, her holding of institutional power within the church puts her at the edge or margins in relation to (Christian) feminists who see this as a 'sell-out' to hierarchical and male models of power.¹¹ Jamieson writes of her own vision and that of other women to model new ways of exercising leadership, power and authority within the church, reinterpreting these concepts as they do so. Central to this is a vision of power as owned, granted and legitimised by the community, and that whoever holds the

⁷ Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, 241.

⁸ Musimbi Kanyoro (ed.), *In Search of a Round Table: Gender, Theology and Church Leadership* (Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997), ix.

⁹ For example, Martha Storz, "Naming and Reclaiming Power," in Kanyoro, 71-82.

¹⁰ Penny Jamieson, *Living at the Edge: Sacrament and Solidarity in Leadership* (London: Mowbray, 1997), 80.

¹¹ Penny Jamieson, 169.

power on behalf of the community enables that community to acknowledge their own power and their stake in the power-holder.

I hope to explore in my research whether this vision has been able to be played out in the experience of clergywomen who have undertaken a role as vicar, a role which traditionally has operated in a hierarchical fashion and attracted to it unhealthy expectations and a co-dependency model of interaction with parishioners. I want to see to what extent clergywomen who operate from feminist convictions have felt able to live out those convictions within their ministries, or how much they have felt stymied by the patriarchal overlay of the institutional system they have joined, a system with which at times parishioners collude.

A hypothesis I seek to test out in my research is whether clergywomen, rather than 'aspiring' to be vicars as was perhaps the case in the earlier years after women's ordination, are now being drawn by their feminist commitments to more collaborative and less hierarchical forms of ministry, as expressed for example in Local Shared / Mutual Ministry models, which are outlined below.

1.3 Local Shared / Mutual Ministry

These rapidly evolving models of collaborative ministry within Anglican churches, particularly in the USA, England and New Zealand, have an equally mushrooming volume of literature, much of it not yet in book form but still at the spiral-bound stage.

The foundational theological writing behind this form of ministry is Roland Allen's *Missionary Methods : St Paul's or Ours?* (1924, 1962). From Allen's experience as a missionary in China, he advocated a church that was "self-supported, self-propagating, self-led...led by a re-ordered, locally based, volunteer, ordained

ministry.”¹² More contemporary works which develop this same line of thinking and apply it to local faith communities within non-missionary Western contexts are James Fenhagen’s *Mutual Ministry: New Vitality for the Local Church* (1977) and Josephine Borgeson and Lynne Wilson’s *Reshaping Ministry: Essays in Memory of Wesley Frensdorff* (1990).

The most recent writing in this area has tended to focus on integrating Allen’s thinking with written descriptions of how Local Shared Ministry has been experienced and is developing “on the ground” – for example, in the USA, Stewart Zabriskie’s *Total Ministry* (1995); and in England, Andrew Bowden and Michael West’s *Dynamic Local Ministry* (2000), and Robin Greenwood’s *The Ministry Team Handbook* (2000). Greenwood has also written on how this local shared ministry movement is impacting on understandings of priesthood and ecclesiology in *Transforming Priesthood: A New Theology of Mission and Ministry* (1994), and *Transforming Church: Liberating Structures for Ministry* (2002).

Writing about New Zealand experiences of Local Shared Ministry has tended so far to consist of study leave reports – for example, Alec Clark’s “Total Ministry in New Zealand: a Study Leave Report” (1994) – or compilations of addresses at conferences on Local Shared Ministry.

I have not found any writing focusing on the area of (clergy) women in local shared ministry, although numerous articles in New Zealand literature have been written by lay and clergy women involved in the development or enabling of these forms of ministry – for example Barbara Wesseldine’s “Local Shared Ministry in the Diocese of Auckland,” in *Growing Mutual Ministry in New Zealand* (1997), and Jenny Campbell’s “The Journey as a Fellow Traveller,” in *Voices from AMEND* (2001).

¹² Robin Greenwood, *Transforming Church: Liberating Structures for Ministry* (London: SPCK, 2002), 95.

A particular focus of my research is not those clergywomen who have only experienced this one newer model of ministry as local priests or deacons, but rather those who have experienced both the 'traditional' ministry model as vicar, and the role of ministry enabler to a faith community committed to a local ministry model. I wanted to hear them compare and contrast those ministry experiences, to articulate how any feminist commitment has impacted on their experiences, and to describe what in these models of ministry has brought them professional and personal job satisfaction.

These experiences I have not so far found articulated in the research literature as outlined above; thus I feel that the experiences of clergywomen in the New Zealand context as vicars, and as ministry enablers in emerging local ministry models, form a valid area for further research and writing.

Informed by this theoretical and historical background, then, I now want to outline the specific research methodology undertaken for this project.

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

While I have had a number of hunches about what was happening for clergywomen within New Zealand, suggesting, for example, that there are now fewer women vicars than in the early years since the ordination of women to the priesthood, and that the large majority of local priests in local shared ministry contexts are women, I felt it important to get beyond the hunches and anecdotal impressions, to gain more quantifiable evidence.

Thus my main research tool was to send out a 38-question survey to 260 clergywomen who were undertaking ministry with a Bishop's licence within *tikanga pakeha* (the pakeha cultural stream) of the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia. I deliberately decided to undertake research only relating to clergywomen within *tikanga pakeha*, as it is more appropriate that *tikanga maori* and *tikanga pasefika* conduct their own research in ways fitting for them.

I limited my research focus to those clergywomen in licensed ministry, as opposed to those who just hold a bishop's permission to officiate, most of whom are retired. I gained my contacts for these clergywomen from the ministry educators in each diocese and/or other diocesan authorities, who also provided me with up to date statistics on the numbers of clergywomen and clergymen in various ministry roles within their diocese.

The 260 surveys were sent out in August and September 2002, 143 by electronic mail and 117 by post, including a stamped return envelope. I received back 115 surveys, a response rate of 44 per cent. I was encouraged by this response and also by the keenness with which many clergywomen seemed to appreciate the

opportunity to discuss how they were experiencing their ministry and to find out what was happening for other clergywomen.

An analysis of these surveys by ministry roles revealed the following number of *survey responses* from clergywomen in different roles:

TABLE 1 MINISTRY ROLES – SURVEY RESPONDENTS

Vicar	20	16%
Co-Vicar ¹³	8	7%
Priest-in-charge	3	2%
Priest Assistant	26	21%
Deacon Assistant	0	0%
Vocational or Diocesan Deacon	3	3%
Local Deacon (LSM ¹⁴)	14	11%
Local Priest (LSM)	26	21%
Ministry Enablers (LSM)	11	9%
Chaplains (hospital, educational, military, social service)	<u>11</u>	<u>10%</u>
	122 ¹⁵	100%

The survey sample is broadly consistent with *statistics from diocesan sources* of total numbers of clergywomen currently in the various ministry roles:

TABLE 2 MINISTRY ROLES – DIOCESAN STATISTICS

Vicar	40	14%
Co-Vicar	13	4%
Priest-in-charge	9	3%
Priest Assistant	77	27%
Deacon Assistant	13	4%
Vocational or Diocesan Deacon	18	6%
Local Deacon (LSM)	21	7%
Local Priest (LSM)	52	18%
Ministry Enablers (LSM)	11	4%
Chaplains (hospital, educational, military, social service)	25	10%
Other Diocesan staff roles (e.g. Archdeacon, Bishop's Chaplain, Interim Priest, Ministry Educator, Youth Co-ordinator)	<u>8</u>	<u>3%</u>
	287	100%

¹³ Usually a married couple, both ordained, who are both co-vicars of the parish.

¹⁴ LSM = Local Shared Ministry.

¹⁵ Some women hold more than one ministry role concurrently, hence the slightly higher number of ministry roles (122) than survey responses (115).

Again, it must be noted that some clergywomen hold concurrent roles, so the total number of clergywomen in licensed ministry is somewhat less than 287.

I sent out surveys to 260 individual clergywomen in licensed ministry.

The age profile of survey respondents is perhaps of interest:

TABLE 3 AGE PROFILE – SURVEY RESPONDENTS

<u>Age Decade</u>	<u>Number of Survey Responses</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
30s	7	6%
40s	14	12%
50s	37	32%
60s	40	35%
70s	11	10%
<u>unknown</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>5%</u>
	115	100%

This should perhaps give the church pause for thought that the largest numbers of survey respondents were in their 50s and 60s. Yet, to provide a more accurate picture of the ages of clergywomen in the church, I am aware of at least twenty-one other clergywomen in their 20s-40s, seven of whom are vicars, who did not respond to the survey. However, to add their numbers to those in their 30s and 40s above would still only give the younger age decades combined a similar number as those now in their 50s or 60s.

It may be that this lower number of clergywomen aged below fifty reflects the fact that these are the 'missing generations' within the Anglican and mainline churches generally. Or is this a case of younger women choosing not to enter a profession that promised much to their elder sisters but has not really delivered the equality of opportunity and reimbursement they sought?

Obviously the above statistics, both in the survey and from the dioceses, only present a snapshot taken at one particular point in time in 2002. The situation changes rapidly with people moving in and out of ministry roles.

In addition to sending out the survey, I conducted interviews of approximately one and a half hours with four clergywomen who are currently operating as ministry enablers, three alongside the role of vicar, one while also a priest assistant. I also observed a ministry enabler meeting with a faith community as they journey in local shared ministry, and attended a meeting of ministry enablers, gathering for support and mutual learning.

With this methodological framework in mind, I now propose to discuss the experiences of that significant minority of clergywomen who have thus far exercised the role of ministry enabler in local shared ministry contexts.

CHAPTER 3

CLERGYWOMEN AS MINISTRY ENABLERS IN LOCAL SHARED / MUTUAL MINISTRY

3.1 Introduction to Local Shared / Mutual Ministry

Models of local shared ministry have been evolving over the last fifteen years or so in faith communities within six of the seven dioceses of *tikanga pakeha* of the Anglican Church in New Zealand, Aotearoa and Polynesia. It should be noted that this movement is known by different names in different contexts; for example, within New Zealand, it is termed Local Shared Ministry in Auckland and Christchurch Dioceses, and Mutual Ministry in Dunedin Diocese, and has been called Total Ministry in some contexts. I will use the term Local Shared Ministry for consistency throughout this paper.

While each diocese (and indeed each faith community) is developing this ministry model in different ways according to its local context, all these models involve the development in a faith community of a Ministry Support Team, which comprises lay ministers licensed for particular ministries and local priests and deacons. Their role as a team is to focus and enable the ministry of all the baptised within and to their local community.

Selection to these ministry roles is through a communal “calling” process, by which people are nominated by the faith community for different ministry functions, including those of local priest (in some contexts called sacramental minister) and local deacon (focusing on community-facing ministry). Those “called” by the community for local priest and local deacon roles must have this calling endorsed by the diocesan ordination selection process. All ministry in local shared ministry models is conducted on a non-stipendiary basis.

The faith community which has committed to a local shared ministry model is supported by a ministry enabler, who is usually ordained, although there are some lay enablers. This enabler acts as consultant to one or several faith communities, on a contracted basis, receiving a part stipend per ministry unit.

A fundamental principle of these local shared ministry forms is that the church moves from seeing itself as a community gathered round a minister, being there to “help the vicar,” to seeing itself as a ministering community, fully responsible for the ministry within its local context. This resonates well with feminist commitments to move away from hierarchical and patriarchal models of ministry, to more collaborative models of leadership and ministry.

I am particularly interested, therefore, in whether or not clergywomen are particularly attracted to this emerging model of ministry. While acknowledging that research could also be conducted into the numbers of lay women in local shared ministry and issues related to their involvement, I have needed to circumscribe my research to focus on the participation of clergywomen in this area.

In order to provide a basis for comparison, I propose to look first of all at clergywomen as local priests and deacons, for whom local shared ministry is their only experience of ordained ministry, before moving on to consider female ministry enablers who may also have experienced working in traditional parish models of ordained ministry.

3.2 Clergywomen as Local Priests and Deacons

When talking to people within the church about local shared ministry, I find that their general impression is that the vast majority of those ordained as local priests and deacons within local shared ministry models in this country are women. Diocesan-provided statistics from the six dioceses with local shared

ministry models confirm this picture, although not quite as conclusively as some might have believed, with fifty-two women (62%) and thirty-two men (38%) as local priests, and twenty-one women (75%) and seven men (25%) as local deacons.

Why is the rate for women as local deacons so much higher than that for men? Is it because women have often been volunteers, running many of the community services within the small (often rural) communities where local shared ministry is typically developing? Do they therefore have a stronger community-facing profile? Or are they 'more available' than men for non-stipendiary ministry?

The larger numbers of female local priests and deacons may also simply reflect the largely female demographic of the Anglican church in this country. Or are women drawn intentionally to this style of collaborative, team-based ministry? I would suggest so, and yet communal calling to ordination is an important factor in this model, so we need also to consider whether the church community as a whole sees women as more suited to this style of ministry than men.

One ministry enabler has countered this impression in commenting that while the "call" reflects the make-up of the faith community, if there are men available they are likely to be called to ministry roles. If in practice more women are called, it is only because usually there are more women than men in the congregation!

I received survey responses from 26 clergywomen who are local priests (21% of the total sample) and 14 who are local deacons (11% of the total sample). It should be noted that, for these women, this is a first call to ordained ministry, for many of them after years of committed lay ministry within their parishes. Many articulate their ordination as not initially a matter of a sense of personal call, but rather a response to the community's calling of them, which is then confirmed by a (growing) sense of personal vocation. One commented: "I had never considered offering for ordination – my ordination resulted from a calling from the parish, although I knew God was calling me to something!"

Local Shared Ministry is sometimes critiqued for supposedly putting pressure on people in small communities to respond to communally discerned vocations, and yet the above comment highlights to me how a communal discernment process can perhaps crystallise an incipient sense of call and clarify its outworking.

Another factor of note among the women who are local priests is their *age profile*. The twenty-six local priests in my survey were aged 48-76 with an average age of 63; ten were aged 65 or over. The ten local deacons were aged 51-66 with an average age of 60. None was over 65. These average ages are higher than other average ages gleaned from the survey, as can be seen below:

TABLE 4 AVERAGE AGE IN MINISTRY ROLE – SURVEY RESPONDENTS

<u>Ministry Role</u>	<u>Average Age</u>
local priest	63
local deacon	60
priest assistant	57
ministry enabler	55
vicar/co-vicar/priest-in-charge	54
vocational deacon	54
chaplain	54

That these are the average ages of clergywomen in the various ministry roles should be a cause for concern as the Anglican church plans for its future ministry, particularly as 20% of the clergywomen in the survey expect to be retired in five years time, and 41% within ten years time.

This again may reflect the aging demographic¹⁶ of the Anglican church in this country, but it may also be saying something about employment patterns for

¹⁶ 44% of Anglicans are aged over fifty, a much higher percentage than those aged over 50 in the general population (2001 Census).

women. Most women are continuing in paid employment through their child-bearing years, for reasons of personal choice and often economic necessity, particularly as their work is often part-time or casual to work in child-care and so is less well paid.

Some women, particularly if they have a partner who has been or is employed, are able to retire early and choose at that point to make themselves available for ordained ministry. As one local priest commented, "I was 'called' into [our] Local Shared Ministry Unit at a time when I was beginning retirement."

With increasing life expectancies and longer retirement periods envisaged within our population, along with the reality of more mid-life redundancies and ageist employment practices, it may be that we see more of these 'second career' clergy, both women and men. Yet this may only be the choice of those who can afford to be in non-stipendiary ministry, such as local shared ministry offers. A priest assistant whose whole ministry has been non-stipendiary commented: "I have wondered whether adequate financial support, reimbursement, is a factor in the church being labelled as "middle-class" – can some people *not afford* to be in ordained ministry, thereby restricting areas of ministry?"

This has certainly been a criticism levelled at Local Shared Ministry, as exemplified by the comments of two clergywomen in non-LSM roles: "I do have some concerns that it is primarily women who appear to be doing the work within the local shared ministry units for nothing." And: "Does it continue to exploit the unpaid work of women?"

While acknowledging that the majority of lay ministry is carried out in a non-stipendiary capacity, and that some clergywomen may be willing and able to minister in this way, Local Shared Ministry models need to be aware of those

who need to continue with paid employment alongside their unpaid ministry, and not exploit their time commitment.

This seems particularly important as I observed in the survey responses that most of the local priests expressed their time commitment to their ministry in very fluid terms, without clear boundaries. Obviously time-frames are negotiated in the context of the whole ministry support team, but ministering 'as long as it takes' can lead to burnout, particularly in small communities. Some clergywomen certainly expressed the feeling of needing to carry on because there was no-one else to do a particular ministry otherwise.

On a more positive note, the numbers of 60-plus clergywomen involved in local shared ministry suggests that the resistance to hierarchy and advocacy of collaborative ways of operating which is usually associated with post-World War II generations may be more a factor of gender than of age.

3.3 Clergywomen as Ministry Enablers

The main focus of my research is not those clergywomen who have only experienced one model of ordained ministry as local priests or deacons, but rather those who have experienced both the 'traditional' parish ministry model, as well as the role of ministry enabler to a faith community committed to a local ministry model.

I wanted these women to be able to compare and contrast those ministry experiences, to articulate how any feminist commitment has impacted on their experiences, and to describe what in these models of ministry has brought them professional and personal job satisfaction.

3.3.1 Ministry Enablers – An Emerging Role

It is important to clarify that the role of ministry enabler is a relatively new one in this church's history, with local shared ministry developing in the dioceses over the last fifteen years, and particularly in the last ten years. Hence not many clergy have had the opportunity yet to exercise this ministry. Some are committed to this model of ministry, while others are not yet convinced of its potential or viability as an alternative to the traditional parish model.

Current statistics from six dioceses¹⁷ suggest that there are twenty-five priest enablers nation-wide, eleven clergywomen and fourteen clergymen. It should be noted that there are also some lay enablers, whom I have chosen not to include in my research, although their role and experience would be a valuable field of research in the future. In terms of diocesan statistics, the eleven clergywomen enablers constitute only 4% of licensed clergywomen. As I was able to interview and/or survey all eleven clergywomen in my survey, they constituted 9% of my survey responses.

I propose now to look at some of the issues that the clergywomen who are ministry enablers named as important to them.

3.3.2 Clergywomen Enablers – Overworked and Underpaid?

Only one of the eleven clergywomen enablers was ministering full-time as an enabler. Five were concurrently vicars, three in parishes other than the context in which they were enablers. Three were also priest assistants, two had chaplaincy roles, two had archdeacon roles, and one had a fieldworker role. Two of these clergywomen were juggling three ministry roles.

¹⁷ Statistics compiled by Diocesan Ministry Educators and Diocesan Administration staff.

While women may be deft at multi-tasking, one factor in this is surely that clergywomen are often in part-time and part-stipended positions. Three of the five women in vicar positions were on 40-50% stipend, the priest assistants were all non-stipendiary, the chaplaincy and archdeacon roles were non-or part-stipendiary, and the fieldworker role was part-stipendiary. Several of the women became enablers either because the parish they were in as vicar, or one for which they were responsible as archdeacon, could not sustain a full stipend, and the enabler position became an adjunct to their vicar role.

The danger then is that an enabler position becomes yet another cobbled together position in an attempt to make up a full stipend. Enablers see this as devaluing the role and frustrating attempts to have a viable amount of input into the faith community. One saw as a negative factor “the very small time component [for enabling] based on what the community could afford.” Faith communities in local shared ministry contexts are in a far better financial position than they were as parishes, in terms of not now having to raise a vicar’s stipend, and so in theory they should have money available to pay an enabler and other needs such as training costs, but this is still a struggle for some.

Some dioceses have recommended minimum payments for enablers. For one this is a 1/5 stipend, for another a 1/4 stipend. Inevitably this means that enablers are needing to function over a number of ministry units, or to find other stipendiary ministry to bring them up to the equivalent of a full stipend. One enabler was enabling four units at 75% of a stipend, another three units at 70% of a stipend. This financial factor can put off some clergywomen who might be interested in enabler positions. To cite two respondents: “I am still needing a full-time stipend.” And: “Ministry enabler positions in my diocese seen to be add-on’s to vicars.”

3.3.3 Previous Ministry Experience and Training

The ordained ministry experience which these clergywomen brought to their enabler roles was predominantly from traditional parish models. This reflects the short history thus far of local shared ministry development. Five had been vicars, one a priest-in-charge, two priest assistants, two in chaplaincy roles.

One enabler had herself been 'called' as a local priest and, following changes of location, had taken on three enabler roles.

This raises interesting questions regarding training. In this transitional stage, most people undertaking enabler roles will have been trained under a system which expected most clergy to be involved throughout their careers in conventional parish ministry. Informal discussions with students attending the College of the Southern Cross, the *tikanga pakeha* stream of St John's College, the Anglican theological college in Auckland, suggest that although the college is willing to include local shared ministry in ministry formation, and to provide training experiences for those who express an interest in learning about ministry enabling and local shared ministry, this model has not entered the consciousness of students as being as valuable a model as the traditional parish ministry model.

One reality is that the majority of those training for ordination within this country do so now in regional ordination training programmes within the dioceses, and this is certainly the predominant model for women, whose family circumstances often preclude training in a residential college setting, and who sometimes express a preference for contextual modes of training.

Dioceses with a commitment to the development of local shared ministry models need to include training in this area in their pre- and post-ordination programmes, and indeed it may be that more intentional training of ministry enablers will need to be a feature at diocesan level.

This is certainly the case at national level through the annual training events called AMEND (Anglican Ministry Enabling New Directions) which have been held since 1997. Many enablers expressed appreciation of this training, and the opportunities for sharing experiences and learning at these events.

As one respondent noted, "I have valued the camaraderie and support of the AMEND group...opportunities for sharing and training have been great."

3.3.4 Gender and Ministry Enabling

While I have suggested that clergywomen may be drawn to enabling ministry for its collaborative and egalitarian nature, most women enablers did not see that their gender was a factor in their appointment. Rather it was more a question of their particular skills and gifts, and their commitment to the model of local shared ministry.

However, the financial factors mentioned above were cited as a reason why more women might become enablers: "Most ministry enablers are women because it is not full time paid employment. Unfortunately it is women that get those kind of positions." This suggests an expectation that women will be willing to take on (a number of) part-time positions, especially if it is known that they have an earning partner.

Another posited that "being single and therefore a relatively free agent was a greater factor than gender." This is confirmed by other enablers with children, who made comments like: "I would not have been able to do this job ... if I had still had school aged children at home, as I am often away from home and work most evenings and weekends."

Similarly, most enablers did not see their gender as a factor in the way they operated as enablers, rather citing attitudes and style as of greater significance.

One expressed the ways of operating she saw as desirable in an enabler in this way:

Being the sort of person who leads from behind and rejoices when they find themselves redundant in terms of hands-on ministry and is just there to encourage, support and to be a resource person, a person who can provide a safe, stable framework so the community can explore, expend lots of creative energy and be free to make mistakes.

Another commented,

I think the biggest single factor in the success of an enabler is whether they have sorted out their issues around power and control and role. If they can get their ego out of the way, they'll probably do a good job – this is irrelevant to gender.

One enabler wrestled with the issue of gender and enabling in this way:

Maybe it is more of a 'woman thing' – nurturing, etc. – but I'm sure there are men who can do all this?! Having said all that, it is very unhelpful to have a maternal or paternal attitude towards the people you're 'enabling'. They are mature adults and they are probably more skilled than you in some aspects of ministry. Are male enablers more likely to feel threatened by this than female enablers? Doesn't it depend on attitudes rather than gender?

Women enablers generally saw gender as a bigger factor – and a more conflicted one – in the way their ministry as enabler was received. Being female could be construed as a positive factor. As one put it, “[In a] new role, I didn't carry the same baggage as a vicar who should be male!” (or, conversely, as a male whom people could revert to treating as a vicar). It was also felt that “having a woman come alongside may provide greater willingness to be open about issues and concerns and needs.”

One saw this as relating to issues of power: “Being a ministry enabler is not so threatening for people, not the same sense of power [as in parish ministry] perhaps, and of women having that power. “In terms of relating to men, one enabler commented succinctly: “For some older men, my gender was initially a

problem; they grew out of that pretty quickly.” Another found that “the strong males on the team seem to feel that they don’t have to compete with me, but nor do they get away with any nonsense.” Yet another made a comparison with parish ministry: “I haven’t experienced any negativity to date from men with regard to my gender and my role as ministry enabler. I did experience this in my role as a parish priest.”

Several enablers affirmed how women valued their being a role model to them, and were empowered by a female enabler, particularly in situations where women had not been encouraged into ministry previously. Yet there were conflicting perceptions about how people perceived an enabler of a different gender to themselves. One felt that men may find it more difficult to move into ministry roles if the enabler is a woman, and that woman might find it more difficult with a male enabler. Another, however, saw men as more threatened by a male enabler than a female, with whom they could feel free to be less competitive.

Several enablers commented on how their feminist convictions were expressed in the enabler role. As one noted, “I find that I prefer to work in non-hierarchical and empowering ways so ministry enabling fits very well with my theology and way of being.” It is notable that those enablers who had been vicars also felt that they attempted to live out their feminist commitment within that role. Thus it was not the ministry role that drove their way of operating, but rather their feminist commitment which drove the way they operated in whatever ministry role they found themselves.

3.3.5 Dual Roles

As the majority of ministry enablers find themselves juggling two or more ministry roles, a pertinent issue concerns how they experience this multi-tasking. One enabler who is also a vicar puts it this way: “I work in the same fashion, trying to empower and being collaborative. The two roles inform each other.” An enabler who is also a priest assistant in a parish finds it “healthy for me to be involved in another way of being church – both right for the people concerned.”

However, another enabler/priest assistant finds this juxtaposition of roles “sometimes frustrating. I would like to introduce the team approach to any non-Local Shared Ministry parish but this is not always appropriate. As a Priest Assistant, I do not have the authority to make any changes.”

It seems that some ministry roles fit more easily with the enabler role than others. One enabler found the vicar/enabler combination difficult, “especially when the parish became very demanding of my time.” However, the combination of enabler/archdeacon for one meant that “I tend to work as a very enabling archdeacon rather than as an authority figure.”

Those who have been both chaplain and enabler found this difficult, especially given the time demands of chaplaincy. Financial considerations also play a part in this frustration. One enabler described her experience in this way:

I did spend some months working as a chaplain. The arrangement was that the money I earned went into the parish coffers. I came to the conclusion it wasn't the best use of my time and realised it was aimed more at helping the parish I was working with full-time to pay me, than an opportunity to minister in a different way. A rather co-dependent arrangement from my perspective and not freeing me to do the work I felt really called to. I was grateful to be asked to work with a second parish, thereby freeing me from the need to help the first parish raise the funds to pay my stipend.

This to me illustrates the lengths to which clergywomen will often go to be helpful to parishes, being aware of their 'strapped for cash' financial position. In the end the person cited above had to do what was life-giving for her, and what in fact treated her with more integrity, rather than expecting her to collude to prop up the system.

3.3.6 Professional Job Satisfaction

Regardless of the difficulties addressed above, relating to part-time and part-stipended positions for most ministry enablers, overall they expressed high levels of professional job satisfaction in the task of enabling. My impression is that their job satisfaction was generally at a higher level than that of vicars who were also asked this question. Some of this may be related to the challenge and excitement of a newer model of ministry. One appreciated "the chance to help develop some of the processes and material that was needed as we trialed various ways of moving along this path." Another factor is perhaps the more open environment of a role that has less gendered 'baggage' than does the role of vicar.

Enablers expressed appreciation for the opportunity to journey alongside a faith community, to work as part of a ministry team, and to see people grow into their gifts and ministries. One described this as enjoying seeing people "be as adult in the church as they are in other aspects of their lives." Another spoke of her pleasure "when the parish begins to take full responsibility for its own ministry with enthusiasm and a sense of excitement about the future."

It was expressed that the "companion journeying" of enabling contained not only the dimension of support and nurture, but also "the prophetic role necessary to challenge." This is two-way traffic: another saw enabling as "a great way to be challenged" in her own growth in ministry.

The link with the community was also affirmed. As one said, “I love to see people ‘stand tall’ as their ministry that takes place outside Sunday and the church walls is honoured”, contrasting with the often “in-house” focus of parish life.

Some enablers saw their role as a ‘freedom from...’. One respondent summarised this as

the freedom from being immersed in one parish only, from being expected to attend and chair every parish meeting and gathering, and being the person through whom all communication must flow! I am grateful NOT to live in the vicarage next door to the church!”

Another commented, “I am not so close to their situation that I become enmeshed in it.”

3.3.7 And Then There are the Negatives...

Enablers also identified less positive aspects of their role in a number of areas. They identified with the pain some people in a faith community might be experiencing as they struggled to leave old models behind and tried to accept the new. It was most difficult to work with this model when people had chosen it as a ‘last resort’, when they actually did not feel they had a choice and so did not enter into the journey to local shared ministry in a positive frame of mind.

At a personal level, several enablers commented on the enormous amount of travel involved to visit often isolated faith communities, and the difficulties of this particularly in winter. Related to this distance from the units one was enabling was the adjustment to not having a base community of one’s own to relate to. One enabler wondered “where ‘my’ faith community is. I am no longer on any parish electoral roll and have no specific parish home.”

Part of this difficulty is adjusting to having a lesser pastoral involvement with people – “the lack of ‘hands on’ in the day to day life of the parish, especially in

the pastoral care area and the involvement in baptisms, weddings, funerals etc". This is a significant adjustment for some clergywomen for whom their pastoral ministry is a very important and satisfying component of their ministry.

At a diocesan level, some expressed a feeling of isolation from other clergy as "the opportunities to gather with them for mutual edification and support seem to be few and far between as we make efforts to include lay people in gathering and training opportunities." This reflects the small number of peers in a diocese and nationally that enablers may have at this stage of the development of local shared ministry. But it also raises the question of how the philosophy of this model, which emphasises that training and theologising opportunities are open to the whole faith community, can be safeguarded, while also allowing those in a particular order (lay or clergy) to meet at times for their distinctive needs. Allied to this is the question of how local priests and deacons relate to clergy in traditional parish models. It appears that a good deal of inter-relation and mutual learning are needed for clergy in both models so that they can value each other appropriately.

Also at diocesan level is the issue of how much autonomy enablers and faith communities have in adapting the local shared ministry model to fit their context. While dioceses have established guidelines and synod statutes related to this model of ministry, these are often evolving as the model evolves. There is a tension between the diocese enforcing a "one size fits all" model, to guard the theological integrity of the model, and the contextual outworking of the model "on the ground" in line with local conditions. Enablers sometimes feel caught in the middle of this emerging construct, aware of diocesan constraints but also fully aware of local needs and realities.

Three clergywomen who had been enablers were no longer in this role. For two of these, they had carried dual roles – enabler and vicar – and time constraints

and work overload meant they relinquished the enabler role, while remaining vicars. The third is now in a social service ministry role.

It is interesting to consider the reasons clergywomen gave when asked why they have not so far wanted or been able to take up a ministry enabler role. Obviously, with a role that has only been developing and available within the church for a relatively short time, most have not been enablers. Some are fully committed to their present ministry roles, and many in parish ministry were quick to remind me that they saw their current ministry very much in enabling terms.

Some indeed felt called to be part of changing the ministry style of the traditional vicar role within the parish model. One vicar put it this way:

Where I wish to explore is (in) traditional parishes and how to make them less reliant on a vicar figure. I see part of my role to be enabling people to take up roles without me being part of that...I think this is worth exploring in a changing church.

Some were not yet convinced about the local shared ministry model or had questions about it: Is it just a cheap option? Does it lead to increased clericalism in the church with all these locally ordained priests and deacons? Is the (theological) training rigorous enough? Does this contribute to the church “dumbing down”?

It is notable that many of the local priests named their lack of skills, (theological) training and experience as clergy as reasons for not being enablers in the future, but this is not surprising in light of their working with enablers whom they see as very skilled individuals coming into their community from the outside.

However, some stated that the experience of the local shared ministry model from the inside would be of help to enablers. Perhaps this reflects the transitional stage we are in where most enablers have had most of their ministry experience

in traditional parish models. This should change as we see some training for ordination with the intention of undertaking enabling ministry.

But there remains a question as to whether ordination is necessary for the ministry of enabler. Some query this, and indeed there are lay enablers working with some local shared ministry contexts. An advantage of this was described in a study leave report on rural ministry in New Zealand undertaken by a clergyman from England: “[As] a lay Christian enabler, she finds her presence does not carry the agendas and expectations of being a clergy leader. Gentle progress is being made to the development of a lay led ministry...worked out by the lay ministers themselves.”¹⁸

3.3.8 And What of the Future...?

Some respondents felt that enabling could be a role they were interested in if there was an appropriate stipend and a clear job description. One current vicar expressed it this way: “Yes, I am not a great fan of the ‘traditional’ vicar model and think the way of the future is a more mutual shared ministry.”

One clergywomen articulated her concerns about the model in this way:

I would only consider this role if it develops to include parishes who are proactively moving towards local shared ministry as a growth option. If a situation existed where the number of skilled lay people was such that a clergy person was not required full time, and the parish chose to invest its resources in lay led outreach, community involvement etc., then I would be interested in facilitating, supervising, resourcing and encouraging this type of ministry...I don’t yet know of places where this is the case.

This echoes the perception that while many local shared ministry units speak of a great deal of spiritual growth in their people, it is rare to hear them speak of

¹⁸ Anthony Bell, *The Church Upside Down: Investigations in Rural Ministry New Zealand Jan/Feb 2001 and Possible Lessons for the English Church*. (Self-published, 2001), 31.

numerical growth in the faith community, though admittedly some of this may be due to local factors such as rural depopulation.

In asking what ministry roles clergywomen might be interested in five years and ten years from now, nine expressed interest in being ministry enablers in five years' time, and four in ten years' time. This compares with nineteen who expect to be vicars or in parish ministry in five years' time, and five in ten years' time. The drop-off in figures at ten years reflects high retirement rates!

It would seem that, while many clergywomen are attracted to the model of local shared ministry and its collaborative ways of working, its present part-time and part-stipendiary status makes it a less than attractive option for many, and a ministry that some clergywomen cannot afford to be involved in. This needs to be addressed if this model is to continue to attract a good gender balance of enablers in the future. It would be of value to examine the conditions of male clergy enablers in terms of time commitment and financial status, to see if there is equity in this area. I am aware that some of them are also enabler for a number of local shared ministry units.

3.4 Summary

My survey analysis has confirmed that it is predominantly women who are local priests and deacons in local shared ministry models. A little under half the current ministry enablers in this country are women. While many are expressing high levels of job satisfaction in this ministry, they are also naming their unease about its present conditions, particularly its part-stipendiary status which necessitates their patching together a number of enabler or other ministry roles to achieve a full stipend. They feel this currently compromises the integrity and the potential of this ministry.

Those clergywomen who have been both vicars and ministry enablers felt that their vision of "enabling" was able to be exercised through both ministry models, and that in this they were transforming the vicar role. I want now to consider the

experiences of those clergywomen who are currently vicars to see how they view their ways of operating in this ministry model, and whether they feel constrained by traditional expectations of the vicar role.

CHAPTER 4

CLERGYWOMEN AS VICARS

In September 1989, at the time of the first conference of ordained Anglican women in New Zealand, an analysis was done of ministry roles being undertaken by women clergy. Of a sample of 84 clergywomen, 16 (1.9 in 10) had been vicars, and 12 (1.4 in 10) were currently vicars.¹⁹ In October/November 1990, research based on a sample of 113 ordained women and 113 ordained men, matched by year of ordination, revealed that 4 in 10 men and between 1 and 2 in 10 women were vicars. Five per cent of both female and male respondents were co-vicars.²⁰

In November 2002, my survey revealed that of a sample of 115 clergywomen in 122 ministry roles, 16 per cent (1.6 in 10) were currently vicars, 7 per cent were co-vicars, and 2 per cent were priests-in-charge of a parish. Current diocesan statistics²¹ would indicate that over all seven dioceses, 14 per cent (1.4 in 10) of clergywomen in licensed ministry are vicars, 4 per cent are co-vicars, and 3 per cent are priests-in-charge. Even taking these three ministry roles together, that still means only 2.1 in 10 women are in parish leadership roles, which is a minimal advance on the statistics from 1989/1990.

The largest group of clergywomen in any ministry role²² is those who are Priest Assistants. Twenty-seven per cent of clergywomen serve in assistant roles, many of them in a non-stipendiary capacity. I received survey responses from twenty-six priest assistants, 21% of the survey sample. Of these twenty-six, only one was receiving a full stipend, five were receiving a part stipend (up to .6 of a stipend), and the other twenty (77%) were non-stipendiary.

¹⁹ Rosemary Neave, 4/15, 4/17.

²⁰ Roger Pym, 50.

²¹ Statistics compiled by Diocesan Ministry Educators and Diocesan Administration staff.

²² See Table 2, page 13.

Why in twelve years is there only a marginal increase in the numbers of clergywomen who are vicars? Why are a quarter of clergywomen in priest assistant roles, three-quarters of these in a non-stipendiary capacity? How much of this is choice, personal decisions clergywomen are making for reasons of lifestyle or family? And how much of this is systemic – that clergywomen are wanting to be vicars, but finding they are not being appointed to positions they apply for, or only to part-stipended positions in small or marginal parishes?

Are women choosing to be in assistant roles in parishes to fit in with their family circumstances? Are women opting to be non-stipendiary because they can afford to be, having an earning partner? Or are they accepting being non-stipendiary, because they are aware of the difficult financial situation of many parishes, and end up “buying into” the situation, which is of course very convenient for the church?

These are the sorts of issues I have been challenged to consider as I examined the survey responses, firstly of those clergywomen who have been or are vicars, and then secondly of those who have not been in a vicar role.

4.1 The Path to Becoming a Vicar

Most clergywomen had moved through the roles of deacon assistant/curate and priest assistant, and for many, priest-in-charge of a parish before becoming a vicar. Of the twenty-eight survey respondents who are currently vicars or co-vicars, twenty-two had been priest assistants, five in a stipendiary capacity, five with a part stipend, and the remaining twelve non-stipendiary. Twelve had been priest-in-charge of a parish, six with a full stipend, six with up to a half stipend. Two clergywomen had served as acting dean in a cathedral; however we have yet to see a woman dean in a cathedral in this country. One vicar had moved from being a local priest and ministry enabler, one from a ministry enabler position, another from a job within social services.

Thus most clergy women seemed to have a graduated path to taking up a vicar role, through a number of assistant positions, and, for about half, a 'trial run' by being priest-in-charge of a parish, often in interregnum circumstances. Some priest-in-charge positions are not interregnum, but longer term positions where a parish cannot afford a vicar or has lost parish status and become a mission district, where the bishop has authority to appoint a priest-in-charge. There would still seem to be truth in Morgan's²³ comment that "bishops find the placing of a woman as a [priest-in-charge] less problematic...it gives the illusion of full ministry without the problems of making an appointment to a parish."

It would be interesting to compare this path with that of clergymen. Zikmund's²⁴ research suggests that clergymen are more likely to go straight from curacy/deacon assistant roles into leadership of a parish, rather than into assistant roles. They therefore gain parish leadership experience more quickly.

One new reality we are encountering now, after twenty-five years of women priests, is that some women have held several vicar positions. Two women were in their third vicar position, and for eight women this was their second position as vicar. They are thus able to compare different experiences of the vicar role over a longer time-frame. One commented, "I am meeting more 'we want the man-vicar' stuff than I have met before in the last twenty years put together."

²³ J Morgan. *Women Priests: An Emerging Ministry in the Episcopal Church* (Bristol: Wyndham Hall Press, 1985), 22, cited in Pym, 31.

²⁴ Barbara Brown Zikmund, Adair Lummis, Patricia Chang, *Clergywomen: An Uphill Calling* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 83.

4.2 Gender and Appointment as Vicar

A number of vicars commented on the resistance they had experienced in the appointment process from parishes not wanting a woman vicar. A vicar of a large urban parish knew that “they definitely didn’t want a woman” but, when finally offered the parish, “the Bishop did point out that it was important for me to consider well as it did mean a breakthrough from women just being offered small parishes.” This certainly correlates with Zikmund’s²⁵ and Pym’s²⁶ research that clergywomen are more likely to get jobs in smaller, poorer and rural parishes, and to find they are not wanted by larger, more affluent (sub)urban parishes.

This is corroborated by evidence at the other end of the scale where several women commented that it was difficult to get someone for this parish, with the implication that the parish did not have a lot of choices and therefore had to accept a woman. As one commented, “They were a bit desperate at the time, so they chose to take me on, even though I was a woman.” Regarding another parish, another stated, “No man or woman wanted such a difficult task – working amongst ‘the poor’”.

I wonder if much has changed in fifty years since the statement made by Kathleen Bliss²⁷ in 1952, speaking of the then deaconesses, “Much more use could be made of these very highly-trained women if only there was not so rooted a conviction in the churches that the proper place for women’s work is the poor parish and the poor only.”

This is not to deny the validity of some women choosing a ‘preferential option for the poor’ in deliberately seeking to work ‘on the margins’; indeed many women have a strong sense of calling to this form of community-facing ministry.

²⁵ Barbara Zikmund and others, 33.

²⁶ Roger Pym , 97, 112, 118.

The problem is when women are marginalised into one context of ministry, rather than being represented and free to move across the whole spectrum.

Allied to this is the reality that clergywomen (and men) who have exercised ministries with a strong social justice component or bicultural commitment often struggle to get positions after this in parishes. They are perceived as too “radical” by parishes who would rather not face some of these justice issues.

Some women commented that they were able to get a job in a parish precisely because the conditions were not such as would be attractive to men expecting a full stipend: “I was chosen for the half-time position because I was a woman. A man would have normally needed a full-time appointment”, and: “[My gender was] very much a factor – no need to reimburse so much!”

Another, speaking of a part-time/stipend vicar position, said, “If I wasn’t a woman with dependant children [at the time], I would probably not have been available for part-time ministry unless I was nearing retirement.” This can become a cleft stick for women when what suited them for family reasons becomes a position from which they cannot move on: “Initially it allowed me to work part time so I was free to do the family stuff as well. Now I want to work and be paid more and I wonder how to achieve that change...”

Those couples seeking co-vicar positions faced particular challenges. A common anxiety was the need for two full-time stipended positions to support a growing family. Yet of the eight survey respondents who were co-vicars, only one woman received a full stipend, the other seven being on .25-.6 stipend, with most receiving a half stipend, resulting in a couple sharing one stipend between them.

²⁷ Kathleen Bliss, “The Service and Status of Women in the Church,” (1952) in Geoff Haworth, “The Deaconess Revival of the 1960’s in the New Zealand Anglican Church,” Research Assignment, B Theol, cited in Roger Pym, 7.

Several women commented that they felt their ministry as a woman was acceptable only because they were part of an ordained couple. Comments such as the following were typical: “I am initially seen as the useful appendage – the vicar whose wife will be useful because she is a vicar too”; “people tell me they wouldn’t have chosen a woman [and] had seen me as a useful extra, however (they) then came to appreciate that I was called by God to the task and fulfilled it well”; “I do not think I would have been appointed the vicar on my own, although I did end up running the parish and people were very accepting of that and the parish chose another woman vicar after I left.”

Generally women considered that, in securing their appointments, it was an advantage to be married, and more difficult being single. However, while having children fits the preferred vicar profile, parishes seem less convinced about a vicar actually being “an actively producing mother of pre-schoolers as well!” – an added pressure and drag for women feeling they should be able to glide through life as priest and mother: “I can remember being concerned that, if I didn’t make a move [to be a vicar], that I may have lost some credibility as a young female priest, with a young baby!”

It was encouraging to see some women asserting that their gender had been a positive factor in their appointment as vicar: “Perhaps the fact that I was a different gender helped my ministry here to be the new start the parish so desperately needed?”; “[they] were looking for ‘model changes’ – my gender allowed that as an up-front statement”; “I think that after several older men...[my] age and gender were attractive.”

Regarding age, some found that this became a negative factor in appointment once they were in their 50s, although that the average age of vicars in the survey was fifty-four²⁸. However, it should be acknowledged, as noted earlier,²⁹

²⁸ See Table 4, page 19.

²⁹ See Table 3, page 14.

when considering age profile, that I am aware of seven vicars in their 30s and 40s (with an average age of forty-four) from whom I did not receive survey responses. If they were included, the average age of vicars would be reduced slightly to 52.5.

4.3 Time Commitment and Stipend

What were the conditions under which the vicars in the survey were ministering? Of the twenty vicars, thirteen were in full-time, full-stipend positions, and seven were on .4-.5 stipend with the implication that they would be working half-time. Some of these 'part-time' vicars appreciated the flexibility this offered; one commented, "I feel well-paid, and free to do as much as I wish, which is more than half time, and my choice." Another observed: "I don't feel 'used'...they don't own me." Others did feel however that, though paid for half-time, they were carrying a full-time workload.

4.4 The Experience of the Vicar Role: Accentuating the Positive

While the list of positive factors in the vicar role expressed by survey respondents is only half as long as the list of negative factors, that may not be indicative of clergywomen's attitudes. It is often easier to name negative factors! Yet women vicars certainly did express appreciation of a number of aspects of the vicar role.

Many valued the opportunities to empower others, to enable people to discover their gifts and ministries, and to watch people grow and realise their potential. Many valued the "teamwork" aspect of leading and working with staff, leaders and parishioners, while some enjoyed the challenge of leadership as expressed in more conventional terms (for example, "running your own ship," "being my own boss").

Several with experience of Local Shared Ministry forms felt they were deliberately cultivating alternative models of leadership: “I can offer leadership towards a more collaborative style of ministry”; “[I have] the opportunity to model LSM principles in a traditional parish”; “being instrumental in encouraging a change of style of ministry leadership... all the understanding about Local Shared Ministry that I had gained...I am having an opportunity to use as the principles by which I lead ministry in a parish.”

A number commented that they enjoyed the variety of functions they exercised, the element of choice in daily life (“certainly not a dull routine!”), and the flexibility of the job. Some particularly related this to enjoying leading a variety of worship and liturgical styles “outside the norm – I believe that as women we do this well and naturally.”

Others related this flexibility to family life. Some co-vicars appreciated how this model of ministry worked for them: “I was able to work with areas I am skilled at readily, I have enjoyed working with my partner sharing the leadership”; “[I have] freedom to minister in areas of personal gifting and strength, and job-sharing with my husband who has different strengths and gifts.” This partnership also extended to parenting: [the vicar role gave] “the opportunity to share parenting and work.”

Numerous vicars commented on how much they valued being able to make a positive difference in the life of the community in which they were living, beyond the faith community itself.

4.5 Negative Aspects of Being a Vicar

Some of the aspects of ministry as a vicar which women found negative are also commonly perceived as such by male vicars – for example, the amount of routine administration, and the number of meetings, evening and weekend commitments

that affect family life and lifestyle. Related to the vicar role was the sense of always having to be available, still being seen as ultimately responsible for everything, and feeling the parish owned you.

Women seemed to often feel they were needing to resist a high dependency on them as vicar and being seen as ‘the boss’. Some felt keenly the lack of colleagues, but for some who had them, they experienced a lack of willingness to work as a team. It seemed a case of “nice men who like women – but find they don’t know how to treat them as colleagues!”³⁰ There was also the frustration of challenging powerbrokers within the parish to share ministry.

Were there aspects of these problems that women particularly related to their gender? In fact, constant references to their gender was one of them! Several still felt they had to prove themselves, to be good at everything, to be a ‘jill of all trades but mistress of some’. Some felt there were high expectations of them, or that they had high expectations of themselves. Comments like “there was a high expectation I’d fix things” may be related to the idea that a new broom of a different gender would achieve miracles of transformation!

Perhaps these findings indicate that we are still not as far along the road to equal acceptance of women’s priestly ministry after twenty-five years as we would like. An English bishop³¹ has recently made this comment after ten years of such ministry there:

Perhaps we will only be fully a whole and healthy church when a woman priest can go ill, or astray, or slightly dotty without women’s ministry as a whole being thereby diminished – as if male clergy didn’t just occasionally fall victim to these all too human experiences!

³⁰ Emma Percy, in Christina Rees, 127.

³¹ John Saxbee, in Christina Rees, 194.

Some respondents felt they still encountered prejudice from some male clergy, and that some of these were not sensitive to issues of inclusiveness.

There were also issues related to conditions of ministry that reflect the reality that clergywomen are mostly in small, struggling parishes: the frustration of part-time work when that is all the parish can afford, the lack of an adequate stipend, and the tenuous financial support, particularly when this is linked to maintaining historic buildings on a shrinking budget.

4.6 Professional Job Satisfaction

It was noted earlier³² that ministry enablers in the survey expressed a higher and less nuanced sense of professional job satisfaction than vicars, but this was attributed at least partly to the sense of excitement and challenge of the newer enabler role, and the tensions for women in living out a heretofore male-defined vicar model.

Certainly many vicars observed that they found immense job satisfaction at a professional level, in that they felt their skills and gifts were being used, for example in facilitating and managing change within the parish, and bringing vision to fruition. As one commented, “Demanding and all though the role of a vicar has been, I would do it all again if I had the choice.”

At a practical level, one vicar noted: “ Even though I wasn’t on a full-time stipend, I enjoyed earning the money!” Related to this was how some vicars’ sense of fulfilment in ministry was affected by the financial state of the parish (invariably this situation was existing prior to the vicar’s appointment there). One vicar felt that “it was hard to think you have done a good enough job when you are trying to maintain very small and struggling congregations.” Another reflected similarly:

³² See page 29.

“I was certainly worn out after years as vicar in a parish that was struggling for resources and identity.”

It was encouraging to see some women speaking out of a growing sense of professional identity: “I still feel inadequate a lot of the time; however, I think I probably know more and have better skills than I give myself credit for... It’s great to be able to consider myself as a professional. I have discovered I am much stronger than I thought I was and I can deal with conflict when I need to.”

4.7 Personal Job Satisfaction: Family and Lifestyle Issues

Levels of job satisfaction of women vicars from a personal perspective provided much more of a mixed picture than did professional job satisfaction levels. Some felt their being in a vicar role had enriched their family life; for example, “[my] children met so many people;” “living ‘on the spot’ brought the whole vicarage family into parish family life.” For some, a part-time vicar position worked well with the needs of childcare.

Some had found rural ministry a helpful environment for their family life: “I was able to be more available to the children in some ways [than in the city]. Whilst it was busy in the parish, the pace of life is more relaxed in a country area and that was good for us.” For single clergy, however, it was more difficult to have a personal life away from the job in isolated rural contexts.

There were a variety of responses from those who still had young children. Some felt the flexible hours of the vicar role made it ideal with a young family. Others had found it very hard work when children were young, “but I don’t think it is any more [of a struggle] than for any couple where both work full-time.” It was also tough at times for those whose children were teenagers and young adults – some attributed this to “others’ expectations of me and of them.”

Those who were co-vicars (but not only these) mentioned the difficulty of differentiating between family and parish life. This was the case whether the couple worked in the same parish or in different ministries. Women found it stressful to need to make a call between ministry and family at times, with family life sometimes being sacrificed. It was also difficult when there were high family demands, such as health issues. Related to this for co-vicars was the fact that virtually all had the experience that job sharing on one stipend was “financially crippling.”

How did men cope being ‘the vicar’s husband’? Some claimed their husbands enjoyed the experience: “My husband retired early and became house-husband so my full-time role worked more easily (his choice!). It’s been good for him.” Yet for others it was not easy balancing marriage, ministry and work. There were also issues in relation to housing; for some, it was a matter of “persuading my husband to give up our home and live in a vicarage;” for others, it was a matter of the vicar herself not wanting to uproot family from their home. There is a trend now for vicars to live in their own homes, rather than in the vicarage with its ‘open-all-hours’ and ‘fishbowl’ aspects; but this is often more realistic in (sub)urban settings than in smaller or rural areas with less easy re-sale possibilities.

One of the realities for single (including widowed) women vicars was the challenge to ‘get a life’ outside the parish, rather than the parish being one’s life, although some appreciated the sense of parish being family. One commented: “The challenge [to get a life] always is refreshed when friends, family or parishioners start their greeting with ‘I know you are really busy...’” For some the vulnerability of living alone in a vicarage was a concern; another issue for singles was that “the myth of the vicarage family will not die.”

4.8 How Women Vicars Do Ministry

It was notable here that age was a factor in whether survey respondents saw gender as having a key role to play in how women vicars minister. Those aged over fifty were more likely to say that women's ministry was more pastorally oriented than men's, more concerned with people and their feelings, and more interested in collaborative and consultative ways of operating.

Women in their 30s and 40s were more likely to continue to name these qualities as illustrative of women's ministry and then to say, "but so can men [be like this]...", or to question "is this a factor of gender or just personality?" Younger vicars, then, had a less 'essentialist' view of their being masculine and feminine ways of operating.

However, there were still a lot of comments about women's pastoral abilities – about how this can make it easier for both women and men to talk to women about personal issues at times, and how their 'earthedness' in life experience can be of help in relating to people in the wider community and nurturing them (back) into church life.

In terms of leadership and decision-making style, women perceived themselves as less authoritarian and less ambitious, and more consultative and collaborative – than what? Not necessarily 'than men' but at least 'than what have been till now male-defined modes of behaviour'.

It is sometimes considered that clergy show higher levels of psychological androgyny than the population at large.³³ In Myers-Briggs terms, "in the general population, more men prefer Thinking and more women prefer Feeling. In the clergy population, a higher percentage of men with a Feeling preference blurs

³³ Anne Marie Nuechterlein and Celia Allison Hahn, *The Male-Female Church Staff: Celebrating the Gifts, Confronting the Challenges* (Washington DC : Alban Institute, 1990), 31.

this distinction.”³⁴ My research findings lead me to wonder how this affects male clergy ministry in the New Zealand context where Kiwi males have, since the nineteenth century, traditionally left religion to the women, in a feminisation of religion that leaves it confined to the private, domestic sphere rather than the public arena dominated by males, and where it is increasingly marginalised in secular society.

In the same way, many clergywomen have had to use (and have been critiqued for exhibiting) what have been perceived as “masculine” strengths to break into a profession previously closed to women and so defined in male terms. Despite this perception, the received wisdom is still that clergywomen operate in a more pastoral, less hierarchical and more empowering style.

It is of interest in this regard that Zikmund’s³⁵ research finds that clergywomen *think* they share power more than do clergymen in leadership positions, but clergymen say that, from their observation, clergywomen do *not* share power as much as they say they do! Another study of both female and male clergy and rabbis suggests that

some male clergy concede that female clergy may be a bit warmer, less formal and less hierarchical, but the overwhelming majority do not report major sex-related differences in the performance of rituals, in the substance and delivery of sermons, and in the overall definition and performance of the roles of minister...³⁶

My instinct is to respond, “well they would say that, wouldn’t they!” But I wonder if the stronger Feeling orientation of clergymen could lead to a more “feminised” conception of ministry by *all* clergy, although I would not want to fall into the same trap of polarising ways of operating into feminine and masculine, rather than simply affirming what is good human practice!

³⁴ A. Nuechterlein and C. Hahn, ix.

³⁵ Barbara Zikmund and others, 56.

³⁶ Rita Simon and Pamela Nadell, “In the Same Voice or is it Different? Gender and the Clergy,”

Some recent New Zealand research³⁷ on male reactions to ordained women tends to fall back into gendered responses – for example, that women are particularly suited to parish ministry because of their warmth, nurturing and lack of power seeking. But the study does conclude that “both women and men bring gifts of holiness and leadership that are more a reflection of their personal walk with God than gender based.”³⁸

4.9 How People Respond to the Ministry of Women Vicars

Women named a number of positive responses to their ministry as vicars, which they attributed to their gender: “People often comment they feel more at home with a female;” “the authority barrier isn’t there, in the sense people treat me naturally;” “people comment on my style being that of enabling and encouraging;” “being a woman opens many doors especially with those on the fringe.”

Women felt that their life-experience was appreciated, particularly their willingness to share this in preaching: “They comment that my preaching touches real life for them and they remember it.” Some women related this particularly to their life-experience as mothers: “When I was pregnant at Christmas and celebrating communion, several people – men and women – found the imagery affirming and/or challenging;” “I think there is symbolic value – other mothers like to see me ‘up the front.’”

These positive assessments contrast with a recent account written by an English woman vicar³⁹ of her pregnancy, which asks some searching questions:

Sociology of Religion, vol. 56 (1) (Spring 1995): 68.

³⁷ Francie Coventry, “Men’s Response and Reaction to Ordained Women, Especially in Liturgical, Pastoral and Administrative Leadership in the Parish and the Diocese,” unpublished Study Report (Christchurch, 2000).

³⁸ Francie Coventry, 17.

³⁹ Helen Duckett, “Questioning Stereotypes of Sexuality and Gender,” in Christina Rees (ed.), *Voices of this Calling: Experiences of the First Generation of Women Priests* (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2002), 119.

Sharing the common female experience of child-bearing and child-birth helped to remove [women vicars] from their spiritual priestly pedestal, and put them on an equal footing with 'normal' women...Many male vicars have children, so why is the pregnancy of a female vicar deemed as being so significant? And what if I, as a woman priest, was married, but had no intention of having children – would I seem so 'normal' and 'down-to-earth' then? Have people responded so well to my pregnancy because I am upholding for them the patriarchal ideal that a woman's role and true fulfilment in life can ultimately only be found not in her work, but in motherhood?

This initial enthusiasm about a woman vicar's pregnancy does not always continue when the realities of combining priesthood and motherhood are observed by parishioners. As one respondent noted: "[There was] a continual battle with assumptions and perceptions regarding how I manage to work and be a mum...that weren't based on fact...many thought that if I wasn't taking a service or visible in the parish office, that I was at home looking after my children!"

For those whose partners were also priests, there were some inequitable assumptions also: "We still have well established Anglicans who will look to my husband, also a priest, for the authoritative answer;" "I think the parish was initially surprised to discover that I was better at running meetings and dealing with conflict etc. than my husband."

How did male parishioners relate to women vicars? It was expressed that some older men do not cope well: "There [are] the occasional men who want to "father" me, but they don't get far." There seemed to be a few very typical Kiwi male responses: "[There are] some real limitations with the more staunch males"; "[it is] more difficult to minister to the (male) farmers as they are awkward about me dropping in for a chat."

It was also noted that, as a woman, it was hard to encourage male parishioners, and that most women clergy are ministering in a church where women are the

majority: “The reality is, in my context, [the challenge is to] ensur(e) men have a place and role models.”

Perhaps this ethos explains some of the resistance to several women ministering together: “They [the parishioners] found it difficult to have two women up-front!”; “it is interesting to note that ‘gender balance’ is now what is the norm; we had better not have two women. As this is a parish that takes curates, this has been a time when I have really challenged.” All this after centuries of men-only at the front!

Many women vicars expressed a lack of comprehension and concern that they sometimes experienced opposition from other women. “There are some women who feel very threatened by my having the authority of a vicar;” “the people I find most unaccepting of me are women in the 60s age-group – maybe those who wanted to do something like I do but never did get the opportunity.” A co-vicar lamented:

Sometimes I get the ‘pats on the head’ type of response that they would never give my husband. Whenever I suggest I resign, WOMEN always say that’s a good idea, just have more time with your family. It’s like they are threatened by my status as a vicar! Sometimes if I still have my dog-collar on after I have been working, it’s the women who want me to take it off – they would never dream of asking my husband to do so!

Women vicars still encounter conflicting expectations from other women about their role: “They still expect me to do all the things they would expect of a male vicar’s wife, like baking cakes for the cake stall;” but, on the other hand, being a woman “threatens matriarchs, especially when hospitality is offered” – a case of ‘you’re damned if you do, and you’re damned if you don’t!’

What about the reactions of the wider community? Many women spoke of how non-churchgoers would express surprise at encountering a woman vicar in a funeral or wedding situation. Some would initially be opposed to this: “This could

be due to the idea that women are not able to take the emotion that is assumed takes place at such times.” Many women saw “the first few funerals [as] a ‘testing’ time.” But these same people were invariably won over and often requested women clergy on future pastoral occasions.

Sometimes there were difficulties in acceptance by other cultures: “Some from different ethnic groups don’t cope...” – or, at an ecumenical level, by some other Christian denominations: “I am not considered a ‘real’ minister by some churches.”

Reading the above comments, one is tempted to think that nothing much has changed in the reception of women’s ordained ministry over twenty-five years, but most women recited the following scenario: “At first [my gender was] a bit of a novelty. I was watched and eventually owned by gender. After x years I don’t think my gender is so much a factor.”

4.10 Feminist Commitment and its Impact on Ministry

Many women cited their feminist commitment as a driver in their advocacy of the use of inclusive language, feminine images of God, and the stories of women in the Bible in worship and preaching. They aimed at fostering ways of operating that were inclusive of those often marginalised, and open to the community. They sought to model styles of leadership that were participatory, collaborative, used consensus forms of decision-making and were less authoritarian than traditional models. One described it this way: “There are times when others want an authoritarian response to how we fold the linen, for example, and I would rather talk about the implications, how this fits with the Gospel and what we as a community will do.”

Some saw the need to work strategically to avoid “people getting their backs up, but rather to work more subliminally...I seek to be true to my principles but

quietly.” For others their willingness to stand up for their commitments has not been without personal cost. One spoke of her struggle in this way:

At times my personal theology is at odds with a community or traditional expectations. I have learnt to pick my battles, and to hold in tension the personal and public. This has not always been easy, and I struggle with the need to have to stand up and be counted at times for things which in principle the General Synod has agreed.

Being ‘out there’ about commitments can also affect job prospects: “My [radical and liberation] theology may well mean that I won’t work in parish ministry again...very few are interested in the process of radical change that I believe the Gospel challenges us with.”

Some expressed frustration at injustice towards women at an institutional level, such as “the lack of equality I perceive in educational and employment opportunities for women clergy.” Others appreciated enormously the support of other like-minded women: “The local ecumenical feminist group was a life-line.”

4.11 Reasons for NOT Undertaking a Vicar Role: Choice or Circumstances?

There were at least three groups of women who were very clear that the reason they had not been a vicar was a matter of their choice. One group was those whose context was a Local Shared Ministry Unit, who valued the fact that they had a defined but circumscribed role in the ministry team according to the ministry they were licensed for, the roles requiring ordination being *local priest* (sacramental minister) or *local deacon*. This group also included those who were *ministry enablers*. One commented,

Being aware of kyriarchal, hierarchical and patriarchal structures and models, I would be more than happy to be a vicar, as long as I was able to express it through the leadership style I have experienced as enabler. That is, one of many ministers, sharing in the decision making as well as the

working out of ministry. I am told this is possible...but it doesn't seem to be the prevailing style generally. I guess the big issue for me is to help people see that we can work out a life and ministry of equality, without denying or losing our diversity.

Another group was those who felt a vocation to *chaplainscy*, whether in hospital, educational or military settings. Some named their appreciation of the collegiality of this role with other professionals, and how they valued working in an ecumenical context. Some expressed this ministry as a calling to those outside the church. One saw her vocation in terms of being a 'worker priest' in the community but lamented that she seemed to keep getting pulled back into the church!

The third group were those called to be *deacons* with a clear community-facing ministry, whether that was exercised from a parish base, or with a diocesan license, including ministry in church-based or secular social service and social justice organisations. Some of these are now named 'vocational deacons' or 'distinctive deacons'. They were very clear that their ministry would in fact be impeded by being in a conventional vicar role.

Another group were those who felt their calling to ministry was being expressed equally as much in their paid employment as in their non-stipendiary role as priest assistant in a parish, or local priest in local shared ministry.

About a dozen women asserted it was their choice not to be a vicar for family reasons. Some singles and widowed named the issues of safety and isolation to be significant in their choice.

Others raised questions at a philosophical level about the vicar-led model of ministry, for example the tendency towards co-dependent relationships between parishioners and vicar, with clergy self-esteem tied to being the vicar.

Some found uncomfortable the negative messages from parishioners about the cost of providing the vicar's stipend being a burden. One commented:

Another issue for me was the consumer society mindset that seemed to imply that, since I was 'paid', anything others didn't want to do, or couldn't do, was automatically my job and I was expected to fill all those gaps, cover all those jobs and ministries.

A lesser number overall considered that they felt that the reason they had not been in a vicar role was more a question of circumstances than their choice. Some named this as a factor of age, particularly those who had come into ordained ministry on retirement. Several did feel their gender had been an obstacle to appointment, and some single women felt that the factors of rural isolation or difficult residential urban situations had put parishes off having them.

Some women had been put off vicar ministry by negative experiences as a priest-in-charge. Others had enjoyed priest-in-charge positions but found that while dioceses and parishes were content to see them in interim caretaking roles, they were more reluctant to see them as vicars. They tended to feel "used."

4.12 Where are They Now – and Why?

Several women who had been vicars were no longer in that position. Why was this? Three of them were now ministry enablers in local shared ministry contexts; one commented, "I was offered the opportunity to become a ministry enabler and this fits with my theology and preferred way of working so I took the opportunity." Three were now in chaplaincy or social service positions, and one of these noted that a full stipend was a factor here: "I had the opportunity to enter chaplaincy full-time...I wanted to be paid and I had a sense of vocation to chaplaincy ministry."

For some women, their move out of the vicar role was related to change in family circumstances, for example, a move when widowed to a place of greater support and contact with family and friends.

One with a young family who moved from being a vicar to a (still full-time and stipended) priest assistant role, commented, "I thought, why I am I doing this to myself at this stage of my life? There will be plenty of time when my children are a bit older. Why not find a ministry area where I can make the most of this stage of life and where the unique gifts and insights that spring from it can be regarded positively?" Still, the reality for those not wanting a vicar position, but needing an income, is that stipended priest assistant jobs are few and far between.

4.13 Where to From Here?

Of those twenty-eight survey respondents who are currently vicars or co-vicars, only ten anticipate still being vicars in five years time, and only three in ten years time. Another five women who are currently in priest assistant or chaplaincy roles hope to join them as vicars. But the number of women vicars will be decreasing by half – why? Partly this reflects high upcoming retirement rates, with twelve vicars expecting to be retired within five years, and another three within ten years.

I was interested to note that while thirteen women expect to continue as priest assistants for the next five years, nobody is opting for this role in ten years' time. Eleven of the current priest assistants expect to be retired within ten years. It may well be that in the future, in a double-income society, women cannot afford to be in priest assistant roles, the vast majority of which are non-stipendiary.

There does not at this stage appear to be much 'movement' between models of ministry, for example from being vicars in conventional parish ministry to ministry enablers in local shared ministry. Those expecting to be ministry enablers in the

future are all already working within Local Shared Ministry models, and do not expect to be returning to traditional parish ministry.

Again, of those twelve chaplains who responded to the survey, most expect to stay in this area of ministry, although eight of them will be retired within ten years. Six other women expressed interest in moving into chaplaincy, and notably three of these are currently vicars. However, a factor in relation to this is the uncertainty of the future of hospital chaplaincy, with funding difficulties owing to declining contributions from the churches. One chaplain described these funding insecurities as “a constant strain and stress.”

Those supportive of women’s ordained ministry in the English church are currently putting a great deal of energy into getting clergywomen into senior positions within the church. There does not seem to be this same sense of intentionality here, perhaps particularly once we achieved having one woman bishop, even though that was now twelve years ago.

Many women in ministry worldwide claim that they are not interested in positions which seem to affirm the hierarchical nature of the institution. However, others still have a vision of changing the nature of the institution from the inside. This is confirmed from my survey, with only a couple of women showing interest in being deans of cathedrals in the future, and only one brave soul owning up to wanting to be a bishop. I hope they will all get there!

4.14 Summary

Clergywomen are now establishing a track record as vicars in this country, with many embarking on their second, and some their third, vicar position. Yet my survey has established that there are only fractionally more women vicars than twelve years ago, and this situation is confirmed by diocesan statistics.

Those women who are vicars are experiencing satisfaction in parish leadership and, beyond that, in being actively committed to transforming the vicar role to work in more collaborative and non-hierarchical ways with their parishioners. Yet many still mention the “drain” on their ministry caused by the attitudinal bias against their gender which they experience from both parishioners and some male clergy colleagues.

Most clergywomen are still not choosing to be vicars, some for family and lifestyle reasons, some because of their perception that this is a role within the institutional church which they do not want to buy into. A lesser number say they have not become vicars not through choice, but rather as the result of circumstances which they feel have worked against them. They would include in this such factors as gender, age and single status.

In conclusion, I would like to stand back and look at the whole picture of women’s ordained ministry in this country from a broader perspective. I want to identify some trends and to suggest some areas to which attention will need to be given if we are truly to see these “enabling” women exercise their ministry from a level playing field.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Twenty-five years on, is it a rosy picture for women priests and deacons in the seven dioceses of *tikanga pakeha* in the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia? Certainly clergywomen seem to feel that, in those parishes which have experienced their ministry, there is a high level of acceptance that this is the norm; no, more than that, that their ministry is much valued and appreciated. There are still a few ‘horror stories’ of people turning around when a woman is celebrating communion, or leaving the church when a woman vicar arrives, but these are thankfully few and far between compared with what we hear from the English scene.

But beyond this general level of acceptance and appreciation of ordained women’s ministry, there does not seem to be deep change at a systemic and institutional level, in terms of a more equitable distribution of clergywomen across all ministry roles within the church.

5.1 Clergywomen as Vicars

I have found through both my survey research and diocesan statistics⁴⁰ that not more than two clergywomen in ten are currently ministering as vicars or co-vicars. This figure has scarcely changed in the last twelve years, and those surveyed indicated⁴¹ that we may see fewer women vicars in the future, rather than more.

⁴⁰ See page 35.

⁴¹ See page 55.

My assessment of the survey results would indicate that clergywomen are saying that they are *choosing* not to be vicars, more than that they are unable to attain vicar posts. But the deeper questions remain as to why they are making this choice.

Many name family or lifestyle reasons. Others speak of difficulties at an ideological level with the vicar role, some driven by their feminist commitment. For these women there is a dissatisfaction with the institution, with the current *modus operandi* that has been carved out from patriarchal models, and some clergywomen are simply not willing to buy into it, even to 'get in there' to change it.

Be that as it may, the majority of current vicars, however, do see their ministry as consciously transformative of the vicar role. They see themselves as 'enablers' of the ministry of those with whom they work, and seek to model collaborative ways of operating and decision-making.

I am interested in the extent to which diocesan requirements of theological study and training affect clergywomen's vocational choices. Of the thirty-one survey respondents who are in vicar, co-vicar or priest-in-charge roles, eleven have theological degrees, ten have theology diplomas or licentiates, and ten have other qualifications. Of those aged under fifty in this group, six out of eight have theological degrees. I am aware of another seven vicars (non-survey respondents) aged under fifty, six of whom have theological degrees.

The expectation has been in most dioceses that those who are selected for ordination with a view to stipendiary ministry (that is, vicar roles) will attain a theological degree prior to ordination. For most this requires relocation to the College of the Southern Cross at St John's College, Auckland for at least three years. But for family reasons, this opportunity to concentrate on study full-time has not been available to many women. While the college does make

considerable efforts to address students' individual training needs and situations, the strictures of university degree requirements can inhibit more flexible training arrangements. However, it should be noted that half the students from the seven *tikanga pakeha* dioceses represented at the College of the Southern Cross in 2002 were women; here at least there seems to be some equity!

The reality has been, though, that many clergywomen have only been able to fulfil their theological study and training requirements through long-term commitments to diocesan regional training programmes, while juggling family, employment and ministry responsibilities. This has sometimes slowed down their paths to ordination and limited their vocational options beyond ordination.

5.2 Clergywomen in Non-Stipendiary Ministry

I was concerned to find from my survey sample that three-quarters of clergywomen in priest assistant roles in parishes are in non-stipendiary ministry. That the largest percentage (27%) of all clergywomen has this ministry role of priest assistant is also cause for concern, as the two elements of 'clergywomen' and 'non-stipendiary ministry' thus too easily become equated.

Many clergywomen will claim that it is their choice to serve in a priest assistant role in a parish, rather than take on a vicar role, usually for family reasons. Others will offer their ability to be non-stipendiary, usually through having an income-earning partner, as their gift to the church, one which the church receives gladly but, I fear, also often takes for granted, if not abuses. The fact is that clergywomen often find they are 'stuck' in non-stipendiary ministry, for example if their domestic or financial circumstances change. Pym's research⁴² suggested that it is less problematic for clergymen to move from non-stipendiary to stipendiary ministry than it is for clergywomen.

⁴² Roger Pym, 111, 112.

Parish finances may be used to fund additional positions like youth or children's workers, rather than even to think of reimbursement or just allowances for clergywomen once they have offered themselves as "non-stipendiary." Clergywomen will often not advocate for themselves, nor want to be seen as competing for scarce resources, but they also often lack anyone else to advocate for them, particularly as it suits the parish finances to have their ministry 'on the cheap'. Clergywomen too are acutely aware that the vast majority of lay ministry is carried out in a non-stipendiary capacity, and don't want to set themselves up against lay people. But many clergywomen are working full-time for the church and so are precluded from other employment and from other income sources.

The danger of this is that high numbers of clergywomen in non-stipendiary ministry can make women's ordained ministry seem predominantly a "second income profession,"⁴³ where women can only afford to exercise this non- or part-paid ministry if they have the support of a higher income-earning partner. Zikmund's research confirms that clergywomen are "less likely to be perceived (when married) as the primary 'breadwinner' of the family, and churches may thus feel justified in paying female clergy less than men."⁴⁴ The church must realise, instead, that women in ordained ministry need "a living wage not a supplementary income."⁴⁵

If this issue is not addressed, while there may be increasing numbers of clergywomen in the clergy workforce, the future may look "increasingly crowded with female colleagues in lower to mid-level placements" and, although some women will attain positions of religious leadership, "it is doubtful that it will increase beyond a token level in either numbers or influence...In short, women will continue to labor in the vineyard while the masters reap the fruits of their

⁴³ Morgan, 49, cited in Roger Pym, 30.

⁴⁴ Barbara Zikmund and others, 75.

⁴⁵ Roger Pym, 31.

harvest.”⁴⁶ I fear this will be the future scenario for clergywomen in this church unless we are able to reach a “critical mass” of clergywomen in stipended positions of parish leadership. That this critical mass is looking increasingly doubtful is related to the fact that parishes which are declining (of which we have not a few) and so are vulnerable are perhaps less likely to (as they see it) ‘take a risk’ on a woman vicar.

Another factor is that parishes with increasing numbers of women already in (probably non-stipendiary) ministry positions could well look for a male vicar, to address the perceived gender imbalance – a sort of male ‘backlash’! Nesbitt⁴⁷ speaks of this backlash developing when the percentage of women to men in church institutions reaches 30 per cent. Diocesan statistics⁴⁸ of numbers of clergywomen as a percentage of all licensed clergy vary from 15 to 57 per cent, with this range: 15, 33, 37, 40, 42, 45, 57.

However I am not convinced that one can speak of a backlash if clergywomen have never yet been in some church positions (vicars, deans, bishops) in equal numbers, but are only over-represented in the assistant and non-stipendiary positions. They do not provoke enough of a threat to merit a backlash!

The twenty-five year period of women’s priestly ministry has also coincided with two other ministry developments in this church: those of non-stipendiary ordained ministry and of diocesan-provided regional ordination training programmes. While I think the possibility of regional training has been of great benefit to clergywomen, the alliance of these three contemporaneous movements has mitigated against an equal representation of clergywomen in stipended ministry positions.

⁴⁶ Paula Nesbitt, *The Feminization of Clergy in America: Organizational and Occupational Perspectives* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), cited in Barbara Zikmund and others, 133.

⁴⁷ Paula Nesbitt, cited in Barbara Zikmund and others, 105.

A report produced for the Church of England in 1987 made this comment about the Anglican Church in New Zealand at that stage:

One significant point is that more than half the women clergy in New Zealand are non-stipendiary. It has been said that the availability of the non-stipendiary style of ordained ministry allows women to combine an ordained ministry with family and community responsibilities. But does it also reflect a desire to exercise a priestly ministry while not embracing the clerical profession? If most of these non-stipendiaries are married women supported by their husbands, does this raise some questions of principle?⁴⁹

Fifteen years later, it would still seem to be the case that about half the women clergy in New Zealand are non-stipendiary, if one adds together the local priests and deacons, plus the three-quarters of priest assistants my survey found were non-stipendiary.⁵⁰ I would concur that this does indeed raise questions of principle for this church and that, while clergywomen often express ambivalence about “embracing the clerical profession,” they have not always been treated in a professional manner by the church which nonetheless values their priestly ministry. Clergywomen in non-stipendiary ministry are trying to uphold the important principle that ministry is more important than money, and yet they are being exploited by the patriarchal church as they do so.

5.3 Local Shared Ministry and Parish Ministry

I would want to affirm the development of local shared ministry models as alternative models of ministry alongside conventional parish ministry, and also to acknowledge the strong presence of clergywomen within local shared ministry, both as local priests and deacons and as ministry enablers.

⁴⁸ Diocesan statistics obtained from Ministry Educators and Diocesan Administration staff.

⁴⁹ C. Howard (ed.), “The Ordination of Women to the Priesthood: A Further Report” (London: CIO Publishing, Church House, 1987), 37, cited in Roger Pym, 33.

⁵⁰ 13: Local priests, 18%; local deacons, 7%; three-quarters of priest assistants (27%) = 20%.

However, in the light of the above comments about non-stipendiary ministry, it is important to note that local shared ministry is entirely a non-stipendiary model, and that ministry enablers only receive a partial stipend per ministry unit, thus the present need to cobble together a number of enabling and other ministry positions to make up a full stipend. This may reflect the present interim stage in the development of local shared ministry. It is to be hoped that we will see in the future more full-time enablers over several LSM units, and more enablers who have intentionally trained for this specialised ministry.

Having said that, I would still hope to see more movement between LSM and parish models of ministry, at least at the level of the equipping ministries of enablers and vicars, but also at the level of local priests and deacons having their ministry affirmed when they move to new contexts, after an appropriate recognition period and with attention to any new training needs.

It seems to me that there is the need for greater relationship between the two models, and for better education and growth in understanding their principles and dynamics than we see at present, where most clergy in one or other model swear by their own model and often have serious misgivings about the other. This cross-fertilisation is important if we are to avoid the conception of two tiers of priesthood that was first raised as an issue between stipendiary and non-stipendiary clergy.

The report to General Synod (1982) entitled “A Theology of Priesthood for New Zealand” made the following recommendation to this effect:

Since there can only be one priestly ministry, the Church should take care to avoid dividing the ordained priesthood into classes as between parochial and extra-parochial, stipendiary and non-stipendiary, trained full-time and trained part-time. (*Report to General Synod 1982: xvi*).⁵¹

⁵¹ Cited in Roger Pym, 40.

I would suggest this is particularly important for clergywomen whose family and life circumstances often mean they live much more diverse and complex career paths than clergymen. Zikmund's research⁵² has shown that clergywomen are more likely than clergymen to take part-time work and interim, secular and co-vicar positions. Responses from my survey respondents confirm that this is also the case here in New Zealand.

But, in addition, this country is considered one of the most mobile western societies, with people moving on average every five years; and the employment environment shows people's career patterns are increasingly reflecting a number of employment strands over a working life time, rather than just one career. Clergy are not unaffected by these trends, and it seems we will see more of what Zikmund has termed "'intermittent clergy', that is, clergy who move in and out of church-related work throughout their careers."⁵³

My observation is that clergywomen are well-placed to cope with this phenomenon, partly because that is the way they have often chosen to operate to suit their family situation, but also because they have a wider view of their vocation beyond its particular expression in ministry within a church context. Many see their ministry as having a community-facing direction anyway, but in looking to the future, some speak with equanimity of the possibility of not being in 'church work' down the track but, rather, expressing God's call on their lives in whatever situation they find themselves. For some, it is actually a preference to work outside the church in this way because, for them, it is "a joy to be in God's house, though not always in God's Church!"⁵⁴

⁵² Barbara Zikmund and others, 70.

⁵³ Barbara Zikmund and others, 84.

5.4 Enabling Women To Stand Together

Zikmund concludes her study of clergywomen with the following observation:

Clergywomen continue to have difficulties, even when they are within institutional structures that ought to offer them opportunities for advancement...the system is failing women...and without broader information and support networks, some clergy women identify their problems as personal failures rather than the limitations of the social or institutional systems in which they are located. If clergy women can overcome the isolation created by the personalization of their “failures” and gain an understanding that their problems are system-based rather than individual or situational, they may be able to mobilize and make significant new contributions to the churches and their ministries by expanding definitions of ordained ministry and – literally – taking the church into the world.”⁵⁵

These comments are confirmed in my experience of reading the survey responses of New Zealand clergywomen and in conversations with them. Many work in geographically isolated contexts, and even those in urban settings are often too busy to get together, as many women’s groups, long after their heyday in the 1970s, now struggle to attract or maintain membership.

A study of changes for New Zealand women from 1976-2001 examines the same time-frame as that of women’s priesthood in this country. Its author⁵⁶ has identified “a loss of consciousness of women as a collectivity” with “achievement for oneself when smashing the glass ceiling” as significant shifts in women’s attitudes since the 1970s.

That perhaps the attitudes of clergywomen are not too different was brought home to me in relation to the conference held in April 2002 at Hopuhopu, Ngaruawahia to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the ordination of women to the

⁵⁴ Helen Cunliffe, “At the Interface Between the World and the Kingdom,” in Christina Rees, 154.

⁵⁵ Barbara Zikmund and others, 131-132.

⁵⁶ Dr Claudia Bell, unpublished study, *Star* (Dunedin), 28 November 2002, p.6, col.2.

priesthood in this country, which was attended by about one hundred Anglican clergy and lay women. The conference organiser talks about the planning for this conference:

The most common response was... 'wow, fabulous concept, of course I'd love to be there, but I'm so busy with my work and family; I don't think I'll be able to go.' These women were daughters, mothers, grandmothers, wives, caregivers, employees and businesswomen – all at the same time. Conflicting demands of work and private life along with cost and travel made it difficult to translate the interest of so many women into the reality of their physical presence at the conference.⁵⁷

She further commented after the conference:

Connection is something that we women often seem to put aside as we struggle to balance life, work, family and ministry...the 'post-conference' silence reflects my experience of the conference as a whole...many [women] remained silent, neither present nor absent, invisible. Don't think for a moment I'm questioning Anglican women's commitment to women's issues. What I wonder is: where has women's collective activism gone? Is it dead and buried? Has it been converted into a different form? Or are we so helplessly entangled in the minutiae of life that we're too tired to be critical?⁵⁸

I would tend to suggest the latter.

I want to end, however, on a note of hope from the Hopuhopu Conference which I too experienced. This was how one woman described it:

I sensed a new way of doing church, a new vision and lots of tenacity and faithfulness in often difficult or isolated circumstances, women newly ordained with vision and passion for justice, women not yet recognised by the hierarchy, but ministering to their communities, women leading – whether as a bishop or as informal networkers and encouragers, and women going out and connecting the church with the community.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Joanne Richdale. "25 Years on' – here's what they say..." *Women's Resource Centre National Newsletter*, vol. 16 no 4 (May 2002):1.

⁵⁸ Joanne Richdale, "So...What Happens Next?" *Anglican Taonga* (Winter 2002):42.

⁵⁹ Nicola Hoggard Creegan. "More highlights from the 25 years on conference", *Women's Resource Centre National Newsletter*, vol. 16 no 4 (May 2002): 2.

I am reminded of the words of a song written by a Kiwi woman of faith: "Break the mould, women, sing your song, we've been standing in the shadows far too long...break the mould and stand free at last."⁶⁰ While it may be considered that clergywomen in this country have 'broken the mould' of priesthood to reflect with greater wholeness the full image of God, yet it still seems that they are largely 'standing in the shadows' as regards equality of ministry within this church.

There is still a need for women to sing our song together, if we are really to stand free at last in a way that can image the freedom and justice of the Gospel message to our country.

⁶⁰ Sue Boland, "Break the Mould," on the cassette tape "Firewomen," Wellington, Aotearoa New Zealand, 1991.

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APPENDIX A

COPY OF SURVEY

“ENABLING WOMEN? ANGLICAN CLERGYWOMEN AS VICARS AND MINISTRY ENABLERS”

RESEARCH PROJECT FOR MASTER OF MINISTRY – REV JENNY WILKENS

EMAIL SURVEY

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

**PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY BY EMAIL OR POST
BY FRIDAY 27 SEPTEMBER , 2002**

If you'd prefer to post the survey back to me, please post to
Rev Jenny Wilkens, c/- Dr Lydia Johnson, Department of Theology & Religious
Studies, University of Otago, P O Box 56, DUNEDIN.

If you would prefer to fill out a paper copy of the survey, or for any reason can't
read this computer format, please contact me, email jennywilkens@xtra.co.nz or
phone c/- 03 479 5358.

*To keep the format simple in an email survey, I won't use boxes or ticks or
crossing out for responses. Mostly I will request your own answer or a Yes or No
response, but do feel free to add your comments to amplify your response,
by stretching the space between the questions. Although I invite you to amplify
your response, please don't feel you have to do this for every question,
if this will involve more time than you can give to completing the survey.*

Please answer all relevant sections, including Section F.

You will not need to answer questions in all sections of the survey.

SECTION A – Ministry Roles

1. Please state the year in which you were ordained deacon :
2. Please state the year in which you were ordained priest :
3. What ministry roles have you had since ordination? Please list for each
 - a) the role; b) duration; c) paid or non-paid?
4. What is your present licensed ministry role?

(For example, vicar, asst priest, chaplain, ministry enabler, local deacon etc.)

5. What is the expected time commitment for this ministry role?

(For example, full time, ½ time, etc.)

6. Is this ministry role a paid position? Please comment.

SECTION B – if you have been or are a vicar

(If you haven't been a vicar, go on to Section C)

If you have held several vicar positions, please take your experience as a whole.

7. What were the circumstances of you becoming a vicar? Please discuss, for example, your own motivations and reasons, the role of others etc.

8. What are for you some of the positive aspects of your ministry role as vicar?

9. What are some of the negative aspects of your ministry role as vicar in your experience?

10. To what extent has your ministry as vicar brought you professional job satisfaction?

11. To what extent has your ministry as vicar brought you personal satisfaction, in terms of your whole lifestyle, family circumstances etc.?

12. To what extent do you think your gender was a factor in your appointment as vicar?

13. To what extent do you think your gender is a factor in the way you minister as a vicar?

14. To what extent do you think your gender is a factor in the way your ministry as vicar is received? Please discuss

15. If you have a commitment to feminist theology and models of church, how does this impact on your ministry as a vicar? Please discuss.

16. If you have been a vicar in the past, but are not currently a vicar, could you please explain why this is?

(Please go on now to Section D or E, and Section F)

SECTION C – if you have not been a vicar

17. If you have not been a vicar, has this been for you a matter of choice NOT to be a vicar? Reasons for this might be family circumstances, lifestyle, another preferred ministry role, etc. If this is for you a matter of choice NOT to be a vicar, please discuss your reasons.

18. If you have not been a vicar, has this been for you not a question of personal choice, but rather the result of circumstances? Examples of this could be family circumstances, marital status, stance of Board of Nomination at parish or diocesan level, etc.

Please discuss your experience. **(Please go on now to Section D or E, and Section F)**

SECTION D – if you have been or are a ministry enabler

Local Shared/Mutual/Total Ministry models have been developing over the last twenty years in most of the seven Dioceses of Tikanga Pakeha of the Anglican Church. While evolving differently in each Diocesan context, these models involve in broad terms the development in a faith community of a Ministry Support Team, consisting of licensed lay ministers and local priests and deacons, to enable the ministry of all the baptised, supported by a Ministry Enabler, usually an ordained person who acts as consultant, often to a number of faith communities on a contracted, usually stipendiary basis.

19. What were the circumstances of you becoming a ministry enabler? Please discuss, for example, your own motivations and reasons, the role of others etc.
20. What are for you some of the positive aspects of your role as ministry enabler?
21. What are some of the negative aspects of your role as ministry enabler in your experience?
22. To what extent has your ministry as ministry enabler brought you professional job satisfaction?
23. To what extent has your ministry as ministry enabler brought you personal satisfaction, in terms of your whole lifestyle, family circumstances etc.?
24. To what extent do you think your gender was a factor in your appointment as ministry enabler? Please discuss
25. To what extent do you think your gender is a factor in the way you minister as a ministry enabler? Please discuss
26. To what extent do you think your gender is a factor in the way your ministry as ministry enabler is received? Please discuss
27. If you have a commitment to feminist theology and models of church, how does this impact on your ministry as a ministry enabler? Please discuss.
28. If you have been a ministry enabler in the past, but are not currently a ministry enabler, could you please explain why this is.

If you are currently a ministry enabler, please answer questions 29-33.

29. Is this role as ministry enabler full-time or part-time? Please discuss
30. Is this ministry enabler role paid? Please explain
31. Are you exercising this ministry as ministry enabler alongside another ministry role? If so, what is the other role?
32. If you are ministry enabler plus another ministry role, how have you found doing both roles concurrently?
33. If in dual roles, do you think your experience as ministry enabler is affecting the way you do your other ministry role? Please explain.

(Please go on to Section F)

SECTION E – if you have not been a ministry enabler

34. If you have not been a ministry enabler, are there reasons you can give why being a ministry enabler has not been an option for you?

Examples could be : this model of ministry is not available in my diocese or is in early stages of development, financial reasons, family reasons, geographical reasons etc. Please discuss.

35. Is being a ministry enabler a ministry role you might be interested in in the future ? Discuss.

SECTION F – for everyone

36. What ministry role would you like to have in five year's time? Please discuss.

37. What ministry role would you like to have in ten year's time? Please discuss.

38. Your name: _____ Your age (optional): _____

You are, of course, welcome to leave this anonymous if you wish. Please be assured that your personal information will not be identifiable in my written up research, and that any data gained through this survey will be used in a general way for my research conclusions.

Would you be willing for me to contact you if I need to check anything?

Do feel free to contact me with any inquiries, or if you would prefer to answer this survey orally, for example by phone. Thank you very much for your assistance. Jenny.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University of Otago Human Ethics Committee.

APPENDIX B

A paper produced by Rev Cushla McMillan, Vicar and Ministry Enabler, Dunedin Diocese, to help her parish reflect on the differences between her roles as Vicar of the parish, and as Ministry Enabler to some of the faith communities within it.

VICAR OR ENABLER ? !!!

You aren't the only one confused!

Comparison from the Dunedin Diocesan Statutes. (3. 51 / 53. p 18-20)

WHAT A VICAR IS EXPECTED TO DO (BUT NOT AN ENABLER) (By implication these tasks are probably expected of the local ministry leaders.)

In brackets is the reference number to the statute. V= Vicar , E = Enabler

1. Provide spiritual leadership to the community
promote the spreading of the Christian faith within the Anglican tradition (Va)
2. With the church wardens and committee provide spiritual and temporal leadership in meeting the responsibilities of the faith community. (Vb)
3. Build up Christ's congregation
strengthen the baptised and lead them as witnesses to Christ in the world. (Vc)

WHAT IS THE SAME FOR BOTH VICAR AND ENABLER?

1. Monitor the programme of spiritual growth and education ministry leaders will undertake, relating to every aspect of their ministry and the skills and personal qualities they need to exercise their roles. (Vd, Ea)
2. Provide support and nurture, and also resources, education, guidance and opportunities to develop their skills to assist them in their ministry roles. (Ve, Eb)
3. Care for those in the faith community
participate regularly in its activities
encourage the development of mutual care within the community
ensure that those who seek guidance and help can get it (Vg, Ed)
deal with tension or the possibility of tension within the community (Vg, Ee)

4. Provide a link between worshipping communities and the wider church, representing the vision of the Bishop and the Diocese to the people, and the vision of the people to the Bishop and the Diocese. (Vh, Ef)

WHAT IS DIFFERENT FOR THE ROLE OF ENABLER?

1. To empower, encourage and enable clergy and lay ministers to lead their communities of worship (E preamble)
2. and to spread the Christian faith within the Anglican tradition (Ea)
3. Support and nurture the ministers, and those who may become ministers and their congregations (cf. the congregation and its ministers) (Eb, Ve)
4. Provide pastoral care for the ministers and, in exceptional cases, for others in the faith community (cf. for members of the community of worship) (Ec, Vf)
5. Make themselves available to the faith community, (cf. provide a continuing and significant presence in the faith community) (Ee, Vg)
6. In particular take appropriate action where it appears that the ministers may be stressed, (cf. deal with any problems the ministers may have.) (Ee, Vg)

SUMMARY.

Aims are the same

Enabler hands on more responsibility to local ministry leaders.

Vicar holds onto more responsibility.

e.g. spiritual and temporal leadership

building up the congregation to witness to Christ in the world

to spread the Christian faith in the Anglican tradition

to support and nurture the congregation

to provide pastoral care for the faith community

to be present in the faith community

DUNEDIN DIOCESE STATUTE:

Vicars and Enablers

51. The responsibility of the Vicar for each faith community in the Vicar's care shall be to:

(a) provide spiritual leadership to the community, and to promote the spreading of the Christian faith within the Anglican tradition

(b) in conjunction with the Churchwardens and the governing body of the community, provide both spiritual and temporal leadership in meeting the responsibilities of the faith community

(c) build up Christ's congregation, strengthen the baptised and lead them as witnesses to Christ in the world

(d) seek out people who will share a ministry of leadership with the Vicar, and monitor the programme of spiritual growth and education undertaken by those ministers, relating to every aspect of their ministry and the skills and personal qualities they need to exercise their roles

(e) support and nurture the congregation and its ministers, providing them with resources, education, guidance and opportunities to develop their skills, so as to assist them in their ministry role

(f) provide pastoral care for members of the community of worship

(g) care for those in the faith community, participating regularly in its activities. encouraging the development of mutual care within the community, ensuring that those who seek guidance and help can get it; provide a continuing and significant presence in the faith community, dealing with any problems the ministers may have, and with tension, or the possibility of tension, within the community

(h) provide a link between worshipping communities and the wider church, representing the vision of the Bishop and the Diocese to the people, and the vision of the people to the Bishop and the Diocese.

52. Enablers shall be appointed by the Bishop after consultation with the Parish and the Local Church.

53 The responsibility of the Enabler for each faith community in the Enabler's care, shall be to empower, encourage and enable clergy and lay ministers in the Parish to lead their communities of worship, and to that purpose to;

- (a) monitor the programme of spiritual growth and education undertaken by those ministers, relating to every aspect of their ministry and the skills and personal qualities they need to exercise their roles, and to spread the Christian faith within the Anglican tradition
- (b) support and nurture the ministers, and those who may become ministers and their congregations, providing them with resources, education, guidance and opportunities to develop their skills, so as to assist them in their leadership roles
- (c) provide pastoral care for the ministers and, in exceptional cases, for others in the faith community
- (d) care for those in the faith community, participating regularly in its activities, encouraging the development of mutual care within the community, ensuring that those who seek guidance and help can get it
- (e) make themselves available to the faith community, and in particular to take appropriate action where it appears that the ministers may be stressed, or there is tension, or the possibility of tension, within the community
- (f) provide a link between worshipping communities and the wider church, representing the vision of the Bishop and the Diocese to the people, and the vision of the people to the Bishop and the Diocese.