# How Clergy Thrive: Questions for Reflection for Senior Clergy and Diocesan Officers

## Spiritual & vocational wellbeing (pp.8-17 in *How Clergy Thrive*)

1. How do your clergy know that they and their ministry are valued?
2. Which of your clergy feel vocationally fulfilled regarding: ordained ministry; their role; their post; the tasks they are expected to do? What are acceptable levels of vocational dissonance?
3. Which of your clergy are not fully using their gifts and skills? How do your diocesan structures enable ongoing accompanied vocational discernment?
4. How effectively do you use Ministerial Development Reviews? Do you follow them up?
5. How do your clergy grow and mature spiritually? Are you aware of whether or not they are growing?
6. What kind of pastoral supervision do you provide for your clergy?

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## Physical & mental wellbeing (pp.18-27 in *How Clergy Thrive*)

1. How would you know if your clergy were facing challenges to their physical or mental health? How are they supported?
2. How can you help clergy to maintain healthy rhythms of work, rest and prayer? Do they feel they have permission to do so?
3. How are older clergy supported in their physical health?
4. What support is there for clergy approaching the end of their curacy?
5. What support is there for new incumbents? Are there sources of support lasting beyond the first few months (e.g. action learning sets and mentoring)?
6. How are the clergy in your diocese given explicit permission to take time out for self-care and spiritual development? Are their parishioners aware of this?
7. Why might clergy in your diocese not access diocesan support at times of vulnerability? Are they encouraged to do so? How could pastoral support be improved?

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## Relationship wellbeing (pp.28-37 in *How Clergy Thrive*)

1. How would you know if your clergy were feeling isolated? How often do you ask how they are?
2. How can you help single clergy to feel connected and supported?
3. How would you know if clergy were facing family challenges? What do you see as your responsibility to clergy families and how are they supported?
4. What support is given to help clergy negotiate relationships within the parish? How is it different for incumbents, assistants/associates and clergy exercising sector, workplace or other ministries?
5. How many of your clergy have safe spaces in which to discuss personal or ministerial issues with people with whom they are not in a power relationship? How are these spaces found? How well do chapters work?
6. How well are curate/training incumbent expectations managed?

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## Financial & material wellbeing (pp.38-47 in *How Clergy Thrive*)

1. How well does tied housing work in your diocese? Is it an expression of care or a source of stress for clergy?
2. Are you aware of clergy struggling to make ends meet? If not, is that because they’re fine or they hide it? If so, what kind of support do you provide? Do you know which clergy are most at risk?
3. Do clergy in your diocese feel valued? What can you do to ensure they do?
4. How many of your clergy are approaching retirement? How many worry about this? What support is there for clergy approaching or needing to plan for retirement?
5. How far do clergy feel responsible for parish finances? Who can they turn to?

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## Participation wellbeing (pp.48-53 in *How Clergy Thrive*)

1. How far do clergy in your diocese feel under pressure to pay parish share and increase attendance figures? How does this impact their wellbeing?
2. Does diocesan strategy always take into account clergy wellbeing? What messages do clergy receive from the diocese about mission and ministry?
3. How much contact do clergy have with their bishop? Do they know that they are known, understood and valued?
4. Have you considered the specific experiences and barriers in your diocese to: female clergy; same-sex attracted clergy; clergy not from highly educated, middle class backgrounds; clergy from ethnic minorities; clergy with disabilities; clergy from theological minorities or working in traditions different from their own? How can you support these groups?

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## The big picture (p.58 in *How Clergy Thrive*)

1. As you have read *How Clergy Thrive*, what has struck you most about clergy wellbeing? What troubles you?
2. How has the Covid-19 pandemic changed your personal, ministerial and diocesan practices and affected your wellbeing and that of the (other) clergy in your diocese?
3. Where do you think you are doing and feeling well at the moment, and what are you finding challenging?
4. Which things could be impacted by a small, doable change, which is it hard to know how to tackle, and which would require significant cultural or structural change? What changes can you make and what must be left to others?
5. What practical steps will you take to follow this up?
6. With whom can you talk about it?