
Readers and Other Lay Assistants Ordinance 1976

No. 41, 1976

AN ORDINANCE to provide authority for lay persons to assist in pastoral and liturgical ministry.

WHEREAS it is expedient that further provision be made regarding the ministry of lay persons **NOW** the Synod of the Diocese of Sydney **HEREBY ORDAINS DECLARES DIRECTS AND RULES** as follows:—

1. This Ordinance may be cited as "Readers and Other Lay Assistants Ordinance 1976".

2. In this Ordinance unless inconsistent with the context or subject matter:—

"Archbishop" means the Archbishop of Sydney.

"Minister" means:

- (a) as applied to a provisional parish or provisional district, the minister duly licensed thereto as curate-in-charge,
- (b) as applied to a parish, the minister duly licensed thereto as incumbent, and
- (c) as applied to a new housing district, the minister or one of the ministers duly licensed thereto,

but does not include any person appointed pursuant to clause 55. of the Sydney Church Ordinance 1912 (as amended).

"Parish" includes:

- (a) a parish,
- (b) a provisional parish,
- (c) a provisional district, and
- (d) a new housing district.

"Church committee" includes:

- (a) the parish council of a church in a single church parish or if there is no parish council, the minister and churchwardens thereof,
- (b) a church committee of a church in a multi-church parish or if there is no church committee, the minister and churchwardens thereof,
- (c) the local committee of a new housing district or if there is no local committee, the Sydney Church of England New Areas Committee.

"Church" when applicable to a building means a building duly consecrated or licensed for the celebration of Divine Service, the administration of the Sacraments and the performance of any other rite or ordinance of the Church of England in Australia.

"Parish council" means the parish council (if any) of a parish but, in the case of a parish having only one church and which does not have a parish council, means the minister and churchwardens of that church.

3. The minister of a church may invite a lay person to assist him in reading the scriptures and the prayers during morning or evening prayer in that church.

4. (1) The Archbishop may authorise any layman who:—

- (a) satisfies the Archbishop that he has been adequately trained and possesses a sufficient knowledge of Holy Scripture and of the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Church of

Readers and Other Lay Assistants Ordinance 1976

- England in Australia, and
- (b) has subscribed his assent to the Thirty-nine Articles, and
 - (c) satisfies such other conditions as may be required, by the Archbishop-in-Council, and
 - (d) has been nominated by the minister and a majority of the members of the church committee of the church where he customarily worships, in writing signed by that minister and that majority, to be a suitable person to be authorised under this clause,
- to read morning and evening prayer in any church and to expound the scriptures and the doctrine of the Church of England in Australia.
- (2) Any layman so authorised, unless a catechist, shall be called "Reader".
- (3) Any layman so authorised shall perform these functions in a church:—
- (a) only on the invitation of the minister thereof or during a vacancy of the cure on the invitation of the Archbishop, and
 - (b) subject to such regulations as the Archbishop-in-Council may prescribe from time to time.
 - (4) Every authority issued pursuant to this clause shall be for a term not exceeding three years and shall be revocable at will by the Archbishop.
5. The Archbishop may authorise any layman who holds an authority under clause 4 to perform the ministration of baptism, the burial of the dead and the churching of women when no lawful minister can be procured. The provisions of sub-clauses (3) and (4) of clause 4 shall apply to every layman who holds any authority issued pursuant to this clause.
6. (1) Subject to sub-clause (2) hereof, the Archbishop may authorise any layman who satisfies such conditions as may be required by the Archbishop-in-Council to assist the minister of a parish in doing all or any of the following:—
- (a) reading morning or evening prayer,
 - (b) expounding the scriptures and the doctrine of the Church of England in Australia,
 - (c) performing pastoral duties in the parish,
 - (d) celebrating the Holy Communion, provided application has been made in accordance with the regulations made pursuant to the General Synod Lay Assistants at Holy Communion Canon 1973 Adopting Ordinance 1973 and approval given thereto.
- (2) The Archbishop shall not give or issue any authority pursuant to sub-clause (1) hereof unless by resolution a majority of the members of the parish council of the parish or the church committee of the church in respect of which the authority is to be given or issued and the minister thereof have given their approval thereto.
- (3) Any layman so authorised shall perform these functions in a church:—
- (a) only on the invitation of the minister thereof or during a vacancy of the cure on the invitation of the minister authorised to have charge of the parish, and
 - (b) subject to such regulations as the Archbishop-in-Council may prescribe from time to time.

Readers and Other Lay Assistants Ordinance 1976

(4) Every authority issued pursuant to this clause shall be for a term not exceeding three years and shall be revocable at will by the Archbishop.

7. The Archbishop may authorise any layman to deliver sermons expounding the scriptures and the doctrine of the Church of England in Australia in any parish if the Archbishop is requested so to do by the minister thereof, after the minister has consulted with the church committee thereof regarding his intention to make such a request. Any authority given or issued pursuant to this clause shall be for a term not exceeding two years and shall be revocable at will by the Archbishop. The Archbishop shall not give or issue an authority pursuant to this clause unless he is satisfied that the layman to be authorised will pursue such course of study during the whole or part of the term of his authority sufficient to qualify him to become a reader.

8. Nothing in this ordinance shall be deemed to limit the powers of the Archbishop under clause 17 of the Sydney Church Ordinance 1912 (as amended).

I certify that the Ordinance as printed is in accordance with the Ordinance as reported.

ATHOL RICHARDSON,
Chairman of Committees.

We certify that this Ordinance was passed by the Synod of the Diocese of Sydney this 12th day of October 1976.

R. J. BOMFORD,
W. G. S. GOTLEY,
Secretaries of Synod.

I assent to this Ordinance.

M. L. LOANE,
Archbishop of Sydney.

12/10/1976.