

Question: 17 October 2018

Dr Karin Sowada asked the following question –

1. Regarding the Schedule to the Parental Leave Ordinance 2016 entitled “Policy for Parental Leave for Parish Clergy”, given that the Federal Government’s Parental Leave Scheme pays up to 18 weeks of maternity leave, what is the reason for the absence of any further provision for paid maternity leave beyond 18 weeks for a female minister under the model Policy?

To which the President replied –

1. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

A female member of clergy appointed to a parish who is in receipt of a stipend can obtain up to 18 weeks Parental Leave Pay through the Government Scheme, subject to meeting the eligibility criteria.

The consultation process undertaken prior to the 2016 session of Synod, and the debate at that Synod, revealed a diversity of views in relation to parental leave for parish clergy. It was considered that flexibility is needed to ensure the best outcomes for ministry and clergy families in the local context.

The *Parental Leave Ordinance 2016* provides a framework to facilitate parishes adopting parental leave policies. A parish has a choice about whether to adopt the Model Parental Leave Policy or not, or whether to adopt it with amendments.

The *Parental Leave Ordinance 2016* includes a requirement that it be reviewed 3 years after the date of assent. This means that it will be reviewed in 2019-2020. The question of paid leave will be considered again in the course of this review.

Question: 17 October 2018

The Rev Steven Layson asked the following question –

2.

- (a) Could you please tell Synod who is responsible for the organisation and support of student ministers at Moore College?
- (b) Could you also please tell us what advice, direction or counsel is given to those holding student ministry positions regarding which positions they take up?
- (c) Has any consideration been given to encouraging students to experience a breadth of student ministry positions during their time at college?

To which the President replied –

2. I am informed that the answer is as follows –

- (a) Moore College has students who are ordination candidates and others who are not candidates for ordination.

The pastoral care and advice concerning student ministry is part of the pastoral care system of the College and so College chaplains have significant input. The Head of the Ministry Department also takes responsibility for the good conduct of student ministry placements. Candidates have further involvement and guidance through Ministry Training and Development.

Support in student ministry occurs through the pastoral care system already mentioned, and through courses on Intentional Ministry Reflection, where specific episodes that occur in ministry are considered.

- (b) Although the College expects every student to be involved in ministry, student minister positions are not formally part of the College program. It is a long-held practice not to direct students to particular student ministries, but the College operates a database to introduce students to churches, and also facilitates conversations whereby churches pitch to interested students their own ministry positions.

Individual students seek advice from faculty and other students about positions. It is generally advised that College is the best time to be involved in a diversity of ministry experiences.

- (c) Yes. See the answer to (b).

Question: 17 October 2018

The Rev Tom Melbourne asked the following question –

3. Regarding our clergy:
 - (a) What is the estimated number of age-based Rector retirements in the Diocese across the next 4 years (2019-2022)?
 - (b) What is the estimated number of age-based Assistant Minister / Senior Assistant Minister retirements in the Diocese across the next 4 years (2019-2022)?
 - (c) How many Rectors have left parish ministry for reasons other than retirement in the past 4 years (2015-2018)?
 - (d) How many Assistant Ministers in the diocese are currently seeking ordination to the presbyterate through MT&D?
 - (e) How many Assistant Ministers were ordained as deacons in the Diocese in the past 4 years (2015-2018)?
 - (f) What percentage of Ordination Candidates graduating from MTC in the past 4 years were not able to find an Assistant Minister position in the diocese?

To which the President replied –

3. I am informed that the answer is as follows –
 - (a) The *Retirements Ordinance 1993* specifies that the retirement age for clergy in the Diocese of Sydney is the age at which they become eligible for the pension. The federal government has been progressively moving this age from 65 to 67. There are 19 Rectors who will reach the retirement age in the period 2019 to 2022. A Rector can remain in office beyond retirement age in accordance with the *Retirements Ordinance 1993*.
 - (b) 12
 - (c) Rectors leave parish ministry for various reasons other than retirement. For example Anglicare and other Diocesan organisations are keen to employ skilled and experienced parish ministers.

Similarly Rectors may leave the Diocese of Sydney for a parish ministry appointment elsewhere. We do not usually collect this information and it is not readily available.

(d) 53

(e) 145

(f) 2%

Question: 17 October 2018

The Rev Tom Melbourne asked the following question –

4. What was the average length of service, per incumbency as a Rector, for Rectors who resigned an incumbency in each of the following time periods?
 - (a) 1991-1995
 - (b) 1996-2000
 - (c) 2001-2005
 - (d) 2006-2010
 - (e) 2011-2015
 - (f) 2015-present

To which the President replied –

4. I am informed that the answer is as follows –
 - (a) 8
 - (b) 10
 - (c) 8
 - (d) 8
 - (e) 9
 - (f) 9

Mr Colin Reilly, a long standing member of General Synod from the Diocese of Melbourne, has done extensive work collecting current and historical information on clergy across Australia. He has produced schedules on concluded incumbencies for each Australian diocese and this information is posted on the notice board, with his permission.