



THE BISHOP OF LEEDS
The Right Reverend Marcus Stock

Bishop's House, 13 North Grange Road, Leeds, LS6 2BR
www.dioceseofleeds.org.uk

**MESSAGE FROM BISHOP MARCUS
TO ALL THE WONDERFUL VOLUNTEER STEWARDS AND CLEANERS
IN PARISHES WITHIN THE DIOCESE OF LEEDS**

16th July 2021

Dear Stewards and Cleaners

As we approach a new period in which we welcome back parishioners safely to our churches, I want to express to you my sincere thanks for all the time and hard work that you have given over the past year and a half during the current pandemic.

Quite simply, without your dedication and generosity it would not have been possible to safely open our churches for the celebration of Mass, the sacraments, and for private prayer.

So many members of the clergy have related to me how the stewards and cleaners in their parishes have not only carried out the practical tasks associated with maintaining a high level of hygiene and directing the safe movement of people within the church building but how they have also exercised a very real ministry of welcome and pastoral support.

Through countless acts of kindness, and with patience and understanding, you have helped parishioners, who have often been isolated for long periods or struggled with health problems, to overcome any anxieties they may have had in coming back to church during this worrying time.

As a Church, humility often inhibits us in advertising our successes and the great work which is done in our parishes, and rarely do these make the spotlight. But I want you to know just how much you have been a real beacon of light and hope to so many people, and such an invaluable help to the clergy of your parishes.

Although many of the specific tasks carried out by stewards and cleaners associated with the pandemic restrictions are gradually easing, I hope and pray that you will continue to be available to support your parish clergy with the ministry of welcome and friendship, as well as other important roles, which have developed so fruitfully in many parishes.

Please keep me in your prayers!

With the assurance of my sincere thanks and my prayers, I remain,

Your servant and Steward in the Lord,

+ Marcus Stock

✠ Marcus Stock
Bishop of Leeds