



## ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

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To all the participants at the  
12<sup>th</sup> National Conference on the Deanery

It gives me great pleasure, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, to send you these greetings through my Chaplain as you celebrate the Conference Eucharist. Your theme of ‘Developing Deaneries’ evokes both the vital work that deaneries already undertake in furthering the mission of the Church and the tremendous potential that has yet to be fully harnessed.

Many of you will have heard, either in York or from the voice-file on the Church of England’s website, the General Synod debate on Deanery Synods. Whilst the motion put forward by Coventry was amended, the debate, and the discussion it prompted well beyond the Synod chamber, should serve to reassure you that the Church at large recognises the contribution deaneries make and that there is support for ensuring they have the necessary tools to promote the Church’s mission.

At a time of elections for a new General Synod the role of the deanery in our processes of synodical government is very apparent – and I am heartened by the numbers of people prepared to offer themselves for this service. Many deaneries will be playing a central part in ensuring that the issues raised in legislation being referred to dioceses are discussed fully and with a close eye on the impact at both local and national levels. This ability to ensure that local concerns and perspectives remain at the heart of our deliberations is one of the charisms of the deanery grouping. It allows the deanery to be so much more than a building block of the synodical structure; to be a means of incarnating the Good News in a way that grows out of a profound knowledge of the needs and hopes of local communities and an ability to bring to bear the experience, resources and connections of the body of Christ. That is one of the gifts I see as I travel around the country and for which I express my profound gratitude to all of you for the part you play in enabling and sustaining it. It is a charism of which your communities, and the nation as a whole, is going to have an even deeper need in the coming years.

I pray and trust that the fellowship and time you have spent together since Friday has been both an encouragement and an inspiration and that you shall leave the Conference with a renewed sense of the importance of the role that deaneries can play in the life of the Church. Be assured of my prayers for your ministry as you return to your deaneries and parishes, committed to building up a common life that shows forth Our Lord’s love.

Your fellow servant in the service of the Gospel,

+ *Rowan Cantuar:*

Lambeth Palace  
Feast of Saint Jerome, 30 September 2010