

Deliverance Ministries

The ministry of the church in its wholeness includes the authority through Christ to deliver oppressed people from the powers of evil and darkness. “And he called to him the twelve... and gave them authority over the unclean spirits” (Mark 6:7). The prayer given to Christ's followers instructed them to pray “deliver us from evil”, or the “the evil one”. In his life, and especially through his death, the demonic forces were disarmed and people were freed. “Jesus’ miracles were not simply kind deeds done to aid individuals; they were concrete ways of proclaiming and affecting God's triumph over the power of evil in the final hour.” (**New Jerome Biblical Commentary**, p.1321)

There are many expressions of Christian liturgy which reflect deliverance, such as preaching, unction, confession and absolution, and the eucharist. The most explicit of all, however, is baptism which requires the renunciation of evil and a life-long perseverance in resisting evil.

There are cultural differences within our church which tend to a wide variety in the interpretation of spiritual evil.

- On one side has been a sort of ‘dualistic’ world view which tends in its extremes to see even creation and material as essentially evil. Thus, the world is almost totally under the control of the demonic, and human behaviour is never entirely free of evil spirits or a satanic entity in the most insignificant happenings.
- On the other extreme, the more ‘scientific’ orientation of recent decades has tended to deny spirituality in any sense whatsoever, whether of evil or of God. For many in the Western world, the idea of ‘objective evil’ is bizarre.

There are many peoples cognizant of the presence of evil and seek such rituals as the blessing of homes. Individuals may also identify the evil in particular association with their homes or inanimate objects, especially where there has been human tragedy. (See attached, *Guidelines - Deliverance related to Places and/or Objects*)

Anglican liturgies acknowledge “Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God”, as distinct from the social evils in society such as war or racism and from the sinful desires within us that draw us from the love of God.

Pastoral care should include a discerning of spiritual evil and the awareness and sensing of the reality of evil in a person’s life. In such cases, there is need for the pastor to include a ministry of healing and deliverance.



The guidelines below are for clergy who have been approached for a deliverance, commonly called 'exorcism'.

1. **A priest will secure the permission and guidance of the area bishop.** If this is not possible, the bishop must be informed in writing immediately after the event (with full details) including why permission was not sought before proceeding.
2. Because the manifestations of the effects of spiritual evil are culturally conditioned and similar to mental illness, licensed medical, professional specialists in mental, physical, or emotional illness should be consulted as well as persons expert in the dynamics of that culture, or the priest should be assured that such consultation has taken place.
3. If the occasion arises when there is a request for the deliverance of a place or object, Guidelines 1 and 2 remain essential in the process of ministry. (For biblical references see attached *Guidelines - Deliverance related to Places and/ or Objects*).
4. The priest should counsel fully with the persons seeking deliverance, and, if applicable, with his or her family. There should be adequate time for listening, identifying, naming, and instruction.
5. It is essential that another priest be present for the actual liturgy of deliverance and be adequately prepared, spiritually as well as pastorally and liturgically.
6. After the deliverance liturgy, prayer for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit shall take place, followed by the celebration and receiving of Holy Communion.
7. The priest should offer extended follow-up including further counsel and spiritual guidance in the person's participation in the fellowship, prayer, and sacraments of the ongoing life of the church.
8. The area bishop is a resource person in this ministry, able to make referrals and act as consultant, with particular reference to the document proposed by The House of Bishops, *Task Force on Exorcism* (October, 1990). The bishop will also have a resource of liturgy and suggested prayers available.
9. An authorized liturgy of deliverance is available from the area bishop.



A. Guidelines: Deliverance Related to Places and/or Objects

There are occasions when individuals express a desire for the 'deliverance' of a place or an object. This may arise from the use to which the place or object has been put in the past or to its connection with a tragic or violent event. The strong, emotional ties and psychological effect of the past has a continuing effect on the lives of those in the present that is powerful and real for them. There is, however, little biblical evidence of spiritual possession of physical objects or places.

The Old Testament speaks of blessing places in dedication to God. (See below re: blessings - *Book of Occasional Celebrations*, p.119.) The blessing is primarily an act of thanksgiving by God's people for creation, salvation and the provision of physical places/objects with which to serve God. Places or objects connected with evil practices antithetical to God were destroyed [Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19), Asherah poles (Exodus 34:12-14)]. However some objects, e.g., battle spoils, were redeemable (2 Chronicles 34:1-7) and even the temple was cleansed and rededicated through the offering of sacrifices (2 Chronicles 29:19).

The New Testament refers only to the restoration and redemption of people. It speaks neither of dedication, consecration or of possession of places/objects by spiritual powers. In this time, prior to the use of physical church buildings, people are the temple of God (1 Corinthians 3:17), made holy by the sacrifice of Jesus.

There is no direct injunction or command regarding places in the New Testament. God's presence and holiness are seen and known through the life of the community of God's people. Places and objects are tools in holy living - gifts of God. While there is no direct need for 'deliverance' of places/objects, a person may have unresolved fears and prayers of cleansing and blessing would be a pastoral response. An analogy can be made to Paul's injunctions to be sensitive to the conscience of one's neighbour in relationship to food offered to idols (1 Corinthians 8).

In light of the above - while taking into consideration the cultural influences and beliefs of those requesting assistance, the most appropriate response would be a eucharistic celebration in the place or with the object nearby, in which it is blessed as part of God's gifts to us for the service of God. This celebration should include members of the Christian community and family or friends as appropriate. It is a liturgy of blessing for service. Prior discussion with those requesting assistance would identify concerns and fears that could be addressed pastorally in the prayers.

Examples of suitable collects and/or prayers may be found in the *Book of Occasional Celebrations*. For example:

- i) Collects – p. 142 (for church/chapel), p. 150 or 157 (for a home).
- ii) General forms for writing blessing prayers: p. 123ff.



B. Resource Materials for Prayer and Liturgy re: Guidelines on Exorcism/Deliverance

1. *Book of Common Prayer:*

- i) The Litany (p. 30)
- ii) Service for Holy Communion (p. 67)
- iii) Collect for Advent I (p. 95) [same as BAS]
- iv) Service of Holy Baptism (p. 532) [adults]
- v) Penitential Service (p. 611)
- vi) Compline (p. 722)

2. *Book of Alternative Services:*

- i) Canticle 7 "Arise, shine, for your light has come" (p. 78)
- ii) Canticle 9 "I will pour clean water upon you" (p. 80)
- iii) Canticle 21 "God's Plan of Salvation" (p. 91)
- iv) Introductory Responsory 4 "Repentance" (p. 97)
- v) Introductory Responsory 5 "The Cross" (p. 98)
- vi) Introductory Responsory 6 "Resurrection" (p. 98)
- vii) Responsory 2 "My life is in your hand, deliver me" (p. 101)
- viii) Responsory 3 "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous" (p. 102)
- ix) Responsory 7 for Advent (p. 105) use with Responsory 8 for Incarnation (p. 105)
- x) Responsory 9 for Lent (p. 106) use with Responsory 10 for the Cross (p. 107) and Responsory 11 for Resurrection (p. 108)
- xi) The Great Litany (p. 138), Parts 1, 2, 3, Introductory Sentence Part 4, and Concluding Prayers (p. 141)
- xii) Service of Holy Baptism (p. 151)
- xiii) Service of Holy Eucharist (p. 185)
- xiv) Propers of the Church Year
 - ✓ Collect for Advent I (p. 268)
 - ✓ Collect for Ash Wednesday (p. 281)
 - ✓ Collect for Lent 4 with Sentence, Year A (p. 291)
 - ✓ Collects for Lent 5 with Sentences, Years A, B, C, (p. 293, p. 295)
 - ✓ Solemn Intercession for Good Friday (p. 309, 311, 312)
 - ✓ Exultet from the Easter Vigil (p. 323)
 - ✓ Collect for Easter Day (p. 335)
 - ✓ Collect for after Pentecost - Proper 12 (p. 363)
 - ✓ Collect for after Pentecost - Proper 28 (p. 385)
 - ✓ Collect for after Pentecost - Proper 33 (p. 392)
 - ✓ Collect for the Transfiguration (p. 418)
 - ✓ Collect for St. Michael and All Angels (p. 424)
 - ✓ Collect for St. Luke (p. 425)
- xv) Ministry to the Sick (p. 554)
- xvi) Occasional Prayers
 - ✓ for peace (p. 677)
 - ✓ for affliction, mental distress, addiction (p. 682)
- xvii) Psalms appropriate



3. *Book of Occasional Services:*

- i) Blessings in Homes at Easter (p. 97)
- ii) Public Service of Healing (p. 163)
- iii) During Candidacy for Catechumenate (p. 115ff)

