



Definition of “spiritual abuse”

- Misuse of authority e.g. by dictating exactly what a person should believe – oppressive teaching
- Extreme pastoral interference in personal issues including how someone should express their faith
- Teaching that underlines forgiveness and healing without acknowledging the dilemmas of this for those who are abuse survivors
- Teaching on healing that suggests everyone should be healed; without considering the impact of this on those with learning disabilities
- Telling someone that if they pray harder/believe more they will be healed
- Teaching that promotes the superiority of men over women
- Making someone feel inferior in their faith
- Untrained/ unhealthy use of deliverance ministry – (if this ministry is sought or felt to be appropriate then ask the Diocese for access to experts)
- Condescending behaviour by restricting a young adult with learning difficulties to children’s groups because they are unable to read or write
- Including someone on a published intercession list without their consent
- Failing to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people to access church activities such as taking part in prayer meetings or suggesting it would be inappropriate for them to pray aloud as they can’t be understood by many people

Jeanette Plumb, June 2011