

*from the Chaplain
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Dear Fresher,

Congratulations on your place at Keble! It's an amazing achievement and I'm very much looking forward to welcoming you to the College in October. This year I will be a Fresher at Keble as well, having just moved to Oxford after working for five years at Canterbury Cathedral, and I'm delighted to be taking up this post in what is famously one of the friendliest Colleges in Oxford.

There are many aspects to the role of the College Chaplain, but central to it all is providing welfare support to all students and staff. My office is handily located just above the Porters' Lodge and you are always welcome to drop in for a chat if there's something particular on your mind, or if you would just like someone to talk to about life, the universe, and everything (or, indeed, where the laundry room is).

I also run a programme of social, cultural, and discussion events. These are to help you get to know other students, to relax, and to explore informally some broader questions beyond academic study.

Finally, I also look after the College Chapel. The services here, which are open to all whatever you do or don't believe, are a wonderful opportunity to hear the fantastic College Choir and a range of fascinating speakers, as well as times for prayer and meditation – if that's your thing. The Chapel is also always open as a still and quiet space in College where all are welcome to come and find moments of peace amidst busy schedules.

You've probably figured out from the job title that one of the requirements of my role is that I am a priest of the Church of England, but it's important to say that absolutely everything I and the Chapel offer is open to all members of the College, of all faiths and none without any expectations, or agenda, or judgment.

In welfare terms I'm very used to working with people of all backgrounds, and please be reassured that I won't talk about God unless you want to! It's also important to say that one of my own most fundamental beliefs is that people of all backgrounds, gender identities, sexualities, and faiths deserve equal treatment, equal inclusion, and equal love. Indeed, it was Keble's own commitment to diversity and inclusion that drew me to work at the College in the first place.

See you in October!

Fr Max