

ORDINATION MANUAL

Diocese of Oregon



Prepared by
The Commission on Ministry
(Revised 2007)

Please Note: Appendix A of this document is not on the web version. To request a copy, please contact the Director of Vocations Arlene Ullman at arleneu@diocese-oregon.org or 11800 SW Military Lane, Portland, Oregon 97219

DIOCESE OF OREGON

ORDINATION MANUAL

INTRODUCTION

The Commission on Ministry (COM) of the Diocese of Oregon, with the concurrence of the Bishop, has prepared this manual as an aid and guide for those persons who believe they are called by God through the power of the Holy Spirit to the ordained ministry. This manual will direct those persons seeking ordination and will assist others in supporting and directing them through the discernment process that leads to ordination.

In each of the ordination services in the Prayer Book, the person to be ordained is presented by clergy and laity from the diocese to the Bishop in the name of all the clergy and the people of the diocese. The Bishop asks if that person has been selected according to the Canons and if they believe the person's manner of life to be suitable to the exercise of this ministry. The laity and clergy together affirm that the person has been so selected and is qualified for the order to which he or she is to be ordained. This part of the ordination service highlights the fact that a person may feel called to the ordained ministry, but until that call is discerned by the Church, there can be no ordination. After describing the order to which the person is to be ordained, the Bishop addresses the congregation, "Is it your will that this person be ordained?"

It is the task of the Church at large to call forth ministries from individuals within the Church. To do this, the Church has developed a process outlined in the Canons of the National Church and of the diocese that direct and support the discernment of a vocation to the ordained ministry. This manual describes the process as it is presently being implemented in the Diocese of Oregon. The General Conventions in 2003 and 2006 made significant changes in Title III, Ministry. This manual will outline the formation for deacons and priests in separate chapters.

In recent years the Church has recovered the theology that all baptized persons are called to ministry; therefore, closer attention will be paid to the discernment of a vocation to the ordained ministry. Persons considering a call to the ordained ministry must be able to articulate and demonstrate their call in ways discernible by the rest of the Christian community as being appropriate to the ministry to which each person is called.

Of the Ministry of All Baptized Persons

Title III, Canon 1, Sec. 2 No person shall be denied access to the discernment process for any ministry, lay or ordained, in this church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities or age, except as otherwise provided by these Canons. No right to licensing, ordination, or election is hereby established.

Many persons and groups are part of the discernment process and will meet with the person who is aspiring to Holy Orders:

- a. The Bishop of the diocese, as the ecclesiastical authority, has the ultimate decision as to the discernment of a vocation for the ordained ministry.
- b. Basic to and of utmost importance in the discernment process is the local parish and the rector, vicar, or priest in charge of the congregation. The call to ordained ministry is first experienced in the local community of believers and is tested in that community under the direction of the priest. The local congregation is the center of ministry for the Christian Church, and the person aspiring to Holy Orders must be an active participant in the local congregation. The local congregation and priest are encouraged to develop a Congregational Discernment Committee to help discern a vocation and make periodic reports to the vestry. Suggestions for developing such a discernment group are outlined in Appendix A. The Canons require the vestry to endorse a person's entry into the official process for ordained ministry and all subsequent steps.

Of the Commission on Ministry

Title III, Canon 2, Sec.1.

In each Diocese there shall be a Commission on Ministry ("Commission") consisting of Priests, Deacons, if any, and Lay Persons.

- c. The Commission on Ministry is a committee of twenty-seven members appointed by the Bishop and confirmed by Diocesan Convention. The Commission has 2 parts: The Committee for Ordained Ministry Development (COM-O), and The Committee for Baptismal Ministry Development (COM-B), which focuses on lay ministries of the church.

Canon 2, Sec. 2

The Commission shall advise and assist the Bishop;

(a) In the implementation of Title III of these Canons.

(b) In the determination of present and future opportunities and needs for the ministry of all baptized persons

(c) In the design and oversight of the ongoing process for recruitment, discernment, formation for ministry, and assessment of readiness therefor.

The Commission on Ministry (COM-O) interviews those in the ordination process at postulancy, prior to candidacy, prior to ordination to the diaconate, and prior to ordination to the priesthood. The COM-O also maintains review and oversight of this manual. Assisting the Commission on Ministry, the Standing Committee, and the Bishop is the Vocations Director, appointed by the Bishop to facilitate the ordination process. The Vocations Director may be contacted for information and direction by the nominee, the person with pastoral oversight, or vestry / BAC.

The Christian Church continually looks for lay and ordained leaders. Those persons selected for ordained ministry must have an active and deep personal belief in God and faith in our Lord

Jesus Christ. They must be persons to whom others turn for guidance and support in their own faith journeys. They must be people whose lives reflect Christian faith and values. They must be adaptable to changing circumstances in the world and the Church. In order to assure these criteria, as much as possible, the Church has developed the process of discernment of a call to ordained ministry.

STEPS TOWARD POSTULANCY OF THE ORDINATION OF DEACONS

The Canons referred to are those Canons of the Episcopal Church adopted at General Conventions 1789-2006 as published after the General Convention of 2006. A full copy of the Canons pertaining to ordination is available at the Bishop's Close.

Title III. Canon 6, Sec. 2 Nomination

A confirmed adult communicant in good standing, may be Nominated for ordination to the diaconate by the person's congregation or other community of faith.

(a) The Nomination shall be in writing and shall include a letter of support by the Nominee's congregation or other community of faith committing the community to

(1) pledge to contribute financially to that preparation, and

(2) involve itself in the Nominee's preparation for ordination to the Diaconate.

If it be a congregation, the letter shall be signed by two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body, and by the Member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight.

The Commission on Ministry has set two years as the ordinary timeframe for a person to be a member of the congregation before making official nomination to the Bishop's office. Following initial discussions with the priest in charge of the congregation, if the priest is moved to continue, a Congregational Discernment Committee is encouraged to develop to continue the conversations of discernment (see Appendix A). This committee will make periodic reports to the vestry.

During this period, reading and supervised lay ministries should be undertaken as appropriate to the order of deacon. Normally during this period, the person is introduced to the vestry or Bishop's Advisory Committee as one who aspires to the ordained ministry. Please note that in order for a nominee to become a postulant, the person must be endorsed by the vestry or BAC. The Bishop and Vocations Director are available to the nominee, the priest, the vestry or BAC at any time during the process.

When a call to ordained ministry is discerned by the rector and congregation, the nominee can make an appointment with the Vocations Director for further conversation and discernment.

The person with pastoral oversight sends a letter of recommendation to the Bishop concerning the nominee. The letter should discuss:

- (1) How the individual has come to understand (through intensive discussions) that the nominee is moved to seek ordination for good cause;
- (2) The individual's reasons for recommending the nominee;

- (3) Specific information about the nominee's ministry in the life of the congregation and/or community; including the length of time the aspirant has been known and under what circumstances the nominee became part of the congregation;
- (4) Impressions of the nominee's spiritual life, faithfulness in worship and reception of the sacraments;
- (5) Leadership style within the local church community;
- (6) Personal relationships with members of the congregation;
- (7) Special gifts and talents the nominee would bring to the ordained ministry;
- (8) A description of the nominee's family and financial status that is appropriate to the ordination process;
- (9) A confidential discussion about liabilities which the nominee might have;
- (10) Areas in need of further growth or development, especially those of personality, spiritual life, or maturity.
- (11) Specific plans of the congregation for financial support of the Nominee's preparation and for involvement in that preparation.

In addition, the nominee is required to submit the following documents to the Bishop's office before becoming a Postulant (see Appendix B):

1. Letter of recommendation from rector
2. Application for Postulancy (*Title III, Canon 6, Sec. 2(b)*)
The Nominee, if in agreement with the nomination, shall accept the nomination in writing and shall provide the following to the Bishop:
 - (1) *Full name and date of birth.*
 - (2) *The length of time resident in the Diocese.*
 - (3) *Evidence of Baptism and Confirmation.*
 - (4) *Whether an application has been made previously for Postulancy or the person has been nominated in any Diocese.*
 - (5) *A description of the process of discernment by which the Nominee has been identified for ordination to the Diaconate.*
 - (6) *The level of education attained and, if any, the degrees earned, and areas of specialization, together with copies of official transcripts.*
3. Social History Form
4. Spiritual Autobiography of not more than three pages
5. Endorsement of Application for Postulancy
6. Criminal Background Report
7. Report of Psychological Examination. A complete written report is made available to the nominee, the Bishop and the Vocations Director. Please note: the nominee and/or the congregation are financially responsible for the cost of the physical and psychological examinations.
8. Report of Physical Examination
9. Behavior Screening Questionnaire
10. Official Transcript of College Work

11. Six Letters of Recommendation (It is suggested that three letters of recommendation come from members of the nominee's congregation and three from persons outside that congregation.)
12. Current photograph

Again, the nominee should submit these documents to the Bishop's office and make another appointment with the Vocations Director as the nominee's file builds.

At this meeting all materials submitted are reviewed and a decision made whether to continue the process towards postulancy, to wait, or to stop. If the decision is made to continue, the nominee will be encouraged to complete obtaining the documents and ultimately make an appointment with the bishop.

It is important to comment here on files maintained in the Bishop's office. In 1985 the Commission on Ministry adopted a policy regarding the confidentiality of records and files, which states: (a) there will be no "secret" records or files; (b) the individual shall have access to all personal information and its use; (c) the individual may prevent personal information obtained for one purpose from being used or made available for another purpose; (d) a person must have the opportunity to correct or amend personal information; (e) the organization which creates, maintains, uses or disseminates records of personal data must ensure the reliability of the data and must take precautions to prevent misuse." (See Commission on Ministry Policies #7)

After all items have been submitted to the Bishop's office, the nominee will make an appointment with the Bishop for an in-depth discussion of the call to the diaconate. The lack of any major piece of information will delay the process. If the Bishop is moved to proceed, the nominee will be invited to the Vocations Conference.

Vocations Conference

The Vocations Conference is a conference with members from the Commission on Ministry and, when needed, members of the Standing Committee. The purpose of the conference is to interview the nominees and further discern their call to ordained ministry. A Vocations Conference is normally held early each year for nominees seeking ordination to the diaconate. All nominees will depart the Vocations Conference before deliberations begin. The Bishop and/or the Vocations Director will meet with the nominee within one week after the conference informing each of the recommendation.

Spouses/partners are invited to attend the opening of the Vocations Conference, but they are not invited to the interviews. The non-participation of a spouse/partner will not affect recommendations of the Commission on Ministry.

Following the Vocations Conference and a recommendation for Postulancy from the Commission on Ministry, the Bishop may admit the nominee as a Postulant for Holy Orders. Those accepted for postulancy for the diaconate are expected to attend a full course of study and

ministry development. This course normally takes three years and the cost is the full responsibility of the Postulant, although congregations are asked to give financial assistance, and additional funds may be available from the Bishop, if requested.

Title III. Canon 6, Sec. 3 (e) Each Postulant for ordination to the Diaconate shall communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Postulant's academic, diaconal, human, spiritual, and practical development.

It is required that all persons who begin the ordination process undertake the discipline of informing the Bishop of their personal and spiritual development as they discern their vocation. The Ember Days are in March, June, September, and December, and these letters should be received by the Bishop during the week of the Ember Days. The Bishop may respond with counsel, encouragement, and support.

It is very desirable that Postulants receive regular spiritual direction from someone with whom they can share their faith journey, have prayer support, and evaluate their process. This relationship is considered confidential and should be with someone other than the rector of the Postulant's parish and/or anyone else who may be called upon to make an ultimate decision regarding a vocation to ordained ministry.

In summary, the discernment of a vocation to ordained ministry is a very serious, and at some times, difficult process. It should always be accompanied with prayer. All recommendations in the ordination process are advisory to the Bishop. For a person to be accepted as a Postulant, the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry must discern a call and those gifts for ministry that show the person is called to ordained ministry.

The role of the Commission on Ministry is one of support, direction and affirmation for the Postulant. It is important to note that acceptance as a Postulant does not guarantee ordination to the diaconate. Many things can happen during the process to change the nominee's view of ministry, the view of the Commission on Ministry, or of the Bishop about a person's call to ordained ministry.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

DIACONATE
STEPS TOWARD POSTULANCY

NAME: _____

- _____ 1. LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION – from person of pastoral oversight
- _____ 2. APPLICATION FOR POSTULANCY - a formal written and signed request sent to the Bishop's office
- _____ 3. SOCIAL HISTORY FORM - sent to the psychologist and Bishop (Please include a photograph.)
- _____ 4. SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY - not to exceed three pages
- _____ 5. ENDORSEMENT FOR APPLICATION FOR POSTULANCY - signed by the Vestry/BAC and rector/vicar
- _____ 6. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND REPORT
- _____ 7. REPORT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION - sent to the Bishop's office.
- _____ 8. REPORT OF PHYSICAL EXAMINATION - sent to the Bishop's office.
- _____ 9. BEHAVIOR SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE – sent to psychologist and Bishop's office
- _____ 10. OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF COLLEGE WORK - sent to the Bishop's office.
- _____ 11. LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION – sent to the Bishop's office. (It is suggested that three letters of recommendation come from members of the nominee's congregation and three from persons outside that congregation).
- _____ 12. INTERVIEW WITH VOCATIONS DIRECTOR
- _____ 12. INTERVIEW WITH THE BISHOP - arranged with the secretary.
- _____ 13. VOCATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT - sent to the Bishop's office.

STEPS TOWARD CANDIDACY OF THE ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Title III, Canon 6, Sec. 4. Candidacy

Candidacy is a time of education and formation, in preparation for ordination to the Diaconate, established by a formal commitment by the Candidate, the Bishop, the Commission, the Standing Committee and the congregation or other community of faith.

It is the policy of the Commission on Ministry to meet with all Postulants when applying for candidacy, usually in the second year of education. Before being interviewed for candidacy, the following documents must be submitted:

- (1) A formal application for candidacy;
- (2) Written reaffirmation from the priest and the vestry or BAC of the postulant's congregation;
- (3) An evaluation and recommendation from the educational institution of the Postulant's qualifications for the exercise of Holy Orders.

After these items have been submitted to the Bishop's office, the Postulant is interviewed by the Commission on Ministry, whose recommendation will be made known to the Bishop and the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee may interview the Postulant and must give written approval of the candidacy.

Candidacy interviews are a review of the process towards ordination in the areas of:

- (a) Call to ministry;
- (b) Development of special gifts in ministry;
- (c) Development of the candidate's spiritual life;
- (d) Understanding of ordained ministry; and
- (e) Education for the Church's mission and ministry.

When recommendation from the Commission on Ministry and the written approval of the Standing Committee is received, the Bishop may enroll the Postulant as a Candidate for Holy Orders.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

DEACON
STEPS TOWARD CANDIDACY

NAME: _____

- _____ 1. APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY - a formal written and signed request by the postulant, sent to the Bishop.
- _____ 2. ENDORSEMENT FOR APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY - signed by the person with pastoral oversight and Vestry/BAC.
- _____ 3. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION showing personal qualifications for the ordained ministry.
- _____ 4. COMMISSION ON MINISTRY INTERVIEW
- _____ 5. STANDING COMMITTEE INTERVIEW

STEPS TOWARD ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

Since the 1970s, considerable effort has been made to restore the ancient order of deacons to its full integrity within the ministry of the Church. A distinction has been made between "vocational" or "permanent" deacons and "transitional" deacons, those persons called to the priesthood but who are first ordained to the diaconate. The service for Ordination of a Deacon in the Prayer Book (pages 537-547) presents an understanding of this order as viewed by the Church. This section of the ordination manual deals with those called to the vocational diaconate.

Deacons are Christians who are called to represent sacramentally the servant ministry of the Church with special concern for the poor and those in need. As the Prayer Book states, deacons "are to interpret to the church the needs, concerns and hopes of the world." Most deacons in the Diocese of Oregon retain their secular occupations, serving the Church on a non-stipendiary basis, and their ministries are very broad and richly diverse.

Title III, Canon 6, Sec. 5

(f) Before ordination each Candidate shall be prepared in and demonstrate basic competence in five general areas:

- (1) Academic studies including, The Holy Scriptures, theology and the tradition of the Church*
- (2) Diakonia and the diaconate,*
- (3) Human awareness and understanding,*
- (4) Spiritual development and discipline,*
- (5) Practical training and experience*

(g) Preparation for ordination shall include training regarding

- (1) prevention of sexual misconduct.*
- (2) civil requirements for reporting and pastoral opportunities for responding to evidence of abuse.*
- (3) the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, particularly Title IV thereof.*
- (4) the Church's teaching on racism.*

(h) Each Candidate for ordination to the Diaconate shall communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Candidate's academic, diaconal, human, spiritual, and practical development.

(i) During Candidacy each Candidate's progress shall be evaluated from time to time, and there shall be a written report of the evaluation by those authorized by the Commission to be in charge of the evaluation program. Upon certification by those in charge of the Candidate's program of preparation that the Candidate has successfully completed preparation and is ready for ordination, a final written assessment of readiness for ordination to the Diaconate shall be prepared as determined by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission. This report shall include a recommendation from the Commission regarding the readiness of the Candidate for ordination. Records shall be kept of all evaluations, assessments, and the recommendation, and shall be made available to the Standing Committee.

Before ordination to the diaconate, the Candidate must pass an examination conducted by the Commission on Ministry. All deacons ordained in the Diocese of Oregon are expected to have a broad base of abilities for ministry. If the call to diaconal ministry requires further specific preparation, time can be allotted for this pursuit.

The Commission on Ministry has a policy that all Candidates have one-quarter unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) or equivalent experience. The Candidate is encouraged to work with the Vocations Director regarding this placement.

All Candidates must complete the eight-hour SAFE Church training workshops and the Anti-Racism training offered by the diocese.

It is customary in this diocese for a Candidate to be interviewed in person by both the Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee prior to ordination.

Before ordination to the Diaconate, the following documents must be submitted to the Bishop:

- (1) Application for Ordination
- (2) Endorsement for Application for Candidacy (Reaffirmation for Endorsement for Candidacy for Holy Orders)
- (3) Report of canonical examination
- (4) Evaluation from the educational institution
- (5) Evaluation of CPE experience
- (6) Certificate of attendance at 8-hour SAFE Church Training Workshop
- (7) Certificate of attendance at Anti-Racism Training

After receiving the above-named documents and believing that all canonical requirements have been fulfilled, the Standing Committee may, by testimonial, recommend the Candidate for ordination to the Bishop. Only then will the Bishop schedule the ordination with the Candidate.

Title III, Canon 6, Sec. 6 (c) On receipt of such certificates, the Standing Committee, if a majority of all members consent, shall certify that the Canonical requirements for ordination have been met, that there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds and that they recommend ordination.

If a person ordained to the diaconate under Title III Canon 6 later experiences a call to the priesthood, the Deacon will be required to repeat substantially the entire ordination process and complete seminary study.

Title III, Canon 7: Of the Life and Work of Deacons

Sec. 1 Deacons serve directly under the authority of and are accountable to the Bishop.

Sec. 2 Deacons canonically resident in each Diocese constitute a Community of Deacons, which shall meet from time to time. The Bishop may appoint one or more of such Deacons as Archdeacon(s) to assist the Bishop in the formation, deployment, supervision, and support of the Deacons or those in preparation to be Deacons, and in the implementation of this canon.

Sec. 3 The Bishop may establish a Council on Deacons - to oversee, study, and promote the diaconate.

Sec. 4 The Bishop, after consultation with the Deacon and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight, may assign a Deacon to one or more congregations, other communities of faith or non-parochial ministries. Deacons assigned to a congregation or other community of faith act under the authority of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight in all matters concerning the congregation.

- (a) Subject to the Bishop's approval Deacons may have a letter of agreement, setting forth mutual responsibilities in the assignment, and if such a letter exists, it is subject to renegotiation with the Vestry/Bishop's Committee after the resignation of the Rector or the Priest-in-Charge.*
- (b) Deacons shall report annually to the Bishop or the Bishop's designee on their life and work*
- (c) Deacons may serve as administrators of congregations or other communities of faith, but no deacon shall be in charge of a congregation or other community of faith.*
- (d) Deacons may accept chaplaincies in any hospital, prison, or other institution.*
- (e) Deacons may participate in the governance of the Church.*
- (f) For two years following ordination, new Deacons shall continue a process of formation authorized by the Bishop.*
- (g) The Bishop or the Bishop's designee, in consultation with the Commission, shall assign each newly ordained Deacon a mentor Deacon where a suitable mentor Deacon is available. The mentor and Deacon shall meet regularly for at least one year to provide guidance, information, and a sustained dialogue about diaconal ministry.*

Sec. 5 The Bishop and Commission shall require and provide for the continuing education of Deacons and keep a record of such education.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

STEPS TOWARD ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

NAME: _____

- _____ 1. APPLICATION TO BISHOP
- _____ 2. ENDORSEMENT FOR APPLICATION FOR
ORDINATION - signed by the rector/vicar and Vestry/BAC.
- _____ 3. REPORT OF CANONICAL EXAMINATION
- _____ 4. EVALUATION FROM THE EDUCATIONAL
INSTITUTION
- _____ 5. EVALUATION OF CPE EXPERIENCE
- _____ 6. SAFE CHURCH TRAINING (8 hours)
- _____ 7. ANTI-RACISM TRAINING
- _____ 8. COMMISSION ON MINISTRY INTERVIEW
- _____ 9. STANDING COMMITTEE INTERVIEW

NOTE: No date may be set for ordination of any candidate until all canonical requirements have been met.

STEPS TOWARD POSTULANCY OF THE ORDINATION OF PRIESTS

The Canons referred to are those Canons of the Episcopal Church adopted at General Conventions 1789-2006 as published after the General Convention of 2006. A full copy of the Canons pertaining to ordination is available at the Bishop's Close and on the website.

Title III, Canon 8, Sec. 1. The Bishop, in consultation with the Commission, shall establish procedures to identify and select persons with evident gifts and fitness for ordination to the Priesthood.

*Title III. Canon 8, Sec. 2 (a) Nomination
A confirmed adult communicant in good standing may be nominated for ordination to the Priesthood by the person's congregation or other community of faith.*

(a) The Nomination shall be in writing and shall include a letter of support by the Nominee's congregation or other community of faith committing the community to:

- (1) pledge to contribute financially to that preparation, and*
- (2) involve itself in the Nominee's preparation for ordination to the Priesthood.*

If it be a congregation, the letter shall be signed by two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body, and by the Member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight.

The Commission on Ministry has set two years as the ordinary timeframe for a person to be a member of the congregation before making official nomination to the Bishop's office. Following initial discussions with the priest in charge of the congregation, if the priest is moved to continue, the formation of a Congregational Discernment Committee is encouraged to develop to continue conversations of discernment (see Appendix A). This committee will make periodic reports to the vestry.

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When a call to ordained ministry is discerned by the person with pastoral oversight and the congregation, the nominee can make an appointment with the Vocations Director for further conversation and discernment.

The person with pastoral oversight sends a letter of recommendation to the Bishop concerning the nominee. The letter should discuss:

- (1) How the individual has come to understand (through intensive discussions) that the nominee is moved to seek ordination for good cause;
- (2) The individuals' reasons for recommending the nominee;
- (3) Specific information about the nominee's ministry in the life of the congregation and/or community, including the length of time the nominee has been known and under what circumstances the nominee became part of the congregation;
- (4) Impressions of the nominee's spiritual life, faithfulness in worship and reception of the sacraments;
- (5) Leadership style within the local church community;
- (6) Personal relationships with members of the congregation;
- (7) Special gifts and talents the nominee would bring to the ordained priesthood;
- (8) A description of the nominee's family and financial status that are appropriate to the ordination process;
- (9) A confidential discussion about liabilities which the nominee might have;
- (10) Areas in need of further growth or development, especially those of personality, spiritual life, or maturity.
- (11) Specific plans of the congregation for financial support of the Nominee's preparation and for involvement in that preparation.

In addition, the nominee is required to submit the following documents to the Bishop's office before becoming a Postulant (see Appendix B):

1. Application for Postulancy *Title III, Canon 8, Sec. 2(a)*
2. Endorsement of Application for Postulancy
3. Social History Form
4. Spiritual Autobiography of not more than three pages
5. Official Transcript of College Work
6. Report of Physical Examination
7. Report of Psychological Examination: A complete written report is made available to the nominee, the Bishop, and the Vocations Director.
8. Please note: the nominee and/or the congregation are financially responsible for the cost of the physical and psychological examinations.
9. Behavior Screening Questionnaire
10. Criminal Background Report
11. Six Letters of Recommendation (It is suggested that three letters of recommendation come from members of the nominee's congregation and three from persons outside that congregation.)
12. Current photograph

Again, the nominee should submit these documents to the Bishop's office and make another appointment with the Vocations Director as the nominee's file builds.

At this meeting all materials submitted are reviewed and a decision made whether to continue the process towards postulancy, to wait, or to stop. If the decision is made to continue, the nominee

will be encouraged to complete obtaining the documents and ultimately make an appointment with the bishop.

It is important to comment here on files maintained in the Bishop's office. In 1985 the Commission on Ministry adopted a policy regarding the confidentiality of records and files, which states: (a) there will be no "secret" records or files; (b) the individual shall have access to all personal information and its use; (c) the individual may prevent personal information obtained for one purpose from being used or made available for another purpose; (d) a person must have the opportunity to correct or amend personal information; (e) the organization which creates, maintains, uses or disseminates records of personal data must ensure the reliability of the data and must take precautions to prevent misuse." (See Commission on Ministry Policies #7)

After all items have been submitted to the Bishop's office, the nominee will make an appointment with the Bishop for an in-depth discussion of the call to the priesthood. The lack of any major piece of information will delay the process. If the Bishop is moved to proceed, the nominee will be invited to the Vocations Conference.

Vocations Conference

The Vocations Conference is a conference with members from the Commission on Ministry and, when needed, members of the Standing Committee. The purpose of the conference is to interview the nominees and further discern their call to ordained ministry. A Vocations Conference is normally held early each year for nominees seeking ordination to the priesthood. All nominees will depart the Vocations Conference before deliberations begin. The Bishop and/or the Vocations Director will meet with the nominees within one week after the conference informing each of the recommendation.

Spouses/partners are invited to attend the opening of the Vocations Conference, but they are not invited to the interviews. The non-participation of a spouse/partner will not affect recommendations of the Commission on Ministry.

Following the Vocations Conference, and a recommendation for Postulancy from the Commission on Ministry, the Bishop may admit the nominee as a Postulant for Holy Orders.

Canon 8, Sec.3. Postulancy is a time between nomination and candidacy and may initiate the formal preparation for ordination. Postulancy involves continued exploration of and decision about the Postulant's call to the Priesthood.

Those accepted for postulancy for the priesthood must consult with the Bishop regarding the seminary or school of theology for studies. The Bishop's counsel in the matter of seminary must be secured prior to entry into a theological school. A Postulant for the priesthood should be aware that at least one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education is required, and it is expected that Postulants will be involved in seminary field placements as much as possible. The cost of theological school is the full responsibility of the Postulant, although congregations are asked to give financial assistance, and additional funds may be available from the bishop if requested.

Title III, Canon 8, Sec 3e. Each Postulant for ordination to the Priesthood shall communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Postulant's academic experience and personal and spiritual development.

It is required that all persons when named a Postulant begin this discipline of informing the Bishop of their personal and spiritual development as they discern their vocation. The Ember Days are in March, June, September, and December, and the letters should be received by the Bishop during the week of the Ember Days. The Bishop may respond with counsel, encouragement, and support.

It is very desirable that Postulants receive regular spiritual direction from someone with whom they can share their faith journey, have prayer support, and evaluate their process. This relationship is considered confidential and should be with someone other than the rector of the Postulant's parish and/or anyone else who may be called upon to make an ultimate decision regarding a vocation to ordained ministry.

In summary, the discernment of a vocation to ordained ministry is a very serious, and at some times difficult process. It should always be accompanied with prayer. All recommendations in the ordination process are advisory to the Bishop. For a person to be accepted as a Postulant, the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry must discern a call and those gifts for ministry that show the person is called to ordained ministry.

The role of the Commission on Ministry is one of support, direction, and affirmation for the Postulant. It is important to note that acceptance as a Postulant does not guarantee ordination to the priesthood. Many things can happen during the process to change the nominee's view of ministry, the view of the Commission on Ministry, or of the Bishop about a person's call to ordained ministry. It should also be noted that the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry do not guarantee placement in a stipendiary church position after ordination.

Title III, Canon 8, Sec. 5. Preparation for Ordination

- (a) The Bishop and the Commission shall work with the Postulant or Candidate to develop and monitor a program of preparation for ordination to the Priesthood and to ensure that pastoral guidance is provided throughout the period of preparation.*
- (b) If the Postulant or Candidate has not previously obtained a baccalaureate degree, the Commission, Bishop, and Postulant or Candidate shall design a program of such additional academic work as may be necessary to prepare the Postulant or Candidate to undertake a program of theological education.*
- (c) Formation shall take into account the local culture and each Postulant or Candidate's background, age, occupation, and ministry.*
- (d) Prior education and learning from life experience may be considered as part of the formation required for the Priesthood.*
- (e) Whenever possible, formation for the Priesthood shall take place in community, including other persons in preparation for the Priesthood, or others preparing for ministry.*
- (f) Formation shall include theological training, practical experience, emotional development, and spiritual formation.*
- (g) Subject areas for study during this program of preparation shall include:*
 - 1. The Holy Scriptures;*
 - 2. Church History, including the Ecumenical Movement;*
 - 3. Christian Theology, including Missionary Theology and Missiology;*
 - 4. Christian Ethics and Moral Theology;*
 - 5. Studies in contemporary society, including the historical and contemporary experience of racial and minority groups, and cross-cultural ministry skills; cross cultural ministry skills may include the ability to communicate in a contemporary language other than one's own first language.*

6. *Liturgics and Church Music; Christian Worship and Music according to the contents and use of the Book of Common Prayer and the Hymnal, and authorized supplemental texts-*
7. *Theory and practice of ministry, including leadership, and the ministries of evangelism and stewardship.*

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

PRIESTHOOD
STEPS TOWARD POSTULANCY

NAME: _____

- _____ 1. LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION – from rector/vicar
- _____ 2. APPLICATION FOR POSTULANCY - a formal written and signed request sent to the Bishop's office
- _____ 3. SOCIAL HISTORY FORM - sent to the psychologist and Bishop. (Please include a photograph.)
- _____ 4. SPIRITUAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY - not to exceed three pages
- _____ 5. ENDORSEMENT FOR APPLICATION FOR POSTULANCY - signed by the Vestry/BAC and rector/vicar
- _____ 6. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND REPORT
- _____ 7. REPORT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EXAMINATION - sent to the Bishop's office.
- _____ 8. REPORT OF PHYSICAL EXAMINATION - sent to the Bishop's office.
- _____ 9. BEHAVIOR SCREENING QUESTIONNAIRE – sent to psychologist and Bishop's office
- _____ 10. OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPT OF COLLEGE WORK - sent to the Bishop's office.
- _____ 11. LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION - sent to the Bishop's office. (It is suggested that three letters of recommendation come from members of the nominee's congregation and three from persons outside that congregation.)
- _____ 12. VOCATIONS CONFERENCE REPORT - sent to the Bishop's office.
- _____ 13. INTERVIEW WITH THE BISHOP - arranged with the secretary.

STEPS TOWARD CANDIDACY OF THE ORDINATION OF PRIESTS

Title III, Canon 8, Sec. 4 (a) A person desiring to be considered as a Candidate for ordination to the Priesthood shall apply to the Bishop. Such application shall include the following:

- (1) the Postulant's date of admission to Postulancy, and*
- (2) a letter of support by the Postulant's congregation or other community of faith. If it be a congregation, the letter shall be signed and dated by at least two-thirds of the Vestry and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.*

It is the policy of the Commission on Ministry to meet with all Postulants when applying for candidacy, usually in the second year at their theological school or seminary. Before being interviewed for candidacy, the following documents must be submitted:

- (1) A formal application for candidacy;
- (2) Written reaffirmation from the priest and the vestry or BAC of the postulant's congregation;
- (3) An evaluation and recommendation from the seminary or theological school of the Postulant's qualifications for the exercise of Holy Orders.

Title III, Canon 8, Sec. 5 (j) The seminary or other formation program shall provide for, monitor and report on the academic performance and personal qualifications of the Postulant or Candidate for ordination. These reports will be made upon request of the bishop and Commission, but at least once per year.

After these items have been submitted to the Bishop's office, the Postulant is interviewed by the Commission on Ministry, whose written recommendation will be made known to the Bishop and the Standing Committee. The Standing Committee may interview the Postulant and must give written approval of the candidacy.

Candidacy interviews are a review of the process towards ordination in the areas of:

- (a) Call to ministry;
- (b) Development of special gifts in ministry;
- (c) Development of the candidate's spiritual life;
- (d) Understanding of ordained ministry; and
- (e) Education for the Church's mission and ministry.

After each year of study, the faculty of the seminary or theological school must evaluate and recommend the Candidate to the Bishop and other groups involved in the discernment process. When recommendation from the Commission on Ministry and the written approval of the Standing Committee is received, the Bishop may enroll the Postulant as a Candidate for Holy Orders.

Title III, Canon 8, Sec.4. Candidacy is a time of formation in preparation for ordination to the Priesthood, established by a formal commitment by the Candidate, the Bishop, the Commission and the congregation or other community of faith.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

PRIESTHOOD
STEPS TOWARD CANDIDACY

NAME: _____

- _____ 1. APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY - a formal written and signed request by the postulant, sent to the Bishop
- _____ 2. ENDORSEMENT FOR APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY - signed by the person with pastoral oversight and Vestry/BAC.
- _____ 3. RECOMMENDATION FROM THE SEMINARY OR THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL showing personal qualifications for the ordained ministry.
- _____ 4. COMMISSION ON MINISTRY INTERVIEW
- _____ 5. STANDING COMMITTEE INTERVIEW

STEPS TOWARD ORDINATION TO THE TRANSITIONAL DIACONATE

The service for Ordination of a Deacon in the Prayer Book (pages 537-547) presents an understanding of this order as viewed by the Church. This next section on Title III, Canon 8, will describe the process for transitional deacons.

All candidates must complete eight (8) hours of SAFE Church training workshops. All candidates must complete Anti-Racism training as offered by the diocese.

It is customary in this diocese for a Candidate to be interviewed in person by both the Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee prior to ordination.

Title III, Canon 8, Sec. 6. Ordination to the Diaconate for those called to the priesthood.

(a) *A Candidate must first be ordained Deacon before being ordained Priest.*

(b) *To be ordained Deacon under this canon, a person must be at least twenty-four years of age.*

(c) *The Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide to the Standing Committee:*

(1) an application from the Candidate requesting ordination as a Deacon under this Canon-

(2) a letter of support from the Candidate's congregation or other community of faith, signed and dated by at least two-thirds of the Vestry and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.

(3) written evidence of admission of the Candidate to Postulancy and Candidacy, giving the date of admission.

(4) a certificate from the seminary or other program of preparation, showing the Candidate's scholastic record in the subjects required by the Canons, and giving an evaluation with recommendation as to the Candidate's other personal qualifications for ordination together with a recommendation regarding ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon.

(5) a certificate from the Commission giving a recommendation regarding ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon.

(d) On the receipt of such certificates, the Standing Committee, a majority of all the members consenting, shall certify that the canonical requirements for ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon have been met and there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds and that they recommend ordination, by a testimonial addressed to the Bishop in the form specified below and signed by the consenting members of the Standing Committee.

(e) The testimonial having been presented to the Bishop, and there being no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds, the

Bishop may ordain the Candidate to the Diaconate under this Canon; and at the time of ordination the Candidate shall subscribe publicly and make, in the presence of the Bishop, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution.

Before ordination to the diaconate, the following documents must be submitted to the Bishop:

- (1) Application for Ordination
- (2) Endorsement for Application for Candidacy
- (3) General Ordination Examination evaluation
- (4) Evaluation from the seminary or theological school
- (5) Evaluation of CPE experience
- (6) Certificate of attendance at 8-hour SAFE Church Training workshop.
- (7) Certificate of attendance at Anti-Racism Training

All Candidates for the priesthood are required to take the General Ordination Examination, normally given during January of the senior year in seminary. Results are made available to the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry in mid February. Interviews for ordination are conducted only after the results of the General Ordination Examination are known. Note: In this diocese, the report of the General Board of Examining Chaplains is advisory. If the examination is not satisfactory, the Bishop and the Commission on Ministry could require further study, a second examination or other work. Prior to ordination to the diaconate, the Candidate will have an interview with the Commission on Ministry, which will make recommendation to the Bishop and the Standing Committee.

After receiving the above-named documents and believing that all canonical requirements have been fulfilled, the Standing Committee may, by testimonial, recommend the Candidate for ordination to the Bishop. Only then will the Bishop schedule the ordination with the Candidate.

Ordinations are scheduled when all recommendations are made to the Bishop. (A checklist for Ordination Service is available from the Bishop's office.) The Commission on Ministry recognizes the value in a preordination retreat, and strongly encourages ordinands to engage in such a retreat, which can take a variety of formats and include a variety of people to share in the time of quiet and reflection. Candidates are strongly encouraged in conversation with the Bishop to participate in a pre-ordination retreat.

While attempts are made to place transitional deacons in a congregation in the diocese, placements are not guaranteed. The Commission on Ministry hopes that positions for newly ordained transitional deacons will be available so that their further education can be overseen by the Bishop and Commission on Ministry.

COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

STEPS TOWARD ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

NAME: _____

- _____ 1. APPLICATION FOR ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE
- _____ 2. ENDORSEMENT FOR APPLICATION FOR ORDINATION - signed by the person with pastoral oversight and Vestry/BAC.
- _____ 3. GENERAL ORDINATION EXAMINATION EVALUATION
- _____ 4. EVALUATION FROM THE SEMINARY OR THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL
- _____ 5. EVALUATION OF CPE EXPERIENCE
- _____ 6. SAFE CHURCH TRAINING (8 hours)
- _____ 7. ANTI-RACISM TRAINING
- _____ 8. COMMISSION ON MINISTRY INTERVIEW
- _____ 9. STANDING COMMITTEE INTERVIEW

NOTE: No date may be set for ordination of any candidate until all canonical requirements have been met.

STEPS TOWARD ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

The service for the Ordination of a Priest states that the person is "called to work as a pastor, priest and teacher together with your bishop and fellow presbyters and to take your share in the councils of the church"; and further "to love and serve the people, to preach, to declare God's forgiveness, to pronounce God's blessing, to share in the administration of Holy Baptism and in the celebration of the mysteries of Christ's Body and Blood and to perform other ministrations."

A priest is called to be the leader of a congregation in a collegial fashion with other clergy and with the Bishop of the diocese. The office places rigorous demands on a priest and it is therefore necessary that the church be uncompromising in the selection of candidates for the priesthood.

Title III, Canon 8, Sec. 7. Ordination to the Priesthood.

(a) *A person may be ordained Priest*

- (1) *after at least six months since ordination as a Deacon under this Canon, and eighteen months from the time of acceptance of nomination by the Nominee as provided in III.8.2(b), and*
- (2) *upon attainment of at least twenty-four years of age, and*
- (3) *if the medical examination, psychological examination, and background check have taken place or been updated within 36 months prior to ordination as a Priest.*

(b) *The Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide to the Standing Committee:*

- (1) *an application from the Deacon requesting ordination as a Priest, including the Deacon's dates of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy and ordination as a Deacon under this Canon,*
- (2) *a letter of support from the Deacon's congregation or other community of faith, signed by at least two-thirds of the Vestry and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight,*
- (3) *evidence of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy, including dates of admission, and ordination to the Diaconate,*
- (4) *a certificate from the seminary or other program of preparation, written at the completion of the program of preparation, showing the Deacon's scholastic record in the subjects required by the Canons, and giving an evaluation with recommendation as to the Deacon's other personal qualifications for ordination together with a recommendation regarding ordination to the Priesthood, and*

- (5) *a statement from the Commission attesting to the successful completion of the program of formation designed during Postulancy under Canon III.8. 5, and proficiency in the required areas of study, and recommending the Deacon for ordination to the Priesthood.*
- (c) *On the receipt of such certificates, the Standing Committee, a majority of all the members consenting, shall certify that the canonical requirements for ordination to the Priesthood have been met and there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds and that they recommend ordination, by a testimonial addressed to the Bishop in the form specified below and signed by the consenting members of the Standing Committee...*
- (d) *The testimonial having been presented to the Bishop, and there being no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds, the Bishop may ordain the Deacon to the Priesthood; and at the time of ordination the Deacon shall subscribe publicly and make, in the presence of the Bishop, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution.*
- (e) *No Deacon shall be ordained to the Priesthood until having been appointed to serve in a Parochial Cure within the jurisdiction of this Church, or as a Missionary under the Ecclesiastical Authority of a Diocese, or as an officer of a Missionary Society recognized by the General Convention, or as a Chaplain of the Armed Services of the United States, or as a Chaplain in a recognized hospital or other welfare institution, or as a Chaplain or instructor in a school, college, or other seminary, or with other opportunity for the exercise of the office of Priest within the Church judged appropriate by the Bishop.*
- (f) *A person ordained to the Diaconate under Canon III.6 who is subsequently called to the Priesthood shall fulfill the Postulancy and Candidacy requirements set forth in this Canon. Upon completion of these requirements, the Deacon may be ordained to the Priesthood.*

Before ordination to the priesthood, the following documents must be submitted to the Bishop:

- (1) Application for Ordination to the Priesthood
- (2) Endorsement for Ordination to the Priesthood
- (3) Medical examination, psychological examination and background check, if the original exams were obtained more than 36 months prior to ordination as a priest.

Transitional Deacons may make application for ordination to the priesthood to the Bishop after service in a parish. While canons state this period of training to be one year, in practice the

diaconal training is often reduced to the canonical minimum of six months. Requests for a shortened period of diaconal training must be made personally and in writing to the Bishop.

The above documentation must be submitted to the Standing Committee along with a recommendation from the Commission on Ministry. If the Standing Committee finds all is in order for ordination, a recommendation for ordination may be made to the Bishop, and the Bishop may schedule the ordination

Canon 9: Of the Life and Work of Priests

Sec. . The Bishop and Commission shall require and provide for the continuing education of Priests and keep a record of such education.

Sec. 2 Mentoring for Newly Ordained Priests. Each newly ordained priest, whether employed or not, shall be assigned a mentor priest by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry. The mentor and new priest shall meet regularly for at least a year to provide guidance, information and a sustained dialogue about priestly ministry.