

The Diocese of Newark
Commission on Ministry
Committee on the Diaconate

Guidelines to the Vocational Diaconal Ordination Process and its Requirements
(Revised November, 2020)

Introduction

Welcome to those members of the Diocese of Newark who seek to discern if God is calling them to serve Christ in the Church by ministering as deacons. We are grateful for your willingness to discern your call. Discerning a call to ordination is a process involving both the individual's sense of vocation and the church's affirmation of that call. The Bishop, the Commission on Ministry, and the Standing Committee are grateful for your willingness to share your sense of vocation with us. We are committed to making the ordination process one of in-depth dialogue and faithful discernment. The process has been designed to create an environment for this discernment to take place with integrity.

Assisting persons entering the process towards ordination as a deacon is the function of the Committee on the Diaconate of the Commission on Ministry. The process involves one-on-one interviews, conferences, and the submission of documentation regarding various aspects of your background, life experiences, education, discernment, and personal matters that have affected you and your family. Throughout this process, you will be required to complete and submit a number of documents at various times and to advise the respective Committees any time there are significant events that affect you or may affect the process. These Guidelines describe the required paperwork and the sequence of meetings and steps in the ordination process. You are responsible for completing and submitting the required paperwork to the appropriate persons and for meeting all deadlines throughout the process. Conferences and meetings are scheduled in advance, and you will be expected and required to submit documents on a timely basis.

The ordination process is governed by National Canons, and these Guidelines reflect how those Canons are used in the Diocese of Newark. Throughout the process you may need to seek clarification of a particular requirement. The Committees and their members are available to assist you. The proper persons to contact are noted in these guidelines. However, you should feel

free to contact the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate at any time. The name and phone number of the relevant members are available on the Commission's website (<http://www.dioceseofnewark.org/comhome/>) or from the Bishop's office. The following pages describe the stages of the process. Each section includes a list of the documents, conferences and events that are required at each stage.

The Ordination Process

General Conditions for entering the Ordination Process

Overview

An individual seeking to enter the process towards ordination must spend a minimum of two full years in a single congregation before doing so, and must also be a confirmed communicant in good standing in that congregation for at least one full year prior to entering the process. After a period of at least one year of active involvement in the congregation's life, parish clergy may enter into more formal and serious discussions with an Aspirant regarding that person's interest in becoming ordained, spending a minimum of four to six months in such conversations. Should the clergy and the Aspirant believe the person should continue, it is the responsibility of the Parish Clergy to notify the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate of the Commission on Ministry of that person's intent to enter the ordination process.

The ordination process typically lasts between three to four years for the vocational diaconate, beginning with the earliest contact between a parishioner and his or her Rector, Priest-in-Charge, Vicar, or Interim Rector about the parishioner's sense of vocation. It is expected that an Aspirant will be a member of a single sponsoring parish for not less than two years, with a minimum of one year as a confirmed adult communicant in good standing, before applying to the Bishop and Commission on Ministry. The Canons of the Episcopal Church require a minimum of 18 months between the Aspirant's acceptance of Nomination and ordination to the vocational diaconate.

Individuals wishing to enter the process must also take into consideration that, under current rules, anyone entering the diaconal ordination process must be, at the time of ordination, able to provide five years of ministry prior to the mandatory canonical retirement age of 72 years. This means that no one should be older than 67 years about the time of ordination.

Special situations

Individuals Ordained in Other Denominations

Individuals who have been ordained in other denominations and who are seeking to have their orders received in the Episcopal Church should review the Canons of the Episcopal Church, as well as these Guidelines, including those sections specifically addressing their situation. Such individuals should contact the Chair of the Commission on Ministry as early as possible to discuss the steps that must be taken.

For Those Who Have Completed Studies Prior to Postulancy

All Aspirants seeking ordination must go through all the steps in the ordination process, even if they have completed studies prior to entering the process, including completing the Anglican Studies requirement in addition to any additional education requirements.

For those in parishes in transition

The Committee on Ministry recognizes that parishes and missions are dynamic entities and that Rectors, Vicars and Priests-in-Charge (collectively referred to in this section as Rector) may, in due course, leave a congregation while it is in the process of sponsoring a person for ordination. Such departures can have a significant impact on an individual in the process. The National Canons provide that another priest of the Diocese “acquainted with the nominee and the Parish “may fulfill the role required for supporting and approving the individual in the process (e.g., when the required written sponsorship certificate is submitted). This Priest could be the Interim Rector or, in certain circumstances, another priest in the Diocese who is approved to assist in this situation. It is not practical to provide definitive guidelines to address every possible situation. However, there are certain steps to be taken by those involved to facilitate the appropriate decision. The Nominee, Postulant or Candidate must contact the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate as soon as he or she is aware that their Rector may be leaving the individual’s sponsoring parish. It would also be helpful for the departing clergy member to do the same. The Chair will discuss the situation with the individual and the Rector who is leaving in order to consider the immediate impact on the individual; e.g., the period of time until an Interim Rector is assigned, the length of time the Interim Rector is expected to serve, whether there is another priest in the Diocese who knows the individual and parish sufficiently to assist, and put in place

appropriate arrangements. Because each situation is unique, the decision regarding the impact of the Rector leaving will depend on a number of things, and the following questions are among those that will be considered:

- How far into the process is the individual when the Rector leaves?
- How long has the individual been part of the parish, and how well is the individual known by the parish?
- Does the individual have close and deep ties with another priest who also knows the parish community?
- How long has the respective Committee known the individual?
- Has that Committee come to a conclusion that the individual has clearly demonstrated his or her vocation to the Committee?
- What recommendations were made to the individual at previous conferences, and what steps have been taken to address those recommendations? Is the lay leadership of the parish stable and supportive of the individual?
- Are there other matters in the congregation that may affect this situation?
- Is there another Priest in the Diocese who could assist?

Interim clergy may be able to step into the Rector's role of support depending upon the length of time the Interim is expected to stay in the position, and if the individual is far enough along in the process and is well supported by the parish and is well known by the Committee. In some cases, however, the individual may not be well known to the Interim as the individual is likely to be "away" from the parish at seminary or at field placement, and may not be present at the parish long enough to build some relationship with the new clergy. The situation can be significantly complicated if the individual has not yet attended a Nominee Conference. The individual's process may be so new that it would make sense for the individual to take no further steps until the new Rector is in place at the sponsoring parish. That decision will be made by the Bishop in consultation with the Committee on the Diaconate. In any case, it will be important that the individual's Parish Discernment Committee continue to meet with the Nominee, Postulant or Candidate during this transition period should such a committee already be in place. (In the circumstances, a Parish Discernment Committee may only be created following discussion of the matter with the Chair of the respective Commission Committees.)

The Ordination Process

Timeline for the Ordination Process

Attached is the Timeline (see Appendix I) for the Diaconal Ordination Processes, which outlines the general steps, in chronological order, that an individual will complete from the time one is an Aspirant until the time of ordination to the vocational diaconate.

This timeline is a guide only, and does not reflect all steps that may be required of an individual. Each individual is responsible for following the procedures outlined in this document. If there is any conflict between the Timeline and the procedures outlined in this document, the instructions in this document are to be followed. Questions should be addressed to the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate.

Submission of Documents

At each stage of the process a number of documents will need to be submitted. In some cases, the same documents may be requested at different stages, such as transcripts and the Ordination Process Information Form. This is to ensure that the Bishop and the Commission have the most current and complete information as you proceed through the process toward ordination.

If there are any changes to your personal contact information at any time (e.g., address, email address, phone numbers, etc.), you must complete a new Ordination Process Information Form in its entirety and submit it immediately to the Bishop and the Commission.

Unless otherwise noted:

- All required documents for each stage of the ordination process are listed in these Guidelines.
- These forms will be provided to you at each stage of the process.
- Documents that are typed are to be presented in 12-point type with one-inch margins
- Each page is to be numbered and include the individual's name and date in the footer of the page.
- Originals are to be sent to the Bishop's office, with a copy to be sent to the Chair of the

Committee on the Diaconate.

- You must retain a complete set of copies of all documents that you submit throughout this process.
- At any time, should you have any questions as to those documents that are required, please contact the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate.

Discernment

Aspirancy

The first stage in the ordination process is known as "Aspirancy." This suggests that a person is aspiring to discern, or come to know more deeply the vocation to which God calls him or her. Aspirancy begins with conversations between the Aspirant and the Aspirant's parish Rector, Vicar, Priest-in-Charge, or Interim Rector (for purposes of this section, referred to as the Rector) about the Aspirant's sense of calling. These conversations happen over a minimum of four to six months and may take longer, as each person's process of discernment is different. In these initial discussions, the Rector can help the Aspirant by exploring with that person the extent and nature of the call experience, including whether the call is of service to the Church as a priest, deacon, or lay person. These conversations may reach the point where both the Aspirant and the Aspirant's Rector feel that the Aspirant is ready for the next step. If the Rector and the Aspirant mutually agree that a formal discernment process is appropriate and could be meaningful, the Rector will notify the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate of the Commission on Ministry,

The Parish Discernment Committee

Establishment

Following that notification, the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate will discuss with the Rector the initial steps in the process, and invite that person to select appropriate individuals to serve on a Parish Discernment Committee for the Aspirant. Rectors should select persons who have a good understanding of their own ministries and understand that a call to ministry does not necessarily mean a call to ordination. The Rector may also invite persons from outside of the Aspirant's home parish to be members of the Discernment Committee. The Rector is to appoint a person to chair the Parish Discernment Committee who will be responsible for convening and

holding meetings and for ensuring that the Committee's report is written in compliance with the Guidelines.

The next step is a meeting between the Committee Chair, the Rector, and those persons selected to serve on the Discernment Committee. The purpose of this meeting is to help those who feel a call to service to better understand that call, explain the mechanics of the discernment process, and prepare them to work more effectively with a Discernment Committee. Following this meeting, the Parish Discernment Committee begins its work.

Discernment Resource

The Commission on Ministry has created the *Discernment Committee Guidelines*, which provides specific guidelines, resources and selection criteria for the Parish Discernment Committee. The *Guidelines on Parish Discernment* is provided on the diocesan website.

Committee's role and work

The role of the Parish Discernment Committee is to evaluate the Aspirant's qualifications for ordained ministry, to help the Aspirant gain greater self-awareness and a deeper understanding of the aspirant's call to ministry, whether ordained or not, and to help the Aspirant understand the expectations, duties and responsibilities of ordained persons. The Parish Discernment Committee, at this early stage of the process serves as a sounding board for the Aspirant to explore the different dimensions of a call to ordination; offers to the Bishop and the Committee on the Diaconate its observations regarding the strengths the Aspirant would offer the church as a vocational deacon, the areas in which the Aspirant would need to grow to become a well-rounded deacon, and the way the Parish Discernment Committee experienced the Aspirant in the course of their meetings.

The Committee should include both male and female members and members with a range of ages and experiences, so as to reflect the overall diversity of the parish. The Parish Discernment Committee may not include: members of the Aspirant's family, the Rector, or member of the Rector's family, or anyone whose participation may represent a conflict of interests or the appearance of such a conflict. The Parish Discernment Committee is charged with helping an

Aspirant discern the nature of the Aspirant's call to ordained ministry. It is to provide an environment in which the Aspirant and Committee members may freely and openly discuss the Aspirant's call to ministry. The Committee and Aspirant must therefore treat all of their meetings as strictly confidential. In that context, the Committee should encourage the Aspirant to engage in a process of profound and honest self-examination, and exploration of ordination, and should uphold and support an Aspirant's decision either to pursue ordination or live out the Aspirant's ministry calling without ordination.

The Parish Discernment Committee should continue to provide a support network throughout the various stages of the process until ordination. If the Aspirant is not recommended to attend a Nominee Conference, or if the Aspirant attends a Nominee Conference and is not recommended to proceed further, the Parish Discernment Committee must be prepared to provide pastoral care and help as that person ~~Nominee~~ discerns how to live out his or her call in lay ministry. It is recommended that that person be referred to the Commission on Ministry's document, *"Celebrating Life As Ministry: Tools for All God's Children"*.

The Bishop, Commission on Ministry, and the Parish Discernment Committee shall assist persons engaged in a process of ministry discernment to determine appropriate avenues for the expression and support of ministries, either lay or ordained.

Summary of the Parish Discernment Process

The Parish Discernment Committee is to write a report on its work, a copy of which should be sent to the Rector and the Aspirant, prior to the Aspirant attending a Nominee Conference. The Aspirant is responsible for forwarding that report to the Committee on the Diaconate as part of the documentation requirements (see below). The report must follow and address each of the areas as outlined in the Parish Discernment Guidelines. The Committee on the Diaconate relies heavily on the Discernment Committee's report when it meets with the individual in the next stage of the process (the Nominee Conference); not addressing all of the points in the Guidelines may lead to the individual not being invited to the Nominee Conference.

Nomination

The Parish Discernment Committee's report is submitted to the Rector, priest-in-charge, vicar or

interim rector, who informs the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate. The Aspirant may then be nominated for ordination to the Diaconate as specified in Canon III. 6.1(a). The nomination shall be in writing and may include a letter of support by Nominee's congregation or other community of faith committing the community to pledge to contribute financially to that preparation, and involve itself in the Nominee's preparation for ordination to the Vocational Diaconate. The nomination shall be signed by two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body, and by the Member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight. If the Nominee agrees to the nomination, the individual shall accept the nomination in writing as specified in Canon III. 6.1(a); at that point, the Aspirant is known as a Nominee. The Rector, priest-in-charge, vicar, or interim rector will then forward the approved nomination and a cover letter to the Bishop and the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate, informing them of the Nomination.

DIACONAL ORDINATION

The Nominee Conference

Once Aspirant's Discernment Committee's report has been submitted, the Rector, priest-in-charge, vicar, or interim rector should notify the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate that the Nominee is ready to be invited to a Nominee Conference. The Committee on the Diaconate will set the date, time and place of the Conference and the Committee Chair will then issue an invitation to the Aspirant to attend that Conference.

Nominee Conferences are scheduled as needed for the vocational diaconate. Prior to attending a Nominee Conference, the Nominee will send the Bishop and the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate the following documents in electronic form and hard copy, which include those specified in Canon III. 6.1(a).

Form	Description
I-1*	Ordination Process Information Form (including an assessment of any special educational needs)
N-1*	Acceptance of Nomination and Application for Attendance at a Nominee Conference

N-2*	Certificate of Minister and Vestry/Executive Committee form, which indicates the rector's/priest-in-charge's/vicar's and its vestry's/executive committee's support, financially and otherwise, of the Nominee
N-4	The report of the Parish Discernment Committee, which must be based on the <i>Parish Discernment Guidelines</i> .
N-5	A one-page, single-spaced autobiographical statement
N-6	A one-page, single-spaced statement of the Nominee's sense of call
N-7	A current resume

Work of the Conference

The Nominee Conference typically involves brief interviews between the Nominee and members of the Nominee Conference Committee, which consists of several members of the Committee on the Diaconate. This conference allows the Committee to initiate its relationship with the Nominee, to assess the Nominee's readiness for a Postulancy Conference, and to give the Nominee a sense of how the Committee functions. The Conference also provides Nominees with candid feedback about the way they communicate their sense of calling at an early stage of the ordination process, their passion

Nominee Conference Follow-Up

Within one week following the Nominee Conference, the Conference Chair will contact the

Nominee to set up an appointment to meet in person. The purpose of this meeting is for the Conference Chair to respond to the Nominee's presentation of the Nominee's sense of calling, advising the Nominee about the strengths and areas of concern that Committee members discerned. The Conference Chair will also provide each Nominee with one of three recommendations from the Nominee Conference Committee:

- That the Nominee attend the next Postulancy Conference, mindful of the feedback provided as a result of the Nominee Conference.
- That the Nominee attend a future Postulancy Conference, taking time to address concerns raised at the Nominee Conference.
- That the Nominee seriously consider not proceeding in the ordination process, as the Nominee Committee did not sense a call to diaconal ordination.

Should the recommendation be that the Nominee not attend the next Postulancy Conference, or that the Nominee consider not proceeding in the ordination process, the Nominee may—after meeting with the Conference Chair for the feedback session—request to meet with the Bishop. The canonical authority for inviting a Nominee to a Postulancy Conference lies with the Bishop.

Nominee status

Once the Aspirant has been accepted to Nominee status, the person will:

- Continue to work towards fulfilling the diaconal education requirements by attending a school approved by the Committee. Part of those requirements is attending also the Saturday classes at the Herb Tinning School of Deacons as they are scheduled. You will be informed when these are scheduled (see Appendix I)
- Complete, if they have not done so in the past five years, the required Anti-racism Dialogues training offered by the Diocese; and Safeguarding God's People and Safeguarding God's Children training (this is done on-line).
- Continue to meet with their Spiritual Director.
- Continue to widen their Episcopal Church experience by visiting churches with different worship formats.
- Continue to develop their understanding of the diaconate as a distinct order of the Episcopal Church.

- Work on honing in more their sense of call to the diaconate so that it can be more precise.

To help the Nominee navigate the process, a Committee Member will be appointed as Liaison.

Committee Liaison

All Nominees are assigned a member of the Committee on the Diaconate to serve as a liaison. The liaison is the contact person who facilitates communication between the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate and the Committee. The liaison makes the initial contact with the Nominee. Although the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate is solely responsible for making sure all requirements are fulfilled, the liaison serves as a facilitator, helping to make the process as clear and orderly as possible for the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate. There must be contact between the liaison and the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate on at least a quarterly basis. The liaison and the Postulant/Candidate share responsibility for planning this contact. The liaison should check on the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate's progress in fulfilling recommendations from the Committee. The liaison presents a report to the Committee at least twice annually regarding the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate, progress made with respect to Committee recommendations, and any other matters of importance. The liaison is responsible for accurately representing the requirements and procedures of the Committee to the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate – or referring the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate to someone else who can, such as the Committee Chair. It is expected that the liaison's relationship will increase his or her familiarity with the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate's skills and potential. This additional knowledge of the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate should not be a reason for future recusal in voting. If the liaison feels that he or she will be unable to cast a vote in the future, he or she should meet with the Committee Chair to discuss the situation. The Committee Chair has the option of assigning the Nominee/Postulant/Candidate a new liaison. The Postulant/Candidate may, without prejudice, ask for a new liaison by contacting the Committee Chair.

Postulancy

Conference preparations

The next step in the process is for the Committee on the Diaconate, based on the reports provided by the Nominee's Liaison on progress made in the ordination process, is to determine if the Nominee is ready to move forward and to invite the Nominee, with the Bishop's consent, to attend a Postulancy Conference. The Committee will set the date, time and place of the Conference, while considering the time it will take for the Nominee to complete all the requirements. The Committee will also invite the Standing Committee to designate its representatives to attend the Conference.

Conference fees

Not less than four months prior to attending a Postulancy Conference, the Nominee must submit an Administrative Fee. The actual cost for this process, which includes background checks, psychological testing, annual postulants and candidates retreats, convention luncheon, and additional meeting costs is \$2,250. Applicants are responsible for the cost of this process. However, if an applicant is unable to pay the total fee, the first resource that they should seek out is their sponsoring congregation. Vestries pledge to support nominees financially as part of their endorsement in the ordination process. If there is a remaining portion of the expense, after the applicant and the congregation have committed their resources, then the diocese will provide support.

The fee must be received before arrangements can be made for the required psychological testing, medical exam, and background checks. The Check must be made payable to the Diocese of Newark and submitted to the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Diocese of Newark and Canon to the Ordinary, with indication in the memo line "COM application Fee for ...Name of Nominee".

Requirements/Paperwork

For Postulancy, it is critical that all documents be submitted on or before the deadline as set by the Committee Chair, and it is the responsibility of the Nominee to ensure they are received on

time. Since some documents (e.g., transcripts, certificates, and so on) must be obtained from others, the Nominee should begin gathering these documents as soon as possible. If all required documents are not on or before the deadline, a Nominee may be advised that he or she may not attend the Postulancy Conference.

The following documents are required for attendance at a Postulancy Conference and are to be submitted to the Committee Chair and to the Bishop's Office:

Form	Description
I-1*	Ordination Process Information Form
P-1*	Application for Attendance at a Postulancy Conference
P-2*	Certificate of Minister and Vestry/Executive Committee form, which indicates the rector's/priest-in-charge's/vicar's/interim rector's and its vestry's/executive committee's support, financially and otherwise, of the Nominee for Postulancy
P-3	Official transcripts of coursework completed
P-4	A three-page, double-spaced autobiographical statement
P-5	A three-page, double-spaced statement describing the Nominee's sense of call, describing the process of discernment by which the Nominee has determined this call
	Two recent passport-size photographs
	A letter from the Nominee's spouse/partner stating his/her support for the Nominee's ordination process.

Psychological Evaluation

When the Nominee knows that he or she will be attending a Postulancy Conference and after the administrative fee has been received by the Diocese, the Diocese will provide the Nominee with two forms to be completed: *Life History Questionnaire and the Behavior Screening*

Questionnaire. The Nominee should contact Kenwood Psychological Services (124 East 84th Street, New York, New York, 10028, 212-744-2121) and provide them with the completed forms so that it can schedule psychological interviews and tests. Only persons in the Bishop's Office have access to and read the results of these tests. The Bishop's office will review the Kenwood test results and to gain a psychological profile of the Nominee and to report any significant findings to the Committee on the Diaconate and the Standing Committee. The Committee hopes Nominees will find these reports enlightening regarding personal psychological issues bearing on ordination. Nominees should allow up to three months for the completion of the Kenwood process, and should schedule appointments accordingly. This psychological evaluation must be updated if the period from the date of the initial evaluation report until ordination to the Vocational Diaconate is 36 months or more, or at the request of the Committee (Canons III.6.(b)).

Background and Criminal Checks

Background and criminal checks on each Nominee are conducted by the Oxford Document Management Company prior to attendance at the Postulancy Conference and include credit, motor vehicle, and criminal checks. These background checks must be updated prior to ordination if more than 36 months have elapsed between the date of the background check and the date of ordination to the Diaconate, or at the request of the Committee.

Medical Examination

The Nominee must also submit the results of a medical examination on the required Forms provided by the diocese.

The Postulancy Conference

The Postulancy Conference consists of interviews by the Committee on the Diaconate, during which Nominees are asked questions based on their written materials. The Conference is an opportunity to further assess a person's sense of call to the vocational diaconate, as well as the emotional and spiritual maturity, leadership ability, vision for church/ministry, and their passion for seeking and serving Christ in all persons. The goal is for the Committee to be able to recommend whether a Nominee's call to ordained ministry is discerned enough for that person to

proceed into the Postulancy stage of the ordination process. The Chair of the Committee provides information regarding the date, time and place of the Conference to Nominees several months in advance, an indication of all documents to be submitted (see above), and the timing of their submission. Documents are generally due to be submitted to the Bishop and to the Committee Chair four to six weeks prior to the Postulancy Conference.

Post-Postulancy Conference

Following the Postulancy Conference, the Committee makes one of the following recommendations to the Bishop regarding Postulancy for each Nominee: Recommended for Postulancy; Not Recommended for Postulancy All recommendations from the Committee to the Bishop require a two-thirds vote of all Committee members present and eligible to vote. The Bishop will meet with the Nominee at the earliest opportunity to decide whether or not to accept the Committee's recommendation, if that recommendation is to admit the Nominee as a Postulant for Holy Orders. The Conference Chair will schedule an appointment to review feedback from the Conference and to discuss the next steps. Nominees not granted Postulancy after the initial conference must wait at least one year before returning to a second conference. Nominees not granted Postulancy after attending two Postulancy Conferences may not attend future Postulancy Conferences.

Postulancy Status

Definition

Postulancy is a time for those in the ordination process for Postulants to formulate working models or images of what diaconal ordination means to them. It is the time during which formal preparation for ordination is initiated. Postulancy involves continued exploration of and decision about the Postulant's call to the Diaconate

Activities During Postulancy

Postulants will formulate working models or images of what diaconal ministry means to them, with the goal of identifying a theology and style of diaconal ministry that suits them well. These

images or models will be tested intellectually, emotionally, vocationally, and spiritually with the Committee, with a community, in Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) situations, in a social services placement and in a church field placement. The Committee expects Postulants to find this a time of significant spiritual growth and enrichment.

Communication with the Bishop on Ember Days

Each Postulant for ordination to the Vocational Diaconate must communicate with the Bishop by letter, four times each year during Ember Weeks (the weeks in which ember days occur), reflecting on the Postulant's academic experience and personal and spiritual development. One of these four letters each year is to be sent to both the Bishop and to the Committee Chair, which should include specific information about how the Postulant has followed up on recommendations the Committee made following the Postulancy Conference. This letter should be in the Ember Week that falls closest to six months after the Postulancy Conference at which the individual was made a Postulant, and annually thereafter.

Attire

Postulants should not wear any clerical attire. In corporate worship, Postulants should wear only vestments appropriate for a lay person.

Candidacy

Conference preparations

Once the Committee on the Diaconate has determined that the Postulant has fulfilled all the postulancy requirements and steps, and taking into consideration the reports of the Postulant's Liaison, it will invite the Postulant to attend a Candidacy Conference. It will set the date, time and place of the Conference and invite the Standing Committee to attend the Conference also.

Prerequisites and Paperwork

Postulants must submit the following candidacy-related paperwork for the Candidacy Conference:

C-1* Application for Candidacy

- C-2* Reaffirmation of Minister and Vestry/Executive Committee for Candidacy Status
- C-3 Academic transcript to date
- C-5 A written copy of a recent sermon
- C-6 Clinical Pastoral Education evaluation
- C-7 Social Services Field placement supervisor's evaluation
- C-8 Parish Internship Supervisor's report
- Anti-Racism training—proof of completion
- C-9 Adult Sexual Misconduct Prevention training—proof of completion
- C-10 Child Abuse Awareness training—proof of completion
- C-11 A current resume
- N/A Most Recent Ember Week letter

Copies of the required documents must be sent to the Bishop and the Committee Chair within the deadline set by the Committee. It is critical that all documents be submitted on or before the set deadline, and it is the responsibility of the Postulant to ensure they are received on time. Social Services and Parish placement evaluations should be a comprehensive report that includes information regarding the period of field placement, a full description of the tasks and assignments, the goals set for the field placement, the accomplishments achieved, and the detailed observations of the supervisor. If the Committee had made any specific observations or recommendations that were to be addressed during the field placement, those matters should be specifically addressed. A candid report of the observations of the individual's activities, strengths, and areas to be addressed in the future should also be included. Any concerns or reservations by the supervisor regarding the individual's ongoing process towards ordination should also be addressed.

The Candidacy Conference

The Candidacy Conference is similar in format to the Postulancy Conference. The Committee on the Diaconate and the Standing Committee members ask each Postulant questions about the Postulant's academic progress, spiritual development and vision for diaconal ministry. Therefore, the Candidacy Conference is intended to enable the Committee to assess their

academic studies, spiritual development, and field experience and to determine: if there are other areas that still need to be addressed; the leadership style the person has developed; the gifts for ministry that the person has developed; and if the person has been able to articulate the way they will live out their diaconal ministry.

Following the Candidacy Conference, the Committee on the Diaconate makes one of the following recommendations to the Bishop regarding Candidacy for each Postulant:

Recommended for Candidacy; Not Recommended for Candidacy. All recommendations from the Committee to the Bishop and the Standing Committee require a two-thirds vote of all Committee members present and voting. Upon compliance with the requirements specified in Canon III.6.2, including approval in writing, the Bishop may admit the Postulant as a Candidate for Holy Orders.

The Bishop will meet with the Postulant to communicate his/her decision on the Committee's recommendation as to whether the Postulant been admitted or not admitted as a Candidate.

All Postulants should schedule a meeting with the Conference Chair following the Candidacy Conference to discuss the Commission's feedback from the conference.

Candidacy status

Definition

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

The term Candidate reflects the church's expectation that, by this stage of the ordination process, persons will have integrated their academic studies, spiritual development, and field experience so that they are prepared to offer themselves as Candidates for ordination to the vocational diaconate.

Canonical Relationship

A Candidate must remain in canonical relationship with the Diocese in which admission has

been granted until ordination to the vocational Diaconate, except for reasons acceptable to the Bishop. Each Candidate for ordination to the vocational diaconate must continue to communicate with the Bishop by letter, four times each year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Candidate's academic experience and personal and spiritual development. As is the case during Postulancy, one of these four letters each year is to be sent to both the Bishop and to the Chair of the Committee on the Diaconate, including in that letter specific information about how the Candidate has followed up on recommendations of the Committee following the Candidacy Conference. This letter should be in the Ember Week that falls closest to six months after the Candidacy Conference at which the individual was made a Candidate, and annually thereafter. Ember letters are required throughout the remainder of the process until ordination.

Attire

Candidates should not wear any clerical attire. In corporate worship, Candidates should wear only vestments appropriate for a layperson.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ORDINATION

Evaluation

The Evaluation Process will ensure that each Candidate has met the academic and diaconal Training requirements. The Committee will determine any area in which the Candidate has been deemed to be deficient, and will formulate a remediation plan to be undertaken in that area, including meeting with someone who can mentor the Candidate in that area; undertaking further coursework or field placement; or any other way the Committee determines appropriate. The Standing Committee and/or the Bishop may decline to approve the ordination of such Candidate. As part of this process, Candidates may be required also to provide written answers to questions submitted by the Committee.

The Committee will report to the Bishop and the Standing Committee whether each Candidate has successfully completed the required course of study and training and will give an evaluation and recommendation as to the Candidate's readiness for ordination to the Diaconate. The Standing Committee may then make a recommendation to the Bishop on ordination to the vocational Diaconate. The Standing Committee may ask to meet with the Candidate prior to making its recommendation to the Bishop.

Note: Medical, Psychological Examination, and Background Check reports submitted for Postulancy must be updated before ordination if more than three years have elapsed since the original exams, or at the request of the Committee.

Diaconal formation and training

The Committee requires that all persons in the diaconal ordination process complete the following academic coursework to be ordained deacon:

- Hebrew Scriptures Parts I & II
- New Testament
- Christian Theology and ethics
- Anglican Theology
- Liberation Theology
- Theology of the Prayer Book
- Church history, covering the history of the early church to the present day, including Anglican/Episcopal Church history
- Homelitics

In addition, all diaconal students will be required to attend Saturday Formation classes over a three-year period at the Herb Tinning School of Deacons. The objective of which is to acquaint them with social justice issues that they may face in their ministry, to study and discuss the

history, as well as the role of deacons in the world today, and to explore a number of spiritual practices. This also offers an extended opportunity for the development of interpersonal skills and the creation of an environment of collegiality.

Areas of experience and understanding:

- Diakonia and the Diaconate,
- Justice issues, including poverty, human trafficking and immigration issues, domestic violence and exploitation,
- Conflict management,
- Diaconal practice covering Hospital Chaplaincy, Prison Ministry and Seafarers Ministry,
- Community Organizing,
- Interfaith Relations,
- Pastoral Care and Counseling,
- Practical Liturgy (Deacon's Congregational and Liturgical Roles and Practical Liturgy)
- Spiritual Practice and Rule of Life
- Spiritual development and discipline/Spiritual Direction (2yrs, 1 visit/mo)

Practical Training: Social Service and Parish Internships

The Committee on the Diaconate considers the emotional and spiritual development of persons in the process to be as important as their intellectual development. To this end, by the time of ordination to the vocational diaconate, Candidates are expected to have completed the following:

- Two years of regular meetings with a spiritual director
- A full unit of Clinical Pastoral Education
- Six months of field placement in a supervised ministry at an Episcopal parish or mission, and six months in a supervised social services ministry approved by the

Committee

- A daily practice of praying either Morning or Evening Prayer from the Book of Common Prayer, or a supplemental liturgical text, the Daily Office, or Reading Lesser Feasts and Fasts

- Adult Sexual Misconduct Prevention training
- Child Abuse Awareness training
- Anti-Racism training

- Title IV (Ecclesiastical Discipline),

The Committee expects that all persons in the ordination process will complete their fieldwork at a congregation other than their sponsoring congregation or home church, which church must be approved by the Committee. The Committee will ask Postulants to report on these activities at the Candidacy Conference.

Conclusion

The Committee on the Diaconate of the Commission on Ministry recognizes the intellectual, emotional and spiritual stamina required to complete this process and hopes that each newly ordained deacon will have experienced life-changing spiritual growth during his or her time in the process. The Bishop, Commission on Ministry, and Standing Committee again thank you for your willingness to share your sense of vocation with us.

(Revised March 2013; June 2020)

Appendix I DIACONAL ORDINATION TIMELINE

DIACONAL ORDINATION TIMELINE (UPDATED JANUARY 2020)

ASPIRANT	Discernment Committee	NOMINEE	POSTULANT	CANDIDATE	ORDINAND
Personal Discernment	Meeting of Aspirant, clergy, chair of COD/COM and members of the Discernment Committee	Aspirant is invited to the Nominee Conference	Nominee is invited to the Postulant Conference (<i>Admin. \$2,250 fee paid to diocese</i>)	Postulant is invited to the Candidacy Conference. Submits all required reports & paperwork.	COD may recommend ordination to the Bishop and Standing Committee.
Aspirant discussion with clergy					
	Committee proceeds with discernment process and submits final report to COD	Paperwork submitted to COD	Completes: Kenwood Psych. Exam Oxford Background Checks Medical Exam	Update Kenwood/Oxford/Medical if required	Notification to Ordinand
Formation of Discernment Committee		Meets with COD for post-conference debriefing	Submits paperwork to Bishop's office and COD. COD meets with Postulant for debriefing	Candidate is evaluated through written and/or oral exam	Ordinand files application for ordination
		COD Liaison appointed for nominee			Attend Ordination Ceremony

REQUIRED COURSEWORK & Diocesan REQUIREMENTS

Course Work	Approved School	Tinning School of Deacons	Diocesan Requirements
YEAR 1	Old Testament One & Two Theology of the Prayer Book	Diakonia Social Justice Issues as determined by COD (Immigration issues; Domestic violence; Human trafficking; Prison	Anti-Racism Dialogues Child Abuse Awareness training (<i>Safeguarding God's Children</i>) Prevention of Sexual Harassment

		ministry; Seafarers ministry)	<i>(Safeguarding God's People)</i> Prevention of Sexual Exploitation <i>(Safeguarding God's People)</i> Title IV (Ecclesiastical discipline)
YEAR 2	New Testament Liberation Theology Anglican Theology One unit of CPE	Conflict Management; Diaconal Practice/Community organizing Spiritual Practice & Rule of Life	Write Ember Day letters to the Bishop. Attend Diocesan Convention. Attend Deacon & Postulant Retreats.
YEAR 3	Homiletics Church History Ethics/Moral Theology	Practical Liturgy	Complete Social Services Internship. Complete Parish Internship (six months each).