



Ministerial Discernment Process Guide for Presbyteral (Priestly) Ministry

Updated: June 2024

Abstract

This guide is for use by persons discerning a call to ordained ministry and by clergy leaders and others in the church who are assisting in their discernment. The aim of this guide is to empower clergy leaders, congregations and enquirers for the priesthood and the diaconate with the knowledge and tools needed to do the work of discernment. The guide lays out the principles and procedures to be used consistently throughout the diocese so that we raise up faithful, disciplined, effective and inspirational leaders for our church.

The guide recognizes that the ministry of priests and deacons is quite different, as are many of the gifts, passions, and qualities we seek in priests and deacons. This affects the work of discernment. Therefore, this guide exists in two versions: one to be used by those exploring priesthood, and one to be used by those exploring the diaconate. **Please be sure you are working with the correct documents.**

Both guides rely upon “Criteria for Ordination” (see Appendix PI for Priests) as developed for use within our ecclesiastical province, and with additional input from theological educators and local clergy leaders. Please note that the criteria are similar, but not identical, for deacons and priests. They describe some of the important qualities our diocese is seeking in its clergy. They are rooted in the calling of all the baptized into the ministry of the church.

The guide goes on to describe the process of discernment during which an individual, who begins as an enquirer, may become an applicant, then a postulant, and finally an ordinand.

Please note that completing the steps in this process does not “guarantee” ordination, nor is the process a linear journey. Many enquirers complete the process in an order that best suits the circumstances of their lives, repeat steps in the process, or discern during the process that their call is *not* to ordained ministry. Ultimately, it is the bishop’s prerogative when and whether to invite an enquirer to become an applicant, a postulant, or an ordinand.

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Appendices to this Guide

Updated versions can be found on the diocesan website: bc.anglican.ca/resources/ordained-ministry-discernment

- Appendix P1 – Criteria for Ordination to the Priesthood
- Appendix P2 – Presbyteral Enquirer’s History Form
- Appendix P3 – Discernment Worksheet for Ordination to the Priesthood
- Appendix P4 – An example of Assessment Tool Worksheet (priesthood)
- Appendix P5 – An example of an Action Learning Plan (priesthood)
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- Appendix P7 – Parish Discernment Group Report to the Bishop
- Appendix P8 – Clergy leader letter of support to the bishop
- Appendix P9 – Discernment Group Commendation Letter for ACPO

A Word from Bishop Anna

Dear friends,

Frederick Buechner defines vocation as the place where “your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.” The needs of the world and of the church are many, and as baptised persons, we all have a vocation to live into our baptismal covenant. We are all children of God, created in the image of God with particular gifts, abilities and charismas. We are all called to discern the best way to express these gifts in what poet Mary Oliver calls our one “wild and precious life.”

The Anglican Church calls out some from among us to serve the church as deacons, priests and bishops. Discerning whom God is calling to such ministry is the collective responsibility of the church. The church must affirm and raise up leaders from its midst and help them discern a call, or not, to ordained ministry.

This guide is intended to assist congregations form discernment teams for those who are exploring a call to ordained ministry. It is meant to create a space for fruitful and faithful conversations about the nature of ministry, an individual’s journey and service in the church. All those participating in this process are entering into a journey of discernment and growth in their own sense of vocation, faith and communion.

To those discerning a call to ordained ministry, bless you on your journey and thank you for being real, vulnerable and honest with yourself, with God and with the church. To those serving as the discernment team, please enter this sacred responsibility prayerfully and carefully. To have someone share their journey with you in such an intimate way is no small thing and should be treated with respect and compassion.

With every blessing on our shared work of discernment,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large cross-like symbol followed by the name 'Anna' in a cursive script.

+Anna

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people’s trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.

Ephesians 4.11-16; New Revised Standard Version

Ministry in broad perspective

Ordained or Lay?

More often than not in the church, talk about ministry is quickly narrowed down to ordained ministry, and even more quickly to presbyteral (priestly) ministry. However, ministry within the church of Christ, is much broader than this: it is the work of every baptized Christian, wherever we live and move and have our being. All Christians are called to do the work of the church, within the church and beyond, in prayer, in service, in governance and leadership.

Each of us, in settling upon our God-given vocation and ministry, must engage in the work of discernment. God needs people everywhere. Ministerial discernment, therefore, must be an open-ended inquiry into the gifts and needs of the individual, and a faithful attempt to assist enquirers to hear where God most needs people with their particular gifts and interests. This may or may not entail ordination.

However, within this process we do wish to encourage gifted, capable people to explore whether the diaconate or the priesthood might be their calling. We are seeking those who have both *an inner awareness of a call from God* and are *affirmed in that call as observed by others*. We are seeking people who show both passion and realism in their commitment to the church as a bearer of God's mission in the world, and a current involvement in that mission through the life of a congregation within the diocese. We are seeking those whose spirituality is centered in their baptismal identity, rooted in a relationship with God, lived out in their practices of private and public prayer, and demonstrated through the stewardship of their relationships and their resources.

The Criteria for Ordination and the process for discernment described in the following pages are tools to help enquirers and parishes discover the ministry, whether or not ordained, to which an enquirer is best suited.

Purpose and Functionality of the Criteria

To assist us in identifying those people referred to as “enquirers,” who would be suited to explore discernment for Holy Orders, we have a set of criteria with the following objectives:

- to guide those who initiate conversations with potential enquirers;
- to assist enquirers in their own reflections on vocation; and
- to use in conversations between enquirers and Parish Discernment groups, as well as a basis for the enquirers’ next steps.

As always, the qualities we seek may be present in each person in varying degrees given their age, church background, life experience and time in the discernment process. Thus, we are seeking people who currently either possess the gifts, abilities and characteristics which will serve them and the church well, or, who demonstrate a clear potential to develop these gifts, abilities and characteristics during their discernment and formation.

The Criteria for Ordination to Priesthood are found on the following page, and may be printed for easy reference for both the enquirer and the Parish Discernment Team.

Criteria for Ordination to Priesthood

1. **Priestly Identity:** We seek a person whose calling is rooted in an understanding of the sacramental nature of the Church and the calling of priests to enable the celebration of the sacraments in the community. We seek those gifted in gathering diverse people into a community and then building and developing that community over time; who can help groups of people come together around the sacraments of the church, shared values and a sense of purpose. We seek those who can assist others in identifying and developing their gifts and skills in service to God, the Church and the broader community.
2. **A person who has a pattern of spiritual practice that is rooted in a Christ-centered, Anglican approach to spirituality:** We seek a person who is committed to a life of prayer. We seek a person who is regular in the daily offices, faithful in their participation in the eucharist, and active in the practice of personal and intercessory prayer. We seek a person who pays attention to their interior life, practises their spiritual discipline privately and publicly, and who is working with or seeking a spiritual director. Those seeking to serve the church as priests should show an understanding of the role of presbyters in the Anglican tradition, and a be actively learning ways in which to connect these understandings to their own sense of spirituality.
3. **Personal awareness and understanding:** We seek a person whose presence grounds, encourages and inspires others. We seek a person who is working on their self-awareness and who nurtures authentic and productive relationships with others. This includes understanding emotions and having the ability to communicate them; being aware of strengths and areas needing attention in terms of relationships with others; and having and being attuned to the impact of their presence, words and actions on others. We seek a person of emotional resilience who can persevere and stay in relationship with others when situations get difficult.
4. **A leader who both carries authority and can live productively in relationship to those in authority:** We seek a leader who is comfortable exercising a style of leadership that is both relational and carries authority. We seek a person who, having made ordination vows, acknowledges the authority and responsibility that others (ordained or lay) carry in relationship to them and can nurture productive relationships with them.
5. **A listener who loves to learn:** We seek a person committed to life-long learning, who sees God as moving and active in Scripture, tradition and reason, a person open to learning from other disciplines and in the wisdom of the community. We seek those who learn from their experience of both success and failure.
6. **A good steward:** We seek a person who practises self-care of body, mind and spirit, and who nourishes the important relationships in their life. We seek a person who generously gives time, talent and treasure in gratitude to God who is the source of all. We seek a person who has developed and is working with a “Rule of Life” and whose life reflects a deep commitment to all the dimensions of their baptismal covenant, including care for creation.

Educational Requirements and Funding

Educational Requirements

Individuals who wish to practice ordained ministry as a priest are normally asked to complete a Master of Divinity degree, though depending on life experience and previous qualifications there are other formational routes to such ministry. It is best practice to discuss your educational plans with the bishop and/or the Archdeacon for Ministerial Discernment before beginning your studies, although this is not required. The General Synod has a list of educational institutions affiliated with the Anglican Church of Canada at: anglican.ca/about/educational.

In addition, all those seeking ordained ministry must complete a Clinical Pastoral Education program, usually through the Vancouver School of Theology.

Funding

When considering attending a seminary, we encourage considering how the program reflects or speaks to your personal call to ministry, rather than the cost of tuition. There are many opportunities for funding available, although in many cases, the applicants only become eligible to apply after they've been identified by their bishop as a confirmed *postulant* for ordination or (in the case of the priesthood) have been recommended by the Advisory Committee on Postulants for Ordinations (ACPO). For this reason, most begin their formal education after having entered Phase 2 of the discernment process described in this guide.

Many institutions offer entrance scholarships, bursaries, and grants. At some institutions, those who have been designated "postulants" by their diocese are eligible for tuition assistance. The Anglican Foundation of Canada has a Theological Student Bursary which is available to those who have been recommended by the Anglican Commission on Postulants for Ordination (ACPO). There are also specific funding opportunities available for past members or family members of those who served in the Canadian Forces. In addition, a candidate's home parish may be able to provide some assistance, and in this diocese, funding is available through the Educational Trusts Board.

Educational Trusts Board

The Diocese of British Columbia administers a legacy trust portfolio through the Educational Trusts Board that offers educational grants to laity and clergy. The "C.H.G. Mann Scholarship" was established "to support ordination candidates in their theological studies," and available to individuals identified by the bishop as being "on the path to ordination." To be eligible, an individual must have entered the "applicant phase" of the discernment process (see below). The maximum cumulative amount available from the Mann Scholarship is \$23,400 and may not exceed \$7,800 in a given year. These funds may be used to cover tuition, travel, accommodations, meals, learning materials, and other specified expenses.

In addition, the "Stanley Flitcroft Bursary Fund, Ellenor Swallow Trust, and the Diocesan Ministry Fund" were established for laity to attend a short-term course, seminar, workshop or conference. The maximum amount granted from either the Flitcroft Fund or Swallow Trust is \$1,300, but funds more than \$1,300 may be available from the Diocesan Ministry Fund. Individuals in any phase the discernment process may apply for funding for courses, workshops, etc. related to their discernment.

At a glance: Journey of ministerial discernment

<p>Phase 1: In the Parish “Enquirer”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initial conversations between enquirer and clergy leader. 2. The enquirer completes the Enquirer’s History Form. 3. The enquirer completes an assessment of ministerial gifts and skills. 4. The enquirer sets goals and develops an Action Learning Plan. 5. Enactment of the Action Learning Plan and continued exploration. 6. Police Information Check with a Vulnerable Person’s Sector check. 7. Completion of Safe Church training. <p>Once all or most of the above steps are complete, at the discretion of the clergy leader, the applicant is named an <i>applicant</i>. If this occurs, all the above paperwork should be sent to the Archdeacon of Ministerial Discernment and the Bishop’s Office.</p>
<p>Phase 2: In the Parish “Applicant”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The applicant meets with the Archdeacon of Ministerial Discernment. 2. Continued work on the Action Learning Plan. 3. Formation of a Parish Discernment Group. 4. Continued meetings between the applicant and the clergy leader. 5. Once complete, the parish discernment report should be forwarded to the Archdeacon of Ministerial Discernment and the Bishop’s Office.
<p>Phase 3: In the diocese or province “Applicant”</p>	<p>Should the parish group recommend that the applicant continue, and the bishop concurs, the following will occur (not in this order, necessarily):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meet with the Bishop 2. Paired with a companion chaplain 3. The applicant attends a diocesan discernment conference 4. Readiness for ACPO 5. Psychological assessment 6. Reports received from ACPO <p>Once all the above steps are complete, at the discretion of the bishop, the applicant is named a <i>postulant</i>.</p>
<p>Postulancy & Ordination “Postulant / Ordinand”</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Internship or Field Education Placement & Ember Day Letters. 2. Complete Clinical Pastoral Education 3. Readiness for ordination as a deacon in transition / pre-ordination retreat. 4. Following ordination: deacons in transition begin a curacy

In detail: Journey of ministerial discernment

Before a formal process begins

Before a formal process begins, a person perceives a call to Holy Orders. Whether the person perceives this call within themselves, or a clergy leader recognizes and invites the person to consider such a call, the process is the same. A person wishing to be an *enquirer* must be a confirmed member of the Anglican Church of Canada and an active member of a parish for at least one year before beginning the process described in this document. During this time, the person should exhibit a stable connection to the parish and in their relationship to God through regular attendance and participation in the Sunday liturgy (or the parish's principal liturgy); they should participate in other parish activities; they should exhibit a pattern of life that expresses a connection to God; and they should model healthy interpersonal relationships with others.

If and when the clergy leader believes an individual is ready to begin the formal process of discernment, the initial portion of the formal three-phase discernment process begins.

Phase 1: In the Parish

*This phase is a time of **connectedness and stable participation in the life of the parish**. It normally takes 6 to 9 months, and involves the enquirer, clergy leader, the Archdeacon for Ministerial Discernment, and selected members of the parish.*

1. Initial conversations between enquirer and clergy leader

Early meetings should be times for the enquirer and the clergy leader to pray together and to explore the enquirer's sense of call, the enquirer's spiritual biography and their experience in the Church. The clergy leader should also share these and any other materials describing the steps in the discernment process and the likely timeframe for each phase.

2. The enquirer completes the Enquirer's History Form

The clergy leader will share the Enquirer's History Form (Appendix P2) with the enquirer and the enquirer will complete it and return it to the clergy leader. The clergy leader will forward it to the bishop and the Archdeacon for Ministerial Discernment.

The Archdeacon for Ministerial Discernment will arrange for a meeting with the clergy leader to review the discernment process and answer any questions the clergy leader may have about it.

3. The enquirer completes an assessment of ministerial gifts and skills

Using the Criteria for Ordination to the Priesthood (Appendix P1), both the clergy leader and the enquirer will explore and complete the Discernment Worksheet for Ordination to the Priesthood (Appendix P3). The enquirer should also meet with individuals from the parish (the list to be worked out with the clergy leader) to discuss the enquirer's call, to ask invited parish members to complete the Discernment Worksheet, and afterwards, to sit together and share their perspectives. The purpose of this exercise is to assist the enquirer to learn more about how they are perceived and experienced by others in the parish.

There is an example of a completed Discernment Worksheet at Appendix P4

4. The enquirer sets learning goals and develops an Action Learning Plan

Drawing on all the discernment worksheets (the enquirer's, the clergy leader's, and the assessments of members of the parish), the enquirer then meets with the clergy leader and agrees upon learning goals and a specific "action learning plan" for the enquirer as they continue the process of discernment. A plan typically includes activities related to tending to one's mental, spiritual and physical health (engaging in a practice of prayer, meeting with a spiritual director, etc.), as well opportunities to function in new ways in the life of the parish that will provide exposure to various aspects of ordained ministry (liturgy, teaching, pastoral care, outreach, community-building, administration and organization, leadership, etc.).

There are two examples of Action Learning Plans as Appendix P5.

5. Enactment of the Action Learning Plan and continued exploration

As the enquirer pursues the Action Learning Plan, they continue meeting regularly with the clergy leader to reflect on their learning. Also, during this phase, the enquirer will read books and articles about the priesthood and will meet with others who are priests to hear about their experience of their own vocation. This reading and learning from others will also be discussed in one or more of the enquirer's regular meetings with the clergy leader. Costs for books and materials will be assumed by the enquirer; the parish may consider subsidizing if it wishes.

6. Police Information Check with Vulnerable Persons Sector Check

As it is a requirement of all ordained and lay leaders in the diocese, the enquirer must provide the bishop's office with a current (less than five years old), original Police Information Check with Vulnerable Persons Sector Check. There should be no cost associated with this check, as the enquirer is not paid staff. Please contact the bishop's office for more information.

7. Completion of Safe Church Training

As it is a requirement of all ordained and lay leaders in the diocese, the enquirer must participate in Safe Church training, which must be renewed every five years. Please contact the bishop's office for more information.

At the end of this phase, should the clergy leader determine that it is appropriate to explore further the enquirer's call to ordained ministry, the clergy leader will recommend that the second phase of discernment begin. The completed Discernment Worksheet for Ordination to the Priesthood (Appendix P3) is submitted to the Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment. Once approved by the Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment (in consultation with the bishop's office), the individual is referred to as an ***applicant***.

Phase 2: In the Parish

*In this phase, work continues on **enacting the Action Learning Plan**, and the formation of and engagement with a lay **parish discernment group**. This normally takes 6 to 12 months, and involves the applicant, clergy leader and parish discernment group.*

1. The applicant meets with the bishop

The applicant contacts the bishop's office and requests a meeting with the bishop. All materials completed in Phase 1 will be forwarded to the bishop's office. During the meeting, the bishop will discuss the applicant's Action Learning Plan, as well as plans for a formal education program (typically a 3-year Master of Divinity degree, appropriate pathway to be discerned with the Bishop and Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment).

2. Continued work on the Action Learning Plan

The applicant and the clergy leader refresh the Action Learning Plan as needed. The applicant continues to work on their own personal, spiritual and physical wellbeing and to engage in parish activities and leadership.

3. Formation of the Parish Discernment Group

The applicant and the clergy leader identify, and the clergy leader invites, a group of five or six laity to serve on the applicant's Parish Discernment Group. The clergy leader is not a member of this group.

Using the Guide for Parish Discernment Groups (Appendix P6), the group meets with the applicant to explore the applicant's sense of call and spiritual life, and to have a frank discussion about the progress and learning of the applicant on the Action Learning Plan. At the end of the process, the Group is asked to assess whether it affirms the applicant's call to the priesthood and recommends to the clergy leader whether the applicant should continue in discernment for ordained ministry.

The expectation is that the group will meet with the applicant at least nine times for at least two hours and will meet without the applicant once for a total of ten meetings during this phase. At the end of this phase of the process, the group will make one of three determinations:

- (a) It affirms the applicant's call to ordained ministry and the applicant's readiness to proceed to the diocesan phase of discernment ("yes");

If the group affirms the applicant's call to ordained ministry the group will draft and send a report (Appendix P7) to the bishop's office, copying the clergy leader. The committee also completes the ACPO Parish Commendation Form (Appendix P9).

- (b) It does not think the time is right to proceed towards ordained ministry, but that this may be a path to follow in future ("not at this time, and please work on_____"); or

If the Group does not think the time is right to proceed, the applicant and the clergy leader spend a period of at least one year working on the areas requiring further consideration and/or development. Alternatively, the clergy leader, a spiritual director, and the group may assist the applicant in discerning their baptismal ministry.

- (c) It affirms the applicant's calling as an active lay member and encourages exploration of further lay ministry, rather than ordination ("no").

If the committee does not recommend the applicant proceed further towards ordination, the applicant should undertake a period of discernment and reflection alongside the clergy leader and/or a spiritual director to determine areas where the applicant's gifts can be used in baptismal ministry.

4. Continued meetings between the applicant and the clergy leader

During the Phase 2, the clergy leader and the applicant continue to meet to reflect on what the applicant is learning in their Action Learning Plan and to engage in any additional reflections on vocation.

If the Parish Discernment Group recommends that the applicant proceed to the next phase of the process, the clergy leader completes their own recommendation to the bishop (using Appendix P10).

If the Parish Discernment Group and the clergy leader agree in their affirmation of the call of the applicant, and both have submitted their reports, Phase 3 begins. The clergy leader continues to be engaged with ongoing formation and discernment alongside the applicant.

Phase 3: In the diocese and province

*In this phase, the applicant is in conversation with those **outside the recommending congregation to gain a broader perspective** on discernment for Holy Orders. The length of this phase normally depends upon the timing of such events as ACPO (the provincial Advisory Committee on Postulants for Ordination), diocesan discernment weekends, and the applicant's progress in completing the educational requirements for ordained ministry. Those involved include the applicant, clergy leader, bishop, diocesan and provincial assessors staffing diocesan discernment weekends and ACPO, companion chaplains, theological educators and field supervisors, and the Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment.*

1. Meet with Archdeacon for Ministerial Discernment

The applicant schedules an appointment with the Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment who reviews all the materials and, in consultation with the bishop, decides if the applicant should proceed to the diocesan phase of the discernment process, including the potential for attending a diocesan or provincial discernment conference.

2. Paired with a companion

The Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment, in consultation with the bishop, will pair the applicant with a companion from the diocese, who will offer support throughout the remaining process.

3. The applicant attends a diocesan discernment conference

4. Readiness for ACPO

Following the diocesan discernment conference, the bishop receives a report and decides whether the applicant should attend ACPO (the provincial discernment conference for those testing a vocation to the presbyterate). ACPO is normally held annually in May.

5. Psychological Assessment

The bishop's office will arrange for the applicant to undergo a psychological assessment by a registered psychologist, at the expense of the diocese. The report will be shared with the bishop but will otherwise be kept confidential.

6. Reports received from ACPO

After attending ACPO the bishop will receive a report on the applicant. At such time, the applicant will meet with the bishop, who decides whether the applicant becomes a *postulant*.

Should the applicant become a postulant, the person is given a certificate of sponsorship.

Should the bishop decide “not at this time,” the applicant continues to work in the parish and with the clergy leader on specific learning goals identified in the process.

Should the bishop discern that the applicant is not suited to Holy Orders, the bishop will recommend a different continuing exploration of lay vocation in partnership with the clergy leader.

Phase 4: Postulancy and Ordination

During this phase, the postulant continues their education and formation for ministry, fulfilling the requirements of their theological college, as well as those stipulated by the diocese. In addition to theological educators and supervisors, those involved include the postulant, bishop, diocesan companion, and Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment.

1. Internship or Field Education Placement & Ember Day Letters

The bishop will assign the postulant a supervised internship and/or field education placement within the diocese. The length of this placement will depend on the amount of time the postulant has remaining in their formal education program.

The postulant will write an “ember day letter” to the bishop once a year describing their learnings and vocational development.

2. Complete Clinical Pastoral Education program.

The postulant is required to complete at least one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education.

3. Readiness for Ordination / Pre-ordination Retreat

At such time as the postulant has completed their educational program and placement, and if the Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment and the bishop concur, the bishop will meet with the postulant to discuss readiness for ordination, and the availability of a suitable placement. Once a date has been set for the ordination, the postulant is named an *ordinand*.

Prior to ordination the ordinand will attend a pre-ordination retreat planned and paid for by the diocese. The pre-ordination retreat normally takes place the week before the ordination.

4. Following Ordination

Candidates for ordination to the presbyterate will first be ordained to the **Sacred Order of Deacons** as a “**deacons in transition**.” This designation indicates that the ordinand intends to continue to prepare for the priesthood. Deacons in transition will be appointed to a *curacy* for the period of one year, under the direct supervision of an experienced incumbent who will further mentor the *curate*. At the conclusion of the curacy, and at the recommendation of the supervising incumbent, the bishop will again meet with the deacon in transition to discuss readiness for ordination to the priesthood.

Deacons in transition preparing for ministry as presbyters attend a second pre-ordination retreat, also planned and paid for by the diocese.

Once ordained to the **Sacred Order of Priests**, the new priest either continues for a time in their curacy or is placed by the bishop in a new appointment.

Appendix P1

Criteria for Ordination to Priesthood

This appendix is for use by all who are involved in the discernment process. The criteria outlined here should be kept in mind throughout the entire process, and will be in evidence in several of the other appendices.

1. **Priestly Identity:** We seek a person whose calling is rooted in an understanding of the sacramental nature of the Church and the calling of priests to enable the celebration of the sacraments in the community. We seek those gifted in gathering diverse people into a community and then building and developing that community over time; who can help groups of people come together around the sacraments of the church, shared values and a sense of purpose. We seek those who can assist others in identifying and developing their gifts and skills in service to God, the Church and the broader community.
2. **A person who has a pattern of spiritual practice that is rooted in a Christ-centered, Anglican approach to spirituality:** We seek a person who is committed to a life of prayer. We seek a person who is regular in the daily offices, faithful in their participation in the eucharist, and active in the practice of personal and intercessory prayer. We seek a person who pays attention to their interior life, practises their spiritual discipline privately and publicly, and who is working with or seeking a spiritual director. Those seeking to serve the church as priests should show an understanding of the role of presbyters in the Anglican tradition, and a be actively learning ways in which to connect these understandings to their own sense of spirituality.
3. **Personal awareness and understanding:** We seek a person whose presence grounds, encourages and inspires others. We seek a person who is working on their self-awareness and who nurtures authentic and productive relationships with others. This includes understanding emotions and having the ability to communicate them; being aware of strengths and areas needing attention in terms of relationships with others; and having and being attuned to the impact of their presence, words and actions on others. We seek a person of emotional resilience who can persevere and stay in relationship with others when situations get difficult.
4. **A leader who both carries authority and can live productively in relationship to those in authority:** We seek a leader who is comfortable exercising a style of leadership that is both relational and carries authority. We seek a person who, having made ordination vows, acknowledges the authority and responsibility that others (ordained or lay) carry in relationship to them and can nurture productive relationships with them.
5. **A listener who loves to learn:** We seek a person committed to life-long learning, who sees God as moving and active in Scripture, tradition and reason, a person open to learning from other disciplines and in the wisdom of the community. We seek those who learn from their experience of both success and failure.
6. **A good steward:** We seek a person who practises self-care of body, mind and spirit, and who nourishes the important relationships in their life. We seek a person who generously gives time, talent and treasure in gratitude to God who is the source of all. We seek a person who has developed and is working with a “Rule of Life” and whose life reflects a deep commitment to all the dimensions of their baptismal covenant, including care for creation.

Appendix P2

Enquirer's History Form - Priesthood

This form is for use by the enquirer, and will be shared with others involved in the discernment process, including a parish discernment group (should one be convened), and a psychologist. Upon submission of the Enquirer's History Form and completion of the other steps outlined in Phase 1 of the discernment process, the enquirer becomes an applicant.

Please note that the Enquirer's History form is to be completed only *after* the enquirer, the clergy leader of their home parish, and the Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment are together agreed that the enquirer is ready to begin a formal discernment process.

When invited to do so please complete and forward a Word.docx or .pdf to:

- the Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment
- the supporting clergy leader
- the bishop

Note: Type in the shaded areas below; they will expand as you type.

Part I - Identification

Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Address: Click or tap here to enter text.

Postal Code: Click or tap here to enter text.

Home phone: Click or tap here to enter text.

Cell: Click or tap here to enter text.

Email address: Click or tap here to enter text.

Part 2 – Church history

Present Parish: Click or tap here to enter text.

Incumbent: Click or tap here to enter text.

Length of affiliation with this parish: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date and Place of Baptism: Click or tap here to enter text.

Date, Place and by Whom Confirmed or Received into the Anglican Church: Click or tap here to enter text.

Former Denominations (if applicable): Click or tap here to enter text.

How long have you been worshipping in the Anglican Church? Click or tap here to enter text.

Describe the consultation process (if any) you have had with your clergy leader. Click or tap here to enter text.

Have you previously applied for admission to the ordination process in this or any other diocese?

Click or tap here to enter text.

If yes, give date, diocese and name of bishop: Click or tap here to enter text.

Have you ever applied for ordination in another denomination? Click or tap here to enter text.

If yes, give date, place and denomination: Click or tap here to enter text.

Have you ever been ordained in another denomination? Click or tap here to enter text.

If yes, give date, place and by whom: Click or tap here to enter text.

What position(s) did you occupy in that denomination? Click or tap here to enter text.

Part 3 - Background

Are you legally entitled to work in Canada? Click or tap here to enter text.

Would you be willing to relocate if necessary? Click or tap here to enter text.

Would you be able and willing to travel as needed by the job? Click or tap here to enter text.

Ordained ministry can be very demanding and requires the careful balancing of both personal and work commitments and priorities. What challenges do you anticipate in this regard should you be ordained, and how might you address them?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Do you have plans in place to finance the costs of your theological education? Please outline:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Part 4 - Educational Background

School	Year of Graduation	Degree/Diploma
High School Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
University/College (Undergraduate) Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Graduate School Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.
Theological Education Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.

<p>Other certificates and licenses:</p> <p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
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Languages: Spoken: Click or tap here to enter text.

Read and write: Click or tap here to enter text.

Part 5 - Work Experience

Current Employment / responsibilities:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Current Employer / length of service: Click or tap here to enter text.

Previous Employment - *please copy the two fields below to account for all significant employments (waged or unwaged) since the completion of your undergraduate degree.*

Previous Employment / responsibilities:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Previous Employer / length of service: Click or tap here to enter text.

To what professional or other organizations (if any) relevant to your ability to perform ordained ministry do you belong?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Part 6 - Secular and Leisure Activities

With what community organizations are you involved and what is your role?

Click or tap here to enter text.

With what community organizations have you previously been involved and what was your role?

Click or tap here to enter text.

What are your main leisure activities?

Click or tap here to enter text.

Part 7 - Church Related Activities

Present parish involvement: Click or tap here to enter text.

Previous parish involvement: Click or tap here to enter text.

Present and past deanery/diocesan/provincial/national involvement: Click or tap here to enter text.

Part 8 - Spiritual Background

On separate pages provide answers to the following:

1. Give a brief description (2 or 3 pages) of your spiritual journey.
2. Why do you wish to be ordained?
3. What do you see as the evidence of your call to ordained ministry?
4. Describe the work you have done to explore the theology and nature of the priesthood and the role of the priest in the Church and in the world.
5. Describe how your call has been tested in the Christian Community. What do you believe you are called to do in the Church and in the world?

Do you currently have a spiritual director? Yes No

Give the names and email addresses of at least two people who would be willing to witness to your spiritual development:

- 1) Click or tap here to enter text.
- 2) Click or tap here to enter text.

Signature _____

Date:

Sponsoring Incumbent: Click or tap here to enter text.

Appendix P3

Discernment Worksheet for Ordination to the Priesthood

This worksheet is a tool to assist the enquirer, the clergy leader, and those initially selected by the clergy leader to participate in giving the enquirer feedback on how they are experienced in the congregation (Phase 1). It may also prove helpful as a record-keeping tool for the parish discernment group once the enquirer becomes an applicant as they work through Phase 2.

Throughout the process of discernment, we are looking for evidence that the gifts and skills outlined in the “Criteria for Ordination to the Priesthood” are already present in some form in the enquirer or applicant. We also recognize that all these ways of functioning may not be fully present. However, the expectation is that, over time, the enquirer will develop greater facility in the areas outlined on the form.

For an example of a completed worksheet, please see Appendix P4.

Presbyteral Discernment Worksheet

<p>Priestly Identity. We someone who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• has a calling rooted in an understanding of the sacramental nature of the Church and the calling of priests to enable the celebration of the sacraments in the community;• is gifted in gathering diverse people into a community and then building and developing that community over time;• can help groups of people come together around the sacraments of the Church, shared values and a sense of purpose;• can assist others in identifying and developing their gifts and skills in service to God, the Church, and the broader community.
<p>Experienced or Observed Strengths Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Areas Needing Development Click or tap here to enter text.</p>
<p>Comments / Questions / Notes Click or tap here to enter text.</p>

Spiritual practice that is rooted in a Christ-centered, Anglican approach to spirituality. We seek someone who:

- is committed to a life of prayer;
- is regular in the daily office, engaged and faithful in the eucharist, and active in the practice of personal and intercessory prayer;
- is working with or seeking a spiritual director and pays attention to their interior life;
- shows an understanding of the role of presbyters in the Anglican tradition, and is actively learning ways in which to connect these understandings to their own sense of spirituality.

Experienced or Observed Strengths

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas Needing Development

Click or tap here to enter text.

Comments / Questions / Notes

Click or tap here to enter text.

Personal awareness and understanding. We seek someone:

- whose presence grounds, encourages and inspires others;
- who is working on their self-awareness and who nurtures authentic and productive relationships with others;
- who understands emotions and has the ability to communicate emotions; being aware of strengths and areas needing attention in terms of relationships with others; and, having and being attuned to the impact of their presence, words and actions on others;
- of emotional resilience who can persevere and stay in relationship with others when situations get difficult.

Experienced or Observed Strengths

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas Needing Development

Click or tap here to enter text.

Comments / Questions / Notes

Click or tap here to enter text.

Leadership and relation to authority. We seek:

- a leader who is comfortable exercising a style of leadership that is both relational and carries authority;
- A person who, having made ordination vows, acknowledges the authority and responsibility that others (ordained or lay) carry in relationship to them and can nurture productive relationships with them.

Observed or Experienced Strengths

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas Needing Development

Click or tap here to enter text.

Comments / Questions / Notes

Click or tap here to enter text.

A Listener who loves to learn. We seek someone who:

- is committed to life-long learning;
- sees God as moving and active in scripture, tradition, reason;
- is open to learning from other disciplines and the wisdom of community;
- is committed to increasing their own learning and theological understanding over time;
- learns from experience: both successes and failures.

Observed Experiences or Strengths

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas Needing Development

Click or tap here to enter text.

Comments / Questions / Notes

Click or tap here to enter text.

Good stewards. We seek someone who:

- cares for themselves in body, mind, spirit and nourishes the important relationships in their lives;
- gives generously of their time, talent and treasure in gratitude to God who is the source of all;
- has developed and is working with a Rule of Life which reflects a deep commitment to all the of their baptismal covenant, including care for creation.

Observed Experiences or Strengths

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas Needing Development

Click or tap here to enter text.

Questions / Comments / Notes

Click or tap here to enter text.

Appendix P4

An example of a completed Presbyteral Discernment Worksheet

This appendix is for review by the clergy leader and the small lay group invited to offer initial reflections on the enquirer’s impact and presence in the worshipping community using the Presbyteral Discernment Worksheet (Appendix P3). It may also be helpful as a record-keeping tool for the parish discernment group established once the inquirer has been named an applicant. In this case, it has been completed in the case of a fictional enquirer named John.

Presbyteral Discernment Worksheet

Throughout the process of discernment, we are looking for evidence that the gifts and skills outlined in the “Criteria for Ordination to the Priesthood” are already present in some form in the enquirer or applicant. We also recognize that all these ways of functioning may not be fully present. However, the expectation is that, over time, the enquirer will develop greater facility in the areas outlined on the form.

<p>Priestly Identity. We someone who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • has a calling rooted in an understanding of the sacramental nature of the Church and the calling of priests to enable the celebration of the sacraments in the community; • is gifted in gathering diverse people into a community and then building and developing that community over time; • can help groups of people come together around the sacraments of the Church, shared values and a sense of purpose; • can assist others in identifying and developing their gifts and skills in service to God, the Church, and the broader community.
<p>Experienced or Observed Strengths</p> <p><i>John has experience gathering people and building community in his workplace but has not had the opportunity to gather a group of people for a common purpose in a church setting. John seems to have a strength in working with people of diverse backgrounds and seems at ease with differences related to age, ethnicity and religious background. This is a strength that he would bring to gathering and building community in a parish setting.</i></p>
<p>Areas Needing Development</p> <p><i>Again, John simply needs to create or lead a group that has a common task and work on the development of the life of that group over time.</i></p>
<p>Comments / Questions / Notes</p> <p><i>How can we give John experience in this criterion in an area he has some passion about?</i></p>

Spiritual practice that is rooted in a Christ-centered, Anglican approach to spirituality. We seek someone who:

- is committed to a life of prayer;
- is regular in the daily office, engaged and faithful in the eucharist, and active in the practice of personal and intercessory prayer;
- is working with or seeking a spiritual director and pays attention to their interior life;
- shows an understanding of the role of presbyters in the Anglican tradition, and is actively learning ways in which to connect these understandings to their own sense of spirituality.

Experienced or Observed Strengths

John has been regular in praying the Office for the past three years and loves an Anglican pattern of worship and prayer as a way to practice his spiritual life. Others in the parish perceive John as grounded and prayerful in his presence.

Areas Needing Development

John needs to get into spiritual direction and incorporate confession either into his time with his spiritual director or needs to identify a priest who can serve as his confessor and begin meeting with his confessor.

Comments / Questions / Notes

Personal awareness and understanding. We seek someone:

- whose presence grounds, encourages and inspires others;
- who is working on their self-awareness and who nurtures authentic and productive relationships with others;
- who understands emotions and has the ability to communicate emotions; being aware of strengths and areas needing attention in terms of relationships with others; and, having and being attuned to the impact of their presence, words and actions on others;
- of emotional resilience who can persevere and stay in relationship with others when situations get difficult.

Experienced or Observed Strengths

John has strong conceptual and intellectual skills and has cultivated close relationships with a small number of people in his life. John is not a “quitter” in his relationships and is adept at maintaining his relationships with others over time.

Areas Needing Development

John seems unaware of the distancing effect of some of his behavior and mannerisms on others, particularly on women. On some occasions, John appears to be talking to himself rather than directly to others as he works through ideas or his thoughts.

John has said that he may need to work through some family of origin issues as well as find ways to explore what he does that others interpret as cutting off from them, as sarcasm or as superiority in relation to them.

Comments / Questions / Notes

A question—what does John do when he gets into conflict with others? This may be a possible area to work on in that John needs to work on his awareness and expression of his emotions.

Leadership and relation to authority. We seek:

- a leader who is comfortable exercising a style of leadership that is both relational and carries authority;
- A person who, having made ordination vows, acknowledges the authority and responsibility that others (ordained or lay) carry in relationship to them and can nurture productive relationships with them.

Observed or Experienced Strengths

John seems to be confident in his work life as a consultant but has not as yet been given the responsibility to lead a group from an “upfront” position and get feedback on how others perceive his leadership style. John seems to be at ease in living with others’ authority and responsibilities in relationship to him.

Areas Needing Development

John needs to gain experience in leading in a church setting from an “upfront” position—liturgically and in the areas of formation or service—getting feedback as he does this. The hope here would be that he will focus on gaining skills in facilitating the engagement of others rather than just be an expert intellectual voice.

Comments / Questions / Notes

--

A Listener who loves to learn. We seek someone who:

- is committed to life-long learning;
- sees God as moving and active in scripture, tradition, reason;
- is open to learning from other disciplines and the wisdom of community;
- is committed to increasing their own learning and theological understanding over time;
- learns from experience: both successes and failures.

Observed Experiences or Strengths

John loves to learn. He is an avid reader and would probably love to be a permanent student! He is committed to expanding his understanding and some of his skills.

Areas Needing Development

John needs to learn to listen for people’s emotions and to respond at that level.

Comments / Questions / Notes

--

Good stewards. We seek someone who:

- cares for themselves in body, mind, spirit and nourishes the important relationships in their lives;
- gives generously of their time, talent and treasure in gratitude to God who is the source of all;
- has developed and is working with a Rule of Life which reflects a deep commitment to all the dimensions of their baptismal covenant, including care for creation.

Observed Experiences or Strengths

John is very strong in this area. He regularly takes time for himself, for his family and for friends. The Biblical tithe is his standard in financial giving to the parish. John is also very articulate about thanksgiving being at the heart of his giving of his time, talent and treasure.

Areas Needing Development

--

Questions / Comments / Notes

I wonder if this might be an area John could lead a class in, practicing some of the skills needed in some of the other areas of criteria noted above.

Appendix P5

An example of an Action Learning Plan

This appendix is for the use of the clergy leader and enquirer in designing a learning plan for the applicant which can be implemented in the parish. It draws upon the assessments of the enquirer and clergy leader, as well as the presbyteral discernment worksheet prepared by the small lay group invited to reflect upon the enquirer's impact and presence in the worshiping community (Appendix P3). A plan typically includes activities related to tending to one's mental, spiritual and physical health (engaging in a practice of prayer, meeting with a spiritual director, etc.), as well opportunities to function in new ways in the life of the parish that will provide exposure to various aspects of ordained ministry (liturgy, teaching, pastoral care, outreach, community-building, administration and organization, leadership, etc.).

The following is the Action Learning Plan that Jessica (incumbent) and John (enquirer) have agreed upon. As a part of this plan, Jessica and John will meet every other week to reflect on what John has been doing and learning and to explore priestly vocation. In preparation for each meeting, John will bring his questions and issues related to his experience in the parish and his ongoing discernment for the priesthood.

September to December

1. Gathering, Developing and Leading

- In September, begin vesting and serving and also serving as a lector at the Sunday 10.00 a.m. liturgy. Prior to doing this, complete server training with Howard and lector training with Liza. Get feedback from Howard and Liza after serving and reading.
- In Advent of 2015, plan and lead a Bible Study series with Janet on the songs in Luke's Gospel. Collect feedback from participants at the end of the class.
- Serve on stewardship team for fall annual campaign, offering insights and abilities about giving (will probably get started in the late summer)

2. Spiritual Life

- Pray the Office once a day either at the church or on your own.
- Identify a spiritual director by November and begin meeting monthly with the director.
- Identify a confessor by November and begin meeting every other month.

3. Emotional and Relational Life

- By December, identify a therapist and begin meeting regularly to work on family of origin and any other relational issues.

4. Other Learning

- Read Michael Ramsey's *The Christian Priest Today* and discuss with Jessica at one of the reflection meetings in December.

January to May

1. Gathering, Developing and Leading

- Continue the role of server and train to be a Master of Ceremonies with Mark. Serve as Master of Ceremonies at least twice in the spring.
- Train as a Eucharistic Visitor and begin serving as a part of the visiting team in January.

- During Holy Week, vest and work on the serving team for Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Vigil.
- Lead and organize the community dinners for the months of April and May. To prepare to do this, work with Sandy and Yvonne, working with Jessica on how to get feedback from the group on leadership style before the end of May.

2. Spiritual Life

- Pray the Office twice a day either at church or on your own.
- Continue meeting with spiritual director and with confessor.

3. Emotional and Relational Life

- Continue work with therapist.
- Complete workshop on communication (identify the workshop by October).

4. Other Learning

- Read a second book on priesthood and discuss with Jessica at one of the reflection meetings in March.

Appendix P6

Guide for Parish Discernment Groups

This appendix is for the use of the applicant and parish discernment group, and contains detailed instructions to guide their deliberations during Phase 2 of the Discernment Process.

Overview and Purpose

When the clergy leader and the applicant determine that the applicant is ready, the clergy leader assembles a parish discernment group, in consultation with the applicant.

This group typically includes the applicant and five to six lay people from the parish. At least one member of the group must be a member of the Parish Council. The group will also include a member from another parish and who may have been involved in a parish discernment group. The Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment can help with this appointment.

The clergy leader oversees and supports group leaders but does *not* participate in the group's meetings.

The group (including the applicant, and the clergy leader if so desired) will first meet with the Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment, who will orient them to their work. Thereafter, the group meets for six to nine months.

The purpose of the Group is to provide an intensive time of meeting with the applicant to:

- review the applicant's sense of call;
- have a frank discussion of learning goals and the progress made towards those goals;
- explore the applicant's learning of the dimensions of the Criteria for Ordination to the Priesthood;
- and, determine whether the group can affirm the applicant's call to ordained ministry at this time.

Work done earlier (including the use of the Presbyteral Discernment Worksheet, progress on the Action Learning Plan and meeting with the clergy leader to reflect on experience in the parish) continues during and alongside the life of the group.

The group should follow the flow of meetings and conversations outlined below. At the conclusion of the series of meetings, the Group writes a letter to the bishop, using the form at Appendix P7, outlining what they observe to be the applicant's strengths and those areas needing further work with respect to the Criteria for Ordination to the Priesthood. This report is to state explicitly state the overall recommendation of the group: "Yes," "No" or "Not at this time."

Session Guide Introduction

This guide is designed to help Parish Discernment Groups assist the applicant in exploring their call and to help the group explore its own experience of the applicant both through reflecting on the applicant's experience in the parish and the group meetings. In most cases, an applicant exploring their call will already be exhibiting aspects of priestly ministry. The sessions are intended to help the applicant and the group identify and explore these aspects.

This guide is based on the Criteria for Ordination to the Priesthood. There are ten sessions outlined in this guide including introductory and concluding sessions. Most sessions cover a given topic or theme, and include work to be done before the session, question prompts and activities. Groups should follow this guide and may augment it with their own questions as well.

To help facilitate meetings, each group should select a convener and a secretary (neither of these roles is appropriate for the applicant).

The convener is responsible for setting meeting dates, contacting the group and distributing any materials. The convener should be willing to be a point-person for communications with bishop's office regarding the applicant's process. The convener should be a person who facilitates the conversation in meetings, steering the conversation back to its focus should it begin to drift. It is helpful if the convener has had prior experience in small group leadership.

The role secretary can be rotated among members (again, with the exception of the applicant). Notes gathered by the secretary will form the basis of the final report submitted to the bishop.

General Outline for Meetings

Groups will meet for six to nine months and should plan to meet for at least 90 minutes per session no less than once a month. Groups begin when the clergy leader and applicant agree that the applicant is ready. They conclude when the group has examined all the questions in the guide and has arrived at a consensus about the applicant's call to Holy Orders.

Each group will find its own rhythm and style. Groups should open and close each session with prayer, silence or both. Each session should also include some time for personal sharing, prayer and mutual support.

Session Nine provides for a time for members to meet without the applicant present for their own discernment conversation. Groups may find the need to do this more frequently, for instance, at mid-point in the meeting cycle. This check-in time can be used to identify areas of the applicant's call, experience or learning that members wish to revisit or to explore more fully. If differences in discernment are identified during the process, the group can then take steps to attempt resolution.

Groups are welcome to supplement, but not replace the guide with their own work.

Session by Session Discussion Guides

Session One: Introductions and Spiritual Autobiographies

Preparation

Before the group gathers, each member (including the applicant) should prepare as follows:

Prepare the story of your spiritual life. Make sure you include many aspects of your life in what you share: personal life, family life, vocational life and life in the Church are all relevant. Forms that your autobiography can take may include (but are not limited to): a timeline with milestones and turning points; a collage with images that communicate important themes; a picture or pictures that communicate your spiritual history and life via images; or the use of some other medium that best suits you. After you complete this in a comprehensive form, decide what you would be willing to share with the group in a 15-minute presentation.

When the group gathers:

1. Prayer and connecting exercise: Pray together the Collect for Ordination (pg. 653 of the BAS). Briefly introduce yourself to the group: your name, any role(s) in the parish, and one expectation that you are bringing to this process.
2. Go over any norms for the group: Arrive and end on time, what is said in the group stays in the group, use "I statements," etc.

3. Activity: Each member of the group should spend ten to fifteen minutes sharing their spiritual autobiography. Group members simply receive someone's story after it is offered (no need to probe further or comment on it). If the sharing needs to be carried over to a second session, do so.
4. Reflection: After everyone has had a turn telling their story, the group explores:
 - in what ways do our spiritual journeys connect thematically to one another?
 - what similarities do our stories share?
 - what differences?
5. End with any comments about the next session and a prayer of your choice.

Session Two: The Criteria for Holy Orders and the Call Narrative

Preparation

Before the group gathers, each member should prepare as follows:

Review the applicant's Enquirer's History Form, Presbyteral Discernment Worksheet, and Action Learning Plan (applicant should send these to the members of the group to review before the meeting).

When the group gathers:

1. Prayer and connecting exercise: a member offers prayer. Read together Matthew 4.18-22. Reflect briefly on one time when God interrupted the expected pattern of your life.
2. Activity: Read the Criteria for Ordination to the Priesthood (see Appendix P1) aloud. Speaking without interruption, the applicant shares the work they have done so far. This should focus on insights and discoveries made to date. In a go-round fashion, each group member shares their impressions and experience of the applicant's leadership and personal growth.
3. Reflection: The applicant with other group members identify:
 - What do they hear are the applicant's areas of strength?
 - What are the areas that the applicant still needs to work on?
 - What are the areas the group and the applicant believe are important to explore more fully?
4. End with any reminders about next session and with prayer.

Session Three: Priestly Identity

Preparation

Before the group gathers, each member (including the applicant) should prepare as follows:

Read through the description this criterion and make notes about a time when you experienced the applicant functioning in this way. Applicant does the same in reflecting about self.

When the group gathers:

1. Prayer and connecting exercise: A member offers prayer. Read together Acts 2:43-47. Reflect briefly on a time when you felt especially connected to this parish community.
2. Activity: Applicant shares a time when they have functioned as a gatherer and builder of community. Other group members share what they have experienced of the applicant as a gatherer and builder of community.
3. Questions for the group to explore with the applicant:
 - What does it feel like for you to function as a gatherer and builder of community?

- How do you see this function as important to priesthood?
 - What, if any, misgivings do you have about functioning in this way *in the Church*?
 - What have you learned/do you continue to need to learn about functioning in this way?
4. End discussion by going around the group and each person sharing one insight (for themselves or about the applicant) they will take away from exploring this criterion.
 5. End with any reminders about next session and with prayer.

Session Four: Christ-Centered Anglican Spiritual Practice

Preparation

Before the group gathers, each member (including the applicant) should prepare as follows:

Read “The Examination” in the ordination liturgy for deacons (pg. 655-656 of the BAS) or for priests (pg. 646-647 of the BAS), depending on what the applicant is discerning. Make notes about what kind of spiritual practice you imagine would best support the kind of presence and activity described.

When the group gathers:

1. Prayer and connecting time: A member offers prayer. Read together Psalm 84. Share one place where you feel especially close to God.
2. Activity: Read through the criteria related to Anglican spiritual practice. The applicant shares their spiritual practice and connects it to the criteria. Explore this question with the applicant:
 - In your current spiritual practice, where are pools of water? Where are the deserts?
3. Other questions for the group to explore with the applicant:
 - Who is the God you encounter in your spiritual practice? Who is the God you long to encounter in your spiritual practice?
 - What comes easier/more naturally for you in maintaining a spiritual practice?
 - What are the challenges you experience in maintaining a spiritual practice?
 - What do you think is the importance of having a spiritual practice as an ordained person?
4. End by going around the group with each member identifying one insight about the applicant or about spiritual practice that they will remember from the discussion.
5. End with any comments on the next meeting and with prayer drawing on those things for which group members articulated that they needed prayer.

Session Five: Personal Awareness and Understanding

Preparation

Before the group gathers, each member (including the applicant) should prepare as follows:

Read through the criteria on emotional and relational maturity and make notes about where you have seen this lived out in the applicant’s time in the parish or in the group.

When the group gathers:

1. Prayer and connecting time: A member offers prayer. Read together Ruth 1:16-18. Share one relationship that has been important to you in the last month.

2. Activity: Each group member shares one situation in their lives that has called on them to be emotionally or relationally mature. What is the situation and how has it asked you to function? Share in a go-round fashion.
3. A group member will read the criteria aloud on emotional and relational maturity. Explore some or all the following discussion questions with the applicant:
 - a. Where in your work in the parish or in your personal life do you most struggle with emotional or relational maturity? What are the specific people or situations that are the most challenging for you?
 - b. Who for you exemplifies the kind of qualities described in the criteria?
 - c. What are you doing to nurture your best self in terms of emotional or relational maturity?
4. In a go-round fashion, each person shares their description of where they have seen emotional or relational maturity in the applicant. Applicant shares as well.
5. Applicant shares what they have heard in the group and what they believe they continue to need to work on.
6. End with any comments about the next meeting and prayer.

Session Six: Leadership and relationship to authority

Preparation

Before the group gathers, each member (including the applicant) should prepare as follows:

Read through criteria related to authority and make notes about what the word “authority” brings up for you. Where in your life have you had a positive experience with “authority”? Where in your life have you had a negative experience with “authority”?

When the group gathers:

1. Prayer and connecting time: A member offers prayer. Read together the question and answer on obedience from the ordinal (BAS pg. 654). Share a moment from the last month when you exercised authority at home, at work or at church.
2. Activity: In a go-round fashion, each person shares the notes they have made related to their positive and negative experiences with “authority.”
3. Discussion questions with the applicant:
 - Where are you comfortable and uncomfortable with your interaction with people who have been given authority in relationship to you?
 - How would you describe your sense of your own authority and how it manifests itself in your relationships in your family, in your work life and in the Church?
 - How would you describe the Anglican Church and its understanding of authority? How is this expressed in the way a parish is structured? In relationship to the bishop and those who carry the bishop’s authority?
4. In a go-round fashion, members of the group share their thoughts on this question: what is one insight about the applicant that you will take away from the discussion and what is one question you would commend the applicant to explore? Lastly, the applicant shares one learning they have had about themselves in relationship to this criterion and one area they believe they still need to explore.
5. End with any comments about the next meeting and prayer.

Session Seven: A Listener who loves to learn.

Preparation

Before the group gathers, each member (including the applicant) should prepare as follows:

Make notes: Why might it be important for a priest or a deacon to be a person who is not only open to learning but who relishes it?

When the group gathers:

1. Prayer and connecting time: A member offers prayer. Read together Proverbs 8.22-31. Share the name of your favourite teacher at school, and why they inspired you.
2. Activity: Explore some or all with the applicant:
 - Who (besides the person you have mentioned) have been your most important teachers in life? Who were they and what did you learn from each?
 - What life events have taught you the most important lessons or have opened you to the most important learning in your life?
 - What Bible story has taught something very important in your life? What did you learn?
 - What book, movie, saint, theologian or artist (etc.) has been your teacher? What did you learn?
 - Describe one important thing you've experienced in the parish and what it has taught you.
 - What situations or people are harder for you to learn in or from?
 - What areas do you want to learn about in for the future?
3. Group members go around the circle and share with applicant what they have learned in this session about the applicant and this criterion. Applicant then repeats back what they have heard from the group.
4. End with any comments about the next meeting and prayer.

Session Eight: Stewardship of Our Lives

Preparation

Before the group gathers, each member (including the applicant) should prepare as follows:

Spend some time thinking about the following:

- *Who or what do you value in your life? What people/activities/issues are primary for you?*
- *How does what or who you value translate/not translate into how you spend your time, energy and other resources?*

When the group gathers:

1. Prayer and connecting exercise: Read together Ignatius's Prayer:

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty, my memory, my understanding and my entire will, all I have and call my own. You have given all to me. To you, Lord, I return it. Everything is yours; do with it what you will. Give me only your love and your grace. That is enough for me.'

Spend five minutes in silent reflection on this prayer and its resonance with your own life of faith. Allow each group member to share one word that has come to them in this quiet time.
2. Activity: Go around the circle and share one insight that each person in the group had as they did the preparatory work for this session.
3. Explore some or all with the applicant:

- What is your “Rule of Life,” that is, what do and how do you spend your time as you nurture yourself physically, spiritually, mentally, emotionally, socially? As you nurture the relationships with God and important others in your life?
 - What parts of your “Rule” are easier for you keep? What parts do you need to continue to work on or refine?
 - How do you understand financial stewardship? How do you understand and practice financial giving when it comes to the support of your parish? Your family? Other important people or causes?
 - How do you understand your stewardship of the Earth and its resources? What specifically do you practice to care for Creation?
4. Group members go around and share one thing they appreciate about what they have heard from the applicant and one encouragement they would offer the applicant about the applicant’s stewardship of their life.
 5. End with any comments about the next meeting and prayer.

Session Nine: Discussion (held without the applicant)

Preparation

Before the group gathers, each member should prepare as follows:

Read through the Criteria for Holy Orders again as well as your notes. Review the questions that will be asked of the discernment group in its final report (see Appendix P7). Make notes about the following:

- *What are the criteria or other areas in which I experience the applicant’s strengths?*
- *What areas do I believe the applicant needs to continue to work on?*
- *Given my experience of the applicant in the parish and my/our experience of the applicant in the group, can I envisage this person as a priest?*

When the group gathers:

1. Prayer and connecting exercise: A member offers prayer. Read together Acts 6.1-7. Share one quality that you feel the church needs in its leaders today.
2. Activity: Go around the circle and share:
 - Perceived strengths of the applicant.
 - Perceived areas that the applicant needs to continue to work on.
 - Group members’ sense of whether the applicant could be a priest.

It may be desirable to take a short break at this time.

3. The group (reconvenes and) discusses what they have shared and decides whether they are affirming the call of the applicant, and recommending that the applicant continue to the next phase of the process (discernment undertaken at the diocesan level). The group must state their decision clearly, choosing one of the following three options, and stating their reasons:
 - Yes
 - No
 - Not at this time
4. The group decides who will draft the report (using Appendix P7) and how it will be distributed for comment and finalized.
5. End with any comments about the next meeting and prayer.

Session Ten: Sharing the Report (held with the applicant)

The convener and/or the secretary of the group shares the report with the clergy leader, clarifying what next steps may be after Session Ten. This same person also meets one-on-one with the applicant and shares the report.

If the recommendation is “yes”:

- a. The convener and the secretary meet with the clergy leader.
- b. The convener and the secretary meet with the applicant.
- c. The group and the applicant meet as outlined below.

If the recommendation is “not at this time”:

- a. The convener and the secretary meet with the clergy leader to clarify the steps recommended before the applicant would be eligible to re-apply.
- b. The convener and the secretary meet with the applicant.
- c. The group and the applicant meet as outlined below.

If the recommendation is “no”:

- a. The convener and the secretary meet with the clergy leader to clarify what needs to be in place to provide the pastoral care and support the applicant may need.
- b. The group and the clergy leader meet with the applicant.

When the group gathers:

1. Prayer and connecting exercise: Read together Psalm 98. Share one moment of joy you have experienced in the group’s work together.
2. Distribute copies of the report. Group members take turns reading each section aloud.
3. Applicant asks any questions they might have about the report.
4. Discussion of any specific sections of the report and discussion of next steps.
 - If “yes,” what is the next step?
 - If “not at this time,” what is the recommended next step?
 - If “no,” what is the next step?
5. Group members reflect together on their experience of the group:
 - What was energizing or uplifting?
 - What was more of a struggle?
 - What new insights were gained?
6. Close with prayer for the applicant and for all the members of the group.

Appendix P7

Parish Discernment Group Report to the Bishop

This appendix is for the use of the parish discernment group at the end of their ministry discernment process. It forms the basis of the group's joint recommendation to the bishop concerning the applicant's candidacy. The contents of this report will be shared with the applicant by the bishop or the archdeacon for ministry discernment, the clergy leader, and one member of the discernment group (usually, the convener.)

Please email or deliver in hard copy to the bishop one typed evaluation completed on behalf of the entire Parish Discernment Group.

Note: Type in the shaded areas below; they will expand as you type.

Applicant's Name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Parish: Click or tap here to enter text.

Incumbent: Click or tap here to enter text.

Assisting Clergy (if applicable): Click or tap here to enter text.

Parish Discernment Group Convener: Click or tap here to enter text.

Names of Parish Discernment Group Members:

1. Click or tap here to enter text.
2. Click or tap here to enter text.
3. Click or tap here to enter text.
4. Click or tap here to enter text.
5. Click or tap here to enter text.
6. Click or tap here to enter text.

- Parish Position: Click or tap here to enter text.
- Parish Position: Click or tap here to enter text.
- Parish Position: Click or tap here to enter text.
- Parish Position: Click or tap here to enter text.
- Parish Position: Click or tap here to enter text.
- Parish Position: Click or tap here to enter text.

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability, giving specific examples. These questions are to be answered by the parish discernment team as a group.

1. List the dates on which you met with the applicant and what was discussed or explained in each meeting.
Click or tap here to enter text.
2. What is the applicant's understanding of Christian Ministry?
Click or tap here to enter text.
3. In the group's conversations with the applicant on the Criteria for Ordination to the Priesthood, what have you identified as the applicant's strengths? What areas have you identified that need continued development?
Click or tap here to enter text.
4. Describe any other strengths and areas needing further development.
Click or tap here to enter text.

5. What is the applicant’s understanding of their vocation to ordained priestly ministry and how was it clearly articulated?

Click or tap here to enter text.

6. How clearly is the applicant able to speak about this vocation?

Click or tap here to enter text.

7. Describe the applicant’s past and present history of ministry. Please be specific.

Click or tap here to enter text.

8. What is your impression of the applicant’s intellectual, emotional and spiritual capacities?

Intellectual: Click or tap here to enter text.

Emotional: Click or tap here to enter text.

Spiritual: Click or tap here to enter text.

9. Are there any physical or emotional conditions that would limit the applicant’s ability to engage in ordained ministry that you know of? If yes, please describe.

Click or tap here to enter text.

10. What is your general sense of the applicant’s suitability for ordination?

Click or tap here to enter text.

11. Are there any other factors that you consider significant?

Click or tap here to enter text.

12. Do you recommend that the Applicant should continue in the diocesan discernment process?

Yes:

No:

Not at this time:

Please elaborate:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Add name above each title and sign in the opposite box.

Click or tap here to enter text. Convener	
Click or tap here to enter text. Incumbent or Clergy Leader	
Click or tap here to enter text. Applicant	

Date

Appendix P8

Clergy leader letter of support to the bishop

This appendix is for use by the clergy leader, at the end of the parish discernment process.

The clergy leader who has been most involved with the applicant during the discernment process writes a letter to the bishop indicating:

- their personal discernment of the applicant's vocation;
- to what extent the applicant is meeting the various "Criteria for Ordination to the Priesthood;"
- any recommendations for formation in areas where the applicant needs to grow and develop to become a fully effective minister in the Church.

Appendix P9

Confidential ACPO Parish Commendation Form

This appendix is for use by the clergy lead and wardens once the bishop has agreed to send an applicant to ACPO. This form is to be returned to the Archdeacon for Ministry Discernment , and is provided in confidence to the diocesan bishop, provincial ACPO Secretary and Assessors.

We, the undersigned clergy and laity of the parish or worshiping community of [Click or tap here to enter text.](#), commend to Bishop Anna Greenwood-Lee, bishop of the Diocese of British Columbia [Click or tap here to enter text.](#) for consideration as a postulant for ordination to the priesthood in the Anglican Church of Canada.

We have known the above-named individual for a period of [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)years.

Our association with the above-named individual has been the following:
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

They have functioned in the following ways in the life of the congregation:
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

We believe that the following gifts and characteristics make this individual particularly suited to be considered for priestly ministry:
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

We offer the following concerns, limitations or areas of personal growth that might need attention or consideration if this individual were to proceed toward ordination:
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

We would / would not
be prepared to accept this individual for service as a priest in this parish, given proper preparation for priestly ministry.

If not, please comment:
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

We offer the following advice or counsel to the bishop regarding this individual:
[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Signed:

Incumbent Name of incumbent [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Warden Name of Warden [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Warden Name of Warden [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Lay Member of Congregation Name of Signatory [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

Lay Member of Congregation

Name of Signatory

[Click or tap here to enter text.](#)
