



ORDINATION PREPARATION

GULF ATLANTIC DIOCESE
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Welcome to the Ordination Process!

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks for you, for your interest in serving and leading God's people, and for the work you have done thus far in discerning God's call on your life. We affirm your courage and desire to be faithful to God, even in this inquiry into ordination preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese. The Ordination Preparation Team (OPT) and I look forward to working with you, your Rector, and your home parish as this process continues.

This manual provides details regarding the ordination process and outlines the responsibilities and requirements of both the Aspirants and their home churches. We want you to know, at every step along the way, exactly what you need to be doing to keep things moving forward. If at any time you have questions or concerns, please contact the Canon for Leadership. Always feel free to take the initiative.

The discernment process includes discerning to which order one may be called: priest or deacon. The process generally is the same for those pursuing the Vocational Diaconate (meaning, permanent deacon), as well as the Priesthood, though the preparation for each of these orders will differ.

As a diocese, we are committed to *"Identify, Train, and Deploy Missional Leaders."* Not all missional leaders are ordained, but we want all of our clergy to be missional leaders! A missional leader is someone who understands the mission field of this culture: its language, its hopes and dreams, its heartbreak and brokenness, its gods and demons. Missional leaders align with the mission of God, participating with God in Christ who still comes "to seek and to save that which is lost," through both the proclamation and the demonstration of the Gospel. Missional leaders make missional disciples, witnesses who follow her or him in bringing the gospel to our culture. Yes, leaders in God's church are called first to be servants; we also want them to be people who are both worthy of following and who are able to draw and mobilize followers.

A word about Women's Ordination: Women are welcome to seek ordination to the Diaconate and the Priesthood in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese. Ordained women serve in many capacities around the diocese, including on the Ordination Preparation Team, as well as in various diocesan leadership roles. We are grateful for their ministries, their partnership in the gospel mission, and their leadership. However, we understand there are different viewpoints on this issue throughout our province. The ACNA has allowed for various views of this issue and we are committed to respectful discourse on this topic and to mutual accountability for nurturing relationships of integrity.

Finally, I would ask you to read Michael Frost's book *"Surprise the World,"* in which he shares the vision of a mission-focused life, and shares five habits that can shape us as sent ones with Jesus Christ. Please think through how these habits should be better incorporated into your life and practice them accordingly.

God bless, guide, grow, and uphold you in this process of discernment. Prayerfully, reverently, and gratefully, we will do all in our power to assist you to "fulfill the ministry you have received from the Lord." (Colossians 4:17)

Onward and upward,



The Right Reverend Alex Farmer

Bishop, Gulf Atlantic Diocese of the Anglican Church in North America

Deacons and Priests

As the Body of Christ, the people of God are called both priests and servants in God's world. God calls people to ordained ministry to aid the Church in fulfilling its vocation. All the orders represent Jesus Christ, who is Prophet, Priest, and King. Each order in turn attends to teaching and proclamation of the Gospel (Word), to the Worship of the Lord and the Sanctification of his people (Sacrament), and in some sense to the rule of the Lord (Discipline; Charity and Justice).

Deacons – Threshold Ministers

Deacons are called to stand in the threshold between the Church and the world. They strengthen the Church, and the interpret the needs of the world to the Church. They are called to hold up service in God's name as vital for all believers thus epitomizing the ministry Christ has given to his Church, the servant ministry we are all called to, and commissioned for, in our Baptism and that we hope is a witness to the world (*diakonia*). Primarily, in the Early Church, deacons served as witnesses in three principal areas: liturgy, pastoral care, and societal concerns. Their activity in the liturgy of reading the Gospel signifies the essential ministry of verbal witness, and their facilitation of intercession signifies the essential ministry of caring for the marginalized and infirmed. Regarding pastoral care and societal concerns, deacons are also asked to instruct others in the faith, thus signifying the fact that full commitment to Christ includes formation of the baptized Christian, not for the purpose of leading to ordination but the purpose of discipleship in order to serve as witnesses to the world.

Rather than define a Deacon by function, however, consider Deacons as threshold ministers who are committed to serve others in the name of God, based on the needs within their context and their own unique gifting, as a witness to the world of who Christ is and of his Church.

We understand the Diaconate to be a full and equal order; one that is exceedingly important for these days of mission in our post-Christian culture. Because Deacons serve however they are needed to strengthen the Church, and because their giftings vary greatly, the ministries of Deacons vary greatly, perhaps putting more emphasis on one of the three areas to which they are called (Word, Sacrament, Charity/ Justice). Our vision is to have at least one Deacon serving every congregation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese. To that end, and for our mission: May God raise up more Deacons among us!

Priests – Presbyters of Word and Sacrament

Priests, also called Presbyters (BCP 2019, p. 7; Title III of the Canons), are called to serve Christ *with* their bishops, and “nurture God's people through the ministry of Word and Sacrament and pronounce absolution and blessing in God's Name” (Catechism, p. 61, Question 144). They are “to minister the doctrine, sacraments, and discipline of Christ, as the Lord has commanded them” (BCP, p. 490). Here Christ's ministry as Prophet and Priest are seen in the ministry of Word or doctrine, and in Sacramental ministry – as one authorized to oversee teaching, preaching, and the Sacraments. Christ's ministry as King may be exemplified in the pronouncing (or withholding) of absolution and blessing, and in administering the discipline of Christ.

All Priests serve as Deacons before their ordination to the priesthood. This call to servant ministry continues once a Deacon becomes a Priest. An additional expectation placed on Priests, but not on Deacons, is the call and responsibility to oversee and to discipline. Though both orders developed in relationship to the Bishop, Deacons were called to serve in the ministry of Word and Table, which included teaching, serving in the liturgy, and advocating for the marginalized. Priests (or Presbyters) were appointed to oversee churches distant from the Bishop, and to pastor as his representative in that place. There is a sense in which a Priest represents God to the people, and the people to God. There is a sense in

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which the Diaconate is a threshold or bridge ministry which represents the Church to the world and the world to the Church. Both are equal, and both are necessary for the work of the Church.

Descriptions of Clergy Roles

The following descriptions of a Deacon and a Priest, from the Ordinal and Catechism, are not exhaustive of all that a Deacon or Priest may be called to do in any particular congregation or cultural setting, especially as we consider what missional service and leadership looks like in our generation. However, in general, Deacons and Priests do no less than the following from the Ordinal and the Catechism.

Deacon *(from the Exhortation in the Ordinal, BCP. P 477-478)*

A Deacon shares in the humility and service of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the strengthening of the Church, particularly in Word, Liturgy, and Charity/Justice. Thus, a Deacon:

- reads the Gospel and proclaims Christ at all times through their service;
- instructs both young and old in the Catechism;
- at the direction of the Bishop or Priest, baptizes and preaches;
- assists the Priest in public worship, guides the intercessions, aids in administering Holy Communion;
- carries the Sacrament to those kept from the Table by illness, infirmity, or imprisonment;
- encourages and equips the Church to care for the stranger and neglected;
- seeks out and embraces the poor and helpless, that they may be relieved;
- and addresses specific needs of their parish at the Priest's or Bishop's discretion, or according one's gifting.

What is the work of deacons? (Catechism, p. 61, Question #145): Serving Christ under their bishops, deacons care for those in need, assist in public worship, and instruct both young and old in the catechism. *(Deut 15:7–11; Ps 119:1–8; Lk 12:35–40; Acts 6:1–7; 1 Tim 3:8–13)*

Priest *(from the Exhortation and Examination in the Ordinal, BCP. P 488-491)*

A Priest is to faithfully and diligently minister the doctrine, sacraments, and discipline of Christ, that people may be saved through Christ forever. Thus, a Priest:

- equips and leads the congregation to proclaim tirelessly the Gospel of Jesus Christ;
- teaches, warns, feeds and provides for the Lord's family;
- seeks for Christ's sheep in the midst of this fallen world;
- learns, inwardly digests, lives and proclaims God's most holy Word that people may be saved and brought to maturity in Christ;
- presides at Holy Baptism, in the place of a Bishop, and at Holy Communion;
- and declares the forgiveness of sins and the blessing of God.

What is the work of priests? (Catechism, p. 61, Question #144): Serving Christ with their bishops, priests (or presbyters) nurture God's people through the ministry of Word and Sacrament and pronounce absolution and blessing in God's Name. *(Gen 14:17-20; Ps 132:8–18; Lk 10:1–9; Jn 10:1–16; Eph 4:7–13)*

God calls people to be Deacons and the Priests. God calls people to these orders for the Church, and through the Church – that is, for the nurture and strengthening of the Church, and through the discernment of the local church and the diocese. May God raise up faithful men and women, who are fruitful missional leaders, to these ministries. And may God guide and bless us all as we participate with God in identifying, training, and deploying such missional leaders.

Diocesan Policy for Ordination

I. Biblical Principles

- A. Ordained ministry is a “noble task,” aspiring to it is to be commended (1 Tim. 3:1).
- B. The process of discernment and formation for ordination should not be hasty, and those seeking ordained ministry should be tested (1 Tim. 3:10; 5:22; BCP p. 470).

II. General Overview of Process

A. **The parish** (local congregation) has the primary responsibility for discerning whom God is calling into ordained ministry. This responsibility includes identifying gifted people whose lives and leadership would bless God’s people as well as testing the call of those who come forward offering themselves for ordained leadership.

1. The **Rector** of a parish has the responsibility of making a careful inquiry into an Aspirant’s suitability for ordained ministry (see pages 14-17).
2. Working with the Rector, **a team of lay peers**, called the **Parish Discernment Team (PDT)**, will also test a person’s call (see pages 18-21).
3. Finally, **the Vestry** must confirm the work of the PDT by sponsoring an Aspirant in the diocesan process (see page 22).

B. The Diocese, likewise, has a series of responsibilities in discerning God’s call on the lives of men and women and in preparing them for ordination in the Anglican Church.

1. The Diocese confirms the work of the parish through conversations with the **Bishop** and through the work of both the **Ordination Preparation Team (OPT)** and the **Standing Committee**.
2. The OPT also assesses the training and preparation needs of postulants, which in consultation with the Bishop determines the path of Formation.
3. The Diocese (the Bishop and the Standing Committee with input from OPT) assesses the readiness of the postulant (at the end of the training process).
4. The Diocese (Bishop) ordains.

III. Regarding Discernment:

- A. The discernment process works along three tracks, or in three spheres. The following chart will help you see who is or will be involved along the way.

Individual Discernment	Parish Discernment	Diocesan Discernment
Individual	Rector	Bishop
Family and Friends	Parish Discernment Team (PDT)	Ordination Preparation Team (OPT)
Other godly counsel	Vestry	Standing Committee

- B. There are **three possible outcomes** from the discernment process:
 1. A calling to ordained ministry is confirmed and you move forward in the preparation process.
 2. A calling to ordained ministry is confirmed, but moving forward in the process is delayed.
 3. A calling to ordained ministry is not confirmed, and work continues in your home parish to determine God’s call on your life.

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IV. Path to Ordination and Terminology

- A. Aspirant – “aspiring” to a noble task
 - 1. Parish Discernment (Rector, PDT, and Vestry)
 - 2. Diocesan Discernment (Bishop, OPT). *Held two times per year, in March or October (preferably).*
- B. Postulant – the Diocese (on behalf of larger Church) “postulates” one is indeed called to Anglican orders, and commits to the fulfillment of that call.
 - 1. Assessment (Psychological, Physical, Background Check, initial Theological)
 - 2. Education and Formation
 - 3. Review of the whole process and Candidacy Interview (OPT)
- C. Candidate – one is ready to be examined for an ordination in the near future
 - 1. Canonical Exam/Assessment (OPT). *Held in January or July (preferably).*
 - 2. Review of whole process and final Consent for Ordination (Bishop, OPT, Standing Committee)
- D. Ordinand – all necessary affirmation has been given
 - 1. Ordination date set

V. Timeline of Process

Note that there is no set length of time for the process, because each individual’s circumstances vary. Some variables include: timeliness of submitting materials, thoroughness of Parish level process, theological education, and ministry experience/ preparation. That said, the following will give you a good idea of the time frame:

- A. As an **Aspirant**, the discernment work will happen primarily in your home parish with your Rector and a Parish Discernment Team (PDT). The Rector will submit their report to the diocese to begin the process. After being accepted as an aspirant, a liaison from the diocese will help guide the PDT. Discernment work is not to normally begin until one has been present, worshipping, serving, and leading in your church for **at least a year**. Parish discernment concerns both whether one is called to ordained ministry, and to which order one is called: Vocational Diaconate or Priesthood. A set of work (pp. 10-22) will be turned in to the Ordination Preparation Team (OPT) who will meet with you for further discernment and determination of next steps. Normally, these interviews are scheduled in March or October. If the Bishop (on recommendation of the OPT) affirms your sense of call to Anglican orders, you will be named a Postulant. In consultation with the Bishop, a plan will be made for your formation for ordination.
 - *The Aspirant phase lasts a year to eighteen months on average.*
- B. As a **Postulant**, theological, vocational, psychological, and physical assessments take place, and training for ministry begins (or continues, depending on your circumstances). The diocese will assist, guide, and encourage you along the process. The Postulant phase holds the greatest variables in terms of the time needed for the process. Timing will depend on a number of things, including: one’s life, family, and work circumstances, theological education schedule, spiritual formation, specific weaknesses or growth areas to be addressed in mentoring or counseling.
 - *The timeframe for the Postulancy phase depends on multiple factors, primarily your theological education. As a result, formation for the Vocational Diaconate may take up to two years, depending on one’s plan. Formation for the Priesthood could take up to three to four years.*
- C. **Candidate.** Toward the end of your formation period as a Postulant you will have a candidacy interview to ascertain that you have fulfilled the requirements of your Postulancy, and are nearing the end of your theological education. As a Candidate you will sit for a written and oral canonical examination. The OPT will

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conduct this assessment of your readiness for ordination, as specified by the Provincial Canons. This will normally take place in January, though provision will be made for this in the summer if necessary. A review of the whole process and final discernment will happen with the Bishop, the OPT and the Standing Committee of the Diocese.

1. Candidacy is three to six months long, on average.
 2. Candidacy could be prolonged if additional work is deemed necessary following the canonical exam.
 3. Following determination of “sufficient knowledge” of Scripture and the other canonical areas, a Candidate is commended to the Bishop and Standing Committee for consent for ordination.
- D. Finally, when the Bishop and the Standing grant formal consent to your ordination, you will be named an **Ordinand**, and an ordination date is set and deployment issues are addressed.

VI. Theological Education

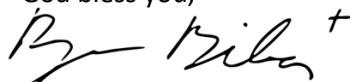
- A. Vocational Diaconate: The preferred theological education track is *The Certificate of Diaconal Studies* from Trinity Anglican Seminary. Alternatives may be considered.
- B. Priesthood: A Masters of Divinity (with Anglican Studies) from a seminary which the Bishop approves for the Postulant, or its equivalent upon approval.
- C. In unique circumstances requiring additional accommodations, Reading for Orders with an academic mentor will be permitted. Reading for Orders will include some online seminary work.

VII. Expectations of Those Interested in Ordination

- A. In most cases, Aspirants must already have a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university.
- B. Aspirants must be involved in the worship, education, witness, and ministry of a local congregation that is a part of the Gulf Atlantic Diocese. Aspirants should be involved in the parish a minimum of a year, long enough that the clergy and congregation can test the sense of call and leadership capacity, and can determine readiness and suitability to enter the discernment process. In some cases, with the Bishop’s approval, an Aspirant may do this discernment in their seminary field education parish. In some cases, with the Bishop’s approval, people not involved in a congregation of the Gulf Atlantic Diocese and outside the Diocese may be considered to enter the process.
- C. Aspirants must be able to articulate both their spiritual journey, showing a pattern of growth and development, as well as a grasp of the Gospel such that they can share it in a clear and casual manner.
- D. Aspirants must accept full responsibility for the financial costs throughout the process. The cost of the discernment process is estimated to be about \$2700, excluding travel and costs for theological education (outlined on page 11). The diocese contributes 1/3 of the cost, and the sponsoring church will be billed during the postulancy phase for the remaining 2/3 cost (the individual will reimburse the church their third).

Be assured of our prayers throughout the process of finding your unique place in the body of Christ. This is an exciting and significant time in your life and we are privileged to be journeying with you, one step at a time.

God bless you,



The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba

Canon for Leadership

bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

One Page Flow Chart

Pre-Aspirant Phase:

- ☐ Active in ministry in the church, college or High School ministry
- ☐ Able to articulate the Gospel
- ☐ Proven leadership
- ☐ Been at sponsoring parish for at least a year
- ☐ Meet with Rector to begin Careful Inquiry
- ☐ Send Personal Information Form
- ☐ Rector should submit Rector's Careful Inquiry to Archdeacon and Bishop
- ☐ When Careful Inquiry form is submitted, meet with the Bishop (prior to mtg with Parish Discernment Team)

Aspirant:

- ☐ Meet with Parish Discernment Team
- ☐ Submit Aspirant work: Sense of Call, Family History, Spiritual Autobiography, etc.
- ☐ Vestry Approval, report submitted
- ☐ **Interview** with the Ordination Preparation Team to become a Postulant

Postulant:

- ☐ Begin writing Ember Day Letters to the Bishop (*continue through to a year after final ordination*)
- ☐ Begin regular check-ins with assigned Mentor, if applicable (*continue until ordination*)
- ☐ Begin Theological Education and Mentored Ministry (*continues until complete*)

Assessments:

- ☐ Psychological, including Sexual Addiction Screening
- ☐ Physical
- ☐ Background Check
- ☐ Safeguarding Our People training
- ☐ Submit Rule of Life
- ☐ Teach the Catechism
- ☐ **Interview** with Ordination Preparation Team to become a Candidate

Candidate:

- ☐ Canonical Exam
- ☐ Resubmit Rule of Life
- ☐ Silent Retreat
- ☐ Bishop requests Standing Committee for Consent for your Ordination

Ordinand:

- ☐ Order vestments
- ☐ Pre-Ordination Retreat
- ☐ Ordination to Diaconate

*This chart is a guide. The Bishop and the OPT reserve the right to add requirements at their discretion.

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Applicant Personal Information

1. Applicants in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese Ordination Preparation Process, whether aspiring to the Diaconate or the Priesthood, send the following personal information to the Canon for Leadership. This form can be filled out as a Word document (and emailed) or submitted [online here](#). All records submitted will be kept confidential.

PLEASE SUBMIT THIS FORM PRIOR TO COMPLETING ALL THE OTHER ASPIRANT WORK.

This form can be found at the diocesan website as a separate downloadable and fillable Word document.

Date	
Name	
Address	
Phone (home, cell, work)	
Email	
Date of Birth	
Marital Status	
Number of Marriages	
Dates of Marriage(s)	
Spouses full name and birthdate	
Names and birthdates of children	
Diocese	
Present Parish Affiliation	
Location	
Rector/ Vicar	
How long?	
Prior Parish Affiliations	
Baptism Church Name	
Location	
Baptism date	
Confirmation/Reception Church	
Location	
Confirmation Date	
Confirming Bishop	
Diocese	

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Have you previously applied for ordination in this or any other denomination?	
When?	
Where?	
If YES, you must request that all documentation be sent directly to the Canon for Ordination	
Are you ordained in any other denomination?	
If YES,	
Which denomination?	
For what order?	
When?	
Date of Introductory Meeting with the bishop	

Please submit this form by email to:

The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba
Canon for Leadership
bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

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Aspirant Information to Submit

*Aspirant is responsible for the submission of all of these, which will mean working with others to be sure some of them are submitted.
6-18 may be submitted all at once (preferably) or separately if necessary.*

2. Rector “Careful Inquiry”: *Discernment by clergy* (see pages 14-17).

NOTE: When the Rector has completed the Careful Inquiry, he/she will submit via email to the Bishop and Canon for Leadership. The Aspirant will request a meeting with the Bishop prior to the work of the Parish Discernment Team.

3. Meeting with the Bishop and written summary of the meeting (initial discernment by Bishop)

Take the initiative to set up an appointment with the Bishop by emailing scheduling@gulfatlanticdiocese.org. Write a brief summary of your interaction with the Bishop and the date this contact took place and send it to the Canon for Leadership.

4. Parish Discernment Team (PDT) Report: *Discernment by lay peers* (see pages 18-21).

5. Vestry Recommendation: *Affirmation of parish leadership* (page 22).

6. Release of Information Agreement (Appendix A)

Please sign and date the enclosed Release of Information Agreement (see Appendix A on page 26).

7. Theological Statement (Appendix B)

Please sign and date the endorsement of the Jerusalem Declaration, the Constitution of the Anglican Church of North America (ACNA) and the Gulf Atlantic Diocese Constitution and Canons (see Appendix B on page 27).

8. Call to Ministry

In 250 words or less, describe your sense of call to ordained ministry.

9. Family History

Please give us any information about your family that you feel is relevant to your call to ordination. Include information about your upbringing and how you have responded to the situation in which you were raised. Include a brief statement about your present circumstances. If married, how does your spouse feel about your pursuing ordination? If single, do you hope to be married or do you feel called to a celibate life?

10. Spiritual Autobiography: Faith Journey, Personal Growth and Holiness

Provide a brief description of your faith journey. Include how you came to know Jesus as Savior and Lord, what your relationship with Jesus means to you today, and how this expresses itself in spiritual disciplines. Describe areas of personal growth you have experienced and areas where you feel you need to grow. Explain how you deal with stress. If you have had professional counseling, what was the reason and the outcome? Discuss any addiction you may have (for example, drugs, alcohol, food, over-work, pornography, etc.) and state how long you have been sober/free in each instance and what measures you have in place to be held accountable.

11. Occupational History

Describe your present job and list all the jobs you have held since college (or in the last ten years). Include your duties and responsibilities. You may also attach a copy of your current resume.

12. Online Church Planter Assessment

Most Aspirants will be asked to complete this initial Church Planter Assessment, which has five parts: Church Planting, Spiritual Gifts, Risk Factor Analysis, Ministry Systems Experience, and Transformational Discipleship Assessment. This report will assist both the parish and the diocese. Contact the Canon for Leadership for the login passcode.

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13. Good Samaritan Parable Reflection

Engage this reflection which may guide the particulars of your sense of call to ministry. Discuss this with your Rector (Appendix C, pages 28-29).

14. Unique Place in the Body of Christ

Provide a brief description of your unique mix of temperament/personality, spiritual gifts, passion, availability and maturity. How were you created in Christ Jesus and what good works has God prepared in advance for you to do? (Ephesians 2:10) See Appendix D for some ideas, in addition to the Spiritual Gifts Inventory taken online (#12, p. 12).

15. Continuing Education

Since leaving formal education, what have you done to continue your education/intellectual growth? Describe any graduate work you have done as well as any other special training or intellectual development, including your chief academic interests.

16. Transcripts

Send us a copy of your official college transcript, official graduate school transcript (if applicable) and any other unofficial transcripts you have.

17. Photographs

Send a digital photograph of you individually as well as a picture of your spouse and family, if applicable.

18. Recommendations

In addition to the recommendations we will receive from your Rector/Vicar, Spouse (if applicable), Parish Discernment Team and Parish Vestry, please submit the name, address, email and phone number(s) for the following: we will email them with an online form to share their recommendation.

1. A non-family member who has known you for at least three years
2. An employer or educator
3. A non-family member who has observed you in ministry settings

19. Spouse Recommendation

If married, have your spouse fill out the Spouse Recommendation of Aspirant form (see Appendix E, page 31).

Discernment Fee

Note all Postulants will be sent an invoice at their sponsoring church. It is intended that the church pays for 2/3, and the individual reimburses the church for 1/3. This can be submitted online by selecting the Ordination Preparation Fund from the dropdown menu [here](#). This payment will not be requested until after postulancy interviews (in person).

Interview with the Ordination Preparation Team (OPT)

Contact the Canon for Leadership to make sure you know when and where your interview with the OPT will take place.

Make sure that every piece of paper submitted has your name in a header at the top. Return completed work to:

The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba

Canon for Leadership

bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

SEE THE ASPIRANT CHECKLIST (p. 37, and emailed to you as a viewable online checklist)

Rector Involvement

Dear Rectors,

We are grateful that the Lord is using you to raise up those aspiring to ordained ministry. The Ordination Preparation Process in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese begins with you and the members of your parish. One significant aspect of discernment for the individual, and you, is to which order, Deacon or Priest, the individual is called. Please do not assume one over another without careful consideration. As you prayerfully discern an Aspirant's call for ministry, whether ordained or not, and to which order, we ask God to bless you with wisdom and discernment. If you determine that the Aspirant is not called to ordained ministry, we trust you will help that individual discover his/her unique place in the Body of Christ.

We expect that each Aspirant will be able to clearly articulate the message of *the Gospel*. For example, in a casual setting such as a coffee shop or grocery store, our expectation is that they would "always be ready to give an account for the hope that is in them, and with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15). The Bishop expects every Aspirant to teach *the Catechism*. This could be in a Confirmation class, a Newcomers' class, or just having them find a friend whom they could lead in a study of the Catechism. Also, we encourage you to be involved in the part of the process we describe as their "Unique Place in the Body of Christ." This includes an exploration of *spiritual gifts*, as well as passion, personality, experience, etc. and how these may blend together to guide the person toward their unique place in the Body.

In summary form, here is what you as Rector need to do:

1. The initial expectation is that the Aspirant is a member of your church and has been around long enough (**at least one year**) for you to observe his/her character, ministry, leadership, and servanthood to the extent that you are willing and able to conduct a Careful Inquiry with the individual.
2. Feel free to contact the Canon for Leadership to discuss your role in the process.
3. Send an initial email to the Canon for Leadership and Bishop indicating your affirmation of the Aspirant's call, paying attention to the list of considerations found on page 9.
4. Conduct your Careful Inquiry of the Aspirant until you are able to fill out the report (p. 17) with confidence and thoroughness. We expect this Careful Inquiry normally to **take six months to a year to complete**. It is not helpful for you to be unsure of someone's suitability for ordained ministry and send them along in the process, hoping that they will be turned down on the diocesan level. Guidelines for this inquiry, along with questions we hope you will be able to answer as part of the report form, are attached.
 - a. Please review the Good Samaritan Parable Reflection with Aspirant (Appendix C, pages 28-30). This assessment enables a healthy dialogue with the Aspirant regarding the gifts they display and alignment with the appropriate order (priest or diaconal minister).
 - b. Please review the Lifeway Online Assessment (cf. top of page 11) with her or him (codes are available from the Canon for Leadership).
2. When complete, please send your Report of Careful Inquiry to the Bishop and Canon for Leadership via email; the Aspirant will then request a meeting with the Bishop. The Aspirant will submit a 1-2 page reflection on that meeting to the Canon for Leadership.

3. After the Aspirant meets with the Bishop, you will form a **Parish Discernment Team (PDT)** which will thoroughly explore with your Aspirant his/her call to ministry. See the suggested guidelines and report forms for the PDT (see pages 16-22).
 - a. The Parish Discernment Team is made up solely of **lay members** of the church. Working under the guidance of, but relatively independently of, the Rector/ Vicar, they provide the lay endorsement of the Aspirant.
 - b. Each PDT member must sign the same theological statement as that of the Aspirant (see Appendix B). It is helpful to do this early on in the process so as to not lose members along the way.
 - c. Assign a PDT Chair of your choice. You should meet initially with this person to guide him/her as to what it means to lead the PDT, and be available during the process to encourage and advise the Chair. The Chair will meet with the Parish Liaison from the diocese, who will advise them in this process.
 - d. Ask 4-6 other individuals to serve on the PDT, the majority of whom will be the Rector's choice. You may ask the Aspirant to submit a name of someone to on the PDT. It is strongly suggested that the members of the PDT be active members of the congregation who:
 - Have a lively faith in Jesus Christ which they can articulate.
 - Have a heart for the mission of the Church.
 - Pray regularly and agree to pray for the discernment process and the people in it.
 - Are able to listen carefully to God and to others.
 - Have the gift of discernment.

If the Aspirant is a woman, choose parishioners who are not opposed to the ordination of women. The job of the PDT is to discern a call to ordination. This is not the time for female Aspirants to have to defend themselves over against people with a different theological understanding.

 - e. In most cases the Rector will want to meet initially with the PDT (as well as with the Chair and the Liaison) to discuss the discernment process.
 - f. There is not a specific number of meetings with the PDT, however we recommend six, though that is flexible based on your needs. We want them to meet long enough to be able to give a thorough report, which we expect usually to take about six months. For some Aspirants that will take more time than others. It is the Bishop's suggestion that the PDT Chair report to the Rector following every meeting to determine whether their work has been completed. The PDT Chair and Rector should consult with the Parish Liaison to finalize their work and submit the report.
4. The Rector's Careful Inquiry and the PDT Report will be given to the Vestry for their consideration. See the Vestry Recommendation Form (p. 23).
5. Give thought, with your Vestry and Finance Committee, as to what kind of prayer, financial, and practical help you will be able to give your Aspirants as they move forward. Please consider the following:
 - a. The cost of the Discernment Process is around \$2700 (application, Oxford Document Check, Psychological Exam, Church Planting Assessment, and Sexual Ethics and Boundaries training). Beyond that, there are the costs of Theological Education, whether a 3-year residential degree program or an alternative suggested by

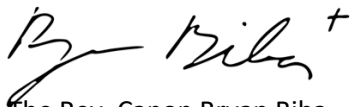
Ordination Preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese

the OPT and approved by the Bishop. There will be times when the Aspirant incurs expenses beyond those listed above, such as travel and lodging to required interviews and examinations.

- b. The Diocesan Budget will cover 1/3 of the costs, the Aspirant will cover 1/3, and the supporting congregation will cover 1/3. In order to streamline reimbursement, the congregation will receive an invoice for 2/3 of the cost once the Aspirant becomes a Postulant (\$1400). The Postulant should reimburse the parish for 1/3. Please discuss with the individual/diocese any payment plans that may be necessary.
6. Stay in touch with your Aspirant throughout their process. Consider visiting him/her during theological formation. We will ask each person to send their quarterly Ember Day Letters not only to the Bishop and Canon for Leadership, but also to you. (For a description of Ember Day Letters, see description under Postulant Work.)

It is most helpful if you have a good understanding of the process in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese. We have streamlined the process as much as possible, while still being thorough. If you have questions or suggestions, please contact us. Thank you for your ministry, for encouraging and equipping the saints for the work of ministry and for building up the Body of Christ.

God bless you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bryan Biba" with a small cross symbol at the end.

The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba

Canon for Leadership

bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

Suggested Guidelines for the Rector's Careful Inquiry

Although the discernment process for ordained ministry begins the moment the question first arises in conversation between a potential Aspirant and another follower of Jesus, the process formally begins with the Rector's (or Vicar's) Careful Inquiry. This consists of time spent with the Aspirant (and spouse or fiancée, if applicable) to discern the person's suitability for and calling to ordained ministry.

During your time spent together, here are a few of the areas that might be helpful to explore:

1. Have him/her tell you their story about God's work and leading in their life.
2. Can he/she clearly and casually share their testimony, as well as the message of the Gospel?
3. Who or what has shaped him/her as a person?
4. Would you describe the Aspirant as a person of stable character?
5. Inquire as to Aspirant's physical and emotional health – How does this person take care of himself/herself?
6. What is the main source of authority for the person's moral behavior?
7. To what extent has the person been shaped by individual and corporate devotional disciplines?
8. Is the person reasonably well acquainted with the Bible and the Prayer Book?
9. What might be brought to light when a background check is conducted?
10. Who or what exemplifies what ministry is all about for the Aspirant?
11. How does the Aspirant understand the church in relationship to his/her concept of ministry? Does this ministry have to be ordained to be effective?
12. Spend sufficient time exploring both the Diaconate and the Priesthood, not prematurely assuming one or the other. See the resources on the Diocesan Ordination web page, including the Parable Assessment.
13. In what ministries is the Aspirant presently involved? In what ministries would this person like to be invited to share?
14. What would happen if the discernment turns out that ordination is not the best setting for this person's ministry?
15. Is the Aspirant capable of acquiring the needed body of knowledge and skills for the ministry under consideration?
16. Does this person exhibit an openness to growth, change and life-long learning?

See also the areas to address in the Rector/Vicar Report on the following page.

As a reminder, the Parable Assessment Tool can be a valuable introduction to discussions about calling, and may be helpful in determining the particular order to which the applicant feels called.

Rector's Report of Careful Inquiry

THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD AT THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE

Date:

Aspirant's Name:

Your Name:

Church:

Church Address:

Phone Number(s):

Email Address:

1. How long have you known the Aspirant?
2. Summarize your discernment process with the Aspirant.
3. Who first raised the issues of Holy Orders? What were the circumstances of his/her call? When was this call affirmed by both the Aspirant and the Rector?
4. In what kind of ministerial activities have you or other leaders observed the Aspirant?
5. Describe your observation of the Aspirant's experience in church settings, commenting on
 - a. Matters of integrity
 - b. Emotional strength
 - c. Confidence
 - d. Personal and intellectual maturity
 - e. Relationships
 - f. Spiritual maturity
 - g. Ability to share the Gospel
 - h. Ability to teach the Catechism
6. What do you see as the Aspirant's spiritual gifts and talents? How has the Aspirant used these in the parish setting?
7. Comment on strengths and weaknesses you have observed. List areas of growth for the Aspirant to achieve before ordination.
8. How might the Aspirant's home environment affect his/her ability to prepare for ministry?
9. Can you with confidence recommend this person for ordained ministry? If yes, to which order **and why**? If not, why not?

Please submit by email:

The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba

Canon for Leadership

bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

Ordination Preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese

Guidelines for the Parish Discernment Team

These guidelines should be reviewed together by the whole team at their first meeting.

The task of the Parish Discernment Team (PDT) is to assist the Rector and Vestry in discernment of God's will for Aspirants who feel called to ordained ministry. Historically, the laity helped affirm the call to ordained ministry in a effort to prevent clergy orders from being a self-selected body. For this reason, discernment, accomplished in the context of the Aspirant's home church with lay peers, is of critical importance.

Each member should commit to:

- Pray for yourself, the other committee members, and the Aspirant
- Read the Aspirant's materials and be prepared at committee meetings
- Attend all committee meetings
- Respond in a timely fashion to communications from the committee Chair
- Commit to confidentiality

An Aspirant will have already indicated to the Rector whether they sense the call to ministry as a deacon or as a priest. As the PDT, you will either:

- "Affirm" the Aspirant's call to ordained ministry
- "Affirm with conditions" or
- "Not affirm at this time"

If you are not able to affirm a call to ordination, it is our hope that the PDT will continue to work with the former Aspirant until you, and the Rector, have helped him/her find the unique place in the Body of Christ that the Lord has prepared in advance for this person to do.

The task of discernment is truly an awesome responsibility, especially as it has direct implications for future decisions of another's life. This work should be undertaken with a humble awareness of the privilege it is to participate in what God is doing in someone else's life, and in the life of the Church. The PDT is not an advocacy group, nor a support group. Likewise, the discernment process is not a job interview. Instead, its goal is to hear from the Lord about the future direction of the Aspirant's life and speak truth in love through the leading of the Holy Spirit, whether that is an "Affirm," an "Affirm with conditions," or a "Not affirm at this time." Please ask yourself if you are willing and able to give the Aspirant, your fellow churchgoer, whichever of these three determinations is deemed appropriate.

Your recommendation will be given consideration by the Vestry of your parish, who along with the Rector, will decide whether or not a person should continue in the process toward ordination.

The composition of the PDT, including designating a Chair, is the prerogative of the Rector. The Chair will meet with The Diocesan Parish Liaison to guide them in this process. Each person on the PDT will sign the Theological Statement that our Aspirant is asked to sign early in the process (see Appendix B). If the Aspirant is a woman, the Bishop asks that the PDT members be open to the ordination of women as this is not the arena for her to have to address or defend that issue.

The PDT should be aware that this work is intensely personal for the Aspirant and will be most effectively conducted in an atmosphere of trust and respect. PDT members will assure the Aspirant of the confidential nature of this work, help the Aspirant grow in his/her self-understanding, where he/she is gifted and where grace needs to be sought. The PDT may request the Aspirant develop and complete a ministry project in the parish, especially if he/she has not been deeply

Ordination Preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese

involved in the life of the parish. With concurrence of the Rector, the PDT may also request to receive copies of the written work the Aspirant is doing for the Diocese.

There is no set number of meetings required for the PDT, though we see this taking four to six months in most settings. The first and final meeting will be alongside the Diocesan Parish Liaison to help guide the process and the writing of the Report. The Aspirant's spouse or fiancée, should be invited to attend some of the sessions with the PDT (usually Session 4). After the second meeting, and after every meeting thereafter, the PDT Chair will communicate with the Rector. The Rector and PDT Chair will determine when the work of the PDT is finished. The PDT Chair will complete the evaluation. This document and the signed theological statements will be sent to the Diocesan Office along with the Vestry Recommendation.

Parish Discernment Team Report Form

THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD AT THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE

The following is to be completed by the Chair of the Parish Discernment Team (PDT), though every member of the PDT should have a copy with which to work.

Aspirant's Name:

Parish, Location:

Names of PDT Members and email address (denote who served as Chair):

Date of all PDT meetings:

Did each PDT Member sign the Theological Statement (see Appendix B, p. 27)? Attach copies of each to this Report.

Key Objectives to be Reported on:

Session 1: PDT with Liaison [INTRODUCTION]

- Logistics
- Theological Statement
- Forms
- Purpose
- Questions about Diaconal Minister / Priest

Session 2: PDT with Aspirant [CALLING]

- Background
- Personal faith, testimony
- Education
- Calling to ordained ministry (pastoral focus and purpose for pursuing ordained ministry)
- Character

Session 3: PDT with Aspirant [MINISTRY]

- Experience in church
- Gifts
- Experience in ministry
- Interpersonal relationships in the church
- Experience in leadership
- Articulating the Gospel

Session 4: PDT with Aspirant & Spouse [SUPPORT SYSTEMS]

- Current household
- Family of origin
- Support systems (including those pertaining to prevention of moral failures)
- Dealing with Conflict

Ordination Preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese

Session 5: PDT with Aspirant [SPIRITUAL LIFE]

- Devotional life
- Passions
- Protection against burnout
- Hopes for future
- Reflections/questions from previous sessions

Session 6: PDT with Liaison [CONCLUSION]

- Forms
- Report
- Questions

Signature of PDT Chair:

Date:

Please submit completed work by email:

The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba

Canon for Leadership

bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

Ordination Preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese

Vestry Recommendation of the Aspirant

Date: _____

The Vestry of _____ (Name and Location of Church)

believes that _____ (Name of Aspirant) is being called by God to
ordained ministry as a

☐ Vocational Deacon

☐ Priest

in God's One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church and commends him/her for further discernment by
diocesan leadership. They have reviewed the Rector's Careful Inquiry and the Parish Discernment Report.

Senior Warden (Printed Name)

(Signature)

Junior Warden (Printed Name)

(Signature)

Rector (Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

(Printed Name)

(Signature)

THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD AT THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE

Please scan and submit this form by email:

The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba

Canon for Leadership

bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

Postulant Work

After you are named a Postulant by the Bishop, you will begin working on the following:

Follow your Formation Plan, the theological education and personal development outlined by the bishop for you. Keep in touch with the Canon for Leadership, whose role will be to assist you through the process.

As a season of Formation for Ordination under the direction of the bishop, it is understood that Postulants will not make major decisions such as altering their marital status, changing seminaries, changing churches for worship, or changing work or mentored ministry, without consulting with the Bishop. Your formation plan was carefully discerned and is in place to aid you in preparing for fruitful and effective ministry; as a beginning to being “under orders” we submit significant life and formation decisions to the bishop and to the ordination process.

Ember Day Letters

It is customary for those in the ordination process to use the Ember Days to communicate to their Bishop. These letters ensure regular communication in writing, though we hope that our communication via email and phone will be more often than that. In your Ember Day letters, written to the Bishop and copied to your Rector and the Canon for Leadership, please give us a brief update on your academic, personal, and spiritual status, including any important changes that have occurred in your life. Please also include how we can be of service to you, what questions/frustrations you have and anything else you think would be helpful. You should send these letters via email. **Ember Days fall between the 3rd and 4th Sundays of Advent, the 1st and 2nd Sundays of Lent, between Pentecost and Trinity Sunday; and after Holy Cross Day on September 14.** Please add these dates to your calendar.

Mentored Ministry Reports

If not done as part of seminary training, please submit Mentored Ministry documents. Contact Canon for Leadership if you have any questions.

Ministry Safe

Every two years all clergy licensed in the diocese must complete Ministry Safe certification and training on the diocesan Safeguarding Our People policy. The Executive Administrator will initiate your Ministry Safe course, but the training on the diocesan policy should be completed by your parish trainer.

Oxford Document Check

You will be hearing directly from the Oxford Document Company who will be conducting a thorough background investigation. The cost of this background check will be approximately \$175.

Psychological Evaluation

Contact the diocese for information regarding an approved psychologist who will administer a variety of psychological and vocational instruments. If the Postulant is married, the spouse will also participate in a portion of the testing. This assessment will include a sexual addiction screening.

Physical Examination

Have a complete physical examination by a medical doctor of your choice and have a standard physical examination report sent directly to the Bishop. You will receive a letter to give your physician.

Rule of Life

Describe your Rule of Life. See Appendix H for guidelines written by the Rev. Dr. Travis Boline. Submit with, or before, your Written Canonical Exam.

Candidate Work

You will have a check-up Interview to be named a Candidate toward the end of your Theological Education; after which you will be scheduled for the Canonical Exam. Your Formation work continues during this time, including:

Online Training for Ethical Boundaries in Ministry

Understanding Clergy Sexual Ethics

Maintaining Boundaries in a Digital Age

Both of these are offered by Wesley Theological Seminary at lewisonlinelearning.org. They cost \$49 each, for which the Candidate is responsible. A discount code may be available from the diocese.

Transcripts

Submit seminary transcript, if not already submitted.

Contact the Canon for Leadership to make sure your file is complete.

Rule of Life

Please resubmit your Rule of Life, noting changes you may have made since your first submission. See Appendix H for guidelines. Submit with or before your Written Canonical Exam.

Canonical Exams

The Canon for Leadership will inform you when you will take the Written and Oral Canonical Exam, which is normally offered in January each year, but may be offered mid-year if necessary.

Ember Day Letters

Ember Day Letters continue throughout the process four times per year (see Postulant Work section, p. 23).

Ordinand Work

One becomes an Ordinand once she or he receives Standing Committee consent.

Becoming an Ordinand: When a Candidate has completed the Canonical Exam, and shown sufficient knowledge in the canonical areas, the Bishop and the Canon for Leadership will request the Standing Committee for consent for ordination. A firm ordination date may be set once the Standing Committee grants consent, though a provisional date is sometimes permitted to be set depending on circumstances. One becomes an Ordinand once she or he receives Standing Committee consent.

Pre-Ordination Retreat: All Ordinands are required to take a retreat within a week prior to their ordination date, and preferably the day of the ordination (in the case of an evening ordination) or the day before. This retreat may be led by someone the Diocese recommends (or approves), or it may be a self-directed retreat.

Pre-Ordination Dinner with the Bishop: All Ordinands and their spouses will be invited to a meal with the Bishop (normally dinner) prior to their ordination.

Ember Day Letters

Ember Day Letters continue throughout the process four times per year (see Postulant Work section, p. 23). You will continue to write the Bishop on Ember Days until the end of your first year of ordained ministry. This includes through the first year of Priesthood.

Ministry Safe

Every two years all clergy licensed in the diocese must complete Ministry Safe certification.

Diocesan Sexual Misconduct training

Must be completed within six months after ordination to the diaconate. This also is renewed every two years. Your church should have a trainer available to meet with you to complete this.

Ordination Preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese

Appendix A Release of Information Agreement

THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD AT THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE

I understand that all materials pertaining to the Gulf Atlantic Diocese Ordination Preparation Process may be read and utilized by the Parish Discernment Team, the Ordination Preparation Team, the Standing Committee, the Diocesan-appointed Psychologist, the Church Planting Consultant, the Bishop's Staff and the Bishop, for the determination of my application to be considered for Holy Orders.

I, hereby, authorize the above-mentioned parties to obtain such records as required.

Name

Signature

Date

Please return signed form by scanning and emailing to:

The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba

Canon for Leadership

bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

Appendix B
Theological Statement

THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD AT THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE

I have read, understand, and endorse

1. The [Constitution of the Gulf Atlantic Diocese](#) and
 - a. The mission of the diocese: *To proclaim the transforming Gospel of Jesus Christ in every facet of our faith and life.*
 - b. The strategy of the diocese: *To Encourage Missional Initiatives and Planting of Congregations; To Strengthen Existing Parishes and Ministries; To Identify, Train and Deploy Missional Leaders.*
2. The [Constitution of the Anglican Church in North America](#)
3. The [Jerusalem Declaration](#)

Name

Signature

Date

Copies of the three documents listed above may be found on the Gulf Atlantic Diocese Website.

Please return signed form by scanning and emailing to:

The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba

Canon for Leadership

bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

Appendix C Parable Assessment

THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD AT THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE

This assessment is to aid Aspirants, and rectors, in discerning a call to ordained ministry and, in particular, to which order of ministry one may be called. It is simply a tool for reflection and discussion, and may be helpful, in conjunction with the Lifeway online Gifts and Leadership Assessment, in discerning whether one is called to be a Deacon or a Priest.

~ ~ ~

Imagine it is the year 100 A.D. The Gospel of Luke has come to your small community. For the first time, you are hearing Luke's gospel read and this story catches your attention.

²⁵ And behold, a lawyer stood up to put him to the test, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" ²⁶ He said to him, "What is written in the Law? How do you read it?" ²⁷ And he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." ²⁸ And he said to him, "You have answered correctly; do this, and you will live."

²⁹ But he, desiring to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" ³⁰ Jesus replied, "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among robbers, who stripped him and beat him and departed, leaving him half dead. ³¹ Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him he passed by on the other side. ³² So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³ But a Samaritan, as he journeyed, came to where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion. ³⁴ He went to him and bound up his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he set him on his own animal and brought him to an inn and took care of him. ³⁵ And the next day he took out two denarii^[a] and gave them to the innkeeper, saying, 'Take care of him, and whatever more you spend, I will repay you when I come back.'

³⁶ Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?" ³⁷ He said, "The one who showed him mercy." And Jesus said to him, "You go, and do likewise." (Luke 10:25-37. ESV)

Response

Read through these responses, and circle verbs you find most compelling and cross through verbs you find the least compelling.

1. I'd want to go to the Jericho road as soon as possible, share the story with all passersby and what we can learn from it.
2. I'd want to visit the sick wherever I could find them, and try to lighten the load of their caregivers, and comfort them.
3. I'd have to try to tell everyone everywhere! This is the gospel, what Jesus did for us, let's do for others!
4. I'd want to gather people I know in a home with the goal of helping each other share the good news of Jesus and living for and like him.
5. I'd want to connect with all the house church leaders (since I'm already in relationship with many), teaching and encouraging them and their groups about Jesus and his kingdom.

Ordination Preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese

6. I'd want to collect money, clothing and food to give to those in need that are in my community (some come immediately into my mind).
7. I'd want organize a guild of people, in order to better identify the needs of the stranger, the poor and the helpless, and to meet those needs in an organized and systematic way.
8. I'd want to find that Priest and Levite and rebuke them!
9. I'd want to require and lead sensitivity and misconduct training for all ordained people!

Rank

Identify the top three or four that express how you would be motivated on hearing this moving story.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Reflect

Finally, indicate why you made your top choices and why you left the others off.

Please elaborate the selection(s) with which you resonate most; how does this, and the characteristics named, represent your motivation to respond in this manner to ministry needs?

Please elaborate on those you left off; how do these, and the characteristics named, represent your least likely inclination to respond in this manner to ministry needs?

PLEASE COMPLETE THE ABOVE PORTION BEFORE CONTINUING ON TO THE NEXT, WHICH SHOULD ALSO BE DONE WITH YOUR RECTOR, AND FRIENDS JOURNEYING WITH YOU IN DISCERNMENT

Ordination Preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese

FOR PARABLE ASSESSMENT DISCUSSION AND DISCERNMENT

The following are some different ways the Scriptures identify or categorize gifts and ministries in the Church:

- Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:11)
 - Apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, healing, helping, administrating, tongues (1 Corinthians 12:28)
 - Prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, contributing, leading, acts of mercy (Romans 12:6-8)
 - Bishops, Presbyters, Deacons (Acts 6:1-7; 20:17-35; 1 Timothy 3:1-18; 5:17-22; Titus 1:5-9)
- Note: in the English Standard Version Bible, Bishop is translated as “overseer” and Presbyter is translated “elder.”

For discussion, here are some ways to connect one’s motivational response to the Parable of the Good Samaritan with the gifts and ministries that Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, gives to members of his Body for the sake of the Church and the world. You may think of other ways to interpret and connect the response to different gifts above.

Some of the gifts and ministries listed here explicitly say Presbyter or Deacon (or Bishop), others from the Scriptures listed above, will require thought and discernment as to how they may connect with the ministry of a Deacon or a Priest. For example, one that could be an Apostle or an Evangelist may indicate a calling to the Diaconate, because evangelism is part of diaconal ministry.

1. I’d want to go to the Jericho road as soon as possible, share the story with all passersby and what we can learn from it.
TEACHER. EVANGELIST.
2. I’d want to visit the sick wherever I could find them, and try to lighten the load of their caregivers, and comfort them.
SERVING. HEALING. MERCY EXTENDER.
3. I’d have to try to tell everyone everywhere! This is the gospel, what Jesus did for us, let’s do for others!
APOSTLE. EVANGELIST.
4. I’d want to gather people I know in a home with the goal of helping each other share the good news of Jesus and living for and like him.
PASTOR. PRESBYTER. BISHOP. APOSTLE. LEADING.
5. I’d want to connect with all the house church leaders (since I’m already in relationship with many), teaching and encouraging them and their groups about Jesus and his kingdom.
BISHOP. APOSTLE. PROPHET.
6. I’d want to collect money, clothing and food to give to those in need that are in my community (some come immediately into my mind).
DEACON. PASTOR. HELPING. SERVICE.
7. I’d want to organize a guild of people, in order to better identify the needs of the stranger, the poor and the helpless, and to meet those needs in an organized and systematic way.
DEACON. PASTOR. HEALING. ADMINISTRATING. LEADING. ACTS OF MERCY.
8. I’d want to find that Priest and Levite and rebuke them!
BISHOP. PRESBYTER. PASTOR. PROPHET. EXHORTATION.
9. I’d want to require and lead sensitivity and misconduct training for all ordained people!
BISHOP. PRESBYTER. DEACON. APOSTLE. PASTOR. TEACHER.

Appendix D Unique Place in the Body of Christ

Please write a paragraph on what you understand your spiritual gifts to be, and how they fit in the Church. It would be helpful to include examples as to why you understand your gifting and role as you do. The Lifeway Church Planter online assessment you will take has a Spiritual Gifts component. Be sure to interact with those results.

Other options for Spiritual Gift discovery, include, if you have not already completed something similar: “Network” (produced by Willow Creek Community Church) and the book Discover Your Spiritual Gifts the Network Way by Bruce Bugbee; S.H.A.P.E. (Discovering your “Shape” for Ministry, produced by Saddleback Community Church); and the works of David Pytches. You may want to discuss and explore this with your priest or a mentor.

For more information, please contact:

The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba

Canon for Leadership

bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

Appendix E
Spouse Recommendation of Aspirant

THIS FORM IS AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD AT THE DIOCESAN WEBSITE

Aspirant Name:

Your Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

A married person is not ordained in isolation. Your perspective, as the spouse of the Aspirant, is of utmost importance in the discernment of call to ordained ministry. Please answer the following questions:

1. How do you feel about your spouse pursuing ordination?
2. How do you think the path to ordained ministry will affect you, your marriage, and your family?
3. What concerns do you have about the ordination preparation process or being a clergy spouse?
4. What gifts do you bring as a partner in ministry?
5. How can we care for you and your children during this discernment/preparation time?
6. If you have children living at home of middle or high school age (or older), please ask them to submit a statement about how they feel about their mom/dad pursuing ordination.

Please return signed form by scanning and emailing to:

The Rev. Canon Bryan Biba

Canon for Leadership

bbiba@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

Appendix F

Divorce, Remarriage, and the Call to Ministry

Title III, Canon 3, Sections 5 and 6 of the Canons of the Anglican Church in North America form the basis for the following guidelines.

Considering the place of the deacon or priest as a model for the community, and as a picture of Christ's love for the Church, the acceptance of a divorced person for Holy Orders will be a VERY rare occurrence. The man or woman who has not been able to find reconciliation with the central person in his/her life may be hard pressed to proclaim this to those under his/her care. Christians have been taught that, in the new life in Christ, the old things have passed. If a divorce took place prior to a person becoming a Christian, this may be a mitigating circumstance. For any divorced person pursuing Holy Orders, the Bishop must apply to the Archbishop for a Pastoral Exception.

Any person with more than one divorce will not be received into the ordination process.

Any person with a single divorce seeking ordination will generally not be accepted into the ordination process. These are possible exceptions that the Archbishop may accept:

- a. It is clear that the divorce was not desired by the individual, but forced upon him/her by the spouse
- b. If the cause for divorce was unfaithfulness by the individual, prior to his/her conversion, and if there is now repentance for the past and a clear understanding of Christian marriage
- c. If the cause was for self-protection or the protection of children

Appendix G Physical Examination

You will receive a letter outlining your Postulant's Next Steps/ Formation Plan. Included with this letter, will be a letter for your doctor regarding this exam requesting him/her to send a standard physical examination report directly to the Bishop, and to include any medications the Postulant is or has been on for bipolar disorder, anxiety, or depression.

This report should be mailed directly to the Bishop by the medical examiner. The information will be treated as strictly confidential. By submitting to this examination, the Postulant consents to the use of the information herein in connection with his/her Postulancy.

Mail to:

The Rt. Rev. Alex Farmer,
Bishop Gulf Atlantic Diocese
4042 Hartley Rd, Jacksonville, FL 32257
904-701-4230

bishop@gulfatlanticdiocese.org

Appendix H Mentored Ministry

Mentored Ministry provides opportunity for ministry experience and reflection with a supervisor. Those in Formation for the Priesthood and the Vocational Diaconate participate in Mentored Ministry. Because we seek to tailor this experience to the order for which one is preparing, please use the documents provided for the order for which you are preparing. Two semesters of Mentored Ministry are required.

This does not apply to those in a Masters of Divinity program, which will include Mentored Ministry (or Field Education), though reports may be requested to be submitted to OPT. All of the documents described below may be found on the diocesan website.

Mentored Ministry Covenant

Postulant (or Candidate) and Supervisor agree to a basic understanding of goals of this program. This is done once, prior to Mentored Ministry formally beginning. Each person will sign this, keep a copy, and send a copy to the Canon for Leadership.

Ministry Skills Checklist (separate lists for Vocational Deacon and Priest/ Presbyter)

Each semester Postulant/ Candidate will focus on some specific ministry skills chosen from this list.

Mentored Ministry Learning Agreement

Postulant/Candidate and Supervisor prepare this agreement each semester, articulating what Ministry Projects the Postulant/ Candidate will engage and what Ministry Skills will be worked on. Each person will sign this, keep a copy, and send a copy to the Canon for Leadership.

Mentored Ministry Student Report

The Postulant/ Candidate will reflect on his/ her experience and submit it to the Canon for Leadership.

Mentored Ministry Supervisor Report

The Supervisor will assess and reflect on the Postulant's/ Candidate's ministry, affirming strengths and identifying areas for growth. Each person will sign this, keep a copy, and send a copy to the Canon for Leadership.

Appendix I

A Rule of Life

by The Rev. Dr. Travis S. Boline

A Rule of Life is a set of spiritual practices or disciplines that an individual adopts for daily living in order to nurture a spiritual relationship with God. The essence of Christianity is a relationship with the living God and the Rule of Life is intended to nurture that relationship. As in all relationships, it includes time, communication, and action. Many Christians observe elements of a Rule of Life without ever having consciously ascribing to such a concept: in taking time for morning devotions, weekly worship, and regular giving. But covenanting with God to live by a specific Rule of Life brings an element of intentionality and accountability to our spiritual practices.

The term Rule of Life is not to imply a strict, law-driven way of life. In Shakespearean English, the term rule was not a synonym for regulation. Instead, it is more common meaning was a straight-edge, for drawing lines and taking measure. In that sense, a Rule of Life is a tool that equips us to maintain appropriate boundaries and to measure our progress.¹

There are many time-tested practices that might be incorporated into the pattern that forms a Rule of Life: reading and meditating on Scripture; praying regularly; participation in the sacraments, especially Eucharist and reconciliation; exercising sacrificial self-giving; observing periods of silence; and practicing hospitality. In addition to behaviors, attitudes can be brought under a Rule of Life: response to authority; acceptance of the other; rejection of grumbling or cynicism; forgiveness; respect for others.²

A good place to begin in developing a Rule of Life is to assess where you already are in your relationship with God and with your spiritual practices. Prayerfully and honestly ask yourself, “What are the things that I do (daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly) to nurture my faith and awareness of God’s presence and purpose in my life?” Write these down and determine where your areas of strength are and where there is room for growth. Be holistic in your approach – examining your family time, your work time, your free time and your private time.

Some areas to consider:

- Relationships with friends, spouse, children and family
- Stewardship of health, talents and time
- Faithful giving of the wealth that God has blessed you with (tithing and beyond)
- Use of your spiritual gifts for the building up of the Church
- Observing Sabbath rest
- Time in prayer – both petitionary and listening
- Reading and study of Scripture
- Participation in the Body of Christ in both worship, study and service

In forming your rule of life, it is important to be realistic and consider the amount of time you have to devote to specific practices. You do not want to be over zealous and set yourself up for discouragement or failure. At the same time, it is also important to stretch yourself beyond where you currently are so that there will be opportunity for growth. It will also be helpful to write your rule of down and date it, then share it with someone who will meet with you regularly and hold you accountable for what you have covenanted. And remember that your Rule of Life is open to change as your life and your circumstances change. An annual review will be helpful to determine if there are any changes or additions that need to be made.

¹ “Developing a Rule of Life” by Demi Prentiss, The Episcopal Diocese of West Texas – Prayer and Spiritual Formation.

² Ibid.

Appendix J: Ordination Checklist

PHASE 1:	Date v	Notes
First contact		
01 Application Form		
02 Rector's Careful Inquiry		
03 Meet with the Bishop, submit summary report		*Note: this must happen prior to Aspirant mtg with the PDT
Parish Discernment:		
04 Parish Discernment Team Report		
05 Vestry Recommendation		
06 Release of Information Agreement		
07 Theological Statement		
08 Call to Ministry		
09 Family History		
10 Spiritual Autobiography		
11 Occupational History		
12 Parable Assessment Reflection		
13 Unique Place in the Body of Christ		This includes the Lifeway Assessment; receive codes from the diocese
14 Continuing Education		
15 Transcripts		
16 Photographs		
17 References		
a.		
b.		
c.		
18 Spouse Recommendation <i>if applicable</i>		
Interview with the Ordination Preparation Team: <i>scheduled when all the above is completed</i>		

Ordination Preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese

Phase 2: Postulant Checklist

Name:	Date	Notes
Date Accepted as Postulant		
Paid Ordination Process Fees		Total cost \$2700; Church billed \$1800 (individual reimburses church \$900)
Theological Education		
Theological Education track approved		
Theological Education completed		
Anglican Studies coursework		
MENTORED MINISTRY		
Mentored Ministry Covenant		
Ment Min 1 plan		
Ment Min 1 supervisor report		
Ment Min 1 student report		
Ment Min 2 plan		
Ment Min 2 supervisor report		
Ment Min 2 student report		
Other Internships or Ment Min		
REQUIRED		
Psychological/ Vocational assessment		
Physical Examination		
Oxford Background Check		
Rule of Life		
Ember Day Letters		Advent (wk 3-4); Lent (wk 1-2); btw Pentecost and Trinity Sunday; and Holy Cross Day (9/14)
Sign Appendix B		
OTHER FORMATION PLAN REQUIREMENTS (if required)		
CPE or similar program		
Mentor(s)		
Silent Retreat		
Counseling		
Diocesan fees paid		

Ordination Preparation in the Gulf Atlantic Diocese

Phase 3: Candidate Checklist

Name:	Date	Notes
Date of Canonical Exam		
Theological Education		
Seminary Transcript		
Report from Advisor		
REQUIRED		
Ember Day Letters (four times a year)		
Safeguarding Our People training		
OTHER REQUIREMENTS (if required)		
Assigned Study after Canonical Exam		
Mentor(s)		
Counseling		

Ordinand Checklist

Name:	Date	Notes
Ordination Date Set		
Vestments ordered		
Invitation sent by Diocesan Office		
Pre-Ordination Retreat (week of ordination)		
Ember Day Letters		Advent (wk 3-4); Lent (wk 1-2); btw Pentecost and Trinity Sunday; and Holy Cross Day (9/14)
Diocesan Misconduct Training (within six months of ordination)		
Meet with Diocesan Staff for Orientation		
Assigned to MLA group		

*To Encourage Missional Initiatives and Planting of Congregations;
To Strengthen Existing Parishes and Ministries;
To Identify, Train and Deploy Missional Leaders;
To Reach the Next Generation of the Church.*

The Gulf Atlantic Diocese of the Anglican Church in North America

4042 Hartley Road
Jacksonville, FL 32257
904-701-4230