



The Missionary Diocese of All Saints

Anglican Church in North America



The Right Reverend William H. Ilgenfritz, Bishop
The Right Reverend Richard W. Lipka, Suffragan

GUIDELINES REGARDING DISCERNMENT PROCESS FOR HOLY ORDERS

The Bishop has outlined the following steps for aspirants and their sponsors. These steps are the norm for those seeking Holy Orders through The Missionary Diocese of All Saints. However, we recognize that aspirants entering this process are most likely at different levels of preparedness. Therefore, the Bishop may not require the same length of postulancy and candidacy, or course of study for all aspirants. No aspirant should engage in comparing his progress with that of another applicant.

Preliminary Steps:

1. Before making formal application to be admitted to postulancy in The Missionary Diocese of All Saints all aspirants should be confirmed communicants in good standing in the local parish. Rectors should not submit anyone for consideration who is a new convert to the Faith.
2. Aspirants should prayerfully (and repeatedly) be interviewed by the Rector, who shall inquire as to their spiritual life and the circumstances and their sense of calling by God.
3. Aspirants should demonstrate their spiritual gifts and leadership by their active involvement in ministry.
4. Aspirants should be prayerfully interviewed by the Vestry or Rector's Council as part of the discernment process.
5. All aspirants should be instructed by the Rector that since the call to Holy Orders is the highest vocation of man, the process of discernment will be prayerful, comprehensive and patient. It will involve:
 - a. A detailed application;
 - b. Interview(s) by the Bishop; the Bishop's Council; including a joint interview with the applicant's wife, if applicable;
 - c. Psychological Testing;
 - d. Criminal background inquiry;
 - e. And in the case of divorce and remarriage, a determination by the Bishop or an appointed authority as to the marital status of the inquirer. Applicants who have been divorced and remarried are subject to the Canons of the ACNA requiring approval of the Archbishop. A Petition for Annulment or Irrevocably Broken Covenant should be submitted to the

Bishop for determination prior to the application process outlined below.

6. In addition, all aspirants should know that the educational norm for postulants and candidates for Holy Orders requires graduation from college; and before ordination to the priesthood, graduation from seminary.
7. If the aspirant is an ordained clergyman from another denomination, the above process still applies; however, the normal course of study (6) may be waived or tailored to the individual's academic needs.
8. Any aspirant requesting an application for Holy Orders from the Bishop's office will need to first request a confidential letter from the Vestry (Rector's Council), or the sponsoring Convocation Bishop (if applicant is not part of an MDAS parish) be sent to the Bishop that contains the following:
 - Name of aspirant
 - Address & phone number of aspirant
 - Name of church
 - Name of Rector/Vicar
 - How long the aspirant has been a member of the church?
 - How many times has the Vestry or Rector's Council met with the aspirant?
 - A statement regarding the Vestry's or Rector's Council assessment of the spiritual life and maturity of the aspirant
 - A description of the leadership qualities and spiritual gifts of the aspirant
 - A description of the ministry involvement of the aspirant

This letter should be sent to: The Rt. Rev. William H. Ilgenfritz
40 Delsandro Drive
Donora, PA 15033

Application Steps:

Aspirant (One who senses a possible call to receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders)

1. Aspirant expresses interest to his Rector, or Rector approaches man concerning possible vocation.
2. Aspirant and Rector approach Bishop regarding interest.
3. Parish's Rector's Council (Vestry) meet with man, and send letter to Bishop requesting that he be received as an aspirant.
4. Once the Bishop has reviewed the letter from the Vestry or Rector's Council and discerns the process should move forward, an application will be sent to the aspirant from the office of the Canon to the Ordinary.

5. The Applicant presents completed application to Bishop.
6. Once the application is received the aspirant should make arrangements with the Canon to the Ordinary to take his psychological exams. The exam will be administered at a location determined by the Bishop at a mutually agreeable date and time. The background check will also be initiated at this time.
7. Diocese conducts background check and psychological evaluation.
8. When the application, recommendations, background check and psychological evaluation is complete the interview process will begin.
9. The aspirant undergoes an interview with Bishop's Council.
10. After consulting with his council, the Bishop will determine when and whether the aspirant shall advance to postulancy.

Postulant

1. Shortly after being selected as a postulant:
 - a. The Bishop, with the advice of his council assigns a course of studies, either on-site seminary training, online seminary, or reading for orders.
 - i. Seminary training is the preferred choice for all postulants; however, the Bishop may approve reading for orders if the postulant demonstrates that he cannot attend seminary and has a call to the Vocational Diaconate.
 - ii. Seminary is required of those Postulants with a call to the Priesthood
 - b. The Bishop assigns a priest as the Postulant's Spiritual Director who will be in charge of his overall course of studies;
 - c. The postulant selects a clergy mentor and lay mentor and begins to meet with them monthly for spiritual direction.
 - d. The postulant begins writing Ember Day Letters to the Bishop as an act of obedience and submission to authority.
 - e. The postulant begins praying the Daily Office as approved by his spiritual director.
 - f. Although not required, the postulant is encouraged to make regular Confessions to a priest of his choosing
2. Throughout the postulancy, the spiritual director, clergy mentor, and lay mentor discuss the postulant's progress. When they think the postulant is sufficiently trained and spiritually developed to be considered for candidacy, the spiritual director forwards this recommendation to the Bishop who schedules a second interview.
3. The postulant is interviewed by the Bishop and his council.
4. After consulting with his council, the Bishop will determine when and whether the aspirant shall advance to candidacy.

Candidate (One selected for Ordination)

1. The Bishop selects a date for ordination.
2. The Candidate receives the Ordination Checklist from the Canon to the Ordinary and begins making preparation. All arrangements must be approved by the Bishop.
3. The Candidate will make a spiritual retreat shortly before the Ordination to prepare himself for the grace the Lord would bestow on him.
4. During the time of candidacy the Bishop will be his mentor.
5. No one shall be ordained Priest until he has been a Deacon one full year, unless it shall seem good to the Bishop, for reasonable causes, with the advice and consent of the Bishop's Council, to shorten the time.