

The Roles of Ordained Ministry

Two Orders outlined here:

VOCATIONAL DEACON – A deacon is ordained to a ministry of service in the world and also interprets the needs of the world to the church. A vocational deacon has a parallel ministry to a priest. Traditionally, a deacon is responsible primarily to the Bishop while working under the direction of a priest. This is a permanent role.

PRIEST – ordained to a ministry of Word and Sacrament. Priests are licensed to their various appointments by the Bishop.

Transitional deacon – Traditionally this ministry has been a temporary step for an Ordinand en route to the priesthood.

Some ways in which Ordained life is lived out practically.

STIPENDIARY PRIEST – The traditional role is the seminary trained priest, usually employed full time, who is licensed by the Bishop to be in charge of a Parish. Stipendiary priests may request a change either in the Diocese or seek employment in another Diocese.

CURATE – Either a Transitional Deacon who will expect to go on to ordination as a priest or a junior ordained priest, in the early years of post-seminary training, who is appointed to a parish and supervised by the rector. This role is akin to an apprenticeship.

NON-STIPENDIARY PRIEST – Some priests derive their livelihood from work outside the church or from a pension (Bi-vocational).

LOCALLY RAISED PRIEST – An individual who has grown into a leadership role in a congregation where there is not a full-time priest. He/she may feel called to the priesthood in that faith community. This is more common in rural areas. These individuals may be ordained to the priesthood and subsequently licensed by the Bishop to their faith community. They are required to pursue a course of education agreed to with the Bishop. This training is focused on the needs of the postulant and the local parish. If a non-stipendiary priest wished to exercise his/her ministry in another location, further training would normally be required.

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Outline of process toward discerning ordained ministry to the Diaconate or Priesthood



This brochure is intended for those who are prayerfully discerning a vocation which may include call to Vocational Deacon or Priestly ministry.

Inside you will find outlined the basic steps used in the Diocese of Calgary for the selection and formation of ordained priests and deacons. The process outlined, is not restricted in time. It is intended to be a process for individuals within the life of a community – not simply steps to work through to complete an individual desire.

All are gifted and necessary

We begin with the assumption that everyone within the Body of Christ is called to use their gifts in a variety of ways.

1Corinthians12 speaks of gifts needed in the whole community of believers. *For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.* All are necessary for the work of the community we cannot say *we have no need* of one another.

Discernment - a definition:

The act of discernment is the prayerful and listening approach to hearing God's voice calling us to where we can fully live out our giftedness for the benefit of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, this process is one of humbly and thoughtfully spending time in prayer – quietly listening and watching for God's leading and listening to others who are prayerfully listening as well.

Every step along the way should be steeped in prayer and deeply rooted in a scriptural and prayerful approach.

Discerning a Call to Ordained Life

Using Gifts and Leadership in a Parish and Community

The foundation for ordained ministry is the expression of one's gifts in servant leadership in a parish and community. An important consideration is where you are already using your gifts in the life of the community.

Spiritual Gifts Inventory & Preliminary Conversations

When sensing a call to any vocation (ordained or not) it is good to complete a Spiritual Gifts inventory to have a sense of where your giftedness seems to be leading in terms of calling/vocation. Please speak to your Priest or Regional Dean to find an inventory.

Conversations with leaders in your parish, ordained and not ordained are helpful in reflecting on a variety of ministries you may be called to pursue.

If after some prayer and conversation you sense a possible call to ordained life then one can begin the Diocesan process to continue discernment.

Diocesan Process of Discernment to Orders

1. Conversation with Parish Priest or Regional Clergy

It is important that your parish priest, or if there is no parish priest, your Regional Dean is aware of your inquiry and sense of call before being in touch with the Diocesan Office.

2. Preliminary Conversation with Bishop

In this conversation you will be asked to discuss how you have perceived your call thus far. You will then be assigned the following:

- Completion of a Spiritual Gifts Inventory (if not already done)
- Writing of a Spiritual Autobiography (5 -8 pp)
- Writing a reflection on the particular order (Deacon/Priest) that you are sensing a call toward, using the Ordinal in the BCP p. 655 or BAS p. 655 as a guide. (3-5 pp)
- These written pieces will be used in both the Parish Discernment and Clergy Discernment Groups to help them prayerfully discern alongside you. They should also be submitted to the Bishop.

3. Parish Discernment Group

This group is made up of prayerful, Lay people who know you in your current parish. They meet with you for all the meeting times except the last.

There is a specific outline of the process provided for the group when it begins.

The group meets once a month for approx. 5-9 months.

At the end of the time together the Lay group meets without the candidate for a final conversation where they draft a short letter to the Bishop or designate outlining the gifts and areas of growth as well as where they see the call in that person.

4. Clergy Discernment Group

This group is made up solely of clergy and the candidate. They meet for a much shorter amount of time. They too review the written documents and provide a written report to the Bishop and designate.

5. Second Conversation with Bishop

In this conversation the Bishop outlines any further steps which they may want to candidate to take in discerning.

They may include:

- Further education
- ACPO weekend
- Internship in a parish
- Other (at the discretion of the Bishop)

6. Final Discernment

The final decision to ordain someone is completely in the hands of the Bishop who considers all of the conversations, reports and reflections. The Bishop's decision is final.

If someone is **not** to be ordained, this allows conversation to seek where God is calling that person to ministry in other ways.

If the candidate **is** to be ordained the following will be set:

Ordination Date/Time and Placement

The Bishop or designate will choose a possible ordination date and work out the details of the service with the candidate.

The Postulant needs to be willing to accept placement by the Bishop anywhere in the Diocese. The Bishop, in discussion with the Postulant will appoint the person to the post they deem most appropriate.

Post Ordination - The newly ordained will participate in a three-year Post Ordination Program.

For further information or questions along the way please contact:

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