



# ORDINATION PREPARATION TEAM GUIDE



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# ORDINATION PREPARATION TEAM (OPT)

At C4SO, we believe Holy Orders is different from other forms of ministry, as it is both a “setting apart” of a leader within a community and a sacramental rite of the one holy, catholic and apostolic church. That’s why with C4SO, the Path of Discernment to Holy Orders is just that — a path. It’s a journey we take together as a community of faith, exploring what God has for an individual as an aspiring member of C4SO clergy, how He has uniquely equipped them for the sake of others, and where He is leading them to serve.

## Ordination Mission Statement

Because C4SO exists to spread the gospel through church planting, we ordain ministers, both women and men, who are serving in paid or stipend positions in growing C4SO churches that need more clergy; or having achieved a healthy core congregation, are ready to lead a church plant.

## Alignment to C4SO’s Vision and Values

Ordination is a Divinely-initiated and sponsored process. Ordination is not a civil or personal right. Neither is it owned or controlled by various denominational judicatories or bishops. It is God who calls, gives character, gifts and ministry-fruit. The Church, in any form, recognizes such people, and in Anglican circles, discerns which of them are called to Holy Orders. Then we simply seal that discernment by publicly recognizing, in the form of an

ordination service, what God has done from before time (Psalm 139, Jeremiah 1:4-10, Isaiah 6:1-8, Luke 9,10 sending passages, Ephesians 2:10, John 20:19- 23, Revelation 22:5, etc.). The real differentiating power begins, stays with, and ends with God, not the candidate or church hierarchy. The diocese cannot give the gifts or fruit of the Spirit. We can coach, mentor, teach and offer relationship, but we can’t create effectiveness. And demonstrated fruit-of-proven—ministry is the chief box to be checked in the ordination process.

## Our Ideal Candidate

Because C4SO seeks to focus on church planting and multiplying apprentices to Jesus in kingdom living, we ordain people who are called to start churches or to work in a substantive, paid role in a growing local church.\* Such candidates will possess these attributes:

- Character and the lifelong pursuit of spiritual transformation through apprenticeship to Jesus, as the core of their life
- Competency: a proven track of fruitful ministry (based on the testimony of others)
- Calling: a clear purpose, people to serve and place to work
- Alignment to core C4SO values: Kingdom, Spirit, Formation, Mission, Sacrament
- A paid/stipend place to work/serve

\*A vocational deacon might not get paid from a local church, but they should be able to demonstrate the ability to raise money for whatever ministry they are doing in the world and should have the financial backing of a church.

The Ordination Preparation Team (OPT) serves the ordination process by helping to determine whether an individual’s call can be affirmed and by identifying areas of character or competency that need to be addressed during the Path to Discernment. Anglicanism is conciliar in its exercise of authority. Anglican Bishops, as part of their role, enjoy the absolute right of ordination and have full authority to ordain the Candidates they choose. That said, it is normative within Anglicanism for a Bishop to seek the counsel of ordained and lay people at the Local, Deanery and Diocesan levels as they consider a decision to ordain. Someone seeking ordination in C4SO would normally have a Rector’s Recommendation and Parish Discernment Committee Report in the Local Process, then a Dean’s Recommendation and an OPT Report in the Deanery Process as vital community inputs in the discernment process. Each of these four recommendations provides a unique perspective on the question of calling, as well as questions of character and competence.

### **Prior to the first OPT meeting, you will receive copies of:**

- The Postulant's Spiritual Autobiography and resume (including educational information)
- The Rector's Recommendations
- The Parish Discernment Report

*Church Planter Assessments and any other relevant documentation will be included as appropriate.*

OPT meetings with the Postulant will be held in person or by video conference. During these interviews, the Postulant will share about his or her sense of call and whether or not that has been affirmed. You will ask questions pertaining to call, character, and competency.

After meeting with the Postulant, you and the other members of the OPT will prayerfully confer together and produce a Report with your recommendations to give to the Canon for Ordinations and the Bishop.

### **This Report may:**

- Simply affirm the call and the Postulant's readiness
- Affirm the Postulant's call, with recommendations for further preparation and growth
- Question either the call or the Postulant's suitability for ministry, supported with specific reasons and areas of concern

The OPT will consist of five members, with no fewer than three required for a quorum. Members will be three clergy and two lay persons, representative of parishes within Deaneries. As detailed in the diocese's constitution and canons (Canon 6, Section 4), members will serve a two-year term and are eligible for re-appointment. Members must be mature believers and active members of a C4SO congregation and should be familiar with the ACNA ordinal, the theology of the Anglican church, the culture of C4SO, and the general requirements of Priestly and Diaconal ministry.



# GETTING TO KNOW THE POSTULANT

Your conversations with a Postulant will become the foundation of your Final Report. Please make sure to gather information to support your findings in the following six categories:

## 1. Is the Postulant called by God to seek Holy Orders as a Priest or Vocational Deacon?

### *Suggested Questions:*

**1** At what point did you begin to realize that you might be “called” to ordained ministry?

**3** Why are you seeking Holy Orders?

**4** Which order of ministry do you feel called to – Deacon or Priest? Why?

**2** Describe the meaning of your sense of call from:

- God
- Family
- Friends
- The Local Church

**5** What has led you to seek ordination with the Anglican Church of North America? If you were unable to be ordained within the Anglican Church of North America, what effect would that have on your involvement in ministry

## 2. What special gifts does the Postulant exhibit in his or her present ministries? How will these gifts enhance their ordained ministry?

### *Suggested Questions:*

**1** Have you ever been the leader of a small group or ministry? Have you started one from scratch?

**4** If you are ordained, where do you see yourself in five years?

**2** Have you ever led someone to faith? Tell us about it.

**3** Why do you feel called to ordained ministry when you can already be on mission and in ministry as a follower of Christ now?

## 3. In what ways has the Postulant been active in his/her congregation and community?

### *Suggested Questions:*

**1** What ministries are you active in within and without the local parish?

4. What special gifts does the Postulant exhibit in his or her present ministries? How will these gifts enhance their ordained ministry?

*Suggested Questions:*

**1** Are there any hindrances—like more schooling needed, small children at home, major life changes, etc.—that might stand in the way of you pursuing Holy Orders at this time?

**3** In the Book of Common Prayer, read The Examination for Deacon (pp. 543-544) or Priest (pp. 531-532) as appropriate. Is there anything in these promises that you cannot make with integrity before God and others?

**2** Is there anything that would disqualify you from Holy Orders permanently or temporarily?

5. If the Postulant is married or engaged, does he or she have a strong marriage relationship and a supportive Spouse or Fiance?

*Suggested Questions:*

**1** Have you discussed with your Spouse or Fiancé the possible personal and financial demands involved in the pursuit of and in taking Holy Orders? How does he or she feel about it?

6. Is there additional information regarding the Postulant that will be helpful to the Bishop?



# FINAL REPORT

by the Ordination Preparation Team

After the allotted meetings, you should meet together as an OPT without the Postulant to determine your recommendation, which will:

- 1 Affirm the Postulant's call and readiness with a recommendation to ordination, or**
- 2 Affirm the Postulant's call and readiness, with recommendations for further preparation and growth, or**
- 3 Question either the call or the Postulant's suitability for ministry, supported with specific reasons and areas of concern**

In your Report, supply sufficient written response to validate your findings but no more than a couple of pages.

**Once again, thank you for your service!**

If you have any questions, please let the Canon for Ordinations know: [ordination@c4so.org](mailto:ordination@c4so.org).







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