



Understanding the Transitional Diaconate in the Diocese of C4SO

Dear Friends,

Thank you for reading this short overview of the role of the transitional deacon in the life of our diocese.

The role of a deacon is crucial to our Anglican ministry, and a full experience of this life as a deacon is vital to developing as a priest. When a person is ordained to the transitional diaconate in C4SO, we follow the historic tradition of one year of service to this office, prior to being priested.

This is not simply a box to be checked. The year spent in the transitional diaconate is formative in many ways, both in areas of life-long service as well as spiritual formation in the context of ministry.

Some of this formation includes, but is not limited to:

- **Experiencing the spiritual mantle of ordained ministry.** This year of service offers the deacon an opportunity to practice living into their ordination vows. This may sound simple, but in real life, this is a great challenge. “Encouraging and equipping the household of God to care for the stranger, embrace the poor and helpless, and to seek them out, so that they may be relieved” is a profound calling. Shifting our eyes from inside to outside the church walls takes practice. Serving for a year before priesting provides space for this practice.
- **Serving as a transitional deacon gives the deacon opportunities to articulate their calling, explaining Anglican theology and practice to all kinds of people.** As a deacon, you will find many opportunities to practice the necessary skill set of responding winsomely to questions about the Anglican way.

- **Serving as a transitional deacon provides a year of personal and spiritual formation.**

Continuing to meet with a Spiritual Director and evaluating your day-to-day ministry will transform you. You will find there is a difference in ordained ministry compared to lay ministry. This year of diaconal service provides the formative place for any clergy person to continue to experientially grow into their calling.

- **For those transitional deacons who have had a life of ministry in another denomination, this year of diaconal service is also about learning what it means to be a part of a diocese, specifically C4SO.** Serving under our bishop and in community with our churches, relationally and in unity, will feel different from a non-denominational or other-denominational affiliation.

We've made a list of activities to help develop proficiencies and expertise in vocational ministry for the sake of others. Please work with your Rector to develop a plan that includes as many of these preparatory experiences as possible.

DIACONAL FORMATION

- Attend a priest as he/she performs last rites
- Explain the liturgical calendar in a missional way to an Anglican and non-Anglican
- Prepare for an Anglican wedding: counsel the couple, lead the rehearsal, prepare the liturgy, and help select the music
- Prepare for an Anglican funeral: grief counseling, receiving the body/ashes, prepare the liturgy for a celebration of life, a commendation, and a committal
- Visit hospice regularly for those in your church and broader community
- Visit hospitals regularly for those in your church and broader community
- Direct and participate in a local, national, or international mission trip
- Serve for a month in Children's Ministry, in Student Ministry, and on the Altar Guild
- Preach
- Teach a Bible study
- Lead an Alpha Course (if you run Alpha at your church)
- Teach a confirmation class
- Lead a service without preparation – as you may be required to do this in an emergency

- Pray extemporaneously in a variety of settings, including Sunday worship
- Explain the Anglican understanding of infant baptism to a non-Anglican
- Teach a baptism class. Then organize and prepare for the baptisms: font, oil, liturgy, music, etc.
- Lead a small group
- Have a faith conversation

PROFESSIONAL FORMATION

- Raise up a lay leader who regularly leads in the church
- Mentor a student
- Create, print, and then use service bulletins – or digital service bulletins – in a service
- Design a communication strategy for a new sermon series
- Prepare a Facebook and/or Instagram marketing campaign
- Review the church financials monthly and help lead a stewardship campaign

Almighty God, the giver of all good gifts, in your divine providence you have appointed various orders in your Church: give your grace, we humbly pray to all who are called to any office and ministry for your people; and so fill them with the truth of your doctrine and clothe them with holiness of life, that they may faithfully serve before you, to the glory of your great Name.

As you come to the end of your time as a Transitional Deacon, please reach out to us at ordination@c4so.org about scheduling your ordination to the priesthood.

Reading List for the Transitional Diaconate

The description of the Deacon's office, duties and calling can be found in the Anglican Prayer Book (2019), beginning on page 472. In addition, the recommended books below will give you a robust understanding of the history and office of the Deacon. Please complete this reading list during your year-long diaconal service.

Pastoral Ministry:

Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity, Eugene Peterson

Leadership/Authority:

A Church Called Tov: Forming a Goodness Culture That Resists Abuses of Power and Promotes Healing, Scot McKnight and Laura Barringer

Servant Leadership (Always a Deacon!):

Our Character at Work: Success from the Heart of Servant Leadership, Todd Hunter

Sacramental Imagination:

For the Life of the World: Sacraments and Orthodoxy, Alexander Schmemmann

Spiritual Enrichment:

The Spiritual Life, Evelyn Underhill

Poetry and Prayer:

Endless Life: Poems of the Mystics, Scott Cairns

Formation:

The Deeply Formed Life: Five Transformative Values to Root Us in the Way of Jesus, Rich Villodas

Suffering in Ministry:

The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society, Henri Nouwen