

GOD CALLING



INFORMATION ABOUT THE
VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT
PROCESS LEADING TO
ORDINATION AND
FIRST APPOINTMENT



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Anglican
Church Southern Queensland

*Creator God,
you have made us for yourself,
and our hearts are restless
until they find their rest in you:
teach us to offer ourselves to your service,
that here we may have your peace,
and in the world to come
may see you face to face;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Amen

A Prayer Book for Australia p.574

TAKING THE NEXT STEP...

Welcome to this further stage of exploring your sense of God's call upon your life.

This document sets out the process of Vocational Discernment and Formation and will guide you as you follow your call to ministry. As you do so, you will work in partnership with the church, in order to receive guidance and support, and submit your sense of call to the discernment of the church. Whether this 'testing of vocation' results in affirmation of your ministry as a layperson, or in ordination as a deacon or priest, may God richly bless you in and through it.

Please read through this document and discuss it with your Parish Priest. Having done so, should you wish to take the next step in exploring your calling, please contact:

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MINISTRY OF THE WHOLE PEOPLE OF GOD

The ACSQ seeks ways to raise up, affirm and celebrate strong, vibrant ministry by all God's people.

The call to ministry is a gift every Christian receives through baptism. Discerning the specifics of one's call is a lifelong adventure. Learning to respond willingly— and even joyfully—is the mark of mature faith. The principal focus of discernment concerns how closely an individual's gifts and experience match the unique challenges of ordained ministry in this time and place. We pray for the Spirit's guidance in all stages of this process, and we trust that the process will continue to evolve over time.

THE MINISTRY OF THE LAITY

The importance of the ministry of the laity - within individual faith communities, to the wider Church, and to the world at large - cannot be overemphasised. Every baptised Christian is called to be Christ's presence, whether that be in the home, in the workplace or in the community.

Lay people with particular gifts are encouraged to develop those gifts and to use them generously in the life of the Church and their local community. We celebrate the gifts that members of the laity bring to this mission, while recognising that this does not necessarily mean a call to ordination. In this Diocese, we are committed to finding ways to enable lay people to exercise their vocations. It is a denial of baptismal grace to take the view that a lay person with serious commitment to ministry can have that recognised only through ordination.

THE CALL TO ORDAINED MINISTRY

Within the Christian community, another kind of call may be discerned—the call to ordained ministry. Those who become deacons, priests, and bishops serve God and the Church by encouraging and supporting all the baptized in the diverse ministries to which they are called. For this reason, the selection and, later, the formation of those who will serve as clergy require careful attention, so that they may offer faithful and fruitful service as they work to build up the Body of Christ and to reveal the presence of God's kingdom on earth.

The ordained ministry represents a unique combination of privilege and responsibility. This makes it both rewarding and challenging. Priest and deacon alike become confidants of many people. People entrust them with their joys and sorrows, successes, and failures. Priests are also responsible for the sacramental life of the Church, and for the encouragement and enabling of the ministry of all members of Christ's body. Clergy are not expected to be perfect, but they are expected to have the inner capacity to meet these challenges.

The Anglican tradition understands that a genuine call to ordination comes to an individual within a community. The individual may experience a sense of God's call, which may or may not be confirmed by the local parish and the wider Church. Alternatively, the community may identify people in its midst and encourage them to explore the ordained ministry. As a Church we seek to help individuals to use the resources of their parishes and diocesan communities in clarifying their call.

The Church as a whole has a responsibility to discern which of its members are called to help lead the body of Christ - that is, to 'equip the saints' - for living out its vocation, not just in the congregation but in the wider world where God-talk and servant leadership are alien and risky. As the 'overseer' or shepherd of the people of God, the Bishop has a particularly important part to play in this process.

WHAT ARE THE QUALITIES WE ARE SEEKING IN OUR PRIESTS AND DEACONS?

The ACSQ embraces and celebrates Anglican comprehensiveness as central to our identity as a Diocese of the Anglican Church of Australia. This means that our clergy, people and faith communities reflect the breadth of Anglican theology and liturgical style. We seek ordained leaders who reflect this diversity, and who can work collaboratively and generously with people who may express their faith and ministry differently. Our ministry leaders need to empower congregations to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in ways that speak to the varied and emerging missional contexts of our communities. Our ordained leaders will need to be mission-focused, innovative, collaborative, and adaptive.

The qualities described below are not exhaustive - nor are they exclusive to priestly and diaconal ministry. We do not expect every candidate to exhibit all of these qualities, but we do expect them to exhibit most of them. Our discernment process focuses on discerning the presence, or the seeds of presence, of these qualities and abilities in every candidate who is recommended for the priesthood or diaconate.

Compelling spiritual life and a passion for the Gospel: We seek clergy who love God with heart, mind, and soul, and who desire to respond to the spiritual hunger in the culture at large and in our congregations. We seek clergy who have a vision for ministry which reflects the Anglican Church's distinctive character and who can guide our people to greater faithfulness and spiritual depth; clergy who have both a deep reverence for the sacraments at the heart of our liturgical life and a sacramental worldview.

Spiritual maturity, self-awareness, and authenticity: We seek clergy who have a strong Christ-centred spirituality, physical and mental stamina, healthy personal boundaries, and a willingness to grow and learn alongside others. We seek clergy who are able to persevere in challenging circumstances, recognize their personal growth edges, and are willing to learn new skills and ask for help.

Ability to communicate the Gospel in ways that people and communities find engaging and relevant to their lives: We seek clergy who connect with others and spark their curiosity from the pulpit, in personal conversation, and in social media. We seek clergy who are called to minister in a wide variety of contexts and engage people of all ages.

Ability to lead, organize, and equip others in ministry: We seek clergy who are able to equip others for meaningful Christian lives and vocations, inviting others into the life of Christian community and ministry. They should not be wedded to the predominant model of ministry of a solo pastor (the priest) ministering to all the people. We seek clergy who have community organizing skills and the ability to identify and mentor new leaders.

Innovative leadership: We seek clergy who demonstrate creativity, the capacity to discern new paths, and the willingness to make mistakes and learn from them. We seek individuals who are able to take risks and try new things in ministry; innovative leaders who see opportunities where others see decline, possibilities where others see insurmountable challenges.

The ability to lead congregations through change: We seek clergy who will lead our congregations through the uncertainty of changing parish life, to the mission fields to which God is now calling us. This requires a process of transformation on the journey, as well as the ability to adapt to new ways of being the Church. We seek clergy who are able to show the way, in faithfulness to God's call and in the challenging work of change.

A willingness and ability to be vocationally flexible: Our churches are in a variety of contexts in a variety of locations with a variety of needs. We seek clergy who are able to respond to this variety with their own flexibility. In addition, a growing number of congregations require clergy leaders who do not depend on them for their entire livelihood. Thus, we seek some priests who can offer their presence and their gifts as priests in a part-time or non-stipendiary capacity. We seek clergy who will demonstrate flexibility in their vision of professional ministry in order to respond to God's call to them and the church in our world.

STAGE 1 - THE DISCERNMENT JOURNEY

THE SEEKER – FEELS THE CALL TO ‘SOMETHING’ IN MINISTRY

When people first enquire about ministry, we call them a ‘seeker’ because they are seeking out God’s will for their life. We have faith that God will be with them in this activity, as Jesus promised that those who seek, will find. (Matt 7:7-8) However, it is not always guaranteed that we will find what we are expecting! This is the time to wonder, ‘Am I called to the ordained ministry or is God calling me to continue my ministry as a lay person?’

Seekers’ events are held at various times throughout the year. These are online and in-person opportunities to gather with others asking the same questions. During this time of exploration, the seeker will be asked to meet with their priest and members of their parish community, to explore aspects of ministry more deeply. The priest is invited to offer an opinion on the observed faith, gifts, character, and experience of the seeker. For some, the advice at this point will be to pursue some form of ministry as a lay person before continuing further. Further education and formation may be suggested to grow maturity of faith and test vocation further.

THE ENQUIRER - FEELS THE CALL TO ORDAINED MINISTRY

If an individual believes, after prayerful reflection, that they are called to ordained ministry in the Anglican Church, and this call is affirmed by others in their faith community, they may be invited to enter the Vocational Discernment and Reflection program, held annually at St Francis College. Through a series of workshops, enquirers test their vocation through theological reflection, group discussion, journaling, and interviews, so that their suitability for a possible future in ordained ministry can be discerned by themselves and the Church.

Before considering entering this stage, individuals should be realistic about what the future may look like and what is achievable. Financial, family, study, and other commitments should be considered intentionally and realistically. In order to enter the Discernment stage, candidates will need the endorsement of a priest sponsor who will provide a reference.

MINIMUM EXPECTATIONS OF ENQUIRERS

While Christians at any stage of their faith journey may explore vocation and ministry as a ‘seeker’, an individual will not be invited to begin the formal Discernment and Reflection program until they have had sufficient exposure to, and experience in, Anglican church life, mission, theology, and leadership.

Expectations will depend on individual enquirers, but in general, a candidate entering Discernment will:

- be committed to Christ, the Christian faith and the mission of the Church;
- have a demonstrated commitment to personal prayer and Bible reading;
- be a baptised and confirmed member of the Anglican Church, or have been formally received into the Anglican Communion;
- have a significant history of active involvement in an Anglican parish or faith community - usually at least two years;
- have the endorsement of their Parish Priest or chaplain;
- relate well to others, showing emotional and spiritual maturity;
- have experience in church leadership, either in liturgy, administration, mission or pastoral care;
- demonstrate capacity to undertake theological study at a tertiary level.

If invited into the Discernment and Reflection program, the individual will build on this foundation with confidence as they explore what future ministry God may have in store for them.

SPOUSE AND FAMILY

Expectations of clergy spouses and clergy families have changed greatly in recent times. While clergy spouses are encouraged to develop their own areas of ministry and interest within the life of the church, the suitability of an applicant for ordination is not determined on the basis of the abilities of their spouse or the willingness of their spouse to express their ministry within the same context as the applicant.

However, the work of an ordained person is demanding in ways that can put strain on a partnership. For this reason, questions to the applicant and spouse or potential spouse about present and anticipated challenges for them and their family, and about how they deal with tough questions together, are not only appropriate but essential.

THE VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT PROGRAM

The Discernment stage is intended to provide a climate of support, encouragement, and reflection. A number of people will assist enquirers to take the next steps in clarifying their vocation. The roles of the Diocesan Director of Discernment, the relevant Regional Bishop and Examining Chaplains are described in Appendix 3.

During this stage the enquirer will be invited to attend a series of Discernment and Reflection days. These are held on weekends and, for some of the program, spouses and fiancés are encouraged to attend and participate.

During the course of the program, the enquirer will:

- participate in a series of Vocational Reflection days with other enquirers;
- submit three essays entitled:
 - My Life Story (see Appendix 1)
 - My Understanding of God
 - My Understanding of Priesthood (or Diaconate as appropriate);
- submit their CV with academic transcripts;
- submit copies of baptism and confirmation certificates;
- submit a National Police Check;
- complete a Safe Ministry Check;
- obtain a Blue Card;
- provide proof of residency/citizenship (if applicable);
- submit a full current medical report from a qualified GP.

During the program, each enquirer will meet with:

- their Regional Bishop, who will also meet with a small group of parishioners who know the enquirer;
- two of the Archbishop's Examining Chaplains (in separate interviews).

The Bishop and each of the Examining Chaplains will submit a recommendation to the Director of Discernment indicating their support or otherwise for the candidate to proceed to the Vocation Discernment Conference (VDC). (See *Appendix 3*) They may recommend continuation of lay ministry, further education and formation, or an invitation to the VDC.

THE VOCATION DISCERNMENT CONFERENCE

At the conclusion of the Vocational Discernment program, enquirers wishing to proceed and who are endorsed by the interviewers, are considered for an invitation from the Archbishop to attend the Vocational Discernment Conference (VDC). They are, from this point, considered candidates who are quite serious about their suitability and readiness to enter the Ordained Ministry Formation program and all the commitment that entails.

Prior to attending the VDC, candidates will participate in a psychological capacity interview and in-depth interviews with three of the Archbishop's VDC Advisors. The VDC consists of a full day of group discussions, written tasks and group work. The Advisors work in teams of three, prayerfully considering all the information provided to them, and forming their own impressions of each candidate. They make a recommendation to the Archbishop about the suitability and readiness of the candidate to enter Formation the following year.

Based on all the information and reports available, including the advice of the Vocational Discernment Conference Advisors and Director of Discernment, the Archbishop decides whom to invite to proceed to the Formation stage. While the Advisors, Bishops and the Director of Discernment make recommendations to the Archbishop based on sound evidence and prayerful reasoning, it is the Archbishop's decision as to who will be invited to begin Formation.

Following the Archbishop's decision each person will meet with the Director of Discernment to discuss the decision and the advice arising from the VDC.

Each candidate proceeding to Formation must sign the *Memorandum of Understanding* regarding candidature for the ordained ministry in the ACSQ (*Appendix 4*).

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

The process of selection of candidates for ordination is carefully undertaken, with input from a wide variety of people. Equity and transparency are key factors in ensuring that people understand exactly what characteristics and qualities are sought when discerning vocation in the Church.

The ACSQ therefore refers to nine selection criteria when discerning the qualities of candidates. These are given in detail on the next two pages. While these are prayerfully applied, they are a framework and not a definitive checklist. It is God who calls people, and God's Holy Spirit who inspires others to see the potential in possible ministers, both lay and ordained.

The Director of Discernment, Bishops, Examining Chaplains and VDC Advisors are deeply cognisant of the selection criteria, and when interviewing, reading and observing, remain open to the Holy Spirit to reveal the capacity of each individual. There is a calling and vocation as much as anyone's, for which they prayerfully ask God's guidance.

People exploring vocation will do well to read the criteria carefully and seek out opportunities to discern and develop these areas in themselves. In doing so, no matter where they end up serving, they are growing in and into their greatest capacities.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

CRITERION A: VOCATION

Candidates should be able to articulate a sense of vocation to the ordained ministry and reflect on the effect of this on their life. They should be able to speak of the development of their inner conviction and the extent to which others have confirmed it. They should be able to show an understanding of what it means to be a deacon or a priest. Their sense of vocation should be obedient, realistic, and informed.

CRITERION B: MINISTRY WITHIN THE ANGLICAN CHURCH

Candidates should show an understanding of their own tradition within the Anglican Church, an awareness of the diversity of traditions and practice, and a commitment to learn from and work generously with difference. They should be able to speak of the distinctiveness of ordained ministry within the Anglican Church and what it means to exercise public ministry. They should be able to reflect on changes in contemporary society and the implications of this for ministry and the Church.

CRITERION C: SPIRITUALITY

Candidates should show evidence of a commitment to a spiritual discipline, which involves individual and corporate prayer and worship. They should be committed to a developing pattern of disciplined prayer, Bible study and the regular participation in Holy Communion. They should be able to show how they discern God's activity in their life, how their spiritual practice has changed over time and how it is changing them. They should be able to reflect on how engagement with the world and others both affects, and is affected by, their practice of prayer. Their spiritual practice should be able to sustain and energise them in daily life and future ministry.

CRITERION D: PERSONALITY AND CHARACTER

Candidates should be sufficiently self-aware, mature, and stable to show that they are able to sustain the demanding role of an ordained minister. They should be able to demonstrate how they have faced change and pressure in a balanced and flexible way and how they manage stress. Candidates should be seen to be people of integrity who can generate trust and display honesty. They should be able to speak of how they have coped with difficult life experiences, how they have reflected upon them and incorporated them within their life and understanding.

CRITERION E: RELATIONSHIPS

Candidates should show the capacity to build healthy personal, professional, and pastoral relationships. They should demonstrate an awareness of the need for, and ability to establish and sustain, appropriate boundaries between personal and professional life and within pastoral relationships. They should be able to manage conflict and show an ability to negotiate difficult relationships. Candidates should demonstrate good interpersonal skills, the willingness to learn from experience, and a commitment to building inclusive relationships within diversity. They should show the potential to exercise effective pastoral care. Candidates must be willing to live within the discipline of [*Faithfulness in Service*](#).

CRITERION F: LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

Candidates should demonstrate an ability to offer leadership in the Church community and in the wider community as appropriate. This ability includes the capacity to offer an example of faith and discipleship which is inspiring to others and witnesses to the servanthood of Christ. They should show a commitment to identifying and nurturing the gifts of others and be able to collaborate effectively. Candidates should be able to identify their own leadership style and reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of this and of the different ways in which leadership may be exercised within the Church. They should be able to be flexible and adaptable in leadership and demonstrate ability to guide and shape the life of the Church community in God's mission to the world.

CRITERION G: FAITH

Candidates should show an understanding of the Christian faith and a desire to deepen their understanding. They should demonstrate a personal commitment to Christ and a mature, robust faith which shapes their life and work. Candidates should show an ability to reflect critically on their faith and make connections between faith and contemporary life. They should demonstrate a capacity to communicate their faith engagingly and effectively.

CRITERION H: MISSION AND EVANGELISM

Candidates should demonstrate a personal commitment to mission that is reflected in thought, prayer and action. They should show a wide and inclusive understanding of mission and the strategic issues and opportunities within contemporary culture. Candidates should be able to articulate the good news of the Kingdom appropriately in different contexts and speak of Jesus Christ in a way that is exciting, accessible, and attractive. They should enable others to develop their vocations as witnesses of the good news. They should show potential as leaders of mission.

CRITERION I: QUALITY OF MIND

Candidates should have the necessary intellectual capacity and quality of mind to undertake satisfactorily a course of theological study and ministerial preparation and to cope with the intellectual demands of ministry. They should demonstrate a desire to learn through the integration of academic study and reflection on experience and a commitment to this as a lifelong process of learning and formation. Candidates should show flexibility of mind, openness to change and challenge, and the capacity to facilitate learning and theological reflection within the Church community.

STAGE 2 - FORMATION FOR ORDINATION

It is important to note that:

- A. for all candidates invited into Formation, the first year is a provisional one, requiring positive reports from all aspects of the program to continue; and
- B. a person's acceptance into Formation does not guarantee that the Archbishop will ultimately ordain that person.

The formation period is normally three years, but may vary depending on the type of formation required for a particular person. It is a period of preparation for ministry and mission. It is aimed at helping to equip ordinands for growing the church and applying strategic ministry skills to this task.

There are three strands to the Formation for Ordination program:

1. Academic study - a Bachelor of Theology or equivalent
2. Spiritual and Ministry Formation - provided by ACSQ
3. Supervised Field Education - in a parish, school, or other ministry centre

Each strand has its own learning goals and works in harmony with the other two to ensure a balanced program of learning for head, heart, and hands.

St Francis' Theological College (SFC) in Brisbane is the ACSQ formation centre. All candidates for ordination in the Diocese of Brisbane study through SFC unless other arrangements are approved in advance by the Archbishop. Candidates who already have Theological qualifications from another institution are likely to have to enrol in and successfully complete a number of subjects to satisfy the Archbishop's academic requirements.

Before entering formation, students meet with the Director of Discernment and Formation, Principal, and Academic Dean to formalise an academic plan, and a personalised formation plan. It is important to work out a practicable balance of work, study, formation, and personal commitments which optimises the time spent within the life of the College community. Effective and enjoyable theological and ministry formation is achieved through involvement in community and every opportunity to participate should be taken.

The Archbishop requires regular reports from College staff, Examining Chaplains and Supervising Clergy in relation to each formation student's progress. It is therefore important for College staff to build up a full understanding and knowledge of each candidate. While academic subjects can be taken by distance education, this is not the preferred or best option. Because formation in community is so important, where possible within each person's plan, subjects should be taken face to face, rather than choosing an online learning mode.

SFC is a member of the University of Divinity and offers a broad and deep program, designed to meet the needs of all who are preparing to serve God in the ministry of the Church.

Formation students will usually enrol in the Bachelor of Theology course; however, postgraduate options can be considered where appropriate prior theological qualifications have been completed.

ACADEMIC STUDY

Theological education for ordained ministry in the ACSQ is offered at St Francis Theological College, with awards conferred by the University of Divinity. Individuals exploring a call to ministry are encouraged to enrol in one or more subjects at St Francis College while in Discernment to establish that they have the capacity and desire to complete the required award.

FOUNDATIONAL STUDIES

There is a common core of knowledge about the Bible, Christian beliefs, Church history and Mission and Ministry studies, which is needed by lay ministers, deacons and priests. All Anglicans exercising ministry are encouraged to undertake Theological study so that they are well equipped to guide others in the faith.

The eight foundational subjects can be studied at undergraduate or postgraduate level.

While names and subject codes may vary slightly, the foundational subjects are:

- BS1001X Reading the Bible: Introduction to Biblical Studies
- AL1002X Understanding the Biblical World: Biblical Languages and Cultures.
- CH1001X Telling History: Introduction to Church History
- CH1002X Building Christendom: Christianity and Imperium in the First Millennium
- CT1001X Thinking Theologically 1: Challenges and Tasks
- CT1002X Thinking Theologically 2: Theologies in Context
- DA1001X Forming Communities: Introduction to Church and Ministry
- DA1002X Being Christian: Foundation Capstone

It is possible to graduate after completing Foundational Studies with either a Diploma in Theology or a Graduate Diploma in Divinity. Both awards are conferred by the University of Divinity and details of the exact course of study can be obtained from St Francis College.

ADVANCED STUDIES (DIACONAL FORMATION PROGRAM)

Candidates for ordination as a permanent deacon complete a further eight subjects beyond the Foundational Studies and may graduate with an Advanced Diploma in Theology and Ministry.

A person selected for the permanent diaconate may not transfer to the Priestly Formation Program without the express permission of the Archbishop, regardless of their academic qualification. This is usually done on the basis of another Vocational Discernment Conference.

ADVANCED STUDIES (PRIESTLY FORMATION PROGRAM)

Ordinands in the Priestly Formation Program (PFP) will complete either the Bachelor of Theology or a Master of Divinity. The subjects studied in these awards need to be configured in such a way as to satisfy the Archbishop's requirements as well as meeting the University's degree rules. You are advised to consult with the Principal and the Academic Dean of St Francis College to discuss your academic studies, including possible transfer credit for prior learning.

No distinction is made in the formation program, including the academic requirements, between candidates who expect to receive a stipend to support them in their future ministry and those candidates who expect to minister without receiving a stipend.

Every ordinand is encouraged to complete their academic studies in the shortest possible time. The minimum recommended enrolment is 2 subjects per semester, so that the BTh can be completed within 6 years. A full-time student would normally take 4 subjects each semester and complete the degree in 3 years.

SUPERVISED FIELD EDUCATION

All those in Formation participate in a program of Supervised Field Education (SFE). An ordinand is expected to give up to eight hours per week in the academic term to parish life which involves Sunday worship and other ministry experience. A learning agreement is signed between the Supervisor and the ordinand. The ordinand is supported and offered feedback from a Field Committee comprising a number of members of the parish or faith community in which the ordinand is placed. In the course of three years, an ordinand usually has two parish placements.

The learning taking place in the ministry placement setting is documented with a portfolio of examples of ministry undertaken. This could include, but not be limited to:

- Copies of sermons and reflections
- Reflections on pastoral or liturgical activities
- Bible study notes or materials
- Records of missional initiatives
- Photos, videos, or audio recordings

ORDAINED MINISTRY FORMATION INTENSIVE WEEKENDS

Ordinands usually gather for five weekends each year for Ordained Ministry Formation Intensives. These focus on developing ministry skills, theological reflection, self-understanding and being introduced to diocesan policies and protocols.

CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION

Successful completion of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) is also a part of formation. CPE is a group and individual program, usually done within a hospital context. It combines pastoral practice with theological reflection and deeper personal insights.

PRAYER, SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR AND RETREATS

Ordinands are expected to develop a life of prayer. This involves the use of a Spiritual Director and participation in the annual Formation retreat. As well, there are regular Eucharists and opportunities for corporate worship at the College and encouragement to participate in these.

SUPPORT

One of the key benefits of on-campus study is the supportive environment of a community of students and faculty engaged in theological study and ministry formation. For some there will be an opportunity to live on site, others will live in their own homes.

If you are studying by distance mode, there will be a combination of online 'virtual' community and occasional on-site programs. While these 'residentials' are optional in most cases, they are required in some subjects and are recommended for everyone.

The Faculty is available for academic and personal support and the College Chaplain provides pastoral care to all ordinands. Throughout the period of formation candidates meet with their Spiritual Director at regular intervals as well as work closely with the clergy of their SFE placements.

DECISION—PROCEED TO ORDINATION

The Archbishop decides who will be ordained on the basis of regular reports on candidates throughout the period of formation.

Throughout the formation period, reports are provided to the Archbishop twice yearly from:

- The Academic Dean and/or Principal of St Francis College
- The Director of Formation
- Supervising Clergy
- Examining Chaplains

Additional information may be sought from others involved with the student. Please note that no feedback is ever sought from the College Chaplain or an ordinand's Spiritual Director except at the request of the ordinand.

Feedback is provided to the student via a twice-yearly conference with the Director of Discernment and Formation, College Principal and Academic Dean.

Each year, the Director of Discernment and Formation provides advice and recommendations to the Archbishop about who is suitable and ready to be ordained. Ordinands who are recommended to proceed will **normally** have satisfied all the requirements of formation and had their calling confirmed during this period.

Although formation *per se* never ends, this period of **formal Formation** culminates with either ordination (to the diaconate or priesthood) or an exit from the process for continued service as a lay person greatly enriched by the knowledge and understandings gained.

THE DIACONATE

The Anglican Church maintains the apostolic tradition of a threefold order of ministry: Bishop, Priest and Deacon. The diaconate (order of deacon) dates from the early Church and more recently there has been interest in renewing this ancient order. Some deacons are called to proceed to the priesthood. All three orders retain the ministry of deacon at their heart.

Deacons are commissioned agents of God and the Church taking the Gospel and the love of Christ into the world. Deacons engage in diverse ministries which may focus on outreach, pastoral care, social justice, education of the young, or numerous other fields. They are described as messengers, ambassadors, advocates. They are ecclesial persons sent by the church with the church's authority, through the person of the Bishop, to undertake significant tasks to further the mission of the Church. The ministry of deacons will vary according to their individual gifts.

Deacons have a distinctive liturgical role, calling the community to confession, proclaiming the Gospel, and assisting with the administration of the sacraments. As the deacon dismisses the gathered community all the baptised are sent to engage in God's mission in the world.

THE PRIESTHOOD

Deacons proceeding to the priesthood will ordinarily spend about one year as a deacon. The Archbishop continues to receive reports from supervising clergy and others involved in training and supporting the newly ordained. Based on all the information available, the Archbishop makes decisions about whom to invite to proceed to ordination to the priesthood.

EXPECTATIONS OF ORDAINED PERSONS

The Archbishop has certain expectations of all those who are ordained. These include:

- Participation in local on call hospital rosters
- participation in Diocesan Synod
- participation in the life of the local area deanery
- attendance at the annual diocesan or regional clergy conference
- participation in an annual diocesan clergy retreat
- regular meetings with a Spiritual Director
- regular supervision from a qualified Professional Supervisor
- commitment to continuing education (including Graduate Clergy Training – see below)
- compliance with the code of conduct ‘Faithfulness in Service’

GRADUATE CLERGY TRAINING (GRADUATE CLERGY TRAINING PROGRAM—GCT)

Newly ordained deacons and priests usually serve one or more assistant curacies. During this time, they experience ordained ministry with the support and guidance of experienced deacons and priests. The Post Ordination ‘Graduate Clergy Training Program’ assists reflection on this experience. Every baptised person is assumed to be engaged in a life-long process of growing in ministry and learning from that engagement. Special attention is given to this task in the first few years following ordination as a major transition is negotiated. This program runs for three years following ordination as a deacon.

Following satisfactory completion of an assistant curacy, the Archbishop may proceed to appoint a deacon or priest to another appointment. This may be:

- an incumbent of a parish
- a position in a team ministry
- a chaplaincy to a school, hospital or other organisation
- some other ministry position as models and needs emerge

CONTINUING EDUCATION & DEVELOPMENT IN MINISTRY

Learning in ministry does not finish with the completion of three years of the Graduate Clergy Program but continues throughout life. Such opportunities to learn are taken very seriously and there is a clear expectation that all those ordained and holding the Archbishop’s licence will participate in in-service training courses, clergy conferences and diocesan retreats.

St Francis College offers a range of postgraduate courses in areas of ministry and theology, as well as opportunities for advanced academic studies. Clergy are especially encouraged to:

- make active use of Roscoe Library at the College and to audit lectures in areas of interest
- engage in ongoing accredited professional development
- undertake training as Spiritual Directors or Professional Supervisors

CHAPLAINCIES—HOSPITAL, SCHOOL, WORKPLACE, & OTHER MINISTRIES

The Archbishop may also appoint suitably qualified and experienced deacons and priests to other kinds of ministries including chaplaincies in schools, hospitals, prisons or other areas. Often some parish experience is useful before appointment to other types of ministries. Sometimes additional formal qualifications are necessary to undertake such positions.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

ENQUIRERS – LIFE STORY

The *Life Story* is to help those concerned with the candidate's sense of call. It is a brief life history that highlights those experiences and developmental steps that have formed the candidate. It will include (but not exclusively focus on) those experiences the candidate identifies as having led them to offer for the ordained ministry in the Anglican Church. It should also reflect how God has been guiding, encouraging, sustaining, and challenging the candidate.

This autobiographical exercise is, in essence, an act of inner prayer before God. It is also a sacramental act in that the mystery of being or hiddenness of self is to be expressed objectively.

When the exercise is complete, the candidate is encouraged to make an act of dedication of their life in prayer. You may care to involve your Spiritual Director or Parish Priest.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE

Birth	Marriage or companionship
Childhood and Family Life	Family life – the role as mother or father
Education	Death or prolonged illness in the family
Adolescence	Present circumstance
Young Adulthood – aspirations	

EXPERIENCES OF LIFE

Celebration of self / Achievements	Sexual identity
Sense of frailty or sinfulness in human condition	Inner fears
Disappointments in self, others, or circumstances	Grief
Friendships	

PRAYER SOURCES

Preparation	Psalm 139
Who am I?	Psalm 8
Birth	Wisdom 7:1-6
Sinfulness	Psalm 51
Self and the Christ	Song of Songs 2:8-14
Self and others	John 15: 12-end
Self and Vocation	Psalm 145
Dedication of the Story	Psalm 103

THEOLOGICAL STUDIES (DIACONAL FORMATION PROGRAM)**FOUNDATIONAL STUDIES**

This requires the equivalent of one full-time year in the Bachelor of Theology program and involves the same subjects as studied by candidates for ordination as priest. A candidate not wishing to proceed to ordination may exit from the program with a Diploma in Theology after completing these eight subjects.

- BS1001X Reading the Bible 1: Introduction to Biblical Texts
- AL1002X Reading the Bible 2: Introduction to Biblical Languages
- CH1001X Telling History: Introduction to Church History
- CH1002X Building a Church: Christianity and Imperium in the First Millennium
- CT1001X Thinking Theologically 1: Challenges and Tasks
- CT1002X Thinking Theologically 2: Theologies in Context
- DA1001X Forming Communities: Introduction to Church and Ministry
- DA1002X Being Christian: Foundation Capstone

ADVANCED STUDIES

This requires the equivalent of a second full-time year in the Bachelor of Theology program. On completion of all sixteen subjects, the candidate will be eligible to graduate with the Advanced Diploma in Theology but may choose to undertake an additional eight subjects and graduate with the Bachelor of Theology.

- BN2002X Stories of The Early Christians: The Gospels and Acts in Context
- BN3001X Loving God: The Theological Imagination of John's Writing
- BN3002X New Testament Letters: The Voices of the Early Christians
- CT2001X Becoming Flesh: The Incarnation of God
- CH2002X The World 'Made New': European 'Reformations' and the Re-Construction of Identity
- DL3001X From Birth to Death: Life, Loss, and Liturgy
- DL3002X Anglican Identity: History and Practice
- DA2001X Growing Faith: Forming Christians in Multiple Contexts

THEOLOGICAL STUDIES FOR PRIEST CANDIDATES

FOUNDATIONAL STUDIES

This requires the equivalent of one full-time year in the Bachelor of Theology program and involves the same subjects as studied by candidates for ordination as priest. A candidate not wishing to proceed to ordination may exit with a Diploma of Theology after completing these eight subjects or with the Associate Degree in Theology after completing the necessary set of sixteen subjects.

- BS1001X Reading the Bible 1: Introduction to Biblical Texts
- AL1002X Reading the Bible 2: Introduction to Biblical Languages
- CH1001X Telling History: Introduction to Church History
- CH1002X Building a Church: Christianity and Imperium in the First Millennium
- CT1001X Thinking Theologically 1: Challenges and Tasks
- CT1002X Thinking Theologically 2: Theologies in Context
- DA1001X Forming Communities: Introduction to Church and Ministry
- DA1002X Being Christian: Foundation Capstone

ADVANCED STUDIES

This requires the equivalent of two further full-time years in the Bachelor of Theology program. The following subjects must be included in the degree.

- BA2001X Becoming the People of God: The Pentateuch in Context
- BN2002X Stories of The Early Christians: The Gospels and Acts in Context
- CT2001X Becoming Flesh: The Incarnation of God
- CH2002X The World 'Made New': European 'Reformations' and the Re-Construction of Identity
- DA2001X Growing Faith: Forming Christians in Multiple Contexts
- DA2002X Bearing Witness: Second Year Capstone
- BN3001X Loving God: The Theological Imagination of John's Writing
- BN3002X New Testament Letters: The Voices of the Early Christians
- *CT3001X At the Edge of Thought: Philosophy and Theology in Dialogue OR
- *CT3300T Atheism for Christians
- DL3001X From Birth to Death: Life, Loss, and Liturgy
- DL3002X Anglican Identity: History and Practice
- XD3001X Forming Disciples: Undergraduate Capstone

** one of these must be completed*

ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

DIOCESAN DIRECTOR OF DISCERNMENT

The Director of Discernment has responsibility to facilitate the process, from first enquiry to entry into Ordained Ministry Formation, and the reporting process throughout the Formation process. The role is one of coordination and oversight, reporting and coordinating reports to the Archbishop up to ordination as a deacon or priest.

The Director of Discernment is the diocesan point of reference to whom the enquirer is directed after indicating to their parish priest a sense of call to ordination. The Director of Discernment acts as coordinator of the process and of the documents and files relating to it and facilitating the training days during enquiry. The Director of Discernment is available to resource and assist everyone involved in the process. Contact details for this person are on Page 1 of this document.

REGIONAL BISHOP

After receiving advice from the Director of Discernment about a person enquiring about ordination, the Regional Bishop interviews the person. The Bishop then arranges to meet with, either together or separately; the enquirer's parish priest and a cross-section of the parish (up to 6 people). The enquirer is told of this process.

At the meeting/s with parish priest and representatives, the group will:

- Agree confidentiality
- Invite unstructured conversation about the enquirer's involvement in the life and ministry of the parish
- Work through the examination questions and invite comments on the person

The Bishop will note briefly the responses and seek consensus as to whether there is solid support for the person to continue towards ordination. The Bishop writes a report to the Director of Discernment with notes of the meetings.

If the Bishop believes that the person should not proceed, the Bishop reports that to the Director of Discernment who presents a report to the Archbishop who will make a final decision. If the decision is not to proceed, the Director of Discernment will meet with the enquirer to discuss the Archbishop's decision and encourage them in their ministry as a lay person.

EXAMINING CHAPLAINS

The Examining Chaplain's task is to examine candidates, to report regularly to the Archbishop, and present to the Archbishop those suitable for ordination as deacons or priests. The purpose of the examination is to discern the presence of the character and skills needed for the proposed vocation. Ordinands should reflect or be moving toward the criteria for selection.

The means of examination include:

- careful listening to and questioning of the candidate
- careful reading and analysis of essays and other material provided
- seeking feedback from others with direct experience of the candidate

STAGES OF EXAMINATION

The period of examination extends from the initial enquiry through to ordination to the diaconate or to priesthood. There are three stages:

STAGE ONE: DISCERNMENT

As one of the steps during discernment, each enquirer will meet with two Examining Chaplains whose pre-conference reports form part of the basis for the Archbishop's decision to invite the person to attend the Vocational Discernment Conference.

STAGE TWO: VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT CONFERENCE

Some examining chaplains will join the Vocational Discernment Conference as Archbishop's Advisors. The Archbishop's Advisors are comprised of examining chaplains and may include other clergy or lay people. Candidates are interviewed just prior to the VDC regarding vocation, understanding of the nature of God, family life, spirituality, leadership ability, etc. At the end of the VDC the Archbishop's Advisors meet to discern together what to recommend to the Archbishop regarding each enquirer.

STAGE THREE: FORMATION

Each Examining Chaplain will interview twice annually ordinands assigned to them.

GENERAL:

- The Examining Chaplain is to arrange all interviews.
- A brief report of every interview is provided to the Director of Discernment.
- Examining Chaplains will meet together from time to time for review and training.

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

REGARDING CANDIDATURE FOR TRAINING FOR THE ORDAINED MINISTRY IN THE DIOCESE OF BRISBANE

I, _____
of, _____
Address

acknowledge and accept that my candidature for the ordained ministry in the Diocese of Brisbane is on the following terms:

1. My acceptance as a candidate in formation is not acceptance for ordination.
2. The period of my candidature in formation for the ordained ministry is a period of testing my vocation to and suitability for the ordained ministry.
3. I am primarily responsible for my financial support during the period in which I am a candidate in formation.
4. I may choose to withdraw from formation at any stage during the period in which I am a candidate in formation.
5. The Diocese of Brisbane may discontinue my candidature at any time.
6. The Diocese of Brisbane makes no undertaking that I will be ordained at the conclusion of my period of formation.
7. The Diocese of Brisbane cannot guarantee that subsequent to the initial placement, persons ordained will be deployed by the Diocese in a stipendiary position.
8. Should I proceed to be ordained I agree:
 - (i) to complete satisfactorily a period of assistant curacy (one or more) in Brisbane and, when deemed ready for appointment to a first incumbency (or other appointment), to serve in that first charge satisfactorily, usually for a period of three (3) to four (4) years, before considering a further appointment in Brisbane or elsewhere; and
 - (ii) to abide by a protocol in place among Australian Bishops that 'no priest or deacon who has been in their present placement for under four (4) years can be actively considered for any appointment without the expressed approval of the appropriate Bishop'.
9. I give permission for St Francis Theological College to provide the Diocese of Brisbane with details of my academic program, including subjects chosen for study with the University of Divinity and my academic results in those studies.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

PERMANENT DEACONS APPLYING TO THE PRIESTHOOD

No formal discussion until at least THREE years after ordination as deacon.

The deacon makes an appointment to see the Regional Bishop who, after the interview, meets with the parish priest and with leaders of the deacon's faith community respectively to seek their affirmation and support of such a move. (If the spouse of an ordained person seeks ordination it may be appropriate to consult with leaders from a previous parish, rather than from the current parish.)

If the Regional Bishop believes the deacon should proceed, the Director of Discernment will arrange for the deacon to meet with two Examining Chaplains. (If the Regional Bishop is satisfied the deacon should not proceed, the Director of Discernment presents a report to the Archbishop who will make a final decision. If the decision is not to proceed, the Regional Bishop will meet with the deacon to discuss that decision and confirm them in the diaconate.)

The deacon submits their academic record to the Director of Discernment.

The Director of Discernment provides a summary of the reports from the Regional Bishop and the two Examining Chaplains and the academic record, on the basis of which the Archbishop will decide whether the Deacon should proceed. (If the decision is not to proceed, the Regional Bishop will meet with the Deacon to discuss the Archbishop's decision and confirm them in the diaconate.)

If confirmed to proceed to **Priesthood:**

Two Year Process

Year One:

- meet with Principal to plan studies and have plan approved by Archbishop
- undertake directed reading and submit an essay on priesthood.
- meet twice each with two Examining Chaplains.
- attend the Vocational Discernment Conference.
- if OK given, proceed to second year.

Year Two:

- participate in formation as required including recommended academic courses.
- complete CPE, if necessary.
- attend the Graduate Clergy Program and in-service days as appropriate.
- meet twice each with two examining chaplains

The Archbishop will make the final decision re: priesting on the basis of reports from:

- Parish Priest
- Regional Bishop
- Examining Chaplains
- College Staff
- Director of Discernment.