

ORDINATION PROCESS in MAINE

The Committee on Holy Orders (COHO) is pleased to present this revision of the ordination process for the Diocese of Maine. Procedures and policies, which comply with and flesh out the current canons of the national Episcopal Church, have been drawn up after thorough study, discussion, and consultation with many in our diocese and throughout the Church.

Our goal has been to provide a "journey in formation" that is based in the baptismal ministry of all persons, focuses on the spiritual and personal development of those considering ordination, and is guided by the leadership needs of this diocese and the Church at large. At the same time, it has been our desire to design and model interactions with interested persons and congregations that respect the diversity of our diocese and the wide range of skills, life experiences, and individual callings of those who approach us for consideration.

With strict adherence to Title III of the National Church Canons, two basic processes have been developed for moving toward Holy Orders: one for ordination to the Diaconate, and the other for ordination to the Priesthood (including a period in the Transitional Diaconate). Grounded in the vastly more numerous and arguably more extensive ministry of God's People, the Laity, these two orders—together with the Episcopacy—offer a ministry of service, support, and leadership to the entire Church. Since each Order, Diaconate and Priesthood, is a unique ministry in itself and requires many unique skills, the requirements for consideration and the process of formation for each differ somewhat. Both begin, of course, from a similar understanding of ministry and the same base in Canon.

For this reason two distinct handbooks have been developed to describe each process—one (red) for ordination to the Diaconate and the other (blue) for ordination to the Priesthood, with its preceding period of Transitional Diaconate. Since both processes start out of the base of the same canonical prerequisites, the handbooks share an almost identical introductory section, but each has a series of Appendices appropriate only to its process.

Baptismal Ministry: the Foundation

All of us recognize, of course, that those in Holy Orders—Deacons, Priests, Bishops—represent but a very small portion of the entire ministry of Christ within the Episcopal Diocese of Maine. The more comprehensive and pressing question, therefore, is how can we assist each other in discerning and developing the individual ministries of all of God's People here—only a few of whom will be set aside by ordination to provide support, service, and leadership for the ministry of the rest of Christ's baptized.

Discernment of Ministry—a Cornerstone

To this end, the Commission on Ministry has developed an extensive process for the Discernment of Baptismal Ministries. This begins with an annual "Ministry Faire" for the "celebration of baptismal ministry"—with displays and workshops on many aspects and varieties of ministry, formation and spiritual growth. The Discernment Process continues in segments. The first is a regional program for all interested individuals to explore together in small, facilitated groups their growing sense of the direction their baptismal ministry might take. The second phase for anyone considering the possibility of ordination involves focused, small-group discernment of that particular vocation. Participation in the appropriate segments of this Discernment Process, or its equivalent, is a mandatory prerequisite for Maine's ordination process.

All of this is unfolding in God's time and, we trust, with God's grace and guidance. At times it seems incredibly complex and voracious of time, energy, and attention. However, those of us who have been privileged to participate in its refinement and to journey as companions to persons "on the way" have found ourselves honored, excited, and blessed with the joy and power of God's Spirit working in our midst. The Commission on Ministry, the Committee on Holy Orders, and the Bishop stand ready to assist you in any way we can; please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns. Into this continuing, demanding journey we invite you--as inquirer, mentor, or companion.

Very truly yours in Christ,

The Rev. Paige Blair, Co-Chair pblair1@earthlink.net

The Rev. Tim Walmer, Co-Chair twalmer@beeline-online.net

INTRODUCTION

A study group consisting of members of the Committee on Holy Orders (COHO), the Standing Committee and resource people of the Diocese of Maine has prepared this handbook. COHO is grateful to those dioceses whose ordination handbooks have contributed ideas and wordings to this one. Among them are the Dioceses of Connecticut, Vermont, Rhode Island, Chicago, and Massachusetts.

This handbook is designed to assist both:

1. persons who believe they may be called to ordained ministry and
2. individuals who will be called to assist them as the Church discerns that call.

Within the framework of the Canons of the Episcopal Church, this handbook describes the steps taken in the process toward ordination. The first step that you will take is to complete the Diocesan discernment processes. It is the intent of the Diocese, with faith, trust and candor, to assist all baptized persons to hear and test calls to ministry within their congregation and community. After this crucial first step, the larger community of the Church will join your journey and also hear and test any call. This "larger community" is embodied in the persons of the Bishop of Maine, COHO and the Standing Committee. We are grateful that you are responding to a possible call to serve God as a Deacon or Priest. No matter how the discernment process turns out for you, this process of hearing a call confirms that you are called to committed service as an essential member of the Body of Christ. All the people who enter this process with you will give of their time, energy and prayer to help you discover just what this call is about. Even if your sense of call is clear and strong, we hope you will remember that this process is about discernment in community. This will help you stay open to those tough questions and challenges that this journey will ask of you.

It is up to you to use this process well. It is your job to know the process, ask questions, clear up confusion, and get help from the many sources mentioned in this handbook. We know that this process seems long, cumbersome and costly. We promise our best efforts to prevent unnecessary obstacles and unexpected delays; but we know that real hardships happen. We urge you to practice faithfulness and use this time to foster a continuing conversion into a life with Christ.

Committee on Holy Orders
April 2005

CALL TO MINISTRY

Baptized Christians

We are all Christian ministers by virtue of our Baptism. We are all called to share in Christ's eternal Priesthood. Thus the ministry of the laity is the foundation upon which the Church was established, the structure which gives it strength throughout its history. We emphasize the importance of lay ministry to the lives of individual faith communities and the larger Church. Every Baptized Christian is called upon to bring the presence of Christ into the home, workplace, and the community. We celebrate the gifts that members of the laity bring to the Church, and we recognize that celebration of individual ministry need not, and usually does not, lead to a call to ordination.

Lay ministers with special gifts often need encouragement to allow these gifts to develop. This diocese is committed to helping our laity exercise their ministry. We strongly oppose the view that a lay member with serious commitment to ministry can have that devotion recognized or fulfilled only through ordination. Academic accomplishment, a life of caring and compassion, a history of personal struggle and courage, a strong personal sense of being called, are all valuable assets, but they do not of themselves mean a call to ordination. This diocese seeks ways to affirm and continue to raise up strong, vibrant lay ministers.

Ordained Ministers

Within the context of the general ministry of the people of God, the Church calls out certain women and men for ordained leadership roles. This leadership must be well chosen, highly trained and committed to serving God and the Church. The call to Holy Orders comes to the individual both from God and from the Church. Therefore discernment of the call occurs within the context of the community.

It is the task of COHO to assist the Bishop, the individual and the Church mutually to discern and evaluate a vocation to ordination. The need for ordained leadership in our Church suggests that only a very few will exercise their Baptismal ministry through ordination. It is the responsibility of the Bishop and the representatives of the Church to recommend prayerfully--and very possibly to identify and recruit-- the strongest and most appropriate candidates for ordained ministry to fulfill the mission of the Church at large.

The Order of Deacons

The word Deacon comes from a Greek word meaning "servant" or "envoy." The unique role of the Deacon among the ordained is to represent Christ and his redemptive love in the world and to interpret the needs, concerns and hopes of the world to the Church. The role of Deacon requires unique gifts and formation, serving as an "ordained messenger of the faith" outside the walls of the congregation. Deacons model how to be in the Church and in the world as servants, and they have the ability to inspire that life in others. Deacons help the laity to be free to find places of connection with God in their lives beyond Sunday morning. Deacons are not those who alone do the work of the Church in the world; rather, they gather, lead, equip, and inform the laity in that work. In all their work, Deacons enhance the ministry of the laity, not supplant it.

Deacons must be academically trained in Holy Scriptures and able to integrate scripture into their Diaconal ministry and the liturgy, often including preaching. They must be conversant in Christian ethics and societal issues. Deacons must be well versed theologically and translate through their work

the Church's understanding of the Paschal mystery, the Incarnation, Baptismal servanthood and Eucharistic community.

Because in this Diocese the Diaconate is non-stipendiary, those who are called to this ministry must exhibit the energy necessary for a full schedule of work both in and outside the Church. Deacons serve under the authority of the Bishop and are assigned in the Diocese of Maine where needed. Deacons will in most cases work under the direct supervision of a Priest, and the capacity to work comfortably in a subordinate position is fundamental to the Diaconate. Deacons will be expected to live a Rule of Life, which includes prayer, immersion in Scripture, self-examination and regular study. Deacons will seek regular continuing education opportunities in order to grow in their vocation. Lastly Deacons will participate in the diocesan community of Deacons as fully as possible.

The Order of Priests

The ministry of the Priest, as a representative of Christ and the Church, is customarily, though not exclusively, within a designated congregation where the Priest serves primarily as celebrant of the sacraments and transmitter and interpreter of the tradition of the faith. The Priest is also a participant in the collegium of presbyters and assists the Bishop in the councils of the diocese. Essential elements for this ministry are prayer, reflection, study, teaching, preaching, so that the sacerdotal life is lived with integrity and depth. In the hands and heart of the Priest should reside such a love of Christ and the Church that others are drawn into the grace of a spiritual life.

The Priest is also responsible for administration and institutional community building. A Priest is a representative, calling forth the priesthood of all believers and providing an example of a faithful life in Christ. Perhaps the greatest challenge for today's Priest is to lead the Body of Christ in living out its mission in the world. The Priest must be able to equip the saints for their ministry, not just in the parish, but in the wider world where God-talk and servanthood are alien and risky.

A profile of Deacons and Priests we seek in the Diocese of Maine

We believe that it is fair and helpful to all who take part in this process for us to be clear about the qualities and attributes we seek. First of all, the Deacons and Priests we seek must be committed to knowing and following Jesus, the Christ, and showing strong signs of growth toward maturity as Christians.

We believe that a person called to ordained ministry must:

- Firmly believe the vows he or she will take at ordination regarding the Holy Scriptures and conformity to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Episcopal Church. She or he will accept the authority of the Bishop and have an open mind and loving heart for those within and outside our Church, who faithfully struggle with their beliefs.
- Show ability to offer leadership in the Church and in the outside world. This would include the capacity to offer an example of faith and discipleship, to collaborate effectively with others and to guide and shape the life of the Church community in its mission to the world as community-builders, competent administrators, and reconcilers.

- Be able to speak of his or her vocation to ministry and mission. This sense of vocation will be obedient, realistic, and informed.
- Show an understanding of the Christian faith and a desire for a deeper understanding. Be in love with the faith, being formed by the Anglican tradition and always open to mystery and God's new revelation. Have a vision of what the community of faith might become and an energy and enthusiasm to inspire others. Delight in shared ministry. Demonstrate personal commitment to Christ and a capacity to communicate the Gospel.
- Show evidence of a commitment to a spiritual discipline, involving individual and corporate prayer and worship. Be able to create a sense of harmony, order and reverence which draws people into the presence of God.
- Be sufficiently mature and stable to show ability to sustain the demanding role of an ordained minister and to face change and pressure in a flexible and balanced way. Know how to get and receive consultation and personal help when needed.
- Demonstrate self-awareness and self-acceptance as a basis for developing open and healthy professional, personal and pastoral relationships as ministers. Possess a sense of humor, reflecting trust and delight in God's surprises. Show respect for the tradition of the Church on matters of sexual morality and other ethical issues.
- Have the necessary intellectual capacity and quality of mind to undertake a course of theological study and pastoral preparation.

These qualities will be most obvious in well seasoned individuals, though no one is expected to possess all of them. In those who are still very young, we will seek a particular hunger to grow in these areas. We hope that we will always make room for the godly mavericks who will never fit a checklist.

Because the training and nurturing of Postulants and Candidates require a considerable commitment of time and energy from the Diocesan community, it is impossible for the Diocese to accept all persons who might qualify for Holy Orders. In selecting Postulants COHO will also consider the particular needs of this Diocese as they may be manifested at various times.

THE PRIESTHOOD

I. PREPARATION BEFORE NOMINATION

- A. Before a person is nominated as a Postulant for Holy Orders, the following requirements must be met:
1. The person has been, and continues to be, engaged in spiritual formation, usually with assistance from a spiritual director, pursuing a study of scripture and theology, continuing in prayer and liturgy, and demonstrating an active ministry in the Church.
 2. The person has consulted with the member of the Clergy in charge of the Congregation ("the Priest in Charge"). The Priest in Charge has made a careful inquiry, in consultation with other leaders of the Congregation, into the physical, intellectual, moral, emotional, and spiritual qualifications of the person. In the course of such inquiry the Priest in Charge shall assist the person in determining to which order the person feels called, the grounds of the desire for admission to Holy Orders, and such personal circumstances as may bear on the person's qualifications or course of preparation.
 3. After at least one year as a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in a congregation in the Diocese of Maine, the person must begin and complete either the two-part discernment process sponsored by the Commission on Ministry ("Here I Am" and "Bound with Cords of Love") or an equivalent approved by The Bishop and the Commission on Ministry. The person must provide COHO such information as it may request concerning his or her participation in the discernment processes. For further information on discernment contact the Commission on Ministry. See also Appendix J.
 4. The Priest in Charge has made a written report of his or her findings to the Bishop. If the Priest in Charge is unable to support the person for Postulancy, he/she will assure that the person receives pastoral care.

II. NOMINATION FOR POSTULANCY

(Note: It is the sole responsibility of the nominee at all times during the process to ordination to provide the materials and information to the Priest in Charge, Vestry/Bishop's Committee, Bishop, COHO and the Standing Committee in a timely manner. The nominee should refer to the Calendar set forth in Appendix A to determine deadlines.)

- A. The nominee shall submit to the Bishop all documents and supporting material as outlined in Appendix C.
- B. The nominee shall schedule a personal conference with the Bishop, unless such a personal conference has been held within the last six months.
- C. Once all of the submissions and personal conference are completed, the nominee applies to the Bishop for a Postulancy interview with COHO.
- D. Before accepting any nominee for a Postulancy interview, the Bishop shall review all materials submitted, including a thorough review of a full transcript of any completed academic work, and make a determination of intellectual ability.

III. FROM NOMINATION TO POSTULANCY

- A. Once each year the Bishop will select and notify the nominees to be interviewed for Postulancy and shall notify all nominees who are not selected for interview. Persons not accepted for interview may reapply for a Postulancy interview but no sooner than the next time for the annual selection of interviewees for Postulancy.
- B. An interview team of people selected by COHO and the Bishop will conduct an interview for the selected nominees and report its findings to COHO and the Bishop. The process will be able to accommodate all who are invited to the Interview Day. The interview will be a time of conversation and mutual discernment.
- C. COHO will receive the report of the interview team and make its recommendations to the Bishop.
- D. Persons recommended by COHO after the interview day will then submit to medical, psychological and background check procedures as specified by Canons III.6.1(b)(i) and diocesan policies and procedures. The cost of these exams and background check is paid by the person being recommended by COHO after Interview day. Sponsoring congregations should be prepared to assist with these expenses. The reports of all these exams are sent directly to the Bishop and are confidential material kept in a separate file in the Bishop's office. In the name of good stewardship, the expense of the medical exam should be submitted to insurance carriers.
- E. The Bishop acts on COHO's recommendations. The Bishop and COHO will discuss any application in which the Bishop does not accept COHO's recommendation. By letter the Bishop will inform all applicants of the decision regarding the application. Those applicants not accepted for Postulancy shall be referred for appropriate support and discernment. All persons not accepted as Postulants and wishing to be reconsidered must reapply in compliance with Sections I. and II. above.
- F. As part of any recommendation for Postulancy to the Priesthood, COHO may (1) develop a suitable monitoring of a program of formation including theological training, practical experience, emotional development and spiritual formation, and (2) insure that pastoral guidance be provided throughout. COHO will continue active involvement in determining the course of study during seminary.

IV. FROM POSTULANCY TO CANDIDACY

- A. A COHO Contact Person will be assigned at the time of acceptance as a Postulant. The duties of the COHO Contact are set forth in Appendix J. In the spring of each year a seminarian shall provide a transcript of his or her course of study to the Bishop and to the COHO Contact who shall present it to COHO.
- B. The Postulant will communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter four times a year in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the postulant's academic, priestly, human, spiritual and practical development.

- C. In an effort to provide opportunity for members of the Standing Committee and COHO to meet in an informal setting with Postulants and Candidates for a time of fellowship and check-in, an annual event will be planned at a time and place accessible to the greatest number of Postulants and Candidates possible.
- D. Postulancy lasts at least six months. Prior to a Postulant obtaining an interview for Candidacy the Postulant shall complete the Application to the Bishop set forth in Appendix E.
- E. Interviews for Candidates shall take place at a time designated by the Bishop in consultation with COHO. Postulants are responsible for assuring submission of all application materials to the Bishop's office prior to the interview.
- F. The interview (which may be conducted by a subcommittee of members of COHO) shall not only review the matters considered at the time of the Postulancy interview, but shall inquire into the readiness of the Postulant to make the declaration required by Article VIII of the Constitution:

"I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Episcopal Church."

The Postulant can expect to reflect on this question again with the Standing Committee, and again at the time of his or her interview for ordination to the transitional diaconate.

- G. After considering the results of the interview, COHO will submit its recommendation to the Bishop as to the Postulant's readiness. COHO will provide the Standing Committee with such supporting information as the Standing Committee may reasonably require to support its determination as to the readiness of the Postulant to make the declaration set forth in the above Paragraph E.
- H. The Standing Committee interviews the Postulant and reviews documentation. No one will be admitted to Candidacy without the approval of the Standing Committee.
- I. The Bishop acts upon the recommendation of COHO and, with the approval of the Standing Committee, enrolls the Postulant as a Candidate.

V. FROM CANDIDACY to TRANSITIONAL DIACONATE

- A. Candidacy lasts at least six months. The following must be completed by the Candidate before applying for ordination:
 1. A second medical exam with the report sent to the Bishop using the special form provided by the Church Pension Fund. In the interest of good stewardship the cost of the medical exam should first be submitted to the Insurance Carrier. The balance is then divided between the Candidate and the Diocese.
 2. A psychiatric exam with confidential report sent to the Bishop's office. The cost of this exam is divided between the Candidate and the Diocese.

3. A certificate from the seminary or other approved program of preparation showing the Candidate's scholastic record in the subjects required by the Canons, and giving an evaluation with recommendation as to the Candidate's other personal qualifications for Holy Orders together with a recommendation regarding ordination. COHO shall further determine satisfaction of any requirements it may have set for the Candidate at any time during Postulancy or Candidacy.
4. A reaffirmation of the certificate from the Priest in Charge and Vestry/Bishop's Committee of the Congregation as required by Canon III.8.5(a)(2). See Appendix H.
5. An essay by the Candidate reflecting the readiness of the Candidate to make the declaration required by Article VIII of the Constitution, the Oath of Conformity:

"I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline and Worship of the Episcopal Church."

6. Candidates must take the General Ordination Exam or other examination as determined by COHO and the Bishop. The General Board of Examining Chaplains or other evaluation body shall inform COHO of the results. If any further evaluation or remediation is required, it will be done in accordance with COHO's policy as set forth in Appendix L.
 7. COHO certifies that the Candidate has demonstrated proficiency in all required subjects. Canon III.8.4(e). The Standing Committee shall not recommend a Candidate for ordination to the Transitional Diaconate unless it receives this certification.
- B. COHO reviews the application for ordination to the transitional diaconate and makes recommendation to the Standing Committee. Canon III.8.6(e)(3). COHO may choose to interview the Candidate as part of its review.
 - C. The Standing Committee reviews the application. No person may be ordained without the recommendation of the Standing Committee.
 - D. After receiving a favorable recommendation from the Standing Committee the Bishop may take order for the Ordination.

VI. FROM TRANSITIONAL DIACONATE TO PRIESTHOOD

- A. After ordination the Transitional Deacon must obtain an appointment to serve in a parochial cure, or some other opportunity judged appropriate by the Bishop, before being ordained to the priesthood.
- B. Ordination to the Priesthood may not take place until at least six months after ordination to the Transitional Diaconate. Canon III.8.7(a)(1).
- C. The applicant shall submit to the Bishop's Office the application and attachments, as set forth in Appendix I. The Bishop shall certify that the terms of Postulancy, Candidacy and service in the Diaconate have been completed.

- D. COHO attests to the Standing Committee and Bishop that the program of formation has been successfully completed and recommends the deacon for ordination to the Priesthood. Canon III.8.7(b)(5).
- E. The Standing Committee, after reviewing the reports and conducting such other investigation (including a personal interview) as it may, in its discretion, deem appropriate, makes the testimonial set forth in Canon III.8.7(c). No person may be ordained without the recommendation of the Standing Committee.
- F. After recommendation by the Standing Committee the Bishop may take order for the ordination.

APPENDIX A

STEPS	COMMENTS	HANDBOOK REFERENCE
I. Preparation Before Nomination		
Meet with priest		I.A.2
↓		
Meet with Bishop		
↓		
Attend Ministry Fair; bring Priest or lay leaders as possible		page 1
↓		
Complete "Here I am, Send Me" Discernment Group	Pre-requisite: Year-round resident and communicant in good standing of a congregation in Diocese for at least one year	I.A.3
↓		
Complete "More Deeply into Christ" Discernment Group	Full report of participation sent to Bishop	I.A.3
II. Submit complete Nomination for Postulancy materials	Consult with Priest-in-Charge and Vestry/Bishop's Committee prior to completing nomination.	II. A-D; Appendices B and C
↓		
III. From Nomination to Postulancy		
Bishop approves persons to attend COHO Interview Day	Occurs once a year in late Fall	III.A
↓		
Interview Day Team reports to COHO		III.B
↓		
COHO reports to Bishop		III.C
↓		
Background Check, Psychological and Medical Reports completed		III.E
↓		
Bishop admits person as Postulant		III.F
↓		
IV. From Postulancy to Candidacy		
COHO assigns Contact Person		Appendix K
↓		
Postulant must comply with Ember Day communications	See Bishop for details, if needed.	IV.B.
↓		
Postulant begins training	Begins program of preparation as developed by COHO, the Bishop, and the Postulant. Bishop will oversee formation requirements/obligations. <i>Note:</i> Postulant must provide transcript or other progress report each Spring after end of semester.	III.F
↓		
Postulant completes of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)	CPE can be taken at any time prior to Candidacy	
↓		
With consent of Bishop, Postulant applies for Candidacy	Postulant must obtain separate endorsements from Priest-in-Charge and Vestry/Bishop's Committee. Postulant notifies COHO and Standing Committee of readiness for interview.	Appendices D and E
↓		
COHO interviews Postulant for Candidacy		IV.E
↓		
COHO recommends Postulant for Candidacy		IV.G

to Bishop and Standing Committee		
↓		
Standing Committee interviews Postulant and endorses for Candidacy		IV.H
↓		
Bishop writes letter admitting person as Candidate		IV.I
↓		
V. From Candidacy to the Transitional Diaconate		
Candidate takes GOE or other evaluative instrument	Must demonstrate proficiency in all required Canonical areas. COHO/Examining Chaplains recommend remediation if proficiency is not demonstrated.	V.A.5 Appendix L
↓		
Candidate completes of second set of Psychological and Medical examinations		V.A.1 and 2
↓		
With consent of Bishop, Candidate applies for Ordination to Transitional Diaconate	Candidate must obtain separate endorsements from Priest-in-Charge and Vestry/Bishop's Committee, and write essay on the Oath of Conformity. Candidate notifies Standing Committee of readiness for interview.	Appendices F & G
↓		
COHO reviews application and recommends ordination to the transitional diaconate.	COHO may choose to interview Candidate at this time	V.B
↓		
Standing Committee reviews application and recommends Ordination		V.C
↓		
Bishop ordains and approves assignment to parochial cure or other opportunity		V.D
↓		
VI. Transitional Diaconate to Priesthood		
Transitional Deacon applies to Standing Committee for ordination to Priesthood	Transitional deacon must obtain separate endorsements from Priest-in-Charge and Vestry/Bishop's Committee. Transitional deacon notifies Standing Committee of readiness for interview. COHO attests to successful completion of program designed during postulancy and recommends transitional deacon for ordination to the priesthood	Appendix H & I
↓		
Standing Committee recommends ordination	Interview may be required	VI.E
↓		
Bishop may take order for Ordination to Priesthood		VI.F

Appendix B

**DIOCESE OF MAINE
NOMINATION FOR POSTULANCY**

Date _____

To The Bishop of Maine:

We, whose names are hereunder written, testify to our belief (based on personal knowledge or on evidence satisfactory to us) that

Print name clearly

is sober, honest and godly, and that he/she has been a communicant of this Congregation in good standing since

_____. We do further declare that, in our opinion, he/she possesses such qualifications as fit him/her to be admitted a POSTULANT FOR HOLY ORDERS. We commit our congregation to involve itself in the nominee's preparation for ordination.

We set forth, in a letter or statement attached to this certificate, the grounds upon which we make our judgment of the applicant's qualifications.

SIGNED _____

Member of the Clergy in Charge of the Congregation to which Applicant belongs

VESTRY/BISHOP'S COMMITTEE OF THE CONGREGATION

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

(To be signed by a two-thirds majority of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee)

ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing certificate was signed at a meeting of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee of

(Name of Congregation)

at _____, Maine, duly convened on the _____ day of _____, _____, and that the names attached are those of all (or a two-thirds majority of all) the members of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee.

DATE _____ SIGNED _____

Clerk of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee

Attached is our statement concerning the applicant.

Appendix C

**DIOCESE OF MAINE
REQUEST FOR ADMISSION AS A POSTULANT FOR HOLY ORDERS**

To The Bishop of Maine:

I hereby request admission as a Postulant for Holy Orders.

I. Biographical Information

Full Name _____

Address _____

E-Mail Address _____

Telephone Home: _____ Work: _____ Cell phone: _____

Date of Birth _____ Marital Status _____

Name of Spouse: _____

I have resided in the Diocese of Maine since _____

I am a Communicant in Good Standing of the following Congregation: _____ Church,
_____, Maine since _____ (at least one year).

Name of Sponsoring Presbyter _____

Date and Location of Baptism _____

I was baptized by _____

Date and Location of Confirmation _____

I was confirmed by _____

I have () have not () previously applied for admission as a Postulant for Holy Orders.

If the answer is affirmative, please state details on separate attachment.

I intend to seek ordination to () the Diaconate () the Priesthood.

The Sponsoring Presbyter has informed me that she/he sent the written report (See Part V below) to the Bishop
on _____. (date)

II. Education History

Name of College/University	Years Enrolled	Degree/Major
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Describe in a separate attachment other training you have received that you believe is relevant.

III. Attachments

Note: This application will not be considered complete until all attachments are delivered to the office of the Bishop. Please note that all of these items will be copied and made available for Interview Team and COHO review.

- A. The certification from the Commission on Ministry of completion of its discernment process and the results of that portion of the discernment process designed specifically for applicants for Holy Orders. In special cases a letter from the Bishop verifying comparable experience satisfactory for discernment will replace the certification from the Commission on Ministry.
- B. An essay indicating why you are moved to seek Holy Orders.
- C. Full official transcripts of all post high school academic work completed. A baccalaureate degree or its equivalent is a requirement for ordination.
- D. Certification of participation in Diocesan course of training regarding appropriate sexual conduct, or equivalent training acceptable to the Bishop, or a written commitment to complete this training as soon as possible.
- E. List any current employment and any employment in the past ten years. Include name of employer, description of responsibilities and period of employment. A current resume is satisfactory for this purpose.
- F. If you have been previously married, please provide dates of marriage and divorce.
- G. *Nomination for Postulancy* with accompanying letter from the Vestry/Bishop's Committee (Appendix B), including detailed statement.
- H. Separate Letter of support from sponsoring Clergy (see part V of this Appendix.)
- I. The signed Representations and Authorizations page (Appendix C section IV).

IV. Representations and Authorizations

- A. I authorize the Commission on Ministry to release to COHO and to the Bishop those reports from the discernment program which are specifically designated for this reporting purpose.
- B. I understand that I am under a continuing obligation to provide COHO with any information that would correct any representations to COHO on any applications or other documents in its possession that are or become inaccurate at any time during the period subsequent to my being accepted as a Postulant for Holy Orders, and that failure to do so shall constitute grounds for my removal from the Register as a Postulant or Candidate.
- C. I authorize the Bishop of Maine and COHO to request from me any further information which is deemed relevant to determining my suitability or fitness for Holy Orders, or my continuing progress in the ordination process. If I am accepted as a Postulant, I understand that both COHO and the Bishop have a responsibility to seek and receive any information which they reasonably determine they must have in the exercise of their duties.
In every possible case, my permission and signed release will be sought for such an inquiry. However, I understand that information may come to the Bishop or to COHO without my knowledge or express permission. Wherever possible, questions arising from such information will be discussed with me. I acknowledge that information given to the Bishop may be offered in the understanding that the Bishop will hold such information confidential and that the Bishop, in that instance, must comply.
- D. I acknowledge that Postulancy and Candidacy are terms denoting canonical status and that the Bishop, in exercising the responsibilities of episcopal office, may need to seek information about me which is not specified in the procedures in this Handbook. I acknowledge the Bishop's prerogative to do so, and waive my right to claim privileged communication, except for those circumstances which are understood to be absolutely binding as to confidentiality (e.g., the Sacrament of Reconciliation). I understand that the Bishop will make no inquiry of my personal therapist, spiritual director or physician without my signed release, except in extreme cases (danger to self or to others) where circumstances require the Bishop to make such inquiry.

Date _____ Signature of Applicant _____

V. Letter of Recommendation from Sponsoring Presbyterian to the Bishop

To the Sponsoring Presbyterian:

Please write a letter to the Bishop with your recommendations about this applicant. Your letter will be shared with the Committee on Holy Orders. Please cover at least the following topics:

A. FINANCIAL

Please describe how the applicant will provide financial support for his/her self and family during the educational program required for ordination. In your opinion, are these expectations realistic?

B. FAMILY

If the applicant is not single, give a brief evaluation of the partner's feelings regarding the applicant's intent to enter Ordained Ministry. If the applicant has children, give a brief account of their feelings about the applicant's intent to enter Ordained Ministry.

C. EVALUATION

Please comment concerning your feelings about the applicant's strengths and weaknesses.
What is your assessment, factual and intuitive, of the applicant's quality of Christian commitment for Ordained Ministry?

D. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Anything else about the applicant that you feel is relevant for the Bishop's consideration?
If, in addition to this formal recommendation, you wish to communicate privately with the Bishop, please send a separate letter marked "Confidential to the Bishop."

Appendix D

**DIOCESE OF MAINE
LETTER OF SUPPORT OF APPLICATION FOR CANDIDATE FOR HOLY ORDERS**

Date _____

To The Bishop of Maine:

We, whose names are hereunder written, testify to our belief (based on personal knowledge or on evidence satisfactory to us) that

_____ print name clearly

is sober, honest and godly, and that he/she has been a communicant of this Congregation in good standing since

_____. We do further declare that, in our opinion, he/she possesses such qualifications as fit him/her to be admitted as a CANDIDATE FOR HOLY ORDERS with the intention to seek ordination to the Priesthood.

We set forth, in a letter or statement attached to this certificate, the grounds upon which we make our judgment of the applicant's qualifications.

SIGNED _____

Member of the Clergy in Charge of the Congregation to which Applicant belongs

VESTRY/BISHOP'S COMMITTEE OF THE CONGREGATION

(To be signed by a two-thirds majority of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee)

ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing certificate was signed at a meeting of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee of

(Name of Congregation)

at _____, Maine, duly convened on the _____ day of _____, _____, and that the names attached are those of all (or a two-thirds majority of all) the members of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee.

DATE _____ SIGNED _____
Clerk of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee

Attached is our statement concerning the applicant.

Appendix E

**DIOCESE OF MAINE
APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION AS A CANDIDATE OF HOLY ORDERS**

To The Bishop of Maine:

I, _____, hereby make application to be admitted as a Candidate for Holy Orders.
print name clearly

I am a member in good standing of the following Congregation:

_____ at _____, Maine

Name of Sponsoring Presbyter _____

I have been a Postulant since _____.

I have completed % of my course of study at _____.

I have completed the following Clinical Pastoral Education Program:

II. Attachments

Note: This application will not be considered complete until all attachments are delivered to the Bishop's Office.

- A. Evaluation and recommendation of the theological school or other program of formation as to the Postulant's personal qualifications for the exercise of Holy Orders.
- B. Endorsement letter from the Member of the Clergy in Charge of the Congregation.
- C. Letter of support from the Vestry/Bishop's Committee. (See Appendix D.)
- D. Evaluation and report from supervisor of the Clinical Pastoral Education Program.
- E. Full official transcripts of all academic work completed since becoming a Postulant.
- F. An essay on what the affirmation required by Article VIII of the Constitution means to you.

Date _____

Signature of Applicant

Appendix F

DIOCESE OF MAINE

LETTER OF SUPPORT OF ORDINATION TO THE TRANSITIONAL DIACONATE

Date _____

To The Standing Committee of the Diocese of Maine

We, whose names are hereunder written, do certify, after due inquiry, we are well assured and believe that

Name of Candidate

for the last three years has lived a sober, honest and godly life, and is loyal to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church, and does not hold anything contrary thereto. And, moreover, we think

Name of Candidate

a person worthy to be admitted to the Sacred Order of Deacons. *We set forth, in a letter or statement attached to this certificate, the grounds upon which we make our judgment of the applicant's qualifications.*

SIGNED _____
Member of the Clergy in Charge of the Congregation to which Applicant belongs

VESTRY/BISHOP'S COMMITTEE OF THE CONGREGATION

(To be signed by a two-thirds majority of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee)

ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing certificate was signed at a meeting of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee of

(Name of Congregation)

at _____, Maine, duly convened on the _____ day of _____, _____, and that the names attached are those of all (or a two-thirds majority of all) the members of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee.

DATE _____ SIGNED _____
Clerk of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee

Attached is our statement concerning the applicant.

Appendix G

**DIOCESE OF MAINE
APPLICATION FOR ORDINATION TO THE TRANSITIONAL DIACONATE**

To The Bishop of Maine:

I, _____, hereby make application to be ordained to the Transitional Diaconate
print name clearly

I am a member in good standing of the following Congregation:

_____ at _____, Maine

Name of Sponsoring Presbyter _____

I was admitted to Postulancy on _____.

I was admitted to Candidacy on _____.

I have completed my course of study at _____.

Attachments

Note: This application will not be considered complete until all attachments are delivered to the Bishop's Office.

- A. Report from Board of Examining Chaplains regarding the General Ordination Examinations; and report on any remedial work.
- B. Endorsement letter from the Member of the Clergy in Charge of the Congregation
- C. Letter of support from the Vestry/Bishop's Committee. (See Appendix F)
- D. Medical and Psychological Examinations.
- E. Certificate from the theological school or other program of preparation showing the Candidate's scholastic record and evaluation with recommendation as to the Candidate's other personal qualifications for Holy Orders and recommendation regarding Ordination.

Date _____

Signature of Applicant

Appendix H

**DIOCESE OF MAINE
LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD**

Date _____

To the Standing Committee of the Diocese of Maine:

We, whose names are hereunder written, do certify, after due inquiry, we are well assured and believe that

print name clearly

Deacon, since the _____ day of _____, in the year _____, being the date of ordination to the Diaconate (or for the last three years), has lived a sober, honest and godly life, and has not written, taught, or held anything contrary to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of this Church. And, moreover, we think

print name clearly

a person worthy to be admitted to the Sacred Order of Priests. *We set forth, in a letter or statement attached to this certificate, the grounds upon which we make our judgment of the applicant's qualifications.*

SIGNED _____
Member of the Clergy in Charge of the Congregation to which Applicant belongs

VESTRY/BISHOP'S COMMITTEE OF THE CONGREGATION

(To be signed by a two-thirds majority of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee)

ATTESTATION

I hereby certify that the foregoing certificate was signed at a meeting of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee of

(Name of Congregation)

at _____, Maine, duly convened on the _____ day of _____, _____, and that the names attached are those of all (or a two-thirds majority of all) the members of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee.

DATE _____ SIGNED _____
Clerk of the Vestry/Bishop's Committee

Attached is our statement concerning the applicant.

Appendix I

**DIOCESE OF MAINE
APPLICATION FOR ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD**

To The Bishop of Maine:

I, _____, hereby make application to be ordained to the Priesthood.
print name clearly

I have been serving at the following Congregation:

_____ at _____, Maine

Name of Sponsoring Presbyter _____

I was admitted to Postulancy on _____.

I was admitted to Candidacy on _____.

I have been a Transitional Deacon since _____.

I have completed my practical training in work as a Transitional Deacon.

Attachments

Note: This application will not be considered complete until all attachments are delivered to the office of the Bishop.

- A. Report from the supervisor of the practical training undertaken by the Transitional Deacon in preparation for ordination to the Priesthood regarding the Deacon's completion of training and an evaluation of the Deacon's attainments.
- B. Endorsement letter from the Member of the Clergy in Charge of the Congregation.
- C. Endorsement letter from Vestry/Bishop's Committee. (See Appendix H)
- D. Certificate from seminary or other program of preparation showing Transitional Deacon's scholastic record and giving an evaluation with recommendation as to the Transitional Deacon's other personal qualifications for ordination, together with a recommendation regarding ordination to the Priesthood (unless provided at the time of ordination to the Transitional Diaconate).
- E. An essay from the applicant describing and evaluating the practical experience and training since becoming a Transitional Deacon.

Date _____

Signature of Applicant

Appendix J

Discernment

Identifying and responding to a call to Ordination involves many conversations with many people over time. The goal of all such conversations, whatever their context, is to discern God's invitation to the individual and the community.

We have identified several fundamental principles which must be part of a process of discernment:

- (1) Discernment is set within the established, disciplined life of prayer and meditation (especially upon Scripture) of each discerner (and of each discerning community).
- (2) The predisposing reality of Discernment is freedom (Ignatius' *Indifference*; 12 steps' detachment)
- (3) The purpose of Discernment is a progressive discovery of God's will in all the subtlety and graciousness of that will.
- (4) Discernment seeks for faithfulness, rather than a particular result or outcome.
- (5) Discernment acknowledges fully the context in which it takes place.
- (6) Discernment acknowledges fully the human particulars of the discerner's own circumstances (family, physical limitations, gifts and liabilities, temperament, age, etc.) at this moment.
- (7) Discernment encompasses the whole of the personal journey of the discerner.
- (8) Discernment embraces, but is not driven by, the emotions, desires, "baggage" of the discerner.
- (9) Discernment assumes (or commends) the gift of rigorous insight (self-awareness) as essential for sifting, sorting and distinguishing between *temptations* and *invitations*.
- (10) Discernment is dynamic; it attends to the movements, growth and evolution of the discerners, and it encompasses the redemption of those persons or communities.
- (11) Discernment takes place within the faith community; presupposes trust, complementarity, synergy and candor.
- (12) The indicators of appropriate Discernment are peace, consensus, felt rightness and courage.

Appendix K

Guidelines for Postulants, Candidates and COHO Contact Persons

At the time a person is named a postulant for Holy Orders, the Committee on Holy Orders (COHO) will assign one of its members to be a **Contact Person** to that person. These guidelines are intended to define the relationship of the postulant and the COHO contact person.

1. Purpose. The purpose of the COHO contact person is to provide a convenient and relatively informal avenue for ongoing communication and advice between people in process (PIPs) and COHO.
2. The Role of the COHO Contact Person. Initial contact with the PIP should be made by the Contact Person soon after he or she is assigned. *Once that initial contact is made, responsibility for ongoing communication is shared but is primarily that of the PIP.*

The COHO Contact Person is to be aware of where the PIP is in terms of studies, Clinical Pastoral Education (or equivalent), field education, and other aspects of progress towards ordination. The contact person should serve as an ordination process adviser to the PIP: he or she should help to identify procedural steps (such as application for candidacy) when the time is appropriate, and guide the PIP through any questions that may arise. The Contact Person should be familiar with the ordination process for Deacons and Priests, but should not hesitate to contact either of the COHO co-chairs, or the Bishop, if clarification is needed or special circumstances arise.

3. The Role of the Person in Process. The PIP has an obligation to keep the Contact Person informed about what the PIP is doing: program of studies, scheduling of CPE or equivalent, choices concerning field education, and so forth, so that the Contact Person will have the information he or she needs to serve usefully as an adviser. As a general rule, PIPs should be in touch with their Contact Person at least a couple of times a year, and should update them each time a major step in the ordination process is completed. Because Contact Persons will be the COHO members most familiar with their respective PIPs, questions about the ordination process should be directed in the first instance to the Contact Person.

The PIP is always primarily responsible for knowing, anticipating, and completing the various steps of the ordination process. The Contact Person is a resource toward that end.

4. What the Contact Person is Not. COHO, and postulants and candidates, share a ministry and a goal: to identify and prepare faithful people to take up ordained ministry in the Church. The COHO Contact Person will seek to further that goal by giving the best possible advice and encouragement. However, the Contact Person is an adviser and not an advocate; the Contact Person acts on behalf of COHO in the relationship, and is obligated to share with COHO (or with the co-chairs, if that is more appropriate) all information which has a bearing on the PIP's information. That does not mean that the COHO Contact Person is to be a gossip, but it does mean that the relationship is not one where pastoral confidences should be confided or maintained.

Appendix L

DIOCESE OF MAINE REGARDING THE GENERAL ORDINATION EXAMS

Following are the general policies for all Priest Candidates. The Committee on Holy Orders, in exceptional circumstances and in consultation with the Bishop, may decide about other appropriate procedures on a case-by-case basis.

CANDIDATES FOR THE PRIESTHOOD (GENERAL ORDINATION EXAMS)

Preface:

The Committee on Holy Orders (COHO) uses the General Ordination Examination (GOE) as its primary tool to evaluate a candidate's proficiency in the required canonical areas. COHO may and does, however, use other sources of information (including but not limited to seminary transcripts, papers, evaluations, and other materials) in particular cases where the GOE results raise questions about a candidate's proficiency.

A candidate's readiness for ordination, of course, depends on many matters beyond the scope of the GOEs, such as general academic performance, spiritual health, and readiness to live into the ordination vows. COHO, the Standing Committee, and the Bishop will continue to use all available resources for discernment of this sort of readiness. This document does not address that broader continuing discernment.

Policy:

1. Expense
The Committee on Holy Orders will pay the registration fee for General Ordination Examinations for any person who is formally in the ordination process (i.e. who is a Postulant or Candidate). People not in the process for ordination will assume this cost on their own.
2. Proficiency
 - a. Any Candidate who scores 3 or above in any area will be deemed to have demonstrated proficiency in that area.
 - b. Any question which receives a score below 3 will be processed as follows:
 1. A subcommittee of COHO will review the problematic answer and will substitute its evaluation for that of the GBEC.
 2. If the subcommittee deems the answer does not demonstrate proficiency, the subcommittee will ask the Candidate to furnish further evidence of proficiency in the area, such as a seminary paper or a rewrite of the question.
 3. This evidence will be reviewed by the subcommittee to determine if proficiency has been demonstrated.
3. Remediation
If, following the procedure noted above, proficiency still has not been demonstrated, a plan of remediation will be developed by the Bishop, COHO, and the Candidate, tailored to the Candidate's particular needs and situation. The need for remediation may or may not delay ordination to the transitional diaconate.

TIPS FOR PREPARATION:

Read the catechism.

Take basic classes before you take the exam (postpone electives to final semester).

Choose one or two theologians and know their work thoroughly.

Breathe. Pray. Laugh. Sleep. Avoid people who are stressed out about the exam.

Appendix M

DIOCESE OF MAINE

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The role of the Commission on Ministry (COM): Specific processes for ministry discernment (both for lay ministries and for ordained ministries) will be conducted under the auspices of the Commission on Ministry. The Commission will be responsible for administering the regional group discernment processes, and for the training of discernment facilitators.

The role of the individual: It is the responsibility of the individual to communicate any questions, forward necessary paperwork and forms to the Bishop and/or COHO as required and on time, and to move the process forward for themselves. Individuals should contact the Priest in charge of their congregation, the Bishop or the Co-chairs of the Commission on Ministry if they have questions or concerns about discernment or applying for Postulancy. A Postulant or Candidate for Holy Orders should communicate with the Bishop through regular Ember Day letters, and with their Sponsoring Priest and their assigned Contact Person at COHO.

The role of the Priest in charge of the congregation: The primary role of the Priest in the beginning of the discernment process is a pastoral one. However, should the individual decide to apply for postulancy, then the canons require that the Priest in charge make a recommendation as to the individual's fitness. Both the individual and the Priest should be aware of this possible change in role. The Priest in Charge needs to know how this process works, so it is important for the priest to acquaint themselves with this handbook.

The role of the Committee on Holy Orders (COHO): COHO is the branch of the COM responsible for overseeing the ordination process. The responsibility for administering the process of continuing discernment about ordination falls to the Committee on Holy Orders if an individual is named a Postulant for Holy Orders by the Bishop. At that point (and not before) an individual is considered to be in the ordination process. COHO has certain canonical responsibilities in the process of formation and preparation for ordination.

The role of the Standing Committee is to recommend a person for candidacy and then ordination, according to the Constitutions and Canons of the Episcopal Church, permitting the Bishop to take order for an ordination. In case of any questions or concerns do call the Diocesan Office at 1-800-244-6062

GLOSSARY

COHO Committee on Holy Orders
COM Commission on Ministry
GOE General Ordination Examination