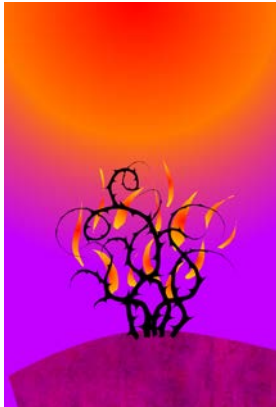


DIOCESE OF NIAGARA
PROCEDURE AND REQUIREMENTS REGARDING THE CANDIDACY PROCESS



Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian; he led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush; he looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. Then Moses said, 'I must turn aside and look at this great sight, and see why the bush is not burned up.' When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, 'Moses, Moses!' And he said, 'Here I am.'

Exodus 3:1-4

God calls to each of us from the burning bush and asks us to use our gifts in some form of ministry in the world. Part of discerning if your call is to ordained ministry in the Diocese of Niagara is your participation in the candidacy process.

Under normal circumstances, a candidate for Holy Orders passes through five stages in the process before ordination as a priest. The stages are:

The Inquiry	A person in the early stages of vocational discernment prior to initial interview.
The Applicant	A person who has completed or is completing parish discernment ministry and has been invited by the Director of Human Resources to submit an application.
The Candidate	A person who has been approved for candidacy with the Diocese of Niagara by the Candidates' Committee and the Bishop.
The Transitional Deacon	A person who has been ordained a deacon and who intends to become a priest.
The Priest	A person who takes part in the governance of the Church, in the carrying out of its missionary and pastoral work, and in the preaching of the word of God and the administration of his holy sacraments; appointed by the Bishop for the spiritual care and leadership of parish communities.

The requirements for each phase of this process will normally be completed before a person advances to the next stage. Before making any formal application for theological training towards ordained ministry, the person is advised to allow sufficient time for the inquiry stage and application process. Those interested in ordination in Niagara should contact the Bishop's Office as early in his/her studies as possible, preferably before applying to theological college. The Diocese, through the Candidates' Committee, expects to take an ongoing role in the candidate's formation beginning early in the process.

The Diocese may on occasion choose to shorten the candidacy time, e.g. if a candidate has been approved by another diocese or if a candidate has completed/is completing their post-baccalaureate

theological training. Such persons will participate in an initial one year internship program during which they will participate in the life of a Niagara parish and take a leadership role in ministry activities. The supervising incumbent and lay members of the parish will provide feedback and an evaluation of the internship period to the Candidates' Committee. No financial support is available from the Diocese or the parish during this period. The intention of this internship is two-fold: 1) to familiarize candidates with parish and diocesan culture in Niagara; and 2) to provide an opportunity for the diocese to assess the suitability of the candidate to particular diocesan needs.

If all reports are favourable, the Bishop arranges for interviews and upon the offer of an appointment in ordained ministry, the decision to ordain the candidate as deacon will be made and the candidate becomes an Ordinand of the Diocese of Niagara.

At no time during the candidacy/postulancy process, can the diocese guarantee ordination to an applicant. The Anglican Church of Canada prohibits ordination unless a job is available to the ordinand. On occasion, a candidate may be asked to interview with other Bishops and will receive references to enable them to do so.

The Inquiry

1. The person expressing interest in a vocation to ordained ministry will share with his or her parish priest his or her understanding of being called to ordained ministry, and the parish priest assists in further discernment of the nature of the call (e.g., parish or other ministries). This discernment takes place over a period of time (minimum of three months to one year) during which time specific ministry is undertaken (teaching, hospital, social justice, pastoral) with direct supervision by the parish priest; no financial support is available from the diocese during this period. The potential applicant should meet with the rector and a parish team (consisting of two wardens and two other lay people) regularly to discuss the placement experience and how it reflects on the call. The Parish Discernment Evaluation Form is used for this process. Should the parish consider the above experience successful, the inquirer will be encouraged to meet with the Director of Human Resources. This is in addition to any divinity school requirements for internships and field placements, and is most useful to the potential applicant and the diocese if undertaken prior to application to divinity school.
2. The Director of Human Resources has an interview with the inquirer.

We also ask inquirers to provide their home parish with a Letter of Commendation form for the Bishop and the Bishop's appointees to be filled out jointly by their parish rector, two wardens and two lay members of the congregation. The parish should also receive the document entitled Ordination Prerequisites.

Those wishing to apply for ordination may find the necessary documents available on the diocesan website. The documents are:

- Procedures and Requirements Regarding the Candidacy Process
- Application for Ordination
- Parish Commendation Form
- Ordination Prerequisites

The application submission should include:

- Application for Ordination form duly completed and signed
- Responses to five questions on page seven of the application
- Copies of applicant's baptismal and confirmation certificate
- A current Police Record Check which includes a Vulnerable Sector Check
- A photograph for identification purposes

The Applicant

1. Once the Application for Ordination (as outlined above), Letter of Commendation and the Parish Discernment Evaluation Form has been received and assessed, applicants will be either invited to proceed to the next step or otherwise directed.
2. Interviews are arranged with three members of the Candidates Committee (either two clergy and one laity or one clergy and two laity). One of the interviewers will be consistent throughout the process.

Initial interview	Spring (and late fall if needed)
Second interview (upon complete of first year requirements)	Fall
Third/Exit interview	Winter

The Bishop, Director of Human Resources, Chaplains to Ordinands and interviewers meet to discuss applicants after each set of interviews has taken place. Additional interviews may sometimes be required.

3. The Diocese of Niagara has a mandatory vocational assessment requirement for all applicants who have passed through the initial Candidate Committee process. The cost of the assessment will be shared by the diocese with the candidate. The diocese will provide further information when appropriate.
4. The applicant becomes a candidate upon completion of their initial interviews and the vocational assessment tool and approval by the Candidates Committee, Director of Human Resources and Bishop.
5. Sometimes a meeting with the Director of Human Resources follows.

The Candidate

1. A Chaplain to Ordinand is assigned to each candidate and is in regular contact. This relationship will commence with the acceptance to candidacy and end with the candidate's priesting or their withdrawal from the ordination process.
2. Candidates are expected to acquire a Spiritual Director upon acceptance as a Niagara candidate. Candidates will meet regularly, ideally once a month, with an absolute minimum of once a quarter with their Spiritual Director. Having a Spiritual Director is mandatory and is at the candidate's expense. Spiritual Directors can be found through divinity colleges or Spiritual Directors International (www.sdiworld.org). The Diocese of Niagara does not endorse any in particular Spiritual Director.

3. Each candidate is required to write a letter to the Bishop semi-annually (Advent-November 30 and Pentecost-May 15) to indicate how he/she is progressing in his/her training, spiritual life and practice of ministry. Issues for growth identified by the Candidates' Committee should be addressed in the letter.
4. Candidates are expected to attend the Bishop's Annual Student Conference (usually held late December or early January). Candidate partners will be invited. This residential conference held at Canterbury Hills, Ancaster. Participants at the conference meet individually with the Bishop and the Director of Human Resources.
5. Once a candidate has been approved by the Candidates' Committee, their name is added to the list for assessment by the Advisory Committee on Postulants for Ordination (ACPO).

At the request of the diocesan Bishop, the applicant will attend a regional conference of the ACPO for vocational assessment and direction regarding suitability for training. The ACPO recommendation is not mandatory for ordination, but is normally expected. There are occasional situations when an ACPO recommendation may request that an applicant postpone theological training for a period of time or may make other significant recommendations. ACPO usually takes place in the spring (April/May) and fall (October). Partners are not invited to this conference. Applicants will be scheduled as soon as possible after their acceptance as a Niagara candidate.

After being recommended by ACPO, the candidate becomes eligible to receive diocesan bursaries. Diocesan bursaries are available in September and January.

6. Reporting Expectations: It is the **candidate's responsibility** to ensure that the Director of Human Resources receives reports/transcripts from their college, field education/parish placements and internships throughout the process.
7. Field work placements and a full-term parish internship (minimum of three months) which are required both by the college and the Diocese will be made in consultation with the Director of Human Resources and with the College Field Education Supervisor.
8. At some point during the candidate's time in the process, there is a requirement for a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)/Supervised Pastoral Education (SPE) unit to be completed. The final reports (supervisors' and candidates') must be submitted to the Director of Human Resources. A meeting with the Director of Human Resources always follows the completion of the CPE/SPE unit. The tuition fee for this required unit of CPE/SPE will be shared by the diocese with the candidate.
9. Candidates are again interviewed ("exit interviews") by three members of the Candidates Committee prior to graduation. These interviews usually take place in the fall/winter of the final year. An assignment designed to elicit information about the candidate's experience of the training process and what they have learned will precede these interviews and form the basis for discussion during the interviews. Candidates are also required to provide a resume. The feedback from these interviews will be helpful to the Bishop in determining the readiness for ordination.

10. In the spring of their final year, students deemed ready for ordination meet with the Bishop and the Director of Human Resources to discuss any available ministry positions in the Diocese of Niagara. A person will only be ordained if there is a position available to offer them.

The Transitional Deacon

1. Prior to ordination, the potential ordinand is required to attend a pre-ordination retreat.
2. Attendance at the annual New Ministry 101 post-ordination conference is mandatory.
3. The newly ordained clergy all participate in the post-ordination training program, Niagara Continuing Education (NCE), for at least two years, with a third year as an option. The new clergy meet regularly with his or her appointed supervisor for ongoing evaluation and spiritual growth. The Bishop meets with the supervisors on a regular basis.
4. Each new ordinand is required to select a companion from a list of trained individuals and to meet with that person regularly for the first two years at least.

The Priest

Prior to ordination to the priesthood, the individual, the supervising rector and the churchwardens will evaluate the individual within the ministry setting and with reference to the individual's ministry covenant. Upon successful completion of this evaluation, the Bishop makes the decision about ordination to the priesthood. The ordinand is required to attend a pre-ordination retreat.

Reapplication

Applicants who are not chosen from their initial interview to be a candidate with the Diocese of Niagara will be directed to their parish priest. The decision of the Candidates Committee may not be appealed; however, applicants may reapply after a period of 24 months. The reapplication requires a cover letter with resume that would indicate that there have been significant changes/developments to support beginning this process again.

Appeal

Candidates who have been declined later in the process may appeal to the Bishop. The Bishop may affirm the decision or review the decision - a process which may include more interviews, further training or additional experiences. The Bishop's decision is final.

Other Matters

In consultation with the Bishop and Director of Human Resources, the candidate is free to discuss employment possibilities elsewhere in the Church.

It is expected that theological students will be responsible for the cost of their training. Limited grants are available from the diocese and candidates may apply for grants prior to August 31 of each year on the prescribed form available.