

DEAN'S GUIDE

THE DIOCESE OF
CHURCHES FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

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OVERVIEW

of the Dean's Role

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

The Bishop places great trust and value in your judgment and leadership as a Dean—especially your work identifying and forming leaders. Deans play a vital role in creating a regional environment that fosters leadership through modeling, encouraging and coaching local Rectors in raising up leaders from their congregations.

As a Dean, you have two crucial roles to play in the Path of Discernment:

1 You mentor Rectors to effectively lead the local discernment and formation process.

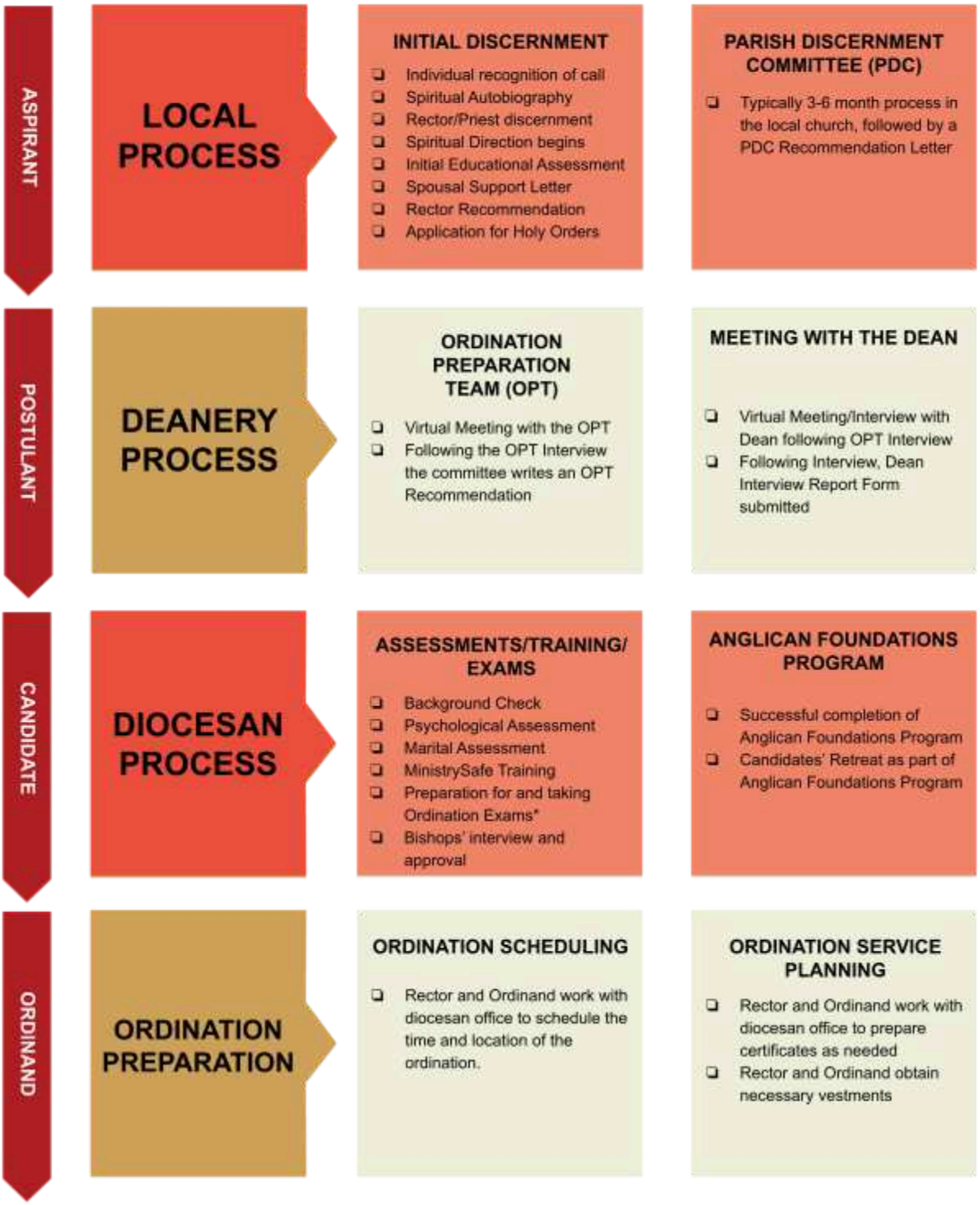
2 You establish relationships with Postulants that will help inform your evaluation of them, while building a relational foundation for their future as clergy in your care.



Please familiarize yourself with the **C4SO Candidate Guide** along with the rest of this guide before you begin interviews with a Postulant. If you have any questions along the way, do not hesitate to contact us at ordination@c4so.org.

STEP BY STEP

The Path of Discernment to Holy Orders



**Vocational Deacons need to complete Ordination Exams prior to Ordination to the Diaconate; Transitional Deacons needs to complete Ordination Exams prior to Consecration to the Priesthood*

LOCAL PROCESS

The Path of Discernment for an Aspirant begins with the Rector and the local church.

Note: If Aspirants are not currently in a local Anglican church, they can approach the diocese and be appointed a Rector or Priest with whom they may undergo the discernment process.

1 **Individual recognizes call** (from God and in community) and begins personal discernment to Holy Orders/pastoral ministry.

2 **Individual approaches local Priest/Rector to begin local discernment.** If local discernment moves forward from this stage, the individual is considered an Aspirant.

3 **Aspirant is encouraged to begin spiritual direction** with a spiritual director approved by the Rector.

4 **Aspirant writes Spiritual Autobiography** which is then discussed and reviewed with the Priest/Rector. This should be 8 pages or less, double-spaced.

5 **Rector conducts an initial Educational Assessment,** based on the Aspirant's vocational plan and C4SO education guidelines. This will determine what further education might be needed, and whether the Aspirant will decide to request an Academic Exception.

6 **Spouse writes Spousal Support Letter.** Aspirant and spouse have intentional discussion about expectations and pressures of ministry. The spouse then prepares a letter of support for Aspirant to pursue ordination. This letter can be sent directly to the diocese (ordination@c4so.org).

7 **Priest/Rector writes letter of recommendation and begins setting up the Parish Discernment Committee (PDC)**. If the Priest/Rector discerns any issues after this point in the process, he or she should immediately contact the diocesan office.

8 **Aspirant undergoes discernment process with Parish Discernment Committee (PDC).** This typically takes about 3-6 months. At the end of the process, the PDC submits a written recommendation to the Canon for Ordinations and Rector. Once the PDC has concluded, the Aspirant becomes a Postulant (formally requesting candidacy for ordination).

9 **Aspirant completes Application for Holy Orders.** Rector notifies Canon for Ordinations to begin the Deanery Process.

Deanery Process

After the Local Process, the Aspirant becomes a Postulant and moves into the Deanery Process.

1 **Postulant meets with Ordination Preparation Team (OPT)** to assess character, competency and calling. This is typically done over Zoom/Google Meet. The OPT submits a written recommendation to the Rector, Dean and diocesan office.

2 **Postulant meets with the Dean** for a formal interview. This is also typically done over Zoom/Google Meet. The Dean will then submit a written recommendation to the diocesan office.

3 **Dean submits recommendation** to the diocesan office by filling out the Dean's Interview Report.

4 **Diocese notifies Postulant that application is complete,** and that he or she is now a Candidate and ready to enter diocesan process.

5 **Diocese invites the Candidate to join the Anglican Foundations Program** (if not yet begun)**.**



Diocesan Process

After the Deanery Process, the Postulant becomes a Candidate and moves into the Diocesan Process.

1 **Candidate submits authorization for Background Check** which covers sexual misconduct, criminal, and financial histories, and checks personal and professional references.

2 **Candidate completes MinistrySafe Training,** unless already completed.

3 **Candidate undergoes Psychological and Marital Assessments** (when applicable).

4 **Candidate prepares for and takes Ordination Exams.** Vocational Deacons will take exams prior to ordination as a deacon. Those aspiring to the Priesthood will take exams sometime prior to consecration as Priest. If remediation is suggested, a plan will be made with the Rector and/or Dean.

5 **Successfully complete the Anglican Foundations Program.** More details can be found at https://c4so.org/anglican-foundations-program/.

6 **Attend the Candidates' Retreat** as part of the Anglican Foundations Program.

7 **Canon for Ordinations reviews your file.**

8 **The Bishop conducts an interview and gives final confirmation for ordination.**

Ordination Preparation

The Ordinand begins work planning and scheduling their ordination.

1 **Rector and Ordinand work with diocesan office to schedule ordination.**

2 **Prior to the ordination service, Rector works with Diocesan Office** (and others) to plan details of the ordination service. Sample bulletin and invitation documents available at https://c4so.org/ordination-preparation/.

SUPPORT FOR THE LOCAL PROCESS

A Rector's ability to raise up and equip leaders has a critical impact on their ability to be successful. Yet Rectors are often caught off guard when an Aspirant identifies themselves, simply due to the competing pressures and priorities of ministry. As a Dean, you can equip Rectors to effectively lead their congregation and Aspirants through the Path of Discernment. You do this in part by keeping the topic of identifying and discipling leaders

top of mind in your regional clergy conversations, helping them become proactive in this important work. Your goal is to be an edifying support for the Aspirant, the Rector, and the church itself.

C4SO sees the Dean's role as coaching Rectors to lead effectively and make the most of pastoral opportunities throughout the Path of Discernment to Holy Orders.

Rectors may need help in these areas:

- Interviewing skills
- Ability to identify and address red flags
- Pastoring through discernment
- Explaining the difference between ordained and lay leadership
- Best practices in helping with spiritual formation
- Tools/help in ministry training

DEAN'S INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

As a Dean, your regional and objective evaluation of a Postulant is a critical part of the process. You provide a unique perspective because you have:

1 Experience in both ministry and church management, and in hiring and managing clergy

2 Understanding of your region's ministry context (local cultures and needs) and a vision for the region

3 Relationship with regional clergy and congregations

The Canon for Ordinations will contact you to request an interview on behalf of a Postulant and provide you with all necessary documents (Spiritual Autobiography, PDC Report, Rector's Recommendation, Spousal Support Letter, etc.). After reviewing these documents, you will schedule a virtual interview with the Postulant to review and assess his or her character and competency and make further recommendations to continue in the Path of Discernment. Your interview will confirm (or express concerns about) the findings of the Rector/PDC/OPT recommendations.

During your interview, here are some topics to explore:

1 Calling

- Deep, growing personal faith that can be easily expressed
- Clear sense of call to ordained ministry that is connected to gifts
- Vocational specificity - Can the Postulant articulate a specific call to ministry? Or is there a clear direction/path for the Postulant in ordained ministry

2 Character

- Spiritual, emotional and physical readiness for ministry.
- Evident maturity and readiness for ministry
- Ensure healthy family relationships. Spouse has considered the unique nature of his/her role and the demands of ministry, and is supportive.
- Past or current financial or legal concerns, and the path to recovery.

3 Competency

Ministerial leadership - the Postulant should be able to share some experience of competency in past leadership roles that showcase characteristics like:

- Servant leadership
- Positive attitude/orientation to culture
- Non-anxious leadership presence
- Healthy relationship to/with power
- Ability to attract others to community and mission

Expectation that the Postulant has competency in Anglican ecclesiology, liturgy, and theology (or a clear willingness and capacity to pursue competency moving forward)

Solid understanding of the nature of ordained ministry, and the role of Bishops, Priests, Deacons and lay leadership in the church.

Proficiency in the areas of study required by ACNA Canons

Fulfills Educational Policy requirements—if an Educational Assessment has not been done, make sure it gets done and implement a subsequent plan

Ability to articulate a distinctly Anglican, orthodox faith

Additional Guidance for Conversations:

If any concerns are raised during the Dean's Interview, you have the authority to request further assessments to be completed (Psychological/Marital Assessment, Background Check, etc.) ahead of their scheduled time in the Diocesan Process. Follow up on issues, questions and thoughts that were raised in earlier conversations. If you think further formation/education is necessary, work with the Rector and Canon for Ordinations to implement a solution with clear outcomes and a future assessment plan.

Following are the questions raised in the Dean’s Interview Report:

- Describe the candidate's understanding of the Anglican Way.
- Describe the candidate's readiness to sign the oath of conformity.
- Describe the candidate's biggest challenges in ministry in this season.
- How did the candidate respond to the following: Is there anything in your secret life that, were it to come to light, would be harmful to you, your family, your ministry or C4SO?
- How did the candidate respond to the following: How does your understanding of human sexuality, identity and flourishing compare to this statement made by the College of Bishops? https://anglicanchurch.net/sexuality-and-identity-a-pastoral-statement-from-the-college-of-bishops/
- What is your overall impression of the candidate?
- Are there any things you need to follow up on?
- Were there others things you asked the candidate that are worth recording here?

FINAL STEPS

of the Deanery Process

Following your Dean's Interview with the Postulant and approval of a recommendation for them to move forward, you will communicate with the Canon for Ordination with your recommendations through the Dean's Interview Report. (https://forms.gle/i3v62dgT7Uk4MvNE9). At this point, the Postulant formally becomes a Candidate for ordination, and the Rector and diocesan office will guide him or her into the Diocesan Process.





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