



GUIDE TO THE DIACONATE IN THE DIOCESE OF DELAWARE

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For clergy, diaconal aspirants, and congregations with a desire to
commit to a diaconal ministry together

“I come among you as one who serves.” (Luke 22:27)

February 2010

OF THE MINISTRY OF ALL PEOPLE

Introduction

Commission on Ministry and Baptismal Ministry

Of Discernment

The Commission on Ministry recognizes that all baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name. This ministry takes place in the normal setting of each person's daily life, as each of us lives out the Baptismal promise to seek and serve Christ in all people. Thus ministry takes place in our homes and schools; in offices, and retail stores and auto repair shops; in hospitals, nursing homes, law courts and prisons; in playgrounds and fast food restaurants. It is through our everyday activity --- through the ordinary and mundane as well as through the extraordinary --- that we all, as baptized Christians, follow the Risen Christ.

It is the responsibility of leaders within our congregations, especially those who preach and teach, to bring this awareness of ministry to life. We must remember that ministry takes place in the world, in ways that may not even be obvious to others as a religious moment, and that only a relatively small part of Christian ministry takes place in churches or religious settings, or is even identifiable as religious in nature.

The Commission on Ministry assists congregations in recognizing the ministry of the baptized. However, no entity alone can bring to life the amazing realization that each of us, joined to Christ in baptism, is already given the gifts for ministry and ordained to minister in his name.

While the Commission on Ministry affirms the call of the baptized, it also recognizes that some are called to exercise their baptism through service in Holy Orders. Therefore, the Commission on Ministry has established guidelines for identifying and evaluating those exploring a call to ordination.

The Canons of the Episcopal Church mandate that each diocese make provision for the affirmation and development of the ministry of all baptized persons, including:

- (a) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to minister in Christ's name, to identify their gifts with the help of the Church and to serve Christ's mission at all times and in all places.
- (b) Assistance in understanding that all baptized persons are called to sustain their ministries through commitment to life-long Christian formation.

No Person shall be denied access to the discernment process for ministry, lay or ordained, in this Church because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, disabilities or age, except as otherwise provided by these Canons. No right to licensing, ordination, or election is hereby established.

The Commission on Ministry is composed of priests, deacons, and lay persons. According to the national Canons: "The Commission shall advise and assist the Bishop in the determination of present and future opportunities and needs for the ministry of all baptized persons, and in the design and oversight of the ongoing process for recruitment, discernment, and formation of ministry and assessment of readiness thereof." (For a detailed description refer to *The Constitution and Canons*, Title III, Canon 1-3)

Of Discernment (cont.)

The Layout of this Handbook

The Bishop and Commission shall provide encouragement, training and necessary resources to assist each congregation, or other communities of faith, in developing an ongoing process of community discernment appropriate to the cultural background, age and life experiences of all persons seeking direction in their call to ministry.

The Bishop and Commission shall actively solicit from congregations, schools and other youth organizations, college and university campus ministry centers, seminaries, and other communities of faith, names of persons whose demonstrated qualities of Christian commitment and potential for leadership and vision mark them as desirable candidates for positions of leadership in the Church. Furthermore, the Bishop, Commission, and the discernment community shall assist persons engaged in a process of ministry discernment to determine appropriate avenues for the expression and support of their ministries, either lay or ordained.

(The above sections taken from the National Canons and the Diocese of Vermont Discernment Handbook)

This guide addresses the discernment and ordination process for deacons and diaconal congregations; it is divided into five parts:

1. The Diocesan policy statement on the diaconate (pp. 3-6)
2. The Discernment Process for Deacons and Diaconal congregations (pp. 7-14)
3. An Approach to Diaconal formation – Competency Model (pp. 15-17)
4. Appendix
 - a. Forms to be submitted (pp. 18-21)
 - b. Major Diaconate Process Event List (pp. 22)
5. Title III, Canons 6 and 7 pertaining to the diaconate (pp. 23-27)

**DEACONS IN
DELAWARE – A
POLICY STATEMENT**

*Affirming the role and
office of Deacon in the
Church*

ORDAINED MINISTRIES OF SERVICE AND PRAYER

*The ministry of Deacons is a visible sign of the vocation of all
Christians*

All baptized persons are called to welcome Jesus Christ into their lives and grow in a living relationship with him. An important characteristic of this growth is service to others. As Jesus commanded, all Christians are expected to participate in a life of servant ministry to each other, the community, and the world.

The Deacon is a living symbol of the servant ministry of the whole Church just as the Priest is a living symbol of the sacred hospitality that belongs to all Christians in the priesthood of all believers.

Deacons serve the needs of the world and the communities where they live. They bring the needs and concerns of the world to the church. They serve as example and they teach, encourage, and support others in the life of service. They witness to this service in prayer. Through this witness they, by example and by training others to do so, lead the church in offering service and prayer to God.

Deacons are part of the visible order and life of the Church

Deacons take their place in the life of the Church as one of the four orders of ministry, along with lay persons, bishops and priests. Their ministry is defined by scripture, tradition, custom, and canon law. The Deacon is a primary sign of the relationship of the Church to the society, as a reflection of Our Lord Jesus Christ's relationship to the world. The Deacon is charged to speak the truth to the Church, and the Church's truth to the world, based on the experience of service to the broken, the downtrodden and the helpless. The Deacon is therefore expected to contribute to the prophetic role of the Church as experience, vision, and the Holy Spirit give voice.

The Deacon offers prayer and service as an outward and visible sign of the ministry of the whole church. Deacons provide a sacramental focus for the ministry of prayer and service to the poor and poor in spirit, and for this reason Deacons are set apart and ordained by solemn vows. They are part of the church's visible order, part of the outward and visible sign of the grace which lies at the center of our lives in Christ.

When serving as a deacon in the liturgy, the deacon: proclaims the gospel, may lead the prayers of the people, prepares the altar, may with other lay ministers administer the cup, cleans and removes vessels after communion and dismisses the assembly. When serving as a deacon in the liturgy, the deacon will not typically assume other functions such as

Affirming the role and office of Deacon in the Church (Cont.)

lector, chorister, usher, organist, etc. Deacons may assist at baptisms and the other pastoral offices. Leadership of these services is not the norm. Deacons may preach from time to time for special occasions. In this diocese deacons will not officiate at a “Deacon’s Mass” from the reserved sacrament.

When serving in the liturgy the deacon may wear a cassock, surplice & stole, or an alb and stole with or without a dalmatic, depending upon the setting and congregational customs. If the deacon is a member of a religious order, liturgical vestments are worn during worship. For Morning Prayer, Evensong and other offices the deacon may wear cassock, surplice & tippet (and hood).

Deacons are diocesan ministers. They serve in direct relationship to the bishop. They serve together in a community with other deacons in the diocese. Individually they take their part in the governance of the Church as canon allows. They may serve in the congregation from which they were raised up, in other congregations, or in specialized ministries.

The ministry of Deacons is a visible sign of Offering.

The ministry of Deacons is grounded in the Holy Eucharist. They have a place in the regular worship life of the local congregation. In the liturgy they symbolize the essence and spirit of their ministry by proclaiming the Gospel, preaching on occasion, guiding the prayers of the faithful, preparing the table and dismissing the assembly. In their liturgical role they are called to remember the poor and the helpless before God and the people, offering prayer concretely and specifically for their relief. Deacons are supported by the faith and care of the congregations where they worship. Their working relationship with the congregation and its clergy is defined and governed by mutual agreement among deacon, congregation, clergy and bishop.

Christian service and the spirit of prayer are the visible signs of a deacon’s ministry. Vocational Deacons generally do not wear clerical collars as they are not priests. An exception may be made when a Vocational Deacon serves, for example, in hospital or prison chaplain positions where clerical attire may be required. It is appropriate at any time for a deacon to be identified by wearing a vocational deacon’s pin given by the bishop.

As a distinct and separate order, the title of the ordained deacon both in the church and in the world is “Deacon.” Thus the ordained deacon is known by his or her Christian name or “Deacon _____”.

At the invitation of the rector or vicar and vestry, the deacon may

Affirming the role and office of Deacon in the Church (Cont.)

Recruiting & Selecting

attend vestry meetings and be granted seat and have voice. As with other ordained clergy, deacons, or their spouses, do not serve as vestry members, on search committees, or other parish governing bodies.

Priests are the primary pastoral leaders in congregations. Deacons should not be in the role of providing primary pastoral care to parishioners, i.e. hospital visitations, pastoral counseling, or home visits.

Deacons, like other ordained clergy, are expected to participate in the annual Diocesan Convention, and attend, various clergy events offered by the diocese during the year. They may also serve on diocesan committees and governing bodies.

Deacons offer their ministry as a sacrificial gift. The congregations where they serve may reimburse expenses incurred in their service. It will be the norm that no deacon will seek ordination with the expectation of being paid for service to the Church. However, a deacon exercising a diaconal ministry as a hospital or prison chaplain may be compensated by the employing entity.

Because of the sacrificial nature of the order, and the extensive personal demands of diaconal service to others, it can be expected that deacons will, from time to time, be afforded the opportunity to take an extended sabbatical from diaconal ministry for restoration and renewal. Diaconal sabbatical time will be with the consent of the Bishop and the Standing Committee.

Recruiting and Selecting Deacons in the Diocese of Delaware.

Persons seeking ordination to the diaconate should have the following characteristics:

- Demonstrated gifts for service and prayer
- Personal maturity and stability
- Gifts for forming and maintaining personal relationships
- A strong desire to grow and be formed by ministry.

The diocese will search for nominees:

- Already demonstrating gifts and experience in ministry
- With the freedom and time for training and formation
- With support of family, friendships and peers
- With a congregation willing to welcome and support a deacon.

***Recruiting and Selecting
(Cont.)***

***Competency Based
Formation***

***Appointment following
Ordination***

Letter of Agreement

The diocese will search for Congregations:

- With a spirit and eagerness to grow in service to others
- With the stability and maturity to embrace the work of a deacon for the good of the community and the world
- With the heart and enthusiasm to raise up, support, and welcome a deacon into the diaconal ministry
- With the willingness to devote resources to engage in a mutual ministry together with the deacon.

Competency Based Formation:

The diocese will review and evaluate the competency of candidates in the areas required by canon. Coaches/Mentors will be provided to work individually or with groups of candidates. Other programs (EFM, Stephen Ministry, nearby Seminary courses, etc) may be utilized in preparation for ordination.

It is expected that every candidate will:

- Take one quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education
- Avail him or herself of a spiritual director, belong to a spiritual support group, or be attached to a religious community
- Continue in his or her diaconal ministry activities
- Gather with peers for collegial time.

In accordance with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, Deacons will be assigned by the Bishop to service in the Diocese. Normally this will be in his or her sponsoring congregation except in unusual circumstances.

The canons suggest, and we strongly urge, that a Deacon in ministry be assigned with a letter of agreement, mutually signed by the Deacon, the congregation Wardens, its priest, and the Bishop. Such letter will include the following:

- The mutual expectations of this ministry of service
- The relationship of the deacon to the life of the congregation
- An understanding that time will be made available for participation in a community of deacons
- Periodic review
- Term of service
- Provisions for appropriate levels of benefits, continuing education opportunities and sabbatical time.

DISCERNMENT PROCESS FOR THE DIACONAL MINISTRY

**As required by
Title III
Canon 6, Sec. 1 (a) (5)**

Initial Discernment

DISCERNMENT PROCESS

Exploration and Discernment leading to Postulancy

Congregational

It is the intention of the Diocese of Delaware to raise up diaconal congregations, not just individual deacons. Therefore, each congregation, individually and as a whole community, should enter a period of education and prayer to discern if they are being called to embrace a deacon and become a diaconal congregation. A diocesan consultant may be utilized to help aid the congregation in this process.

A diaconal congregation is one where the body of Christ engages in Christian ministry outside of the boundaries of such church activities as worship, education, and fellowship. In pursuit of being a diaconal congregation, the members must be ready and able to:

- Raise up one of their own members to become their diaconal leader
- Be willing and able to support a deacon emotionally, spiritually, physically, and financially (Title III Canon 6 Sec. 2(a))
- Follow the leadership of the deacon as together they become the living and vital body of Christ in the world
- Demonstrate a strong desire (i.e. have a passion) to grow and be formed in the diaconal ministry to which they are called in the baptismal covenant.

Individual

Once a congregation has discerned that they do in fact want to be a diaconal congregation then they, along with the clergy, should consider by a variety of means, whether any communicants in good standing are fit persons with spiritual gifts and a passion to be raised up as a deacon. In reality, some person may already have felt an individual call to the diaconal ministry and made such a call known to the congregation. In general these persons would demonstrate (*See also DDE Policy Statement pp. 3-6*):

- Holiness and morality in life always seeking justice and peace
- Gifts of the Spirit of service and prayer
- Maturity and stability of life
- Respect and compassion for every human being
- Strong desire (i.e. a passion) to grow and be formed in the diaconal ministry.

NOTE: Individual and Congregational discernment may occur simultaneously, particularly if a diaconal Aspirant has already been identified.

Initial Discernment (Cont.)

Diaconal Information and Discernment Day (DIADD)

(For the date of next DIADD call the Bishop's Office at 302-656-5441)

Aspirant/Congregational Discernment

(See Congregational Discernment Handbook for full details)

Diocesan

Before, during, or after the above discernment, all interested parties in the diaconal ministry must attend a Diaconal Information and Discernment day (DIADD) given by the Diocese at least once a year in order to gain a deeper understanding of the diocesan expectations of a diaconal ministry and a diaconal congregation. If, after attending a DIADD, the congregation, clergy, and Aspirant(s) still desire to enter into a diaconal relationship, then one to two months after DIADD the Aspirant should request a brief meeting with the Bishop to formally make known their intentions to him or her. Following this the Aspirant(s) will meet with the Bishop and the C.O.M.

NOTE: Attendance at a DIADD is required for the Aspirant, clergy and/or vestry representative before meeting with the bishop.

When a diaconal Aspirant, the congregation, clergy, C.O.M., and the bishop agree that they will enter a diaconal ministry together, a period of Aspirant/congregational discernment would follow.

Aspirant/Congregation

When the Aspirant, the congregation, and the clergy agree to enter a congregational discernment process together the following steps should be taken:

NOTE: This process can vary in length of time depending on the previous formation, experience, and training of the Aspirant although it should be no less than 6 months or more than 12 months.

- Clergy assists Aspirant to select a Lay Committee of 6-8 people to begin the informal discernment process. Only two members of the aspirant's congregation should be on this committee and one should be member of the vestry. The others should be from area Episcopal, Lutheran, or Moravian churches. Further no one related to each other or the clergy should be on this committee
- Aspirant identifies and engages in a diaconal ministry project (See list of appropriate ministries in Appendix)
- Aspirant submits Diaconal Project Plan to Bishop
- Diaconal Aspirant meets with the Lay Committee on a regular basis (It is suggested that they meet at least twice a month)

Clergy Participation and Responsibility

Clergy Decision Point

Lay Committee Participation

Clergy

The clergy of the sponsoring congregation has a crucial responsibility at this stage of the process. If a decision against the ordained ministry is to be made at all, it is best made during this informal discernment process. It is preferable not to approve the Aspirant's continuation in the process rather than to allow him or her to go forward without any prospect of ordination. Therefore, it is essential that the member of the clergy should examine the issues that might give rise to questions about the person's suitability for ordained ministry. These issues could include the person's personal history and psychology, goals for ministry, personal faith and theological understanding. The Clergy however, is not the aspirant's Spiritual Director.

It is also the clergy's responsibility to supervise the Aspirant's diaconal ministry activities and to meet with the Aspirant on a regular basis.

Clergy Decision

Negative: At any point in the process the clergy may decide that he or she cannot in good conscience support the person's pursuit of ordination. The Clergy may make one of two decisions:

1. Cannot confirm person's perceived sense of call, and does not foresee a change of his or her opinion
2. Cannot affirm the person's perceived sense of call *at this time*, but is willing to continue to work with the person, and to re-evaluate at another time in the future.

Positive: If the clergy supports the person's perceived sense of call to be a deacon, then the clergy will inform the person of this decision and clearly express the reasons for it.

Lay Committee

Lay committee members, with the aid of a diocesan consultant if requested, should engage in mapping out a discernment plan with the Aspirant. This plan can vary in length of time depending on previous formation, experience, training, etc.. The plan must include diaconal ministry activities for the Aspirant to undertake, the selection of a spiritual director, and other elements that will help the Aspirant and congregation come to a final decision as to whether or not to proceed with formal Nomination for Ordination to the Diaconate.

Congregational involvement in the discernment process should be an integral part of this plan.

The Lay Committee should meet regularly with Aspirant in order to:

*Lay Committee
Participation (Cont.)*

The Discernment Plan

Major Decision Point

- Query the underlying reasons/gifts for diaconal ministry (See Congregational Discernment Handbook)
- Provide a sounding board for the Aspirant's concerns/issues
- Provide overall guidance through the discernment/exploration process
- Mentor when/where needed and pray with the Aspirant
- Make recommendation for, or against, Nomination based on the outcome of the discernment process. (**NOTE: This nomination does not constitute final approval for ordination. The Commission on Ministry, the Standing Committee, and the Bishop must also approve.**)

The discernment plan of action developed between the lay committee and the Aspirant **may include, but is not limited to:**

- Writing Prayers of the People with lay readers
- Serving as a
 - Communion Assistant (may not set the table however)
 - Lector
 - Lay Eucharistic Visitor
 - Acolyte
 - Altar Guild member
- Organizing and leading an intercessory prayer group
- Participating in:
 - Stephen Ministry Training
 - Ignatius Exercises (Eight month model)
 - Education for Ministry (EFM)
- Meeting regularly, but at least monthly, with a spiritual director
- Engaging in a diaconal ministry activity where Aspirant and congregation would work together in:
 - Identifying a need in the local community
 - Identifying opportunities for others to volunteer
 - Bringing community need and volunteer opportunity to the attention of the congregation
 - Recruiting volunteers to participate
 - Arranging for, and/or training congregational participants
 - Participating in the project
 - Meeting monthly with volunteers for supervision/feedback
 - Bridging with the diaconal ministry activities and congregation through regular communication/progress reports such as
 - ✓ Announcements/
 - ✓ Bulletins and Newsletters
 - ✓ Personal Contact
 - ✓ Preaching at least twice (with clergy permission)

NOTE: A major decision point is reached here when the above Aspirant/congregational discernment period ends. At this point the process will actively involve the Bishop, the Commission on

The Formal Diocesan Discernment Process

Bishop meets with nominee

Selection

Nomination for Ordination Information

Canon 6, Sec. 2

(NOTE: Form 1 required to be submitted to the Bishop)

Ministry, and The Standing Committee on a formal basis and is dictated by Church Canon Law.

Entrance into Formal Diocesan discernment process

After the above period of Aspirant/congregational discernment, the Vestry, clergy, Aspirant and congregation:

- Formally affirm, or decline to affirm, in writing, the Aspirant's call to the diaconate at the end of the discernment process
- Formally affirm, or decline to affirm, in writing, the intentions of the congregation to support a deacon in a diaconal ministry
- If both are affirmed, send a letter to the Bishop indicating the desire to move into the formal diocesan discernment process toward ordination to the diaconate by nominating the Aspirant for ordination (See Form 1 and 2 pp. 18, 19)

Of the Ordination of Deacons

Title III, Canon 6 (See full text of Canon in Appendix)

The Bishop will meet briefly with the nominated person and outline Admission to Postulancy requirements, which are according to Canon 6 as follows:

A confirmed adult communicant in good standing, may be nominated for ordination to the diaconate by the person's congregation or other community of faith. The Nomination shall be in writing, (See Form 1 pp. 18), and shall include, but not be limited to:

1. Full name, address, email, phone, marital status, and date of birth.
2. The length of time resident in the Diocese.
3. Evidence of Baptism and Confirmation (Certificates).
4. Whether an application has been made previously for Postulancy or the person has been nominated in any diocese.
5. A description of the process of discernment by which the applicant has been identified for ordination to the Diaconate.
6. The level of education attained and, if any, the degrees earned and areas of specialization, along with official transcripts.
7. Letter of support from Clergy and 2/3 of Vestry (Form 2)
8. Three personal and three congregational references
9. Spiritual Autobiography - Personal, written testimony by the applicant answering the following questions:
 - a) Describe how your sense of call has developed.
 - b) Why are you considering a call to this sacrificial ministry?
 - c) What gifts/experiences/talents do you bring to the diaconal ministry?
10. A detail Training Plan of study for achieving Competency working with the Examining Chaplains and mentors.

Selection (Cont.)

Letter of Support

(Note: Form 2 required to be submitted to Bishop)

POSTULANCY

Title III

Canon 6, Sec 3.

CANDIDACY

Title III

Canon 6, Sec. 4

11. An acceptance in writing by the nominated person.

Also required is a letter of support by the Aspirant's clergy and discernment committee, including a pledge committing the discernment community to involve itself in the Aspirant's preparation for ordination to the Diaconate and to provide financial and emotional support. If it be a congregation, the letter shall also be signed by a two-thirds majority of the Vestry or comparable body, and the member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight (See Form 2 pp. 19)

When the nomination information is completed and submitted to the Bishop, the Bishop will require that the Commission on Ministry interview the nominee before admission to Postulancy. Or, the Bishop may directly admit the person as a Postulant for ordination to the Diaconate.

Admission to Postulancy

Postulancy is the time between nomination and candidacy and may initiate the formal preparation for ordination. Postulancy involves continued exploration of and decision about the Postulant's call to the Diaconate.

Candidacy

Candidacy is a time of education and formation in preparation for ordination to the Diaconate, established by a formal commitment by the Candidate, the Bishop, the Commission, the Standing Committee and the congregation or other community of faith. Unless there are extraordinary circumstances, the Bishop will assign the Candidate to his or her sponsoring congregations. Otherwise, the Bishop will assign the Candidate to any congregation of the diocese or other community of faith after consultation with the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.

Additional requirements – Within 36 months prior to ordination the Candidate must complete the following:

- 1) There shall be a thorough investigation of the Postulant which shall include:
 - a) a background check
 - b) medical and complete psychological evaluation by professionals approved by the Bishop, using forms prepared for the purpose by The Church Pension Fund, and if desired or necessary, psychiatric referral.
 - c) Reports of all discernment activities, investigations and examinations shall be kept on file by the Bishop.
- 2) The Bishop, or the Bishop's designee, may interview the

CANDIDACY (Cont.)

PREPARATION FOR ORDINATION Title III Canon 6, Sec. 5

Postulant after a review of all the Postulant's reports as stated above. The Commission or a designated committee, after a review of all the reports shall interview the Postulant and the Commission or designated committee shall submit a recommendation to the Bishop.

- 3) The Bishop may then admit the Postulant as a Candidate, informing the Candidate, the congregation, and the Member of the Clergy or other leader of the Candidate's discernment community in writing

NOTE: It is recommended that a Postulant demonstrate competency in four of the nine areas of canonical/diocesan requirements before candidacy is conferred for ordination.

At the Bishop's sole discretion, any Candidate may be removed from the list of Candidates, with written notice of the removal being given to the Candidate and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the nominating congregation or other community of faith and the Commission.

Formation

The Bishop and the Commission, shall work with the Postulant or Candidate to develop and monitor a program of preparation for ordination to the Diaconate in accordance with the Canons to ensure that pastoral guidance is provided throughout the period of preparation.

Before ordination each Candidate shall be prepared in and demonstrate basic competence in the following areas:

- 1) The Holy Scriptures
- 2) Theology
- 3) Moral Theology
- 4) Church History
- 5) Liturgy
- 6) Diakonia and the diaconate.
- 7) Human awareness and understanding.
- 8) Spiritual development and discipline.
- 9) Practical training and experience.

The formation process shall include sexual misconduct prevention training, training regarding Title IV of these Canons, anti-racism training, and one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (C.P.E.). Formation shall reflect the local culture and each Candidate's background, age, occupation, and ministry. Prior education and learning from life experience may be considered as part of the formation required for ordination. Wherever possible, formation shall take place in community, including persons in preparation for the diaconate, or others preparing for ministry.

CANDIDACY (Cont.)

Communication and Evaluation

Canon 6, Sec. 6

Final requirements

Application for Ordination *(NOTE: Form 3 required to be submitted to the Bishop)*

Ongoing Discernment

Re-endorsement of support *(NOTE: Form 4 required to be submitted to the Bishop)*

Communication and Evaluation

Each Postulant and Candidate shall communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Candidate's academic, diaconal, human, spiritual, and practical development.

During Candidacy each Candidate's progress shall be evaluated from time to time, and there shall be a written report of the evaluation by those authorized by the Commission to be in charge of the evaluation program. Upon certification by those in charge of the Candidate's program of preparation that the Candidate has successfully completed preparation and is ready for ordination, a final written assessment of readiness for ordination to the Diaconate shall be prepared as determined by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission. This report shall include a recommendation from the Commission regarding the readiness of the Candidate for ordination. Records shall be kept of all evaluations, assessments, and the recommendation, and shall be made available to the Standing Committee.

Final requirements before Ordination

If the medical examination, psychological examination, or background check have taken place more than 36 months prior to ordination, they must be updated.

Before ordination at least eighteen months shall have passed from the time of written acceptance of nomination by the Nominee as provided in Title III Canon 6.2(b) and at least six months have passed from the date candidacy has been conferred (Diocesan policy).

Each Candidate must have reached the age of twenty-four, and made application for ordination (See Form 3 pp. 20).

Upon certification in writing by the Standing Committee that all canonical requirements have been met and that there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, doctrinal, or spiritual grounds and that they recommend ordination, the Bishop may ordain the Candidate a Deacon.

Ongoing Discernment

The congregational and clergy discernment does not end when a Postulant is admitted to Candidacy and undergoes formation. A second letter of support (See Form 4 on pp. 21) signed by a two-thirds majority of the Vestry will be required before ordination to the diaconate. Therefore, discernment is on-going throughout formation and continues

COMPETENCY BASED FORMATION PROCESS

Oversight

Retreats

Required Competencies

Canonical/Diocesan Areas of Formation

Seminar Weekends

to be important to the congregation's and individual's journey to ordination. Congregational involvement does not end at ordination, but becomes a shared ministry through the service and leadership of the deacon they have sponsored. Further, for two years following ordination, new deacons shall continue a process of formation authorized by the Bishop.

Formation

Each Postulant and Candidate will normally be assigned to his or her home congregation for oversight by the clergy during the full course of his/her formation. And each Postulant and Candidate will choose a mentor who will help guide the development and pursuit of a program of required formation. Mentors must be approved by the program director or Archdeacon. It is anticipated that training and demonstration of competence will usually require two to three years of study.

Each program year begins with a retreat in the fall with all Postulants and Candidates attending. Attendance by Aspirants, Postulants and Candidates is required and attendance by all deacons in the diocese is required for two years after ordination. Attendance by the bishop is welcomed at his/her discretion. A similar retreat will be held in the spring of each year.

Each Postulant will be provided with a topical description of subject areas in which knowledge is required in order to establish competence. Postulants and Candidates, with the help of mentors and examining chaplains, develop programs of individual self-study, utilizing recommended readings, courses at nearby universities or seminaries, work with tutors, regular meetings with his/her mentor, and the like in pursuit of competence in the areas of

1. The Holy Scriptures (New Testament and Old Testament)
2. Theology
3. Moral Theology
4. Church History (Not only Anglican or Episcopal)
5. Liturgy
6. Diakonia and the diaconate
7. Human awareness and understanding
8. Spiritual development and discipline
9. Practical training and experience.

During the year there will be a four one-day seminar sessions for all Postulants and Candidates and deacons; attendance by Postulants and Candidates is required.

During each of these sessions examining chaplains and outside non-

FORMATION (Cont.)
Seminar Weekends (Cont.)

Additional Requirements

*Clinical Pastoral
Education Requirement
and Ministry Activities*

FORMATION (Cont.)

profit groups will make presentations and hold seminars covering topics in the required areas of competence and supplemental material in such areas as:

- Liturgy
- Shape of baptismal ministry
- Shape of the ordained ministry
- Theory and practice of ministry
- Prayer Book studies
- Leadership and group dynamics
- Moral theology
- Ethics; current social and ethical issues
- World mission perspective
- Prayer in Christian life
- Stephen Ministry
- Healthcare ministries
- Community service opportunities
- Congregation life; relationship with the clergy
- Conflict resolution
- Communications.

These sessions are intended to build the community of deacons, provide a continuing education opportunity for deacons, and be a source of training material for Postulants and Candidates. However, they are not intended to be the sole, or even the primary, training vehicle for Postulants and Candidates; independent work in reading, attending courses, and the like are the primary source of training. From time to time the bishop may meet with the Postulants and Candidates for questions and dialog and for discussion of current issues.

Canons now require that all deacons receive training in the Constitution and Canons, particularly Title IV on Church Discipline.

Postulants and/or Candidates will complete one unit of C.P.E.; “safe church” and anti-racism training.

Aspirants, Postulant and/or Candidate’s will also continue in diaconal ministry activities with the sponsoring congregation. Supervising clergy will oversee, evaluate and guide such ministries. And clergy will engage Postulants and Candidates in the areas of liturgy and congregational dynamics except that diaconal liturgical duties may not be performed until the Candidate is ordained.

Finally, Postulants and Candidates will meet with their spiritual directors at least monthly during the entire formation period.

Competency Examination

Examination

Postulants and Candidates, when they believe that they are adequately prepared, will arrange with the appropriate examining chaplain for demonstration of competence in each of the nine areas listed above. If the examining chaplain agrees that competency has been demonstrated, he will so notify the Bishop, the Diaconate Formation Director, and the Postulant in writing. If the examining chaplain does not agree that the Postulant or Candidate's preparation has been adequate, the chaplain and Postulant or Candidate will agree on additional training steps to be completed before re-testing.

If it becomes evident that a Postulant/Candidate is, after repeated attempts, eventually not able to meet competency in a given area, the Examining Chaplain will so notify the Bishop, the Commission on Ministry, the Diaconate Formation Director, and the Postulant/Candidate.

SAMPLE FORM 1

DIOCESE OF DELAWARE
NOMINATION FOR ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE (FORM 1)

Full Name of Nominee _____

Address _____

Telephone _____ Cell Phone _____ Email _____

Marital Status_ Single Married Divorced Widowed

Date of Birth _____

Length of time in the Diocese of Delaware _____

Sponsoring Congregation/Faith Community _____

Date and Place of Baptism _____

Date and Place of Confirmation _____

[Certificates of baptism and confirmation must be attached to this form]

Have you ever applied for Postulancy, in this diocese or another diocese?

Yes No

If yes, explain circumstances and outcome, using the reverse side

Have you ever been nominated for ordination to the diaconate in another diocese?

Yes No

If yes, explain circumstances and outcome using the reverse side

Please check the levels of post-secondary education you have attained:

baccalaureate degree

Name of the institution and date of completion: _____

master degree

Name of the institution and date of completion: _____

professional degree

Name of the institution and date of completion: _____

doctoral degree

Name of the institution and date of completion: _____

other certificate or degree program

Name of the institution and date of completion: _____

Please attach to this form the following:

- A narrative description of the discernment process exercised by you and your sponsoring congregation or faith community.
- A spiritual autobiography of no more than three pages (See Page 11, Item 9 of *Diaconate Guide*).
- The signed Letter of Support (Form 2 on page 18 in the *Diaconate Guide*) and the letters of recommendations from the CDC and the Clergy.
- Three personal and three congregational letters of recommendation (*These should be sent directly to Mary Ann Brillhart, Bishop's Assistant, Diocese of Delaware, 2020 Tatnall Street, Wilmington, DE 19802*)
- A detail plan of how you will accomplish competency in the nine canonical areas.

I accept the nomination to be considered for ordination to the diaconate

Signature _____ Date _____

**DIOCESE OF DELAWARE
NOMINATION FOR ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE
CONGREGATIONAL LETTER OF SUPPORT (FORM 2)**

Full Name of Nominee _____

Sponsoring congregation/faith community:

Dear Bishop Wright:

We, the undersigned, communicants of _____

In the town of _____

Pledge our physical, emotional, spiritual, and financial support of the above mentioned person who is hereby nominated for ordination to the diaconate. Furthermore, we pledge our commitment to continue our discernment ministry with this Nominee, and we will involve our entire faith community in our responsibility to help this person prepare for ordination.

[The letter must be signed and dated by a two-thirds majority of the vestry of the congregation, and signed and dated by the Member of the Clergy exercising oversight. If the discernment community is not a congregation, the letter must be signed by a two-thirds majority of an equivalent governing body and the community's leader or executive]

Clergy Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

DIOCESE OF DELAWARE
APPLICATION FOR ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE (FORM 3)

Full Name of Candidate: _____

Sponsoring congregation/faith community:

Have you ever applied for ordination, in this diocese or another diocese?

Yes No

If yes, explain circumstances and outcome, using the reverse side

Please attach the following documents to this application:

- Endorsement from faith community (Form 4, page 20)
- A 500 word essay describing why you believe you are ready to be ordained a deacon in the Diocese of Delaware
- Transcripts of all academic courses and grades received during the time of formation
- Certificates of Competency from Examining Chaplains in all canonically required areas
- CPE Evaluation from Supervisor
- Certificates of sexual misconduct prevention training (Safe Church)
- Certificate of anti-racism training
- Certificate of The Constitutions and Canons training
- Any other reports, records, or evaluations that have been requested

The Commission on Ministry, the Bishop, or the Standing Committee will submit the following documents:

- Ministry Project evaluation from supervisor
- Certificate of Readiness for ordination

I respectfully request consideration to be ordained a deacon in the Diocese of Delaware

Signature _____

Date _____

DIOCESE OF DELAWARE
ENDORSEMENT FOR ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE: SECOND LETTER
OF SUPPORT FROM THE SPONSORING CONGREGATION (FORM 4)

Full Name of Candidate _____

Sponsoring congregation/faith community:

Dear Bishop Wright:

We, the undersigned, communicants of _____

In the town of _____

Pledge our physical, emotional, spiritual, and financial support of the above mentioned person who is a Candidate for ordination to the diaconate. Furthermore, we pledge our commitment to continue our ministry with this Candidate, and we will involve our entire faith community in our responsibility to minister together with this person as our deacon.

[The letter must be signed and dated by a two-thirds majority of the vestry of the congregation, and signed and dated by the Member of the Clergy exercising oversight. If the discernment community is not a congregation, the letter must be signed by a two-thirds majority of an equivalent governing body and the community's leader or executive]

Clergy Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

Vestry Signature and date

MAJOR DIACONATE PROCESS EVENTS

- 1 Certificate of Attendance at DIADD
- 2 Bishop's letter and Contact Information Form sent to Inquirer (copy to Rector)
- 3 Contact Form and essays received and Bishop letter to make appointment
- 4 Inquirer first visit with Bishop
- 5 First visit with C.O.M.
- 6 Recommendation from C.O.M.
- 7 Letter from Bishop to Inquirer to begin Congregational Discernment (or not)
- 8 Aspirant Diaconal Project Plan to Bishop
- 9 Nomination Form (1) from Aspirant which includes:
 - i. Contact Information
 - ii. Narrative description of discernment process
 - iii. Spiritual Autobiography
 - iv. Detailed training plan for achieving Canonical formation competencies
 - v. Three personal and three congregational letters of recommendation
- 10 Nomination Form (2) from Vestry which includes:
 - i. Discernment Committee Letter of Recommendation
 - ii. Clergy Letter of Diaconal Project progress
 - iii. Vestry approval
- 11 Second visit with Bishop
- 12 Second visit with C.O.M.
- 13 C.O.M. recommendation letter
- 14 Postulancy letter from Bishop
- 15 Safe Church Certificate
- 16 Inclusiveness Training Certificate
- 17 Clinical Pastoral Education Evaluation
- Competency Certificates:**
 - 18 Holy Scriptures
 - 19 Theology
 - 20 Ethics & Moral Theology
 - 21 Church History
 - 22 Liturgy
 - 23 Theory & Practice of Ministry
 - 24 Human Awareness / Pastoral Care
 - 25 Spiritual Dev. & Understanding
 - 26 Practical Training & Experience
- 27 Psychological Test Results
- 28 Psychiatric Test Results
- 29 Medical Exam Results
- 30 Background Check
- 31 Final visit and / or review with C.O.M.
- 32 Final visit and / or review with Bishop
- 33 Request for Ordination Forms submitted to Bishop (Form 3 & 4)
- 34 Candidacy letter from Bishop
- 35 COM competency Certification
- 36 Candidate's Application for Ordination
- 37 Vestry Application for Ordination
- 38 Standing Committee Certification
- 39 Ordination Invitation
- 40 Ordination Certificate / Bishop's Seal

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

TITLE III CANON 6: Of the Ordination of Deacons (GC2006)

Sec. 1. Selection

The Bishop, in consultation with the Commission, shall establish procedures to identify and to select persons with evident gifts and fitness for ordination to the Diaconate.

Sec. 2. Nomination

A confirmed adult communicant in good standing, may be nominated for ordination to the diaconate by the person's congregation or other community of faith.

(a) The Nomination shall be in writing and shall include a letter of support by the Nominee's congregation or other community of faith committing the community to

- (1) pledge to contribute financially to that preparation, and
- (2) involve itself in the Nominee's preparation for ordination to the Diaconate.

If it be a congregation, the letter shall be signed by two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body, and by the Member of the Clergy or leader exercising oversight .

(b) The Nominee, if in agreement with the nomination, shall accept the nomination in writing and shall provide the following to the Bishop:

- (1) Full name and date of birth.
- (2) The length of time resident in the Diocese.
- (3) Evidence of Baptism and Confirmation.
- (4) Whether an application has been made previously for Postulancy or the person has been nominated in any Diocese.
- (5) A description of the process of discernment by which the Nominee has been identified for ordination to the Diaconate.
- (6) The level of education attained and, if any, the degrees earned, and areas of specialization, together with copies of official transcripts.

Sec. 3. Postulancy

Postulancy is the time between nomination and candidacy and may initiate the formal preparation for ordination. Postulancy involves continued exploration of and decision about the Postulant's call to the Diaconate.

(a) Before granting admission as a Postulant, the Bishop shall

- (1) determine that the Nominee is a confirmed adult communicant in good standing, and
- (2) confer in person with the Nominee,

(b) If the Bishop approves the Nominee proceeding into Postulancy, the Commission, or a committee of the Commission, shall meet with the Nominee to review the application and prepare an evaluation of the Nominee's qualifications to pursue a program of preparation for ordination to the Diaconate. The Commission shall present its evaluation and recommendations to the Bishop.

(c) No Bishop shall consider accepting as a Postulant any person who has been refused admission as a Candidate for ordination to the Diaconate in any other Diocese, or who, having been admitted, has afterwards ceased to be a Candidate, until receipt of a letter from the Bishop of the Diocese refusing admission, or in which the person has been a Candidate, declaring the cause of refusal or of cessation.

(d) The Bishop may admit the Nominee as a Postulant for ordination to the Diaconate. The Bishop shall record the Postulant's name and date of admission in a Register kept for that purpose. The Bishop shall inform the Postulant, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Postulant's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the director of the Postulant's program of preparation, of the fact and date of such admission.

(e) Each Postulant for ordination to the Diaconate shall communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, four times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Postulant's academic, diaconal, human, spiritual, and practical development.

(f) Any Postulant may be removed as a Postulant at the sole discretion of the Bishop. The Bishop shall give written notice of the removal to the Postulant and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Postulant's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the director of the program of preparation.

Sec. 4. Candidacy

Candidacy is a time of education and formation, in preparation for ordination to the Diaconate, established by a formal commitment by the Candidate, the Bishop, the Commission, the Standing Committee and the congregation or other community of faith.

(a) A person desiring to be considered as a Candidate for ordination to the Diaconate shall apply to the Bishop. Such application shall include the following:

- (1) the Postulant's date of admission to Postulancy, and

(2) a letter of support by the Postulant's congregation or other community of faith. If it be a congregation the letter shall be signed and dated by at least two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body and by the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.

(b) Upon compliance with these requirements, and receipt of a written statement from the Commission attesting to the continuing formation of the Postulant, and having received approval in writing of the Standing Committee who shall have interviewed the Postulant and who shall have had an opportunity to review the documentation relating to the application of the Postulant, the Bishop may admit the Postulant as a Candidate for ordination to the Diaconate. The Bishop shall record the Candidate's name and date of admission in a Register kept for that purpose. The Bishop shall inform the Candidate, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Candidate's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the Dean of the seminary the Candidate may be attending or proposes to attend, or the director of the Candidate's program of preparation, of the fact and date of such admission.

(c) A Candidate must remain in canonical relationship with the Diocese in which admission has been granted until ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon, except, for reasons acceptable to the Bishop, the Candidate may be transferred to another Diocese upon request, provided that the Bishop of the receiving Diocese is willing to accept the Candidate

(d) Any Candidate may be removed as a Candidate, at the sole discretion of the Bishop. The Bishop shall give written notice of the removal to the Candidate and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Candidate's congregation or other community of faith, the Commission, the Standing Committee, and the director of the program of preparation.

(e) If a Bishop has removed the Candidate's name from the list of Candidates, except by transfer, or the Candidate's application for ordination has been rejected, no other Bishop may ordain the person without readmission to Candidacy for a period of at least twelve months.

Sec. 5. Preparation for Ordination

(a) The Bishop and the Commission shall work with the Postulant or Candidate to develop and monitor a program of preparation for ordination to the Diaconate in accordance with this Canon to ensure that pastoral guidance is provided throughout the period of preparation.

(b) The Bishop may assign the Postulant or Candidate to any congregation of the Diocese or other community of faith after consultation with the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.

(c) Formation shall take into account the local culture and each Postulant or Candidate's background, age, occupation, and ministry.

(d) Prior education and learning from life experience may be considered as part of the formation required for ordination.

(e) Wherever possible, formation for the Diaconate shall take place in community, including other persons in preparation for the Diaconate, or others preparing for ministry.

(f) Before ordination each Candidate shall be prepared in and demonstrate basic competence in five general areas:

- (1) Academic studies including, The Holy Scriptures, theology, and the tradition of the Church.
- (2) Diakonia and the diaconate.
- (3) Human awareness and understanding.
- (4) Spiritual development and discipline.
- (5) Practical training and experience.

(g) Preparation for ordination shall include training regarding

- (1) prevention of sexual misconduct.
- (2) civil requirements for reporting and pastoral opportunities for responding to evidence of abuse.
- (3) the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, particularly Title IV thereof.
- (4) the Church's teaching on racism.

(h) Each Candidate for ordination to the Diaconate shall communicate with the Bishop in person or by letter, for times a year, in the Ember Weeks, reflecting on the Candidate's academic, diaconal, human, spiritual, and practical development.

(i) During Candidacy each Candidate's progress shall be evaluated from time to time, and there shall be a written report of the evaluation by those authorized by the Commission to be in charge of the evaluation program. Upon certification by those in charge of the Candidate's program of preparation that the Candidate has successfully completed preparation and is ready for ordination, a final written assessment of readiness for ordination to the Diaconate shall be prepared as determined by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission. This report shall include a recommendation from the Commission regarding the readiness of the Candidate for ordination. Records shall be kept of all evaluations, assessments, and the recommendation, and shall be made available to the Standing Committee.

(j) Within thirty-six months prior to ordination as a Deacon, the following must be accomplished

- (1) a background check, according to criteria established by the Bishop and Standing Committee.
- (2) medical and psychological evaluation by professionals approved by the Bishop, using forms prepared for the purpose by The Church Pension Fund, and if desired or necessary, psychiatric referral.

(k) Reports of all investigations and examinations shall be kept permanently on file by the Bishop and remain a part of the permanent diocesan record.

Sec. 6. Ordination to the Diaconate

(a) A person may be ordained Deacon:

(1) after at least eighteen months from the time of written acceptance of nomination by the Nominee as provided in III.6.2(b)., and

(2) upon attainment of at least twenty-four years of age.

(b) The Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide to the Standing Committee:

(1) an application from the Candidate requesting ordination as a Deacon under this Canon.

(2) a letter of support from the Candidate's congregation or other community of faith, signed and dated by at least two-thirds of the Vestry and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight.

(3) written evidence of admission of the Candidate to Postulancy and Candidacy, giving the dates of admission.

(4) a certificate from the seminary or other 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 ordination together with

a recommendation regarding ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon.

(5) a certificate from the Commission giving a recommendation regarding ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon.

(c) On the receipt of such certificates, the Standing Committee, if a majority of all members consent, shall certify that the Canonical requirements for ordination to the Diaconate under this Canon have been met, that there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds and that they recommend ordination. The Standing Committee shall evidence such certification, by a testimonial, addressed to the Bishop in the form specified below and signed by the consenting members of the Standing Committee.

**To the Right Reverend _____, Bishop of _____ We,
the Standing Committee of _____, having been duly
convened at _____ at _____, do testify that A.B.,
desiring to be ordained to the Diaconate under Canon III.6 has
presented to us the certificates as required by the Canons
indicating A.B.'s preparedness for ordination to the Diaconate
under Canon III.6; and we certify that all canonical requirements
for ordination to the Diaconate under Canon III.6 have been met;
and we find no sufficient objection to ordination. Therefore, we
recommend A.B. for ordination. In witness whereof, we have
hereunto set our hands this ____ day of _____, in the year of
our Lord _____.**

(Signed) _____

(d) The testimonial having been presented to the Bishop, and there being no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds, the Bishop may ordain the Candidate to the Diaconate under this Canon; and at the time of ordination the Candidate shall subscribe publicly and make, in the presence of the Bishop, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution.

TITLE III CANON 7: Of the Life and Work of Deacons (GC2006)

Sec. 1. Deacons serve directly under the authority of and are accountable to the Bishop, or in the absence of the Bishop, the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese.

Sec. 2. Deacons canonically resident in each Diocese constitute a Community of Deacons, which shall meet from time to time. The Bishop may appoint one or more of such Deacons as Archdeacon(s) to assist the Bishop in the formation, deployment, supervision, and support of the Deacons or those in preparation to be Deacons, and in the implementation of this Canon.

Sec. 3. The Bishop may establish a Council on Deacons to oversee, study, and promote the Diaconate.

Sec. 4. The Bishop, after consultation with the Deacon and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight, may assign a Deacon to one or more congregations, other communities of faith or non-parochial ministries. Deacons assigned to a congregation or other community of faith act under the authority of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight in all matters concerning the congregation.

(a) Subject to the Bishop's approval, Deacons may have a letter of agreement setting forth mutual responsibilities in the assignment, and, if such a letter exists, it is subject to renegotiation with the Vestry/Bishop's Committee after the resignation of the Rector or the Priest in-Charge.

(b) Deacons shall report annually to the Bishop or the Bishop's designee on their life and work.

- (c) Deacons may serve as administrators of congregations or other communities of faith, but no Deacon shall be in charge of a congregation or other community of faith.
- (d) Deacons may accept chaplaincies in any hospital, prison, or other institution.
- (e) Deacons may participate in the governance of the Church.
- (f) For two years following ordination, new Deacons shall continue a process of formation authorized by the Bishop.
- (g) The Bishop or the Bishop's designee, in consultation with the Commission, shall assign each newly ordained Deacon a mentor Deacon where a suitable mentor Deacon is available. The mentor and Deacon shall meet regularly for at least one year to provide guidance, information, and a sustained dialogue about diaconal ministry.

Sec. 5. The Bishop and Commission shall require and provide for the continuing education of Deacons and keep a record of such education.

Sec. 6

(a) A Deacon may not serve as Deacon for more than two months in any Diocese other than the Diocese in which the Deacon is canonically resident unless the Bishop of the other Diocese shall have granted a license to the Deacon to serve in that Diocese.

(b)

(1) A Deacon desiring to become canonically resident within a Diocese shall request a testimonial from the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese in which the Deacon is canonically resident to present to the receiving Diocese, which testimonial, if granted, shall be given by the Ecclesiastical Authority to the applicant, and a duplicate thereof may be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese to which transfer is proposed. The testimonial shall be in the following words:

I hereby certify that A.B., who has signified to me the desire to be transferred to the Ecclesiastical Authority of _____, is a Deacon of _____ in good standing, and has not, so far as I know or believe, been justly liable to evil report for error in religion or for viciousness of life, for the last three years.

(Date) _____ (Signed) _____

(2) Such testimonial shall be called Letters Dimissory. If the Ecclesiastical Authority accepts the Letters Dimissory, the canonical residence of the Deacon so transferred shall date from the acceptance of the Letters Dimissory, of which prompt notice shall be given both to the applicant and to the Ecclesiastical Authority from which it came.

(3) Letters Dimissory not presented within six months from the date of transmission to the applicant shall become void.

(4) A statement of the record of payments to The Church Pension Fund by or on behalf of the Deacon concerned shall accompany Letters Dimissory.

Sec. 7. On reaching the age of seventy-two years, a Deacon shall resign from all positions of active service in this Church, and the resignation shall be accepted. The Bishop may, with the consent of the Deacon, assign a resigned Deacon to any congregation, other community of faith or ministry in another setting, for a term not to exceed twelve months, and this term may be renewed.

Sec. 8. If any Deacon of this Church not subject to the provisions of Canon IV.8 shall declare, in writing, to the Bishop of the Diocese in which such Deacon is canonically resident, a renunciation of the ordained Ministry of this Church, and a desire to be removed therefrom, it shall be the duty of the Bishop to record the declaration and request so made. The Bishop, being satisfied that the person so declaring is not subject to the provision of Canon IV.8 but is acting voluntarily and for causes, assigned or known, which do not affect the Deacon's moral character, shall lay the matter before the clerical members of the Standing Committee, and with the advice and consent of a majority of such members the Bishop may pronounce that such renunciation is accepted, and that the Deacon is released from the obligations of the Ministerial office, and is deprived of the right to exercise the gifts and spiritual authority as a Minister of God's Word and Sacraments conferred in Ordination. The Bishop shall also declare in pronouncing and recording such action that it was for causes which do not affect the person's moral character, and shall, if desired, give a certificate to this effect to the person so removed from the ordained Ministry.

Sec. 9. If a Deacon making the aforesaid declaration of renunciation of the ordained Ministry be under Presentment for any Offense, or shall have been placed on Trial for the same, the Ecclesiastical Authority to whom such declaration is made shall not consider or act upon such declaration until after the said Presentment shall have been dismissed or the said Trial shall have been concluded and the Deacon judged not to have committed an Offense.

Sec. 10. In the case of the renunciation of the ordained Ministry by a Deacon as provided in this Canon, a declaration of removal shall be pronounced by the Bishop in the presence of two or more Members of the Clergy, and shall be entered in the official records of the Diocese in which the Deacon being removed is canonically resident. The Bishop who pronounces the declaration of removal as provided in this Canon shall give notice thereof in writing to every Member of the Clergy, each Vestry, the Secretary of the Convention and the Standing Committee of the Diocese in which the Deacon was canonically resident; and to all Bishops of this Church, the Ecclesiastical Authority of each Diocese of this Church, the Presiding Bishop, the Recorder of Ordinations, the Secretary of the House of Bishops, the Secretary of the House of Deputies, The Church Pension Fund, and the Board for Church Deployment.