

# Vocational Discernment for Holy Orders

## Guidelines for Aspirants

***“The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task.” (1 Tim. 3:1)***

For those who believe that God is calling them to ordained ministry in the Diocese of San Joaquin, after coming before the Lord to seek His direction, the aspirant should follow the path below based on the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church in North America and the requirements of the Diocese of San Joaquin:

1. Initial consultation with sponsoring priest in charge of the aspirant’s church (rector or vicar) or clergy-in-charge. If recommended to move forward to the interview with the Bishop, the following will occur:
  - a. With your rector / vicar or clergy-in-charge, write up your Spiritual Autobiography.
  - b. Complete the Aspirant Application
  - c. Complete a “Live Scan” fingerprint process, if not already completed for ministry.
2. Initial discernment assessment will be conducted by the rector / vicar or clergy-in-charge of the congregation. He/she will assist the aspirant in the following:
  - a. Discerning the order to which the person feels called.
  - b. Discerning the grounds for the desire for admission to Holy Orders, together with personal circumstances as may bear on the person’s qualifications or course of preparation.
  - c. Ensuring that the aspirant is a confirmed adult, male communicant in good standing for the Order of Priesthood or confirmed adult in good standing for the Order of Deacon.
3. A letter of recommendation from the sponsoring priest or clergy-in-charge shall report the evidence or support of a call to Holy Orders. This summary letter of recommendation will be addressed to The Rt. Rev. Eric Menees, and sent with the spiritual autobiography and Aspirant Application.
4. An appointment to meet with the Bishop and/or Canon to the Ordinary should then be scheduled through the diocesan administrator. The aspirant should be prepared to discuss his or her spiritual journey and spiritual autobiography with the Bishop and/or the Canon to the Ordinary.
5. After an interview with the Bishop and with the Bishop’s subsequent permission, the aspirant will then continue their discernment process at the parish level through a Parish Ordained Ministry Discernment Team (POMDT) assembled by the sponsoring priest, according to the POMDT guidelines. This phase lasts a minimum of six months.
6. Following POMDT’s approval and recommendation for Postulancy, the aspirant meets with the Commission on the Ordained Ministry (COM). COM will do the following:
  - a. Review the application and Spiritual Autobiography.
  - b. Evaluation of the applicant’s qualifications to pursue a course of preparation for Holy Orders.
  - c. Present a recommendation to the Bishop for the aspirant’s acceptance for Postulancy.

If the aspirant is admitted as a Postulant, he/she will be assisted with the preparation of an educational plan/course of study and will be assigned a mentor and a shepherd to assist the Postulant through the vocations process, and will be in ongoing communication with the Vocations Officer. This phase lasts a minimum of six (6) months, and includes the completion of a psychological examination, medical examination, background checks, behavioral screening questionnaire, and regular Ember Letter submissions. Once this phase is satisfactorily completed, the Postulant may apply for Candidacy for Ordination.