



**ANGLICAN
DIOCESE OF
MELBOURNE**

**Ordained Ministry in the
Anglican Diocese of Melbourne
INFORMATION FOR ENQUIRERS**

Making the Word of God fully known

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From the Archbishop



The Anglican Diocese of Melbourne welcomes those who believe God may be calling them to consider ordained ministry.

There are many steps to fulfilling that calling, the first of which is to listen to the wisdom of others. There will then be a time for discernment, both individually, and with others. Ultimately, the Church, in a corporate way, will need to recognize the sense of calling and of vocation felt by the individual.

One of the greatest joys I have as Archbishop is the ordination service. To ordain men and women, who have spent many years searching their hearts, learning about the word of God, listening, praying and seeking God, in preparing for a lifetime of service to others, is an extraordinary privilege.

It is heartening to me to see that men and women, young and old, from many different backgrounds, are hearing and responding to God's call to ordained ministry. Each year, the group being ordained together are largely representative of the wonderful diversity of the community we serve.

Those who are called are ready to present themselves to a rigorous process - a process that can take many years - but even then is not done. When you embark on the journey of ordained ministry, you embark on a lifelong journey of continued learning and formation for ministry.

I commend to you these resources which describe the process of ministry training and formation within the diocese, and pray they will be useful to you as you further consider and reflect on what God may be calling you to do.

Grace and peace in Christ Jesus

The Most Reverend Dr Philip Freier
Archbishop of Melbourne

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Call and Vocation

*“As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, ‘Follow me.’ And he got up and followed him.”
(Matthew 9.9)*

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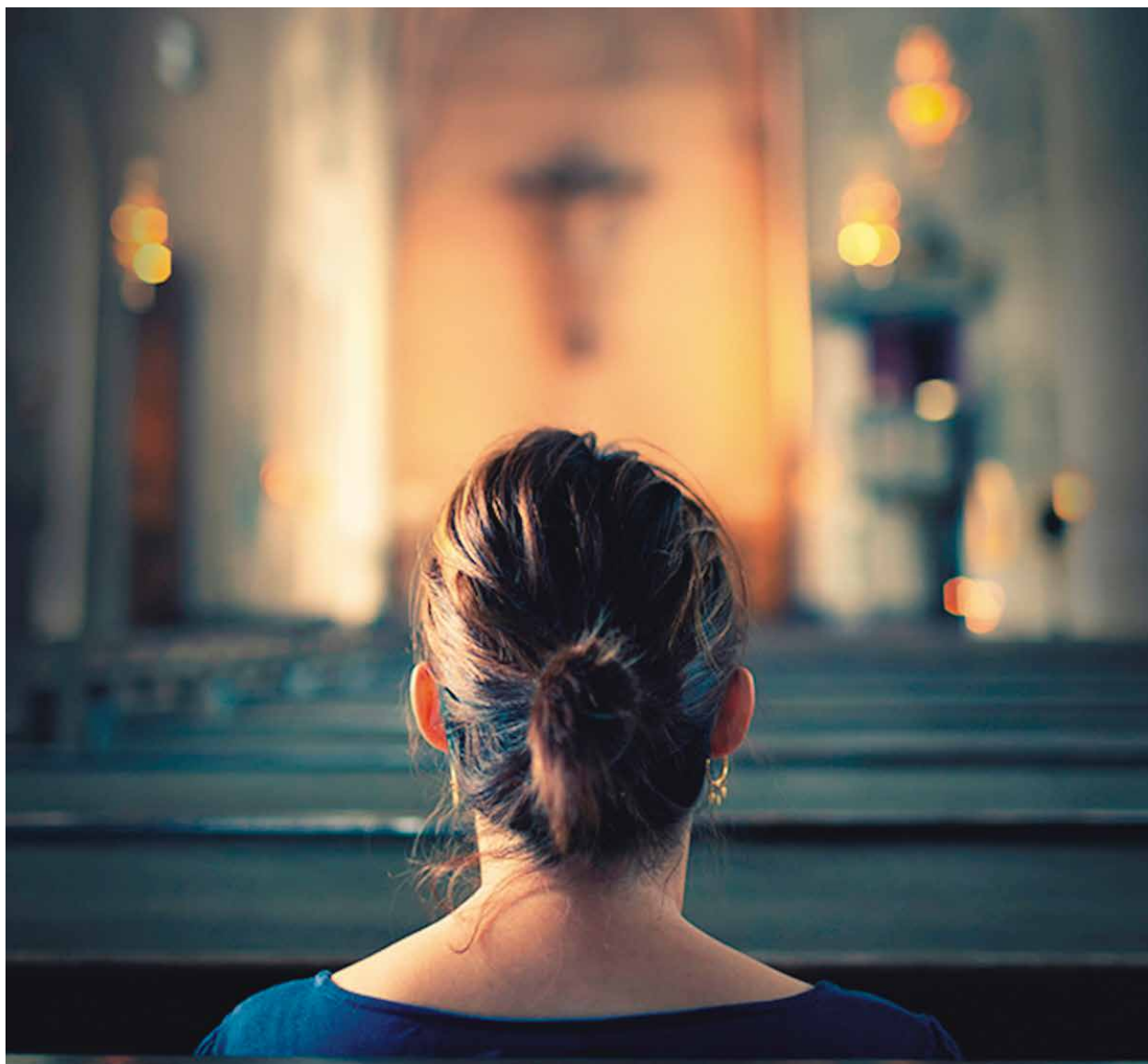
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The call of Jesus to Matthew was clear and unambiguous. Matthew’s response to it was immediate.

For most of us, discerning a call to follow Jesus in the context of the ordained ministries of the church will be much more complex.

Our response may be years, possibly many years, in the making, arising out of long and sustained prayer and reflection.



1. Where do I begin?

Those who sense, or experience, a call to ordained ministry in the Anglican Church will normally be regular members of an Anglican worshipping community, and will be known to the leader of that community.

Begin by talking to the leader of your parish or congregation about your sense of calling. Read all of the information in these pages, and use the resources within to think, pray, and talk to others about this, and what it might mean for you, and, importantly, for those others with whom you share your life.

If you feel ready to proceed, the next step is to carefully consider the Archbishop's criteria as set out below, together with the provisions of canon law that pertain to ordained ministry, with a view to prayerfully and honestly reflecting on the extent to which you can meet them.

If you do wish to proceed, speak to your vicar or other minister about entering the discernment program, and make contact with Ministry Training & Formation to enquire about when the next intake session is scheduled.

2. The Archbishop's criteria

The Archbishop of Melbourne, the Most Revd Dr Philip Freier, has outlined (below) the criteria and qualities sought in a person offering for the ordained ministry.

Any person considering a vocation to ordained ministry in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne should take careful note of the criteria outlined by the Archbishop of Melbourne, in regards to the qualities being sought in potential candidates for the ordained ministries of the Church, and prayerfully consider and reflect on them.

(a) Personal

- Most basic of all is Christian faith and character. A candidate must be able to give a clear explanation of his/her discovery and realisation of Christ.
- There must be evidence that Christian character is held as a high priority.
- A person must exhibit strengths of character and courage, and be able to resist personal, peer and community pressures.
- They must possess physical and psychological fitness.
- They must be cleared for ministry by Kooyoora (the diocesan provider of professional standards), following a rigorous character and background check.

(b) Vocational

- A person must exhibit a 'passion' for 'God in Christ' and his Church, and show evidence of a desire to talk about 'God in Christ' to others.
- There must be evidence of a capacity and a desire to serve, and to lead, communities of faith.
- The person will need to possess people and community life skills and sensitivities.
- The person will be aware that simply to have a desire to be a Priest or Deacon or to have an 'attraction to the spiritual life' are not necessarily a call to ordination. God's call must be tested by the Church.

(c) Professional

- The person will need to have the intellectual capacity to study and reflect on scripture and theology, and to have a high regard for these sources.
- It will be important to have an ability to communicate the Christian faith in a way that is attractive and compelling to contemporary Australians.
- Any potential ordinand will need to have a good understanding of the Anglican Ordinal and of the essence of Anglicanism: the Bible, the Creeds, church polity and liturgy; and demonstrate a flexibility and generosity of experience consistent with the historical diversity of Anglicanism.
- Candidates should come from a background of strong parish involvement that has been sustained over time.

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3. Canon law

The Diocese of Melbourne has adopted the *Canon Concerning Holy Orders 2004* which sets out some fundamental criteria around ordination. These provisions should be carefully noted by all prospective candidates. It should also be understood that it is not usually possible for any provision of Canon Law to be altered or waived, nor to be considered negotiable or flexible.

Deacon

A person cannot be ordained Deacon unless;

- They have attained the age of 23 years;
- Have been baptized and either confirmed or received into communicant membership of the Anglican Church of Australia;
- Have been an active member of the Anglican Church for a period of at least twelve months;
- Have completed an appropriate course of training in theological and ministerial formation;
- Has a sufficient knowledge of Holy Scripture;
- Has a sufficient knowledge of, and accepts the doctrine, discipline and principles of, the Anglican Church of Australia;
- Has sufficient knowledge of the forms of worship of the Anglican Church of Australia.



Priest

A person cannot be ordained Priest unless;

- They have attained the age of 24 years;
- They have been ordained Deacon;
- They will normally have ministered satisfactorily as a Deacon for at least nine months.

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4. The discernment program

The diocese provides a structured program of discernment to assist any person considering a potential call or vocation to ordained ministry.

The program is comprised of an intake session known as the Vocations Day, and three evening sessions. This is complemented by recommended reading on the Anglican Church and Anglican ministry. The participant debriefs and reflects on the content of each session with a mentor who is a person already in Holy Orders (ordained).

The sessions include and cover:

- The process of discernment and dynamics of a call
- The qualities and characteristics required of an ordained minister
- The Ordinal
- Vocational options in the Church

The discernment program is run twice annually, with intakes at the beginning of the year and mid-year.

All persons expressing interest in ordained ministry in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne and wishing to be considered as a candidate for ordination, begin by participating in the discernment program.

The usual requirements for admission to the discernment program are:

- (i) You will have attended a Vocations Day, which acts as the intake session;
- (ii) You will have the support of your vicar or chaplain, or in some circumstances another person in Holy Orders, whom you will have known for at least twelve months, and who is willing to support you entering the discernment program;
- (iii) You are baptised and either confirmed or received into communicant membership of the Anglican Church or are willing and desirous to be.

A person enrolled in the discernment program is described as an 'aspirant' (for ordination).

There is no obligation or undertaking on either party (the aspirant or the diocese) regarding eventual consideration for selection as a candidate for ordination, let alone eventual ordination. The aspirant is free to withdraw from the program at any time, and the diocese does not ask for any commitment or undertaking to continue to selection of those participating in discernment.

The Selection Process

Upon completion of the discernment stage an aspirant may decide to pursue a vocation to the ordained ministry.

1. Initiating the process

It is important to note that the aspirant must take the initiative by asking to be formally considered as a candidate for ordination. This will initiate the formal selection process.

2. Clearance for Ministry

The clearance process will now be commenced. This will involve completing and submitting a Safe Ministry Check (in the category of candidate for ordination) to Kooyoora, and providing other information such as a Working with Children Check, and doing a national police check.

If anything that requires further consideration is raised as part of the clearance process, or if the requisite forms are not completed in full or not provided to Kooyoora in a timely manner, this will need to be resolved prior to the aspirant proceeding to a selection conference.

An aspirant who is unable to obtain a Clearance for Ministry from Kooyoora can not be considered any further as a candidate for ordination.

3. Recommendation from an ordained minister

A confidential recommendation from a person ordained in the Anglican Church of Australia is sought as a first step for every candidate for ordination. The minister from whom this is sought is normatively the vicar or chaplain of the aspirant, or in some circumstances another ordained minister who knows the aspirant well.

The recommendation is confidential and is sought by the office of the Director of Ministry Training & Formation. This report is not provided to the aspirant.

It is important that aspirants wishing to be considered for ordination have spoken to the ordained minister from whom this report will be sought in advance of it being requested.



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4. The Examining Chaplains

Pending the contents of the recommendation from an ordained minister, the aspirant may be asked to make an appointment to see two of the Archbishop's Examining Chaplains.

The Examining Chaplains will meet with the aspirant to assess their sense of call and vocation, and will then make a recommendation regarding the suitability and readiness of the aspirant to attend a Selection Conference.

The Examining Chaplains will each provide a written report to the Director of Ministry Training & Formation. In some cases, where a recommendation may be unclear or unable to be provided, an aspirant may be asked to see one or more further Examining Chaplains.

Pending the contents of the Examining Chaplains' reports, the aspirant may then be invited to attend a Selection Conference. The Director of Ministry Training & Formation will advise on the outcome of the interviews with the Examining Chaplains, and provide notice in writing to the aspirant as to whether they will be invited to attend a Selection Conference.

5. The application process

If the aspirant is to be invited to attend a Selection Conference, the formal application process will be initiated, and the aspirant will be provided with the necessary documentation and other material to be completed in advance of the Selection Conference.

This will include:

- A formal application for ordination;
- A sustained narrative of about 1,000 words in length on their personal faith story and journey;
- Contact details for four referees, each of whom will be contacted;
- A medical certificate from their Doctor stating that the aspirant is physically able to undertake a sometimes physically and mentally challenging occupation;
- An interview on referral with one of the diocesan consulting psychologists, that will also entail completing some psychological assessments in advance of the interview as directed by the consulting psychologist.

The office of the Director of Ministry Training & Formation will assist the candidate in compiling the necessary documentation and in other ways as may be necessary.

The Selection Conference

The Selection Conference is in the nature of retreat, and takes place residentially over three days, normally from Thursday evening to Saturday afternoon.

Over the course of the Selection Conference, each aspirant will attend a series of interviews, make a short presentation to the group, and take part in a group discussion. Aspirants will also worship together, and share meals together. There will be periods of time for prayer and reflection alone, as well as opportunities for informal fellowship together.

An Examining Chaplain will be the Selection Conference retreat convenor, and one or more other Examining Chaplains will be in attendance throughout the three days.

1. Preparation

At the Selection Conference, the aspirant should be able to articulate:

- Whether they believe their calling is to the distinctive diaconate or priesthood;
- Whether they believe their calling is to parish based ministry, chaplaincy, Ordained Local Ministry, or another area of ministry;
- Whether they are seeking to be stipendiary (paid) or non-stipendiary (self-supporting);
- Their willingness to be deployed anywhere in the Diocese of Melbourne.

Aspirants are not expected to have completed any formal academic study in theology or ministry in advance of attending a Selection Conference, but will be expected to have carefully read and considered The Ordinal, and will be able to demonstrate a good understanding of Anglican belief and practice.

2. The interviews

During the course of the Selection Conference each aspirant will attend a series of interviews. The interviews will be on the following aspects of ministry:

- Vocation – this interview is conducted by a Bishop. If married, or engaged to be married, the aspirant's spouse or fiancée is asked to accompany them to the interview on Vocation conducted by a Bishop. The fiancée or spouse is not asked or required to attend the other interviews.
- Leadership – this interview is conducted by a person in a leadership position, such as the Principal of an Anglican School, or the diocesan Registrar or General Manager.

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- Theological Understanding – this interview is conducted by a Faculty member at a theological college such as Ridley College or Trinity College Theological School.
- Spiritual life and practise – this interview is conducted by one or more of the Examining Chaplains present.

3. The presentation

As part of the Selection Conference each aspirant will make a short presentation to the Examining Chaplains and the other aspirants present, on a topic chosen by the aspirant from a list provided in advance.

4. The group discussion

At one point during the Selection Conference the convenor will bring the aspirants present together for a group discussion. The topic or topics will be introduced by the convenor of the Selection Conference at the time of the group discussion, and aspirants will be invited to contribute to the discussion in a group setting.

5. Outcomes

Possible outcomes from the Selection Conference include:

- The aspirant is offered a place as a diocesan candidate for ordination;
- The aspirant is not recommended for acceptance as a candidate in training for ordination at the present time, but the possibility may be left open for the aspirant to attend a future Selection Conference;
- The aspirant's vocation and calling is discerned as being to lay ministry rather than ordained ministry, and the aspirant will not be offered a place as a diocesan candidate for ordination.



If invited to become a diocesan candidate in training for ordination, a letter from the Archbishop offering the aspirant a place as a diocesan candidate for ordination will be issued. The Archbishop's letter will set out the requirements to be completed in advance of ordination, and detail the academic study and ministry formation required to be undertaken in advance of ordination.

If the aspirant accepts the offer, they will become a diocesan candidate for ordination. A candidate for ordination is free to withdraw at any time, and will expect their vocation to be continually tested both personally, and by others, during the period of candidature.

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6. Important considerations

The following should be carefully and clearly noted:

- An acceptance as a candidate for ordination is an acceptance of just that, as a candidate. It does not constitute a guarantee of eventual ordination nor a commitment by the diocese to ordain: a candidate may withdraw from candidacy at any time and the diocese may revoke candidacy at any time;
- All candidates are expected to give an undertaking of their willingness, if ultimately ordained, to be deployed to any part of the geographical expanse of the Diocese of Melbourne;
- All candidates should have read and carefully noted the personal and other requirements as set out in the national Code of Conduct 'Faithfulness in Service' (accessible [here](#)) and be willing to abide by them;
- All candidates should have read and carefully considered the contents of the Oath and the Declarations required to be made by canon law by any person being ordained in the Anglican Church of Australia, and be able and willing to make and sign them;
- The final decision to ordain any person resides solely with the Archbishop of Melbourne.

Formation & Training for Ordained Ministry

If successful at the Selection Conference, an aspirant is invited to accept a place as a diocesan candidate for ordination, and will then participate in a program of training and formation tailored to their needs, and taking into account any prior ministry experience and theological education. The Archbishop's letter of offer will briefly set out what the candidate will need to do prior to ordination.

For most candidates this will include:

- Completing a course of study in theology that meets the diocesan academic requirements for ordination;
- Participating fully in the ministry formation program at their training college in each year of candidacy;
- Undertaking Supervised Theological Field Education (STFE) ministry placements in each year of candidacy;
- Undertaking one unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) preferably in a clinical environment.

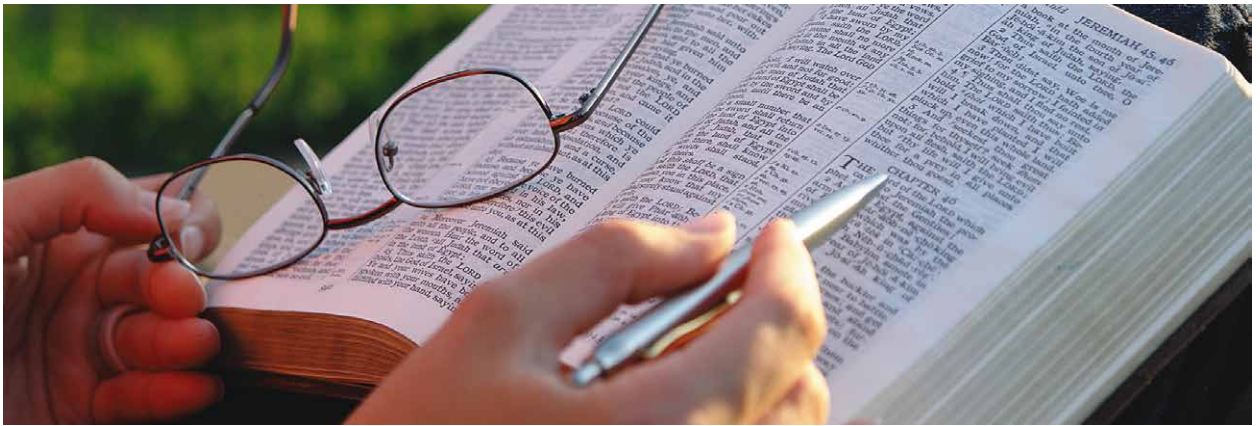
It is expected and anticipated that candidates in training will take the initiative in planning an appropriate course of theological study in consultation with their training college, and in making decisions about their ministry placements, living arrangements, spiritual direction, mentoring and advice, and fellowship, reflective of that of an aspiring leader in God's church.

The model of training, formation and education pursued by the Diocese of Melbourne is integrative and reflective. The theological instruction provided by the theological college is put into practice in the ministry placement, whilst both learning and praxis are the subject of guided reflection with other candidates in training.

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1. Theological study

Candidates for ordination will complete a course of study in theology or ministry, approved by the Director of Ministry Training & Formation. This will normally be at undergraduate or postgraduate level, such as a Bachelor of Theology or Master of Divinity.

The core academic requirements normally undertaken by all candidates for ordination as part of an undergraduate or postgraduate award of study are set out below. Candidates for ordination should discuss with their training college how their course of study can be arranged in order to meet these minimum requirements.

- **Biblical Studies** – introductory units in both Old Testament and New Testament, and at least two advanced units in biblical studies and hermeneutics (with a preference for exegesis in the original languages) must be included.
- **Biblical languages** – the Diocese of Melbourne encourages all candidates for ordination to include the biblical languages in their course of study, and to undertake as a minimum, an introductory unit in New Testament Greek.
- **Theology** – units of study that encompass the doctrine of God, the doctrine of the Trinity, the doctrine of the person of Christ, the doctrine of salvation in Christ, and the doctrine of the Church, must be undertaken.
- **Church History** – the minimum requirement is for one subject or unit on the Early Church (Patristics) and one subject or unit on the Reformation.
- **Practical Theology** – all candidates for ordination should give consideration, in consultation with their training college, as to how units in practical theology can be incorporated into their course of study. Preaching (homiletics) must be included. Subjects that cover pastoral care, ethics, leadership, and evangelism or missiology should be included insofar as it is possible to do so.
- **Liturgy** – at least one unit or subject must be undertaken in liturgical studies, including an examination of Christian worship and the theology of the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion.
- **Anglican Identity** – at least one unit particular to Anglicanism and Anglican identity must be included in their course of study by all candidates for ordination.

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- **Indigenous theology & awareness** – candidates for ordination are required to demonstrate engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural awareness, and with indigenous theology and spirituality, during the course of their studies, as determined by their training college in consultation with the Director of Ministry Training & Formation. This may, or may not, be undertaken for academic award.

The Diocese will take into consideration needs of individual candidates, such as language, accessibility to government assistance with the cost of study (FeeHelp), and other factors, on a case by case basis. Prior study will also be considered on a case by case basis. Individual candidates are advised to discuss matters of this nature, and their particular needs and circumstances, with the Director of Ministry Training & Formation at an early stage in their candidacy. Recommendations concerning theological study are normally made as part of the selection conference and will be set out in the letter of offer from the Archbishop.

2. Ministry pathways

A range of ministry opportunities are present in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, and it is possible for ordained ministers to serve in a variety of settings and contexts. These include, but are not limited to:

- Parish ministry
- The distinctive diaconate (see further information here)
- Pioneer ministry and Church planting
- Ordained Local Minister (see further information here)
- School chaplain (see further information here)
- Health services chaplaincies, in hospital, aged care or other health facilities, and other forms of chaplaincy such as workplace, emergency services, or defence force chaplaincy (see further information here)
- Appointments to academic institutions

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It is usual for candidates for ordination, having been accepted as such through the selection process, to adapt their course of study and program of formation to reflect any specific requirements of the ministry pathway for which they are preparing.

Candidates are advised to seek the advice of persons involved in their formation and training, such as the diocesan Director of Ministry Training & Formation and their college faculty, at an early stage in their preparation, in order to ensure they meet the requirements set out within this booklet by the Diocese in advance of being considered for ordination.

The Diocese is willing and open to consider a course of study and a program of ministry formation that is reflective of the ministry into which the candidate is called and for which the candidate is preparing. Individual candidates are advised to discuss matters of this nature, and their particular needs and circumstances, with the Director of Ministry Training & Formation at an early stage in the process.

3. Ministry placements

Because theoretical knowledge needs to be integrated with the experience of ministry, the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne places an emphasis on both the acquisition of academic qualifications, and the practical experience of ministry gained through ministry placements.

All diocesan candidates in training will undertake ministry placements arranged by their training college in each year of candidacy. The ministry placement provides space and opportunity for the candidate to integrate the theoretical knowledge acquired through academic study and learning into the actual practice of ministry in a practical way, with appropriate support and supervision from an experienced minister.

Ministry placements are arranged by the candidate's theological college, in conjunction with the Director of Ministry Training & Formation.

4. "Exiting Student" interviews and Ordination

Preparing for ordination is about much more than acquiring the academic knowledge and practical skills and competencies necessary for Christian ministry. It also concerns formation as a person in ministry. Because Anglican ordination is intended to be a lifelong vocation, and because those ordained are seen publicly to have the confidence and trust of the Church, it is necessary that the Church, through its various instruments, attain a high level of satisfaction in each candidate's spiritual formation, character, and commitment to the faith, prior to ordination.

Each year the training college will advise the diocesan Director of Ministry Training & Formation who from among the student body who are candidates for ordination



will complete their studies in that calendar year and may be formally considered for ordination at the next opportunity. Those candidates (known as "exiting students") will be interviewed by a panel of Examining Chaplains, normally in August, with a view to making a recommendation to the Archbishop as to the candidate's readiness to proceed to ordination. It is possible the recommendation may be a "no" and that further study and / or formation over the following year is required. If recommended to proceed, the Archbishop will then meet with each candidate individually, and the Director of Ministry Training & Formation will make every effort to locate a suitable ministry placement to which the candidate can be licensed after ordination. It is important to note that ordination cannot proceed unless the candidate has a licensed position in which to serve.

The ordination of deacons occurs in February each year, and the ordination of priests in November. Those deacons who are candidates for the ordination of priests will again participate in an interview process, usually in September, to assess readiness to proceed to ordination as priest.

5. After ordination

Newly ordained deacons are licensed initially as Assistant Curate and will serve in a training position under supervision for up to the first four years of their ministry. All Assistant Curates take part in the diocesan program of Post Ordination Training (POT) during the first three years of their ministry.

Resources



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All persons considering ordination in the Anglican Church of Australia should be familiar with:

- The Ordinal: The Making, Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons, *A Prayer Book for Australia 1995* (APBA) pp. 780-809.
- The Ordinal (The Form and Manner of Making of Deacons and The Form and Manner of Ordering of Priests), the *Book of Common Prayer 1662*
- The Apostles' Creed (APBA p. 12) and Nicene Creed (APBA p.123).
- The 39 Articles of Religion (APBA pp. 825-834).
- The Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia, Chapter I – Fundamental Declarations and Chapter II – Ruling Principles, [accessible here](#).



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Contact

For all enquiries about vocations, the ordained ministry, and discernment ministry training and formation, in the Anglican Diocese of Melbourne, contact:

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