



**Steps Toward Reception of Holy Orders  
for persons ordained in Churches in the Historic Succession,  
but not in communion with this Church  
(A Summary)**

***N.B. National canons and diocesan guidelines give the Bishop oversight of the ordination process. What follows is a description of our customary practice. Applicants should bear in mind that the various steps may be modified on occasion at the Bishop's discretion.***

**1. Applicant disengages from active priestly ministry.**

If not officially laicized, applicant communicates with his superiors in existing Church to clarify that he no longer wishes to function as a priest and is exploring priestly ministry in The Episcopal Church.

**2. Applicant explores the Episcopal Church.**

The applicant takes a period of time to study and participate in The Episcopal Church, making sure that this is the branch of the Catholic Church to which he wishes to make a commitment.

***[Steps one and two may, of course, vary in sequence.]***

**3. Applicant becomes involved member of a parish in the Diocese of New York.**

The applicant is an active member (an adult confirmed communicant in good standing) of a parish for a minimum of one year (or longer if required by the priest). During this year the applicant gets to know the parish and becomes known by parishioners and the clergy. The applicant may not function as a priest.

**4. Applicant is formally received into The Episcopal Church as a layperson by a Bishop of the Diocese of New York.**

[See Book of Common Prayer requirements and canonical requirements]

**5. Applicant discusses discernment with the priest.**

The applicant and priest discuss the possibility of beginning parish discernment.

**6. Parish Discernment Committee is formed.**

After at least one year of active parish participation, and if the priest and applicant decide to initiate parish discernment, the priest forms a Parish Discernment Committee to meet with the individual for six months to a year. *(See the Parish Discernment Handbook for details on the role and responsibilities of the Parish Discernment Committee).* Together they explore whether or not the applicant has shown the gifts and talents needed for priesthood in The Episcopal Church.

**7. Priest writes sponsoring letter to the Bishop.**

The priest writes a sponsoring letter to the Bishop, including a description of the parish discernment by which the applicant has been identified. *(See the Parish Discernment Handbook, pgs. 20-23 for details on the content and format for the letter.)*

**8. Priest & Vestry submit canonical form indicating parish support.**

If the priest and vestry decide to sponsor the applicant, they sign a Parish Recommendation form attesting to this sponsorship and pledging support. The Parish Recommendation form will be sent to the priest after the Bishop has received the sponsoring letter.

**9. Applicant completes application and essays & provides documentation, as requested on the application.**

Materials are sent directly to the applicant after the priest's sponsoring letter has been received by the Bishop.

**10. Applicant completes: (1) physical evaluation; (2) psychological evaluation; (3) psychiatric evaluation; and (4) background check.**

Please refer to the sheet "About the Physical and Psychological Evaluations".

**11. Applicant meets with Canon for Ministry.**

Applicant is contacted to schedule appointment

**12. Bishop reviews the applicant's file.**

The Bishop reviews the file and decides if the applicant should proceed to the preliminary interview stage of Diocesan discernment.

**13. Applicant completes 3 preliminary interviews.**

If the Bishop decides to continue the discernment with the Diocese, the applicant is invited to schedule separate preliminary interviews with three members of the Commission on Ministry. Following each interview, the interviewer recommends to the Bishop that the applicant continue or not continue with Diocesan discernment.

**14. Bishop reviews the applicant's file.**

Following this review, the Bishop decides if the applicant should proceed with Diocesan discernment.

**15. Applicant meets with a Special Committee.**

Applicant meets with the Special Committee appointed by the Canon for Ministry one or more times, at the discretion of the Committee chair. This committee submits a report to the Bishop making recommendations regarding the next steps, including formation.

**16. Bishop reviews the file and recommendations and meets with the applicant to discuss the possibility of reception of orders.**

The Bishop considers the recommendation of the Special Committee and makes a decision about receiving the applicant's orders pending formation and examinations in required areas.

**17. Applicant receives certification from Bishop and Standing Committee that Applicant is acceptable as a member of the clergy of this Church,** subject to the successful completion of the examinations specified in Canon III.10.3(c)(d). Applicant shall not be received less than twelve months from the date of having become a confirmed communicant of this Church (Canon III.10.3 (I) and six months after the certificates have been received.

**18. If the Bishop approves, applicant begins study at the Bishop's direction at a seminary approved by the Bishop.**

Applicant begins Anglican studies (normally 1-2 years) at an Episcopal seminary. Reception of orders follows completion of study and completion of the General Ordination Examinations (GOEs). Payment of tuition and other expenses during the time of formation are the responsibility of the applicant.

**19. Standing Committee consents to Bishop's reception of Applicant's Orders into The Episcopal Church.**

**20. Before reception, Bishop requires Applicant to sign a Declaration of Conformity. (Canon III.10.3 (f))**

**21. Bishop receives into The Episcopal Church the Orders of the priest already ordained by a Bishop in the historic succession. (Canon III.10.3(g))**

**22. In consultation with the Commission on Ministry, Bishop assigns a mentor priest to meet with the priest whose orders have been received.**