

The Customary for the Diocese of the Missouri Valley



A Manual of Policies and Procedures
For the Clergy and Laity of the Diocese

Section I - Pertaining to the Clergy

A. Clergy Information Forms:

Because the basic life facts regarding the clergy are essential to the Ordinary in his role as Chief Pastor, informational data forms on all clergy of the Diocese are maintained for the Ordinary's files. All clergy are required to submit such data to the Ordinary and to periodically update this information.

B. Letters Dimissory:

Transfer of canonical residency between Diocese in the Anglican Church in America (ACA) or Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC) by Letters Dimissory should be requested to be sent to a new diocese by clergy who move there, immediately after taking up residence and being received by their new Ordinary. Generally, we receive such letters under the same conditions. However, both the issuance and acceptance of Letters Dimissory may be delayed by the Ordinary for cause.

C. License to Officiate: and/or Certificate of Permission to Officiate:

A license to officiate in the Diocese shall be issued to all clergy canonically resident in this Diocese that are in good standing. The Ordinary reserves to himself and his successors the power and authority of revoking wholly or in part or for a period these presents and all things herein contained, whenever he shall be certified of just cause for the same.

A Certificate of Permission to Officiate (PTO) may be requested from the Bishop by clergy living within this Diocese who are canonically resident in another Diocese, of the ACA, TAC, or other Anglican jurisdictions in communion with the ACA and/or TAC provided that they have first received a call to affiliate as a priest at one of the congregations of the Diocese. Such PTO's are to be reviewed annually by the Ordinary, and an annual activity report must be submitted to the Ordinary by all clergy holding a PTO prior to having their PTO renewed.

D. Physical Examinations and Clergy Wellness:

Clergy should practice good stewardship by setting the discipline of having thorough physical examinations on a regular basis. We who are accustomed to self-examination at frequent intervals and know the benefit for spiritual health must also care for the physical vehicle provided by God. In taking responsibility for their physical, spiritual and mental well being, all clergy are to take time to be with their spouse and children. All clergy are to take at least one full day off from work each week and an annual vacation.

E. Vacation Policy:

Clergy are entitled to one month's vacation every year. It is to be taken in consultation with the vestry.

F. Clergy Retreats and Conferences:

Clergy Retreats provide a necessary ingredient for the development of priestly spirituality, and an annual retreat for all clergy is considered mandatory by the Ordinary. Clergy Conferences are of a different nature and provide opportunities for the Ordinary and clergy to share vital concerns, develop mission and ministry plans and to enhance the quality of collegiality expected in the Christian community's leadership.

Expenses for retreats and conferences are to be shared by the priest or deacon and the congregation. Each congregation is encouraged to budget an annual amount for clergy continuing education and retreat expense.

G. Professional Ethics:

This category is related to the relationship of clergy with their colleagues living and working in a Christian community. Should a request be made by a parishioner to a former priest to perform a marriage, funeral, baptism, etc., permission must first be granted by the incumbent and such ministry is to be performed only at his invitation to do so.

Such requests may become a difficult problem for the clergyman in relationship with a former parish. He will be loved and remembered, and he himself will have left behind close relationships. Former parishioners may well continue to call upon him for ministerial functions. But for the sake of his former parishioners and for the sake of the new rector/priest in charge, who is trying to establish his relationship with his people, the former priest must refrain if at all possible from accepting these requests.

It is painful to make this kind of sacrifice, but ethically he is obliged to say NO and thus, further strengthen his successor's pastoral relationship and ministry. Good instruction of the laity before leaving a cure will serve to fortify this position.

H. Standards of Sexual Morality:

All members of the clergy of this Diocese shall be under the obligation to model in their own lives the received teaching of the Church that all its members are to abstain from sexual relations outside of Holy Matrimony. The Ordinary refuses to admit any clergy into this Diocese who will not subscribe to this standard.

All clergy functioning within this Diocese are required to be familiar with the Sexual Misconduct Policy of the Anglican Church in America. Copies are available from the Office of the Ordinary.

It is improper for any member of the clergy to date members of their parish. If a priest or deacon finds that they wish to date a member of their congregation they must contact the Bishop for his counsel and proceed only after receiving his explicit permission to do so.

I. Clergy and Divorce:

It is to be understood that when a member of the clergy is divorced under a cloud of scandal he must resign his cure and will not be able to continue to serve within the general location of his previous cure. He is not necessarily resigning from or renouncing the ministry and, in certain circumstances, may transfer and serve in another diocese. The Bishop will assist that person in seeking such a call, when appropriate.

It is expected that when marital difficulties arise among the clergy, the Ordinary will not be the last to know, but will have sufficient opportunity to work with and counsel the priest and his wife so that divorce will not be the only option.

A divorced member of the clergy may not remarry without first being granted an annulment by an Ordinary of this Church. When a divorced member of the clergy or members of his immediate family seeks an annulment of his previous marriage, the policy of this diocese shall be to refer the annulment procedure to another diocese of the A.C.A. Should an annulment be granted it would be done so by the Ordinary of that diocese and not by the Ordinary of the DMV. The initial submission for an annulment should be made to the Bishop Ordinary of the DMV.

J. Clergy Supply Policies and Procedures:

The Diocese, through the Canon to the Ordinary, maintains a list of clergy available for clergy supply. On request, this list will be sent to any parish in need of a supply priest.

The recommended minimum remuneration is:

One principal Sunday Eucharist.....	\$100.00
Other Sunday Eucharist (each).....	\$ 75.00
Weekday Eucharist (each).....	\$ 75.00

Mileage is to be reimbursed at the standard rate per mile under current IRS rules. If travel is by air, reimbursement for airfare at the coach price is required unless otherwise negotiated by the vestry and supply clergy.

K. The Dress of the Clergy:

Clergy must be ever mindful that their personal appearance while in the performance of official duties in public is not only a reflection upon themselves, but also upon their parishes, the Diocese and the ACA. Appropriate clerical attire, clean and pressed, shoes shined, etc. is expected of all clergy of the Diocese at all times, sports and leisure time excepted.

The Ordinary encourages the "black suit, black shirt standard" as the norm for all diocesan clergy and discourages the wearing of loud colors or flashy attire with clericals. The cassock is the ordinary dress of the clergy while in the church.

L. Vestments

The Clergy are encouraged to recognize the symbolism of their Vestments and to teach the same to their parish. This should be part of any Confirmation Program.

(1) Non-Eucharistic Vesture:

The surplice or cotta is the ordinary dress, worn over the cassock, for all services and ministrations, except when Eucharistic vestments are worn.

The stole (outside Mass) is never worn over the surplice as a mere decoration; it is worn only when some occasion requires it. Should the occasion not require a stole to be worn, a tippet may be worn. When the occasion does require a stole, it is, therefore, worn over the surplice or cotta:

- At Baptisms and Weddings (white)
- While hearing confessions and when giving Unction (purple);
- By the priests who assist the Bishop in laying on of hands in the ordination of priests (white or red, as designated by the Ordinary);
- In administering Communion from the Reserved Sacrament to the sick (white);
- When conducting a funeral (black, violet or white).
- When local custom is observed at certain services, such as the Stations of the Cross, Benediction or other devotional services.

(2) The Eucharistic Vestments:

When Eucharistic vestments are worn in this Diocese for the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, the following is strongly advised:

The priest who is to celebrate Mass is to wear the amice (unless wearing a hooded alb), alb, girdle, stole, and chasuble. The cassock/alb may be substituted for the cassock and alb.

NOTE: That a cope may be worn if available. If a cope is worn, it is surrendered at the Offertory and the chasuble is then put on for the Mass. Following the ablutions, the chasuble is surrendered and the cope retained.

The deacon wears cassock, amice (unless wearing a hooded alb), alb (or cassock/alb), stole (over left shoulder) and dalmatic.

The sub-deacon wears cassock, amice (unless wearing a hooded alb), alb (or cassock/alb), girdle, and tunicle.

At a Low Mass, the celebrant is to wear the same vestments, but assisting clergy are to wear cassock, surplice, and stole, if they are to assist in the administration of the Sacraments. An acceptable alternative for assisting clergy would be to wear a cassock/alb and stole.

It is expected that a priest of the Diocese will prepare themselves for the celebration with prayer. Vesting Prayers or other prayers should be used when Vesting or removing Vestments.

Section II – Pertaining to the Laity

A. Acolytes:

Activities of acolytes are to be handled by the local parish/mission. Proper training and instruction of all acolytes are the responsibility of the Rector/Priest in Charge.

B. Lay Readers:

Lay Readers are licensed by the Diocese. Please see the “Manual for lay Readers for training purposes.”

C. Sub-Diaconate:

Parishes in the Diocese may elect to nominate adult males to serve as Sub-Deacons for the parish. The role of the Sub-Diaconate is an ancient one in the church and is reserved to those men who have demonstrated their abilities and faithfulness.

A request is made to the Canon of the Ordinary and he will send the appropriate materials so that an application may be made by the individual nominated. A course of study is required and examination.

One Sub-deacon per 30 parish members is a guideline; however having for more than two Sub-Deacons per parish is discouraged.

D. Membership

All aspects of parish membership, voting and status as a communicant in good standing shall be according to the Diocesan Canons and the Canons of the Anglican Church in America. No bylaws of any parish in the diocese shall contravene the aforementioned Canons.

E. Intinction:

Intinction as a normal practice is not sanctioned within this Diocese. In most cases the practice of Intinction arises from a desire not to drink from the Chalice. Intinction is mistakenly viewed as a mode of communication to be used in cases of communicable diseases, infirmity, etc. However, no medical information would support this practice. Should information be needed to substantiate this be necessary, please contact the Bishop’s Office. Ancient custom and Scripture would indicate reception in both kinds as normative.

This is an issue of Sacramental Theology. Therefore, should a communicant desire to receive by Intinction, as a norm, instruction should be given that would shed light as to the normative practice of receiving both the Body of Christ (in the right palm of the hand or on the tongue) and the Blood of Christ

from the Chalice and the reasons this is the normative manner by which we make our Communion.

Should the communicant still desire not to drink from the Chalice, they should be encouraged to make their Holy Communion on one kind only by receiving the Host only. In this case, the priest should ensure that the communicant understands that the full efficacy of the Sacrament is found in both the Body and in the Blood of Christ. Therefore, even though they are making their Communion in one kind only, they are receiving the full benefit of the Sacrament.

Should the Communicant still insist on receiving by Intinction, for pastoral reasons, it will be permitted. However, Clergy are requested to instruct the laity that desires to receive by Intinction that the following procedure will be followed: The priest/deacon bearing the Chalice shall take the Host, dip it in the chalice and place it directly on the communicant's tongue. At no time shall a Communicant dip the Host into the Chalice himself/herself.

F. Elements for use at the Eucharist:

Hosts that are to be consecrated at the Eucharist shall be made from unleavened whole wheat bread or of unleavened white bread made from wheat flour and water with no additives. Wine that is to be consecrated at the Eucharist shall be made from grapes.

We understand that there are Communicants that are not able to consume whole wheat or wheat flour products. Likewise, there are Communicants that feel that they not able to consume alcohol. In this case we would recommend that the communicant make their Holy Communion in one kind only. Should they not feel that they are able to receive the Host, they should make their Communion by receiving the Blood of Christ only. Should they feel they cannot receive the Chalice, they should make their Holy Communion by receiving the Host only. In both cases, the priest should ensure that the communicant understands that the full efficacy of the Sacrament is found in both the Body and in the Blood of Christ. Therefore, even though they are making their Communion in one kind only, they are receiving the full benefit of the Sacrament.

G. Alcoholic Beverages:

The sale of alcoholic beverages by parishes/missions as a usual practice is normally discouraged. However, permission to sell beer, wine, or wine product may be approved by the Ordinary for very specific functions and on a limited case by case basis (such as large public events sponsored by the parish/mission). The sale of so called hard liquor (whiskey, vodka, etc... and mixed drinks will not be approved. In all cases the sale of any beer, wine, or

wine product may must conform to the laws of the individual states and all proper licenses obtained prior to the event. Appropriate liability insurance (as per the Dram Shop Act). A copy of documentation of said liability insurance, along with any state, county, or city permits shall be forwarded to the Diocesan Office. At no time shall intoxication on parish/ mission property be tolerated. It is the responsibility of the clergy, vestry, and parish leaders that intoxication not be permitted.

The serving of alcoholic beverages (without charge) at wedding receptions, suppers, picnics, etc. on the church property, is left to the discretion of the priest and the vestry. In all cases, where alcoholic beverages are served, alternative drinks (non-alcoholic) must be provided and attractively displayed for those who desire them. As above, intoxication on parish/ mission property shall not be tolerated. It is the responsibility of the clergy, vestry, and parish leaders that intoxication not be permitted.

H. Gambling:

It is the policy of the Ordinary to allow congregations or organizations within a congregation to host, sponsor, or participate in raffles and games of chance (e.g., Bingo) provided they are conducted with discretion and have no connection with an outside commercial organization. He does not condone parishes, missions, or other agencies of the Diocese going into the gambling business (sponsoring Bingo halls, etc.).

SECTION III - Sacraments

A. Baptism:

Except in emergencies, the Sacrament of Holy Baptism should be administered within the Eucharist as the principle service on a Sunday or other major feast day. “Holy Baptism is especially appropriate at the Easter Vigil, on the Day of Pentecost, on All Saints’ Day or the Sunday after All Saints’ Day, and on the Feast of Baptism of our Lord (the First Sunday after the Epiphany). It is recommended that, as far as possible, Baptisms be reserved for these occasions or when the ordinary is present.”

It is the practice of the church that each person to be baptized is to be sponsored by one or more baptized persons, who are themselves practicing Christian believers and who are active members of the Church. There is an expectation that these sponsors are members of a catholic church (Anglican, Roman or Orthodox). It is the required duty of the clergy to provide adequate pre-baptismal instruction to all sponsors, parents, and mature candidates.

In the baptism of infants and children, it is the expectation of the Ordinary that at least one of the parents will be an active communicant member of the congregation where the baptism is to take place. In pastoral situations where this is not the case, the priest is to consult with the Rector of the parish where the family belongs prior to proceeding. Active participation in the life of the Christian community is expected of all parties involved, both before and after the baptism.

B. Confirmation:

Confirmation is a significant event in the spiritual life of one making a public reaffirmation of his or her baptismal vows. It is a time of empowerment and commissioning, when one receives the apostolic laying-on-of-hands and anointing with chrism. Candidates for confirmation must be properly instructed in the Christian faith and life, repentant of their sins, and duly prepared to make a mature, public commitment to following Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Though the minimum age for youth confirmations may vary somewhat for certain pastoral situations, the normative age for young people to be presented for confirmation in this Diocese is 11 or older. In some cases younger children may be presented for confirmation, however, in no case will the child be younger than 9. Candidates between the age of 9 and 11 will be assessed on a case by case basis after consultation with the Rector or priest in charge.

Persons already confirmed by a bishop in the apostolic succession, but not in Communion with the Anglican Church in America, may be received by the Ordinary, or his designee, following the appropriate instruction and preparation. Any member of the church who has lapsed from active participation in the life of the Church, or who for some other appropriate reason wishes to do so, may make a public re-affirmation in the presence of the Bishop at the time of his visitation.

Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows are three different, distinct categories of persons to be presented to the Ordinary, or his designee, at the time of his annual visitation.

In this Diocese, we continue to use the three different categories as traditionally understood in the practice of classical Anglicanism. Confirmation is for those who have been baptized, but have never received the laying on of hands by a Bishop in apostolic succession. Reception is for those who have been baptized and confirmed in another church of the apostolic succession, (the Roman Catholic or Orthodox churches), and now wish to be received into the Anglican Communion.

Reaffirmation is for those who wish to reaffirm their vows previously made at baptism and confirmation. At confirmation, the traditional laying on of hands by this Bishop is used. At reception and reaffirmation, it is not; a blessing is given instead. Only those confirmed or received are to be entered into your parish register in the "Confirmation" section.

Please make these distinctions clear as you present your candidates to the Ordinary, or his designee.

C. Marriage:

The Church will only celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony only for those who are part of the Christian community or those who are seeking to become part of it. Both of the parties must be baptized and at least one should ordinarily be a member of the parish where the Sacrament is to be celebrated. In all cases, at least one party must be a communicant in good standing of the Catholic Church (Roman, Anglican, or Orthodox).

The Rector or priest is in charge, not only of the marriage service, but also of the decoration of the church and the choice of music. No wedding date may be set without consultation and approval by the Rector or priest in charge.

Marriages are expected to be celebrated in the church as a service of worship and not as private affairs or social event. The proper Rite of the Church is the

only acceptable method of Celebration. (The only vows that may be exchanged are those approved for use in this Rite) No marriage is to be celebrated during Advent or Lent, except for special or unusual reasons. In such cases, it is customary to consult with the Bishop Ordinary before proceeding.

The clergy are required to provide careful preparation and instruction to the couple prior to the solemnization of any marriage. For this reason, the officiating priest must be contacted at least six months but not less than 60 days prior to the anticipated date of the proposed wedding.

Every congregation is expected to have clear and precise policies regarding marriages and the use of the Parish Hall for receptions. Matters to be addressed include the use of flowers, candles, photographers, videos, music, rehearsals, fees, etc.

It is the practice of the Anglican Church to celebrate all services of Holy Matrimony within the normal place of worship, the parish church building. Marriage is a Sacrament celebrated by, for and with the Christian community. Any other practice such as garden weddings, or on bridal paths, at lakeside, in airplanes, while skydiving, etc., are to be discouraged as inappropriate.

Marriages of communicant members of the Church are normally celebrated in the context of the Nuptial Mass, during which all communicants are to be given opportunity to receive the Blessed Sacrament during the Communion of the people.

NOTE: Some States are now requiring or are moving toward requiring “ministers” acting on behalf of civil law in performing marriages not to discriminate based on sexual orientation (example: if the clergy are signing and returning a Marriage License or otherwise acting for the county and they are required to marry homosexuals if they marry heterosexuals) then the Church cannot act as representatives of that civil authority. Therefore, in order to guard the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony, should the location of the marriage be situated in a State that requires “ministers” acting on behalf of civil law in performing marriages not to discriminate based on sexual orientation, then the couple should be directed to seek a Civil Marriage immediately preceding the wedding in the Church after which the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony shall be administered by the Church in the same manner as any wedding.

D. Marriage Annulments:

If for pastoral reasons an ecclesiastical annulment is requested, evidence must be submitted based on Canon 16.2 of the Canons of the Anglican

Church in America and in accord with Canon 19 of the Canons of the Diocese of the Missouri Valley. In requesting an annulment, the application form provided by the Office of the Ordinary is to be accompanied by the following:

1. A letter from the petitioner explaining the grounds for a judgment of the nullity of this marriage.
2. A letter from the priest of the congregation where the petitioner is a member, stating his assessment of the basis for an annulment to be granted.
3. A copy of the Civil Divorce Decree

The Marriage Tribunal of the Diocese of the Missouri Valley will receive all pertinent materials from the Ordinary and after prayer and reflection render an opinion to the Ordinary concerning the matter before them. The Ordinary will then accept or deny the petition.

E. Marriage in the Church of Divorced Persons:

As indicated in section “C”, the Church will only celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony only for those who are part of the Christian community or those who are seeking to become part of it. Both of the parties must be baptized and at least one should ordinarily be a member of the parish where the Sacrament is to be celebrated. In all cases, at least one party must be a communicant in good standing of the Catholic Church (Roman, Anglican, or Orthodox).

An annulment is required for divorced persons with living spouses, to celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony. And the consent of the Ordinary is required.

The Blessing of a Civil Marriage by a priest of the Church requires the same consent and must meet the same criteria, if there is a previous divorce with the previous spouse still living.

F. The Reserved Sacrament:

The Blessed Sacrament is to be reverently reserved (generally in one kind) in a tabernacle in the church. This reservation is indicated by a Presence Lamp (or Sanctuary Lamp), which is kept burning at all times.

The Blessed Sacrament in reserve is to be replenished on a regular basis. Only ordained persons are to lock or unlock the tabernacle and remove the Sacrament from or replace it in the tabernacle.

SECTION IV: Parish and Mission Policies

A. Vestries:

Each year in the parishes of the Diocese, a number of vestry members are elected at the annual parish meeting. These men and women are chosen by members of the congregation to act as their representatives in the parish's relations with its clergy and the management of its corporate property.

The parish bylaws will determine the number of Vestry Members, their election sequence and any regulations pertaining to consecutive terms of office. Rules pertaining to the nominating procedure are also to be determined according to the Canons of the Diocese and the custom of the parish. These rules should also be included in the parish bylaws.

BASIC CRITERIA TO CONSIDER FOR VESTRY NOMINATION:

1. Does the nominee meet or exceed the canonical requirements of Communicant status in this Church?
2. Is the nominee a consistent, concerned steward? Is he/she a contributor of record as evidenced by regular financial contributions for the support of the parish/mission?
3. Does the basic lifestyle of the nominee conform to Christian expectations and is it consistent with his/her evaluation by the community and parish?
4. What lay ministry have they performed?
5. Is the nominee hopeful about the life of the parish, the Christian faith, and life in general?
6. Can the Rector work with the nominee?

This information should quite properly be published for each nominee at the parish meeting or before and in that way a more intelligent selection could be made by the voting constituency.

B. Vestry Officers:

The wardens are designated as senior or junior, although sometimes called the "Rector's Warden" and the "People's Warden." At any rate, the duties are usually assigned on the theory that the ultimate responsibility is with the senior warden who is closest to the Rector. The junior warden is most often given the special responsibility of the care of the property and is expected to

represent the interests of the people of the parish. The Clerk of the Vestry has responsibility for minutes and any official correspondence of the Vestry.

To assist with consistency throughout the Diocese, vestries should make every endeavor to conform to the manual titled "*A Manual for Vestries, Anglican Church in America.*" (Please see this document in the Appendix of this manual)

C. Audit, Bonding:

Each vestry is responsible for the fiscal affairs of the congregation. A regular and systematic procedure for auditing all parish funds should be set by every parish.

Larger parishes should consider bonding the treasurer or others who handle the funds of the parish.

D. Parochial Reports:

Each rector and vestry is expected to comply with the requirements of preparing and submitting annual Parochial Reports on schedule. In addition, the clergy and vestry have the responsibility of supplying any information requested by the Diocese.

E. Synod Delegates:

Delegates and Alternate Delegates to the annual synod are elected at the annual parish meeting of the congregation and serve until their successors are elected. Delegates and Alternate Delegates must be communicants in good standing of the parish they are to represent and at least 18 years of age. The number of delegates to be elected is determined on the basis of the size of the congregation as determined by the Canons of the Diocese. If a Delegate cannot serve and no elected Alternate Delegate is available, the rector may certify another person to serve in place of the elected delegate.

F. The Bishop's Mission Committee:

A "Bishop's Mission Committee" shall be formed in each mission of the Diocese to oversee the temporal concerns of the mission.

Members of the "Bishop's Mission Committee" are elected to the committee in the same manner as that of members of the vestry of a parish. However, they serve at the pleasure of the Ordinary, who appoints the wardens of the committee.

The “Bishop’s Mission Committee” functions in the same capacity as a vestry of a parish, guided by the Constitution and Canons of the Diocese pertaining to Vestries. As with Vestries, the “Bishops Mission Committee” should endeavor to conform to the manual titled “*A Manual for Vestries, Anglican Church in America.*”

When a mission attains parish status, the congregation of the new parish elects a vestry as prescribed in the Canons of the Diocese. When that vestry is in place, the Mission Committee is dissolved.

G. Pastoral Relations and Dissolution thereof:

The Pastoral relationship between a Rector and a Parish is not unlike a marital relationship. Therefore, as with a marriage, when the pastoral unity is imperiled by dissension, for any reason whatsoever, it shall be the duty of both the Vestry and the Rector to lay the matter before the Bishop Ordinary long before contemplating the dissolution of the pastoral relationship. Therefore, first contact with the Bishop regarding such dissension must not be a request for Dissolution of the Pastoral Relationship. But rather for counseling and mediation seeking to resolve the issues causing the dissension.

It shall be the duty of the Bishop Ordinary, or his representative, to labor that the Parish and Rector be reconciled such that the Pastoral Relationship may continue. Should this not be possible, Canon 43 of the ACA Canons shall be the guide for the dissolution of the Pastoral Relationship.

H. When There Is a Clergy Vacancy

ACA Canon 44 is specific regarding the calling of a Rector and of Assistant Ministers to serve in a Parish. With respect to the calling of a Rector, said Canon states that “*Written notice of the election, signed by the Churchwardens, shall be sent to the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese. If the Ecclesiastical Authority be satisfied that the person so chosen is a duly qualified Minister, and that he has accepted the office, and that he has been approved by the Diocesan Bishop, the notice shall be sent to the Secretary of the Synod, who shall record it. And such record shall be sufficient evidence of the relation between the Minister and the Parish.*”

Therefore, in compliance with this Canon, whenever a Rector resigns or retires and a Parish is left vacant in the Diocese, the following steps are to be taken:

1. Notification of Vacancy: The Senior Warden is to notify the Ordinary in writing that the Parish is vacant. The Ordinary appreciates a telephone call as well.

2. Special Vestry Meeting: The Ordinary will call a meeting of the Vestry in which either he or the Canon to the Ordinary will present a comprehensive search process which will lead to the calling of a new priest. A brief description of the search process is outlined below.

3. Formation of a Search Committee by the Vestry: It is expected that the Vestry serve on the Search Committee. Ordinarily, the Search Committee is the Vestry plus additional parishioners who possess abilities and skills that will help the Search Committee with its task. (Note: at the end of this process when the Vestry elects the new Rector, those who have served on the Search Committee who are not members of the Vestry will not be allowed a vote.) The Vestry alone is authorized to make the final decision (In consultation with the Ordinary) and to issue the call.

SEARCH – PHASE I

Parish Self-Evaluation: The Vestry/Search Committee in consultation with the Canon to the Ordinary will conduct a congregational study to determine the needs, desires, expectations, wishes, vision and call of the Parish in order to be able to determine the kind of priest that is needed.

The scope of this study will be determined by the size of the parish and the needs of the parish.

SEARCH – PHASE II

1. Parishes will receive names of potential candidates from two sources:

The congregation members may be asked to suggest names to the Search Committee. These names will be forwarded to the Office of the Ordinary.

The Ordinary will advertise the vacancy among the clergy of the Diocese and among his connections throughout the Church. He will select and finalize a list of candidates that he believes are the most qualified and present that list to the Vestry/Search Committee.

2. Contacting the Candidates: The Vestry/Search Committee will send a letter of first contact with the Parish Information and a request for personal resumes of each candidate. This letter will formally ask if they are interested in the position. If the candidate is not currently a member of the Clergy of this Diocese an application must be made to the Ordinary.

3. Selection of a Short List of candidates: Once resumes are received, additional conversations may take place by telephone (conference calls) and/

or written questions which will enable the Vestry/Search Committee to form a short list of two or three candidates.

4. Interviewing the candidates: Once the short list is selected, the Vestry/Search Committee will begin interviewing in the following manner:

a. Members of the Vestry/Search Committee may make a visit to the Parish where the candidate is Rector. This is done only with his permission. Once these visits are completed the Vestry/Search Committee will discuss these visits.

b. The Vestry/Search Committee will bring each candidate and his wife for a visit and interview. Each candidate should be given at least two days in which he will be given the opportunity to celebrate the Holy Eucharist and preach.

c. In addition, a formal interview will take place in which the Vestry/Search Committee presents its questions that have been carefully formulated based on the Parish self study data.

d. During these two days, a social/fellowship activity should take place in which the Vestry/Search committee and candidate get to know each other. The candidate and spouse should also be given the opportunity to see the community.

e. Issuing the call: It is MANDATORY that a background check is done prior to issuing the call. The result of this background check must be forwarded to the Ordinary. Upon completion of all interviews the Vestry/Search Committee will meet to discuss each candidate thoroughly. The Ordinary is then notified if the Vestry is ready to elect.

f. Upon permission granted, the Vestry proceeds to elect the new Rector and a call is issued. This should be done immediately by telephone and followed up with a formal call letter which stipulates the following:

1. Starting date
2. Moving arrangements and conditions
3. Financial package
4. Vacation terms (one month per year)
5. Expectations of ministry
6. Continuing education and sabbatical

g. Wrap-up Activities: Once a call is accepted, the Senior Warden notifies the Ordinary. A date should be negotiated with the Ordinary regarding the service of Institution for the new Rector. All candidates who were not elected must be notified by the Senior Warden and thanked for allowing themselves to be considered.

J. Clergy Compensation

Clergy compensation is a matter between the Clergy and Vestries (or Bishop Committee's). However, the Bishop desires to see that congregations classified as a Parish provide fair compensation for their Rector. Therefore, effective Synod 2009, the Bishop shall not institute a priest as Rector unless the parish desiring his institution provides a compensation package of at least \$2000.00 per month.

K. Deans and Deaneries:

The Diocese is divided into geographical groupings of congregations called Deaneries. The purpose of the Deanery is to enable clergy and laity to share common interests and concerns and to work together with more strength than is sometimes available to single congregations. The Ordinary appoints the Dean of each Deanery who serves at the pleasure of the Ordinary.

L. Missions:

Missions within the Diocese are the responsibility of the Ordinary and are part of his apostolic office and of the Diocese of which he is the constitutional head. The Ordinary is the Rector of all missions and he appoints clergy to serve as Vicars.

M. Parochial Missions:

A Parochial Mission supported by a local parish and is considered a chapel of ease. A Parochial Mission is neither supported by the diocese nor guided by the canons which apply to Diocesan Missions until such time as they may become an unorganized mission of the diocese and apply for that status.

N. Episcopal Visitations:

ACA Canon 40 requires that Every Bishop shall visit the congregations within his jurisdiction at least once in three years, for purposes of examining their condition, inspecting the behavior of the clergy, administering Confirmation, preaching the Word, and at his discretion, celebrating the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. At every visitation it shall be the duty of the Bishop to examine the records required by Canon 42 Section 3. At every visitation it shall be the

duty of the minister, and of the church wardens or vestry, or of some other officer, to exhibit to the Bishop the Parish Register and to give information to him of the state of the congregation, spiritual and temporal, under such heads as shall have been previously signified to them in writing, by the Bishop. This information is ascertained by a review the register of all burials, baptisms, and marriages which have taken place since his last visitation and by a copy of the most recent financial report of the congregation. *ACA Canon 42 Section 2 (d)*

Appendix

A MANUAL FOR VESTRIES

The Anglican Church in America

Origins

In the English Church a vestry is a room in which the priest vests. In America we term this room a sacristy. Before the Reformation some parishes were served by secular priests appointed by the local lord of the manor or the bishop. Such priests were called rectors. In other parishes the church was served by a member of a Religious Order either because the church building was shared between the local Order and the villagers or because an Order had founded and built the parish church. In such cases the parish priest was called a vicar. In “secular” parishes the parish priest was assisted by his flock whereas in a “Religious” parish the members of the Order helped the parish priest. The system of having a body of lay people help the priest originated in “secular” parishes. The lay leadership held its meetings in the sacristy or vestry and this became known as “the vestry”.

In those days there was no separation of Church and State. The parish church was the church of all the people and the vestry served as a sort of village council which looked after the road, village politics, the care of the poor and lunatics. Some things never change.

After the suppression of the monastic orders at the Reformation all parishes were served by secular priests. The local parishes had to take over much of the charitable work previously administered by monks and nuns. To provide funds for this work, the vestries were required to provide alms boxes in each church and to set aside the collection at Divine Service for poor relief. The priest’s salary came from tithes of crops grown on all village lands which he supplemented by farming his “glebe lands”.

In England the titles “rector” and “vicar” merely denote whether, before the Reformation, a parish priest was a secular priest or a “Religious” priest. In America, in recent times, the term “rector” has been reserved for parish priests and “vicar” to priests appointed by the Bishop to be pastor of a mission congregation.

Annually during the week after Easter, the parish priest called a meeting of all the parishioners. He appointed his Warden, the Rector’s or Vicar’s Warden, the people elected their Peoples’ Warden and others were elected to serve on

the vestry. The parson owned for life or his period of office the parsonage and the chancel. The people cared for the rest of the church building.

This system was brought to America by the first settlers. Because clergy were scarce, they had to be imported from England or sent to England for ordination, the parish vestries assumed more church duties than was normal in England. Often the leading families refused to appoint settled rectors, hiring men year by year on annual contracts in order to control the clergy. The Bishop of London was bishop for all the colonial churches in America. He appointed clergy to act for him. Obviously there could be no confirmations and thus the rubric in the Prayer Book which restricts reception of the Sacrament to those who have been confirmed or are desirous of confirmation.

After the American Revolution the Anglican Church was disestablished. Vestries lost their civil authority but retained the rights to elect or call their parish priest in consultation with the Bishop. The Wardens were named "Senior and Junior Wardens" terms which seem to have been taken from Masonic Lodges which were influential in those days. However the basic duties of the vestry remained. They were to be elected committees of church people who saw to it that the parish had a rector, that he was paid, that he was given all the things he needed to function, that the church building was cared for and that parish funds were properly administered. These duties remain the primary tasks of a vestry.

Election

The word election has a political and secular meaning. In the world people stand for election to public office. They tend to be "party" representatives who are voted into office on the basis of their talents and program. To a Christian, election has a different meaning. God calls for "elects" us to His service. One is called to be a Christian, called into the Church, and within the church there are callings, both ministerial and lay. When a person is called, we believe he or she is called by God. The task of the church is to recognize a call.

Sometimes this happen when someone with obvious talents is asked to do a particular job. Someone with musical talents may be asked to be a member of the choir or an organist. Someone with teaching ability may be asked to teach Sunday School.

On other occasions people are asked to volunteer their services. Even then, if there is wisdom, a volunteer's suitability will be examined before the job is given! Each year at the Annual Meeting, all the members of a parish or mission are called together. One of their tasks is to elect people to the vestry. How this is done is most important. Serving on a vestry is a ministry, a lay ministry. All ministries are callings by God. So the parish members must

seek to identify those whom God is calling. How can this be done? There are some obvious signs of calling:

- a. Is a person devout? Christian callings are to Christian people. Of all signs of calling the first has to be that a person is obviously someone who says his or her prayers, attends worship often and is generous with time, money and charity. By charity one means love for the people of God.
- b. Is a person loyal? When the vestry is installed each year its members promise to conform to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Anglican Church in America. Loyalty is a virtue. If people are self-centered enough to their beliefs and preferences before the teachings and practices of the Church, they are not obvious candidates to serve the Church.
- c. Is the person practical? Obviously the vestry looks after the financial and structural affairs of the parish. Not all members have to be experts in these areas, but if a person has problems managing his own affairs he perhaps may have many callings in a parish family, but its business may not be one of them.

You can read about these qualifications in St. Luke's account of the calling of the first deacons in Acts 6:1-4.

In some parishes the vestry sets up a nominating committee to receive nominations and to seek out suitable people. If this is done reverently and prayerfully in consultation with the parish priest for his insights, this can aid the process. Care must be taken to make sure that such committees truly seeks God's will and don't use their authority to select people of whom they personally approve or who think as they do.

Vestry Officers

At the first meeting of a vestry after the annual meeting, the rector (or vicar in a mission) selects one of the members of the vestry to be his Warden. The Rector's Senior Warden has a special role to play. He is the senior lay person in the parish.

If the rector is absent, he chairs meetings. He acts as a liaison between the clergy and laity. He acts for the clergy to the laity. It is most important that the Senior Warden understands his role. He must set an example. He must be devout, organized, and careful to respect the opinions of all the vestry members and must work well with the clergy.

The vestry elects another of its body to serve as Peoples' or Junior Warden. The Junior Warden has special responsibility for the care and upkeep of the

church property and grounds. He must be a man of prayer who recognizes his solemn responsibility to love and care for God's House, to see that it is clean and tidy, in good repair, an inviting place for people to worship. He appoints and supervises the ushers. This rather unglamorous job, for which the symbol of office might perhaps be a toilet plunger, requires a person of practical skills who can inspire others to help in these tasks.

The vestry elects a clerk or secretary who need not be a member of the vestry. The clerk records the minutes of all meetings and keeps copies of the Nation Constitution and Canons, The Diocesan Canons and the By-Laws of the parish for the guidance of the vestry. In drafting and adopting by-laws it is important that the vestry makes sure that they conform to the Canons of the Diocese and National Church.

The vestry also elects a treasurer who is responsible not only for the funds which the vestry directly administers, but for all funds of the various organizations except the rector's discretionary fund. Legally the vestry is responsible for all property and money given to the church which is the reason why all funds, even if they have their own treasurer, are ultimately the concern and responsibility of the treasurer for the vestry. A treasurer ought to know something about finances, particularly church finances, needs to think of church funds as a family account rather than a business fund and should always recognize that these funds are God's money.

While the other members of the vestry have no specific responsibilities, it is always good to share oversight of various activities among vestry members or assign them to committees in order that they have responsibilities. (Note: Please review the last part of this sentence which on the original document stated "...in order that they have responsibilities" This appears to need revision)

The Law

The Canons of the Anglican Church in America state that the vestry is the legal agent and representative of the parish in all matters concerning its corporate property and relations of the parish to the clergy. This means that the vestry holds legal title to the buildings, the contents of the buildings, except those personally owned by the clergy, and the contents of the bank account. In the Anglican Church in America this means that the parish owns its property which cannot be taken from it by the diocese.

This trusteeship of property has three main implications. It is the vestry which must comply with the law of the nation, with respect to IRS regulations. The vestry is responsible to the State with respect to property laws and incorporation statutes. The vestry is responsible to the Diocese in that once a

building is consecrated, which can only occur when it is free of a mortgage, it cannot be mortgaged and it cannot be sold unless it is “secularized” by the Bishop. The vestry must make sure that the parish is tax-exempt through the IRS, either as part of the tax-exemption granted to the Church or, as a separately tax exempt, incorporated parish and that proper accounts are kept, records of contributions maintained and statements made available for inspection and audit. Individual statements must be provided to contributors annually for their tax records.

Calling a Priest

The Canons state that the vestry is responsible for relations between the parish and the clergy.

The Calling of a Rector. Jesus called and sent forth Apostles, sent men with the responsibility of speaking and acting for their Master. The successors to the Apostles, called Bishops, settled in specific areas where they cared for parishes, assisted by priests and deacons. The Bishop was the “Ordinary” minister, the one normally “ordered” to care for the flock of Christ. A Bishop is still called an Ordinary and his chair in the sanctuary of every church reminds us that he is the Ordinary or normal shepherd of all the people.

As the Church grew, Bishops delegated pastoral responsibility to priests who eventually cared for geographical areas called parishes. For a number of reasons, the right to nominate a local parish priest came to be shared with others. In America this right was given to the vestry.

In the Anglican Church in America the right to appoint a rector is shared by the Bishop and the Vestry. Simply put, the Vestry selects, the Bishop approves, the vestry elects and the Bishop institutes. How does this happen?

When a parish becomes vacant, the vestry notifies the Bishop. The senior warden must then make sure that arrangements are made for worship while the parish is vacant. If he fails to do this, the Bishop may make these arrangements himself.

The vestry begins the task of searching for new rector. It can only consider clergy of the Anglican Church in America. If it looks outside the diocese, it must make sure that if it considers such a priest his Bishop will permit him to leave that diocese and that the local Bishop will accept such a transfer. The vestry must always make sure that a candidate is in good standing and that is that he is permitted to function as priest and is not under discipline. It is always wise to work closely with the Bishop and to heed his advice. He often knows his clergy well, know their track record and has insight into their skills.

He may also know if a priest has problems which might not suit him for a particular appointment.

The vestry may want to visit the parish of a prospective candidate. This should not be done without warning such a priest in advance. He may seek a new call, or may not want to alarm his people until he has had a chance to consider an invitation. Certainly no attempt should be made to contact individual parishioners for references until or unless such a priest has signified his willingness to be considered for such a post. If a priest is listed by the diocese, has been in his parish for some time, and is known to be well-regarded, there is no reason to undertake investigations until he is on the "short list". Again the Bishop can guide the vestry at this stage.

During a parish vacancy, the senior warden must obtain the services of priests to conduct services. This is an opportunity to "view" clergy in whom there is some interest before the formal task of examining candidates is reached.

Even if one particular priest seems "heaven-sent" it is always wise to consider a number of candidates before a final decision is made.

Once a short-list is made, these clergy may be asked to come to the parish, meet the vestry, take services and meet the parish family at a dinner or informal social gathering. In preparing to interview a prospective rector, the vestry should look at his training, the length of time he has been ordained, the length of time he has served in parishes and what has happened to these parishes under his care.

When the vestry makes its decision, by formal vote, it must notify the Bishop who has thirty days to respond. This gives the Bishop the opportunity to give advice and counsel and to give reasons why he does not wish to confirm such an appointment, if that is the case. To avoid such an embarrassment, it is wise to keep in touch with Bishop through the whole process.

If the Bishop has no objections, or if the vestry considers such advice and counsel as the Bishop may give, if such is not a direct objection, and decides to proceed, the Wardens then write to the Bishop certifying the election. Once the Bishop has replied and has sent notification to the secretary of the Diocesan Synod that such a priest is elected the election is deemed final.

What about search committees and parish questionnaires and profiles? A vestry may conclude that it does not have the time to do all the work and perhaps travel involved in the process of calling a rector. It can appoint a "search committee" made up of members of the vestry or vestrymen and

parishioners. As in the case of all committees of the vestry, such a body acts for the vestry, is responsible to the vestry, may not act independently of the vestry and must submit all its major decisions to the vestry for approval. A search committee does not call a rector.

A vestry may decide to compile a questionnaire to send out to the parish. The purpose of such a document is to discover what parishioners believe they need in a parish priest. This very modern procedure needs to be viewed with care and caution. The duties of a clergy man are clearly set forth in Holy Scripture, in the Tradition, in the Prayer Book and in the Canons. The duties of a clergyman are not subject to referendum! However, there are aspects of a ministry which relate to the needs of a parish. Should a priest be a scholar, parson, a pastoral man, an evangelist, a teacher?

Of course he needs to be all these things, but different parishes need different types of clergy. Similarly a parish profile may help the vestry take stock. However the results of questionnaire, framed in a profile form a guide to help a prospective priest evaluate a parish in order that he may make professional decisions and not an ultimatum demanding that priest conform to a set of terms.

It is always good for the vestry read carefully the Letter of Institution found on page 569 in the Prayer Book. This letter sets forth clearly that the Bishop is delegating his ministry to the rector, the terms of such delegation and the rights a rector enjoys in a parish.

1. The Canons state that the rector is responsible for worship. In many modern churches, worship committees decide on the form of worship, what service to have when, but in our Church the parish priest is responsible for all worship. Certainly all parishioners are free to bring to the rector their wishes and desires and a wise priest will listen and accommodate when possible. The vestry should always remember it has no rights in this area. A priest must make sure that worship is properly conducted. He it is who must evaluate the spiritual climate of a parish, preach the Word and administer the Sacraments.

2. The Canons state that the rector is responsible for the music, organ, organist and choir. Obviously this is necessary to ensure that music fits worship. If an organist is paid, the vestry must set the salary. It can advise the rector as he selects an organist, but it cannot hire or fire.

3. The Canons state that the rector is responsible for Christian Education. He is called to be a teacher and must ensure that the right people are selected as teachers and the right material chosen in order that his commission to make sure that all his people are well instructed can be honored.

4. The Canons state that the rector must keep the list of members. He it is who determine that a person is qualified, through baptism and confirmation, through regular attendance at worship, by following Christ, worshipping God each Sunday in his Church and by working, praying and giving for the spread of the Kingdom (BCP page 291). In the light of the Canons he determines who shall be baptized, confirmed, married, and buried.

5. The Canons require that the rector be given full use of the parish church and property and its contents.

6. The Canons require that the priest exercises spiritual discipline, including, as a last resort, the painful duty of reusing the sacraments to people whose lives become a public scandal, who engage in unloving quarrels or who upset the life and witness of the parish. If he takes such steps, he must report such action, not the vestry, but the Bishop who may review such action.

7. It is the Rector who appoints assisting clergy, although the vestry, if such clergy are to be paid, sets the salary and compensation. Similarly it is the rector who nominates to the Bishop those who are to serve as lay readers.

If the rector is responsible for all these things, what does a vestry do? We looked at the legal responsibilities of a vestry above and we defined some of the duties of church officers. We must return to the idea that members of the vestry are called Christians. In light of this idea let us look again at the rector's duties to determine how a vestry can share with the parish priest, represent the people and enable him to do his duty.

1. Members of the vestry ought to very regular churchgoers, not only on Sundays but on other Holy Days. Attendance is an active duty, an active ministry and not a passive activity for the benefit of the priest. Worship is our service to God. The vestry sets a corporate example by being in church, by praying for all parishioners, by helping people get to church by encouragement or even by brining people who can't get to church by themselves. As long as such criticism is positive and helpful, the vestry can keep the rector informed about how faithful he is and how effective he is in preaching, teaching and offering Divine Service to God.

2. Music is one of God's gifts. The Church as a great treasury of hymns, anthems and other music. The vestry can help the rector by making sure the parish has the best organ, organist and choir possible. Vestry members can also help by being open to learning new hymns and new tunes in order that the worship of the church may elevate the people rather than catering to the lowest common denominator of comfortable experience.

3. Christians learn both here and hereafter. The greatest antidote to heresy or discord is good, sound teaching. The vestry should participate in Christian Education and show an example to the rest of the congregation.

4. The rector records membership. The vestry helps in this ministry by setting an example in worship, in prayer, in service and in giving. Vestry men and women should be active in evangelism and in sponsoring and attending outreach programs and social events draw new people to the parish.

5. The vestry makes sure that the church building and property is kept in good repair, is as beautiful as possible, is neat, clean and tidy and that the furnishings, vestments, books and accessories are in good repair.

6. The vestry, each of its members, takes care to observe spiritual discipline, minister to those whose conduct is harmful or divisive and help the priest in his task of maintaining decency and order. As representatives of the people, the vestry can without gossip and in a positive manner help with interpersonal relationships. Representation always is a ministry of reconciliation, not of division.

There are occasions when unhappy people harm the unity of a parish. On such occasions, after all else fails, a vestry must support the rector as he exercises discipline. Because a parish is, by definition, a tolerant place, advantage is sometimes taken of the situation by those, who, at least to outward appearances, are insensitive.

They lack reverence, saying and doing things in God's House which would not be tolerated in a secular organization, caring only for their needs, demands, and programs. They do not honor God and they hurt their neighbor. Such people destroy parishes by driving people away. If compromise and reconciliation were always possible, there would be no hell.

7. The vestry by example, through stewardship and active promotion, raises the money to ensure the priest and assisting clergy are well paid and cared-for. A rector cannot do his job well if he is worried about the survival of his family or his financial well being. A vestry should be generous, show appreciation and help in practical ways particularly in caring for the priest's wife and family.

The Vestry and Growth

A parish by definition exists to grow. It has to be understood that we are called to reach out to all whom God may call to serve Him in our part of the Church. Some will be Episcopalians who wish to continue in our tradition of spirituality, worship, and teaching. Others may have “mixed” marriages and seek a home where the whole family can worship. Others may be unchurched but are open to the Gospel.

People choose a church home for the following reasons:

- a. They meet a parishioner who is interested in them, who is enthusiastic about his or her faith, loves the parish and is optimistic about the future. Such a parishioner invites the family to a church function.
- b. When the family takes the first step to come to a church function, whether it is a social event, an enquirer’s class or worship, it meets kind, welcoming, open people who demonstrate the liveliness of their faith and fellowship.
- c. The family discovers that the parish offers firm teaching, a disciplined faith and a concerned fellowship.
- d. The family discovers that it is as important, as well as welcome to contribute and serve as the person who has been in the pew from day one.
- e. The family finds that it is noticed, contacted and visited by the rector or lay members or both.

The vestry has a vital role in evangelism. Each member must set an example. Some practical steps can be taken:

- a. The vestry, as individuals, must set an example by making personal contact with those who they know to be unchurched. They should never discuss church problems or conflicts outside the parish family. If at all possible they should take turns acting as “welcomers” who look out for new people, make them welcome show them the right pages in the Prayer Book, take them to coffee hour and introduce them to others.
- b. Vestry men should attend social events, instruction classes and all parish activities to learn more about the faith and fellowship of the Church and to encourage others.
- c. The vestry should organize social events, work at social events and make a special effort to have fellowship with new-comers who attend such events. It

is a truism to say that if a parish prays together it stays together. It is also true that parish families are families and need to have fun together.

d. It is not enough to leave visitations and the contact of new people, or even old people to the rector. It is a good practice for a vestry to divide the parish list up between themselves and make frequent contact with those for whom they are given the responsibility to pray and care. Each vestryman and woman can help the rector by keeping him in touch with needs and problems of members.

The Vestry at Work

Parish by-laws establish how often a vestry should meet. Meeting should be regular, at a set time and place and be conducted with efficiency. The rector is the chairman of the vestry. He and the senior warden should meet some days before each meeting to set an agenda. It is always good practice for the secretary to distribute copies of the minutes as soon after each meeting as possible. This enables the vestry to remember the tasks it has set itself.

A rector is a professional. He is not a hired employee. Vestries should never require that a rector gives an account of his ministry during the past period. Much he does is confidential, time slots cannot be set for prayer, study, sermon preparation or even visitation. At the same time a working relationship should be established which enables the rector to feel comfortable in sharing with the vestry aspects of his ministry which he is able to discuss. Similarly vestry members should be willing to give accounts of their stewardship and labors.

Vestry meetings should always begin with prayer. It is also good practice for a vestry to meet from time to time to worship together and study together. Before any important decision is made, time should be set aside for prayer. Members of a vestry should keep at home a parish list and regularly pray for all the members. In a large parish such a list may be divided into daily sections. It is all too easy for vestries to ignore the spiritual dimension of their task and to treat the parish as an impersonal unit rather than as the family of Christ.

It is always good to end a vestry meeting with a time of fellowship. Often this period of sharing can bind wounds, prevent quarrels and strengthen fellowship.

Business should be conducted efficiently. Members of a vestry are called by God and serve the people of God. They are not called to serve themselves, their pet ideas or vested interest. Long speeches and contentious behavior

should be discouraged. The vestry should prepare itself for business with great seriousness, prayer and preparation. No major decision should ever be made without considerable consensus. Close votes always indicate that conflict may be just around the corner. The first Christians believed that the Holy Spirit's will is done when, after prayer, in the light of the Church's teaching and discipline, consensus is reached.

Resignations should always be accepted. It must be assumed that people are adults who will only resign if they cannot serve efficiently. If a person puts himself before the good of the whole, and uses resignation as a threat, such a threat must be taken seriously and the resignation accepted for the good both of the individual and the parish.

The Vestry and Candidates for the Ministry

One of the most solemn responsibilities of a vestry is to certify to the Bishop and the Diocesan Standing Committee that a person who feels he as a vocation is suitable. A vestry may be asked to recommend a person who seeks to be a postulant and will be asked for its opinion before a postulant becomes a candidate for holy orders, and finally before ordination. Notice that vestry is not being asked to rule on the validity of a vocation. That is task for the Bishop and his advisors. A vestry is asked to give its input about the character and service of an individual. Has such a person been in the parish for sufficient time for him to be known? Is he frequent in worship and a devout person? Does he get on well with other parishioners? Is he known to be moral, truthful and sane? In short the vestry is being asked to give a personal reference.

Consideration of an aspirant by a vestry is given on the nomination of the rector. It is to be assumed that the rector thinks that such a man has the makings of a clergyman. It may well be a person about whom there is real doubt for fear of alienating him. A loyal churchman will not leave a risk simply because a vestry cannot agree to recommend him. If he does, he ought not to have applied in the first place. A vestry should be careful not to exercise bias or prejudice or to act on negative gossip.

The Vestry and the Termination of a Ministry

Rectors come and go. After prayer and seeking the advice of his Bishop, a rector may decide that the time has come for him to move on or feel that a call to another parish must be heeded. In our young Church such a moment may breed insecurity, a sense of loss or even of betrayal. It is essential that a vestry understand that it is normal and to be expected that a priest will move on. Such a time is a moment for acceptance, for understanding and for

generosity. A good priest will agonize enough about leaving without being given a hard time.

On rare occasions a vestry may conclude that it is time a rector moves on. Unfortunately such times may be ones of conflict where the relationship between a rector and the vestry or rector and a significant portion of a parish has broken down. It is also a time for great caution.

There are moments in a priest's ministry when he needs to say or do things which are not popular. People get angry. Moments of anger are never times to act. It is always good to prayerfully consider that the rector may be right and what he does is needed for the spiritual welfare of a parish.

This is a time when a vestry can urge people to look at themselves, to offer their anger to God and to ask His will. A vestry can often talk to a priest, give him counsel and always consider that he might be right.

If it becomes obvious that something is really wrong with the rector's actions, a vestry should always seek to mediate. A rector is a human being. He may be ill, succumb to stress, have family difficulties or simply need time off. Vestries should always make sure that a priest gets at least four Sundays off in a year and every three or four years arrange for him to have a small sabbatical. A vestry is called to care for the priest. It should constantly examine whether he is paid enough, has time with his family, can afford a vacation, and get help with his personal needs.

A rector can't make special friends of parishioners. By definition he leads a lonely life. He may not be able to afford to join a club, go to the theater, dine out or spend time with other friends and colleagues. If he can't afford these things, his isolation and loneliness may have a terrible effect on his ministry. In short, a crisis may be the vestry's fault.

No priest can survive if his vestry and parish are always users. A parish needs to be caring, thoughtful and generous to its parish priest and his family.

If a pastoral relationship is breaking down, the vestry must first make sure that the crisis is real and not merely the attempt of unhappy people to rid themselves of a clergyman. If, after discussing the matter with priest, he concludes the vestry is right to suggest he move on, if at all possible, the initiative should be given to the priest to resign and the parish should be most generous in the time-frame awarded and the severance pay given. It should be remembered that in such cases the priest must take counsel with his Bishop.

If a rector refuse to resign or cannot change his attitude, a vestry may ask the Bishop to remove him. The Bishop's decision is final. The Bishop will want to talk to the wardens or the vestry before he makes such a decision. A vestry may not seek to influence such a decision by cutting off a priest's salary.

There is never a legitimate reason to refuse to pay one's pledge or attend church. We worship, give and work as our bounden duty and service to God and not in support of a particular priest. A vestry should never seek the removal of a rector until and unless it is sure that there is consensus in the parish.

Tragically there are occasions when rectors get themselves into trouble. They succumb to besetting signs which offend the Church and the parish. Again great care should be exercised in dealing with such situations. A rector, in his pastoral duties, may easily be the subject of gossip and false accusations. If these come to the attention of the vestry they should always be treated with the utmost caution. There are people, who from spite, supposed rejection, or deeper reasons are prepared to seek the ruin of a priest. When a scandal erupts, the senior warden should first talk to the priest in confidence. He should also talk to the person or persons making an accusation. He should use prayerful common sense in evaluating a charge before he talks to the rector and particularly before a vestry formally addresses such charges.

If a priest admits wrong-doing, he should always be urged to talk to the Bishop. It may well be that the situation may be resolved quietly, a priest given counsel and professional help and that he can continue his ministry. If formal charges are made, a priest has the option to talk to the Bishop and accept his verdict or he may elect to be tried in the diocesan court. If he takes that course, he may be suspended for a period.

If a priest is involved in a scandal, admits his sin, or is removed, the vestry will be faced with hurt and angry people. It is important that the vestry takes the lead in demonstrating a Christian example. Priests are human. They can fall. They can be forgiven. They should always be loved and a parish should attempt to be as kind, generous and understanding as possible. The parish will survive. A new rector will be elected. The work of the church goes on.

Missions

A mission congregation is governed by a mission committee which enjoys all the rights of a vestry save that of calling its priest. The Vicar of a mission is appointed by the Bishop, who will consult with the mission committee in the process. Similarly the Bishop may remove a Vicar. In all other respects this manual may be used as a guide in diocesan and parochial missions.

The Vestry and the Diocese

A parish is part of the wider family of the diocese and national church. This relationship is organic. A parish is not “affiliated” to a diocese, but gains its authenticity and mission from the wider fellowship of the Church Catholic within the diocese. It owes its loyalty to the doctrine, discipline and worship of the Anglican Church in America the diocese and the her Bishop.

The vestry sets an example in this area by making sure that the parish tithe to the diocese is always paid on time as part of the working budget. It supports THE MESSENGER and makes sure that our national newspaper gets into hands of all parishioners. It is only through support of the wider church that a parish can be sure that in the future there will be a supply of clergy, good promotional material and Episcopal care without which no Anglican parish may long survive.

The vestry makes sure that it elects the most talented people to the diocesan synod. The vestry encourages its priest and other clergy to attend clergy conferences and retreats and helps with expenses. The vestry responds to appeals for help and money to enable the whole church to grow.

The vestry also shows loyalty by abiding by the Canons and the teaching and practices of the whole Church.

In our highly mobile society, in which families move from place to place, few wish to be part of a fellowship which has no roots and no extended family. The more a parish is made aware of the greater fellowship of the diocese, province, national church and our dioceses and sister churches overseas, the easier it is to establish lasting loyalties and a sense of corporate responsibility.

The Vestry

These then are some but not all of the duties, ministries and responsibilities of a vestry. It is hoped that this very brief guide will be read by all vestrymen, considered by all vestries and its suggestions put into practice. Above all we shall make great progress together if vestries contemplate the religious and spiritual nature of their high calling and develop sound methods of working with the clergy to ensure the growth, stability and harmony of the church at its most basic level, the parishes of our diocese.

Archbishop Louis W. Falk,

The Cathedral Church of Saint Aidan, Des Moines, Iowa

Customary for the Bishops' Visitation

Here are three reasons that a Bishop makes a yearly visitation to a parish.

Pastoral

The Bishop is the chief priest of the diocese, but more specifically he is the priest for his priests. His visit is to be present to them for their needs and to ascertain their spiritual, emotional and physical health.

He will also meet with the clergy family if it is their desire and any associate clergy and their families.

Sacramental / Liturgical

The Bishop will celebrate and preach at the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist, Confirm or receive those who have been prepared and baptize if asked to do so. The Bishop is himself is a living witness to the function of the church. The smallest unit of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church is not the parishes in which we worship, but the diocese. His presence at our liturgical celebration is making present the whole diocese with us as we worship.

Ecclesiological

This five dollar word refers to the church and how the church is governed. At his visitation the Bishop will also observe the condition of the church, the health of the congregation and examine the required record books.

This function is also how and why the Bishop wishes to meet with the Vestry. He is also willing to meet with other parish leaders and/or anyone who wishes to speak with him as time allows. He is our Reverend Father in God and part of caring for those he has been given charge over is to know them and communicate with them.

Practical Issues:

1. Please call me two or three weeks before the visitation. It's also helpful if you will fax, e-mail, or snail-mail me a rough draft of the bulletin prior to our conversation. I will want a list of those to be confirmed, received or baptized with the pertinent information.

I expect that the parish priest has adequately prepared those individual who will receive the sacraments. I will not quiz them on their knowledge, however if a gathering or dinner is to be held on Saturday Evening I will welcome an opportunity to met them.

2. If you have one Sunday Eucharist, I will celebrate and preach. If you have two, the Rector or priest-in-charge is to celebrate the early liturgy. In that case, I will preach and pronounce the absolution and blessing. I am willing to concelebrate with the Rector if that is his desire. In that case the Rector will offer the Mass sub-voce, until we come to the words of institution. An additional candle if one is available should be set on the Gospel side of the Cross when the Bishop is the celebrant.
3. When I am the celebrant, I will wear your chasuble (color of the day) with my mitre. When the rector or priest-in-charge is the celebrant for an early Eucharist, I will wear alb and stole with zucchetto.
4. Please appoint a chaplain to assist with the crozier, to hold the book and oils during confirmation, and to be available for other ceremonial tasks. The chaplain can be an assisting priest, a lay person, or a deacon. Please note that if the deacon is to serve as chaplain there can be confusion at the proclamation of the Gospel. Please consider another man to be chaplain if you have only one deacon.
5. When a deacon is present, he or she should fulfill all rubrical functions prescribed by the Prayer Book. The deacon should stand with me at the altar for the Great Thanksgiving, and hold the chalice during the invitation. An assisting priest can fulfill the functions of proclaiming the Gospel and offering the prayers for the Whole State of Christ Church, but he should not stand at the Altar as would a deacon, unless he is serving as Deacon of the Mass.
6. Please have the Altar Book or Missal that you use in the sacristy prior to the liturgy so that I can set up the ribbons.
7. Confirmation / Reception follows the Homily. A chair should be set up in the central area in front of the communion rail.
8. I would like to speak with Vestry and others in the parish concerning the health of the parish and plans for church growth and evangelism. This may be done following the Mass or at gathering on Saturday Night.
9. If it is necessary for me to stay overnight I will make my own reservations. If I am flying into the area I will contact the priest so that arrangement may be made to pick me up at the airport.
10. The Bishop's Discretionary fund is for travel as well as aiding the ministry of the diocese in other practical ways. A check may be sent to the diocesan office following my visit to your parish.

Customary for Daily Offices at Synod and Diocesan Meetings

Morning Prayer when Mass will follow:

1. One or more of the Opening Sentences of Scripture may be read BCP p. 3-5
2. The Ferial Preces (O Lord open...) BCP p. 7-8
3. If applicable the preface for the Venite may be used BCP p.8
4. The Venite is said or chanted (May be omitted when Psalm 95 is an appointed Psalm for the Day and on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday).
5. The Gloria Patri is recited or chanted after each Canticle or Psalm. Note: It is not used following Te Deum laudamus or the Benedicite, omnia opera Domini.
6. The Psalm(s) appointed for the day (BCP p. X-XIV)
7. The First Lesson for the day (BCP p. X-XIV)
8. a) The Te Deum Laudamus pg.10 On all Sundays except for Penitential Seasons.

On all BCP Holy Days

Daily from Christmas Day through January 13th

Daily Easter Day through the Saturday after Pentecost

Saturday Office of the BVM

- b) The Benedicite, omnia opera, Domini pg.11 on all Sundays and Daily throughout Advent, Pre- Lent, and Lent.
- c) The Benedictus es Domine p.11 at other times the Te Deum or Benedicite, omnia opera, Domini. is not used.
9. The Second Lesson for the day BCP p. X-XIV
10. The Benedictus BCP p. 14 [Jubilate Deo if the New Testament lesson is from St. Luke 1:68]
11. The Apostles Creed on pg. 15 [omit if the Creed is used during the Mass]
12. The Salutation
13. The Lord's Prayer

14 Versicles on page 16.

15. The Collect of the Day is omitted here as it will be prayed at the Mass.

16 The Collect for Peace and the Collect for Grace pg. 17

17 The Prayer for the President of the U.S and all in Civil Authority pg. 17 or 18 are omitted as they are covered in the Prayer for the Whole State of Christ's Church.

18. The Prayer for the Clergy and People and A Prayer for all Conditions of Men on pg. 18 are omitted as they are covered in the Prayer for the Whole State of Christ's Church.

19. The General Thanksgiving is omitted here as we offer our Thanksgiving at the conclusion of the Mass.

20. A Prayer of St. Chrysostom on page 20. followed by the "The Grace..." BCP p.20

Morning Prayer when Mass will not follow:

1. One or more of the Opening Sentences of Scripture may be read BCP p. 3-5

2. The Invitation to Confession (pg. 5) Confession (pg. 6) and Absolution and Lord's Prayer (pg. 7).

3. Following the Lord's Prayer the follows the Ferial Preces (O Lord open...) BCP p. 7-8

4. If applicable the preface for the Venite may be used BCP p.8

5. The Venite is said or chanted (May be omitted when Psalm 95 is an appointed Psalm for the Day and on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday).

6. The Gloria Patri is recited or chanted after each Canticle or Psalm. Note: It is not used following Te Deum laudamus or the Benedicite, omnia opera Domini.

7. The Psalm/s appointed for the day (BCP p. X-XIV)

8. The First Lesson for the day (BCP p. X-XIV)

9. a) The Te Deum Laudamus pg.10 On all Sundays except for Penitential Seasons.

On all BCP Holy Days

Daily from Christmas Day through January 13th

Daily Easter Day through the Saturday after Pentecost

Saturday Office of the BVM

b) The Benedicite, omnia opera, Domini pg.11 on all Sundays and Daily throughout Advent, Pre- Lent, and Lent.

c) The Benedictus es Domine p.11 at other times the Te Deum or Benedicite, omnia opera, Domini. is not used.

10. The Second Lesson for the day BCP p. X-XIV

11. The Benedictus BCP p. 14 [Jubilate Deo if the New Testament lesson is from St. Luke 1:68]

12. The Apostles Creed on pg. 15

13. The Salutation

14. The Lords Prayer is omitted here as it was said earlier.

15. The Versicles on page 16.

16. The Collect of the Day for the previous Sunday or Holy Day.

17. The Collect for Peace and the Collect for Grace pg. 17

18 The Prayer for the President of the U.S and all in Civil Authority pg. 17 or 18.

19. The Prayer for the Clergy and People and A Prayer for all Conditions of Men on pg. 18

20. The General Thanksgiving on pg. 19

21. A Prayer of St. Chrysostom on page 20. followed by the "The Grace..."
BCP p.20

Evening Prayer when Mass will follow:

1. One or more of the Opening Sentences of Scripture may be read BCP p. 21-22
- 2 The Ferial Preces (O Lord open...) BCP p. 25
3. The Gloria Patri is recited or chanted after each Canticle or Psalm.
4. The Psalm(s) appointed for the day (BCP p. X-XIV)
5. The First Lesson for the day (BCP p. X-XIV)
6. a) Bonum est confiteri pg. 27 Christmas Day until Pre-Lent
b) Cantate Domino pg. 27 Easter Day until the Monday after Trinity Sunday
c) Magnificat pg. 26 All other times
7. The Second Lesson for the day BCP p. X-XIV
8. a) Nunc Dimittis pg. 28 Christmas Day until Pre-Lent and Monday after Trinity Sunday until Advent.
b) Deus misereatur pg. 28 Advent, Pre-Lent, and Lent
c) Benedic, anima mea pg. 29 Easter Day until Monday after Trinity Sunday
9. The Apostles Creed on pg. 29 [omit if the Creed is used during the Mass]
10. The Salutation
11. The Lord's Prayer
- 12 The Versicles on pg 31
13. The Collect of the Day is omitted here as it will be prayed at the Mass.
- 14 The Collect for Peace and the Collect for Aid against all perils pg. 31
- 15 The Prayer for the President of the U.S and all in Civil Authority pg. 32 are omitted as they are covered in the Prayer for the Whole State of Christ's Church.

16. The Prayer for the Clergy and People and A Prayer for all Conditions of Men on pg. 32 are omitted as they are covered in the Prayer for the Whole State of Christ's Church.

17. The General Thanksgiving pg. 33 is omitted here as we offer our Thanksgiving at the conclusion of the Mass.

18. A Prayer of St. Chrysostom on pg. 34 followed by the "The Grace..." BCP p. 34

Evening Prayer when Mass will not follow:

1. One or more of the Opening Sentences of Scripture may be read BCP p. 21-22

2. The shorter Invitation to Confession (top of pg. 23), Confession (pg. 23) and the shorter Absolution (bottom of pg. 24) and Lord's Prayer (pg. 24).

3. The Ferial Preces (O Lord open...) BCP p. 25

4. The Gloria Patri is recited or chanted after each Canticle or Psalm.

5. The Psalm(s) appointed for the day (BCP p. X-XIV)

6. The First Lesson for the day (BCP p. X-XIV)

7. a) Bonum est confiteri pg. 27 Christmas Day until Pre-Lent

b) Cantate Domino pg. 27 Easter Day until the Monday after Trinity Sunday

c) Magnificat pg. 26 All other times

8. The Second Lesson for the day BCP p. X-XIV

9. a) Nunc Dimittis pg. 28 Christmas Day until Pre-Lent and Monday after Trinity Sunday until Advent.

b) Deus misereatur pg. 28 Advent, Pre-Lent, and Lent

c) Benedic, anima mea pg. 29 Easter Day until Monday after Trinity Sunday

10. The Apostles Creed on pg. 29

11. The Salutation

12. The Lords Prayer is omitted here as it was said earlier.
- 13 The Vesicles on pg 31.
14. The Collect of the Day for the previous Sunday or Holy Day.
- 15 The Collect for Peace and the Collect for Aid against all perils pg. 31
- 16 The Prayer for the President of the U.S and all in Civil Authority pg. 32.
17. The Prayer for the Clergy and People and A Prayer for all Conditions of Men on pg. 32.
18. The General Thanksgiving pg. 33.
19. A Prayer of St. Chrysostom on pg. 34 followed by the “The Grace...”
BCP p. 34

Customary for the Synod Mass

The Bishop will communicate prior to the Synod a schedule to the liturgies to be celebrated and the liturgical assignments for each liturgy. Days of Celebration, Ordinations and the colors of the day will all be noted. This will include the Synod Mass.

During the Synod meeting the youngest deacon by date of ordination will visit each delegation to collect the necrology to be remembered the Synod Mass. This necrology will be read by that deacon during the Prayer for the Whole State of Christ Church as we remember our beloved dead.

There will be a Master of Ceremonies named by the Bishop for this Mass. You will receive directions from the M.C. and any last minutes changes will be communicated by him.

The Procession and Recession will be according to the following order. The deacons beginning with the youngest according to their ordination date. If there is not an even number of deacons to produce a pair of deacons the single deacon will process along in the center of the aisle. Note the partner you have during the procession you should have the same partner for the recessional.

In a similar fashion the priest will line up for the procession and recession.

If there is to be a Second Cross it precedes the Altar Party. The Altar Party will consist of the two torches, the Deacon of the Mass, the acolytes for the Mass. The Canons, Deans and the Bishop's Chaplin all precede the Bishop.

All those processing into the church (Until physically prevented from doing so) will follow this procedure.) Upon coming the pew assigned the pair will first bow towards the Altar and then genuflect. If one of the pair is unable to genuflect then the pair will simply bow.

Please note that the instructions for kneeling do not apply to the clergy. They are to remain standing through the First Collect, the Kyrie, the Gloria and the reading of the Collect Prayer. Clergy then will remain seated until the proclamation of the Gospel.

Clergy will stand for the Prayer for the Whole State of Christ Church and then knee or sit as they are able following the Sursum Corda. Clergy, if possible, should stand or knee when the Blessed Sacrament is on the Altar.

Following the Recessional please follow the M.C.'s instruction concerning pictures. Please do not remove your vestments.