

## **B8 VOCATIONS**

Vocation is understood in its widest sense to be calling to Christian ministry. There is a vocations adviser in each archdeaconry who is available to individuals who wish to consider their sense of calling. They are happy to see people whose sense of vocation may be either vague or quite defined.

Where someone's sense of vocation is to stipendiary or non stipendiary ordained ministry a vocations adviser will normally see the person before the DDO (Diocesan Director of Ordinands) is seen. This is to provide the opportunity to talk it through before formal discernment and selection processes begin and also to provide part of the diocese's care of people through these processes.

### **Discernment and selection for ordained ministry**

#### **Stipendiary and non - stipendiary ministry**

This is for those whose sense of vocation is wider than to their home parish.

Discernment consists of working with the DDO (Diocesan Director of Ordinands) and two other people in the diocese who over a period share the candidate's sense of vocation and advise the candidate whether they meet the national criteria for selection. This is shared with the bishop who decides whether to sponsor the candidate for a selection conference or not.

The conference is over three days and makes a recommendation to the bishop about the candidate's suitability for training. The bishops receive the advice of the conference.

Training is either at residential colleges for stipendiary ministry or on the regional, part - time course (Eastern Regional Ministry Course) for either stipendiary or non stipendiary ministry. Duration of training depends on which course is chosen and on other factors such as age, theological background etc. It is not normally for less than two years.

#### **Ordained Local Ministry**

Where someone feels their ministry is to be a priest in their own benefice understandings of vocation and ministry are explored through the Diocesan Ministry Course.

Discernment begins in the benefice with a declaration after interview that a candidate's ministry would be acceptable to the benefice if subsequently recommended for training at a selection conference, and for ordination after training.

Discernment consists of working with the DDO and two other people in the Diocese who advise the candidate and people in the benefice as to how the candidate meets the national criteria for selection. This is shared with the bishop who decides whether to sponsor the candidate for a selection conference.

The conference is over three days and makes a recommendation to the bishop about the candidate's suitability for training. The bishops receive the advice of the conference.

Training is on the Diocesan Ministry Course.

### **Accredited and Acknowledged Ministries**

For people who feel that they may be called to be a reader, lay pastor, local evangelist, children's worker or youth worker understandings of vocation and ministry are explored through the Diocesan Ministry Course.

Discernment begins in the benefice with a declaration after interview that a candidate's ministry would be acceptable to the benefice if subsequently recommended for training. The decision to select a candidate to train for reader ministry is made by a Diocesan Reader Selection Panel. The decision to select a candidate to train for Acknowledged Local Ministry is made by the church council of the benefice from which the person comes, in the light of advice from a Diocesan Advisory Panel. Training is on the Diocesan Ministry Course.

After initial conversations with their parish priest people interested in exploring their vocation further should either talk with the Warden of Readers, the Acknowledge Ministries Officer or a member of staff from the DMC.

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