

Prospectus
Three Streams Spiritual Formation
Leading to the Sacrament of Holy Orders
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNION OF THE CHARISMATIC EPISCOPAL CHURCH
North America
Spring 2012

Introduction

This prospectus is intended to introduce and give a general overview to the “Spiritual Formation” manuals Volume 1 and 2. The manuals were created in response to Patriarch Craig Bates’ request that some general guidelines be given for the formation process of those seeking Holy Orders in the CEC, North America.

The Spiritual Formation manuals are divided into two volumes. **Volume 1** provides all the “administrative” forms and procedures needed for a candidate to proceed to Holy Orders in the CEC. **Volume 2** provides the steps and stages that a Candidate commits himself to as a part of “The Formation Process” leading to the Sacrament of Holy Orders. The **white pages of Volume 2** are directed specifically for the Candidate and **the green pages** describe the goals and responsibilities of the Spiritual Formation Director. In a spirit of openness and candor both the white and green pages are provided for the Candidate.

In the initial stage (Inquirer) the person is directly related to his Rector, who is providing his pastoral and spiritual care. Once one has formally submitted himself to the process leading to ordination (Applicant) a Spiritual Formation Team will be established to shepherd the Applicant through the administrative and spiritual formation process leading to Holy Orders.

The Three Streams Spiritual Formation Team

The Three Streams Spiritual Formation Team is composed of a Mentor, Spiritual Formation Director and a Confessor. We are using the visual aspect of three streams that is the foundation for the formation process of candidates for ordained ministry: 1) Mentor (e.g. Bishop, Archdeacon or other appointed by the Bishop) 2) The Spiritual Formation Director (appointed by the Bishop) 3) The Confessor (appointed by the Bishop). This process will *surface* “turbulence” and “currents” in the life of the person being formed and provide the means to effectively address growth issues, any concerns and thereby strive to bring unity within the candidate in the process of spiritual formation.

The Mentor: (Governing)

The Mentor is the “Shepherd” of the overall Spiritual Formation Process
(This person may be e.g. the Bishop, the Archdeacon or one designated by one of them)

- The Mentor is responsible for holding the candidate accountable to all expectations in the “Spiritual Formation” process (in both Volumes 1 and 2 of the *Three Streams Spiritual Formation* manuals, this is done in conjunction with the Spiritual Formation Director)
- The primary resource for the Mentor is Volume 1 of the Formation Process
- Second, to focus on the “Academic” dimensions of the formation process (e.g. SMS progress).

- Responsible to make sure that all forms and administrative materials are completed by the Candidate.
- To make sure a yearly evaluation by the Bishop of the candidate; this yearly evaluation is supported by any appropriate feedback from the Spiritual Formation Team.
- The Mentor is the primary Overseer of the spiritual formation process.

The Spiritual Formation Director: (Guiding)

(Again, this person may be e.g. the Bishop, the Archdeacon or one designated by one of them)

- This person is responsible for implementing the guidelines provided in Volume 2 of the Spiritual Formation Process.
- Assisting the candidate in their spiritual journey and spiritual growth toward Holy Orders.
- Discernment is paramount. Discerning how God is at work in the life of the candidate and helping the Candidate to articulate in a meaningful and effective way how God is working in his life.
- Giving “Direction” so that the candidate is able to name, identify and clarify his “next steps” in his relationship with God.
- Spiritual Direction is understood as not being counseling or advice giving. To quote Thomas Merton from Volume 2, green pages 22f: “Spiritual direction is a *continuous* process of formation and guidance, in which a Christian is led and encouraged in his (or her—we will use the inclusive male pronoun hereafter) special vocation, so that by faithful correspondence to the graces of the Holy Spirit he may attain to the particular end of his vocation and to union with God.

The Confessor: (Guarding)

- A Priest appointed by the Bishop as confessor for the candidate.
- Preferably the Confessor would not normally be the Spiritual Formation Director but there may be situations where that would be permissible. The Bishop will discern this.
- Ideally the “rite of reconciliation” would occur on a monthly basis as a minimum.

The Process towards Holy Orders

The procedure toward Holy Orders in the CEC is structured according to a seven stage process. It involves the following seven steps: Inquirer; Applicant; Aspirant; Postulant; Candidate; Ordination; Deacon/Priest.

The Inquirer: (seed)

The Inquirer is in a discernment process regarding the pursuit of Holy Orders, with a sponsoring a priest, as to his potential call to ordained ministry. It is the responsibility of the Rector to provide spiritual formation at this point in the process.

The Applicant: (soil)

An Applicant is one who a) has formally submitted himself to the process by which ordination candidates in the CEC are prepared and examined and b) has intentionally chosen to devote himself wholeheartedly to that formation process.

The Aspirant: (roots)

An Aspirant is one who is honestly exploring his motives for seeking ordination by authentically engaging in the spiritual formation process and listening attentively to his Spiritual Formation Director and Confessor.

The Postulant: (trunk)

The Postulant is one who has made a formal petition to be admitted to Holy Orders. A Postulant is one who has clarified his motives for pursuing ordination with his Spiritual Formation Team and has now been authorized to continue the process of seeking to be admitted to Holy Orders.

The Candidate: (branches)

A Candidate is one who is being officially considered for Holy Orders. A Candidate is one who is continuing to complete the requirements (i.e. administrative, academic and spiritual formation) necessary to being admitted to Holy Orders in the CEC.

Ordination: (leaves)

An Ordained person is one who has been consecrated into the clergy through the Sacrament of Holy Orders in the CEC. Consecration into Holy Orders in the CEC is to understand that through the divine action of God by His Spirit he has ontologically set apart his servants to be His Priests and Deacons in submission to the Bishop.

Deacon/Priest: (fruit)

A Deacon or Priest is one who is committed to the lifelong process of Spiritual Formation by which he is conformed to the image of Christ and who fulfills his calling to bear fruit for the Kingdom of God.

Concerning the Differing Metaphors Used in the Manuals

A number of metaphors are used to help relate and communicate the ideas of the Spiritual Formation Process. One of the fundamental metaphors used in the Spiritual Formation Process is that of the "Harvest". In both the Old and New Testaments the Bible uses the metaphor of sowing, tending, reaping and harvest to reveal what God is doing in the world. The harvest

metaphor is used throughout the Spiritual Formation Manual to help organize and clarify the task of developing those who are seeking Holy Orders. It is also used to help remind all that the task of Mentor, Spiritual Formation Director or Confessor is organic, not mechanistic, and that while some plant and some water, God alone gives the increase.

Metaphor is a way of speaking of one thing in regard to something else that is totally different. Metaphors make the invisible visible. The relationship is used in a completely unusual way by making an analogy of one thing that is totally unrelated to the other (e.g. “The Lord is my Shepherd”). The function of metaphor is to bring together two normally incompatible or incongruous ideas together in such a way as to give clarification and associations with numerous ideas but at the same time help clarify the one with the metaphor. Metaphor has the character of associating the *is* and *is not* because while an assertion is made, it is not a definition.

Some of the Goals of the Three Streams Spiritual Formation Process

The goals of the Three Streams Spiritual Formation Process is being implemented to help cultivate and nurture those seeking Holy Orders to become more intimately oriented to the ethos and vision of the CEC:

Vision and Identity:

- The Spiritual Formation Process is an intentional attempt to help establish, clarify and deepen the Candidates understanding of the Vision of the CEC (the Original Vision of the CEC).
- To help establish, clarify and deepen the Candidates understanding of the Identity of the CEC according to the Bishops of the CEC prior to any commitment to seeking Holy Orders (the Three Streams).

Embracing the Ontology of Holy Orders:

- This process hopes to communicate that Holy Orders involves an *Ontological* change in the person who is consecrated to the Sacrament of the Diaconate or the Priesthood.
- The Diaconate and the Priesthood is not simply wearing a clergy shirt, vestments or something one does; it is what we are: “I become a Deacon.” “I am a Priest.” Those in Holy Order are Sacramentally and Ontologically set apart by the Servant-hood and High Priesthood of Jesus Christ.

Nurturing the Character and Calling of the Candidate for Holy Orders:

- This overall process (Administrative, Academic and Spiritual Formation Process) is an authentic attempt to help to Spiritually Form all future Clergy in the CEC.
- To help discern and nurture the character of the Candidate for Holy Orders in order to facilitate his understanding and find his place in the service of the Lord, even if this process reveals that the Candidate will best serve as a faithful layman in the CEC.
- When a Candidate is ready for Ordination there should be nothing in his way for Holy Orders Ordination.

- Like Melchisedek in the Old Testament, a Christian Priest is a Priest forever. Priesthood is not a profession, priesthood is a way of life, a life lived.
- The hope is that all candidates for Holy Orders have gone through the Spiritual Formation Process and have gained a clear understanding of the sacramental nature of their new identity and their role as one ordained into Holy Orders in the CEC.

Our Responsibility in Relation to our Congregations and Candidates:

- This process is also being implemented to help spare congregations and Candidates the pain and confusing experience of being inappropriately and/or impulsively ordained.
- Finally, we hope this process will help discern the calling, gifts and involvement of any Candidate in genuine ministry in the CEC, whether sacramental ministers or lay ministers.

Living for the Future of the CEC

It is the conviction of the CEC that all Believers (Lay or Clergy) will commit themselves to the lifelong process of Spiritual Formation by which we are conformed into the image of Christ and fulfill our calling to bear fruit for the Kingdom of God.

Respectfully Submitted,

+Bishop Michael Davidson
Fr. Terry Hedrick+