

Appendix E

Terms

Baptism

The rite of initiation into the Christian faith. Baptism is the foundational event for calling Christian people into ministry.

Baptismal Covenant

The document that translates faith into action. The first two promises of the Covenant relate to our faithfulness within the Christian tradition. The third calls us to be evangelists, and the fourth and fifth direct our action to “all people” (BCP, pp. 304-5)

Bishop

The bishop’s responsibility is oversight of the diocese. He or she is charged with guarding the faith, providing for the sacraments, and ordaining priests and deacons.

Candidate

A person in the ordination process, who has completed a time as a postulant, testing a vocation. This person is currently working on his/her preparation for the diaconate or the transitional diaconate.

Canons

The laws of the Episcopal Church.

Clinical pastoral education (CPE)

CPE offers participants the opportunity to explore personal and professional growth issues in ministry formation in a clinical setting. Students study the meaning of pastoral care and work under the supervision of a treatment team.

Commission on Ministry (COM)

The diocesan body charged with developing and affirming the ministries of all baptized persons. The COM plays a significant role in mentoring people through the ordination process.

Deacon

An ordered (ordained) person who represents to the people of God the servant ministry of the church in the world. The office of deacon is called the diaconate.

Discernment

A prayerful community process of coming to understand call (vocation) as it is represented in members of the faith community.

Ember Days

The Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday following the first Sunday in Lent, the Day of Pentecost, September 14, and December 14. These days are set aside for fasting and prayer. During each Ember Day cycle (four times a year), each postulant and candidate is required by canon to communicate with the bishop.

Initial Discernment Process

The process an individual undertakes with the help of a clergy person or trusted friend in his/her home congregation. A person usually takes some time personally to reflect on the feelings of a call, and then asks the community to help listen to this call.

Laity

A term used to refer to those people of God who are not ordained to one of the three orders of deacon, priest, or bishop.

Laos

A Greek word which means “all the people of God”.

Liturgy

Literally, “the work of the people,” liturgy is the way the faith community acts out the rites of Christian worship.

Mentor

A person who guides a person through the ordination process.

Ministry

That which we spend our lives on, in the name of Christ. Ministry is often equated with “church work,” but most ministry is done “in the world”.

Ministry developer

A professionally educated person who supports multiple congregations in a region of the diocese.

Nominee

A person who is testing a call to ordained office, but has not yet been admitted to the process leading to ordination.

Postulant

A person who has been formally accepted into the ordination process by the bishop.

Priest

An ordered (ordained) person who is called to be a pastor, sacramental leader, and teacher.

Spiritual Director

A spiritual companion who helps a person discern how she/he can grow in faith.

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Standing Committee

The diocesan body which, by canon, must approve persons for ordination to the diaconate and to the priesthood based on fulfillment of canonical requirements.

Vestry/Bishop's Committee

The governing body of a congregation. It must approve, at several steps along the way, their postulant's and/or candidate's continuation in the ordination process.

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