



The Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania COMMISSION ON MINISTRY

The Qualities We Seek in Our Ordained Leaders

Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God, who has made us competent to be ministers of a new covenant....

2 Corinthians 3:4-6a

*The power for authentic leadership...
is found not in external arrangements
but in the human heart.*

(Parker Palmer)

The ordained leadership in the Diocese of Pennsylvania must first be grounded in the love of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Leaders in this corner of the Church should find the beginning, middle, and end of their calls in the obedience, passion, expectation, and hope of those who are disciples of Jesus of Nazareth. These leaders must also possess certain gifts that can be used to guide and shepherd God's holy people. The gifts and qualities described here are not exhaustive, nor are these qualities exclusive to the ordained ministry. The discernment process of the diocese will focus on discerning the presence, or the potential presence, of these qualities and abilities in each person.

1. A visible love for the proclamation of the Gospel and for the Church

The Diocese of Pennsylvania seeks to raise up clergy who love God with heart, mind, and soul, and who know and love the person of Jesus Christ and seek to make him known. Those seeking ordination must place Jesus Christ as the center of all they do, say, and feel. Their discipleship should be evident in their speech and action, their choices, and their relationships with friends, community, and family. We are looking for clergy who demonstrate a visible love of the Gospel and of God's people. Ordained leaders in this diocese should show a genuine, holy love for those whom they serve and those who are in their care, a love that gives them the strength and compassion to give freely of themselves to others, even to give their own lives for their people and for the sake of the Gospel. Clergy in this diocese will have both a deep reverence for the sacraments at the heart of our liturgical life as well as an understanding that the world itself is a visible sign of God's love and care and is therefore worthy of our good stewardship.

2. The ability to communicate the truth of the Gospel in ways that lead to connection and transformation

Clergy in the Diocese of Pennsylvania are called to be communicators of God's love to God's beloved. Ordained leaders in this diocese must have the capacity to clearly articulate how Jesus transforms their lives, the Church, and the world. In order to do this, our clergy need to speak several languages – both figuratively and literally – whenever they speak from the pulpit, in personal or pastoral conversations, and through various forms of social media. Clergy in this diocese are called to minister in a wide variety of contexts and among all sorts of people. The Diocese of Pennsylvania seeks to raise up clergy who have the skills for honest, open, and effective communication that demonstrates a love of both God and neighbor.

3. Spiritual maturity, self-awareness, and authenticity

The work of the ordained ministry is a great gift and blessing; it also can be complex, challenging, and exhausting. To be an effective clergy person requires a strong spiritual center, physical and mental resilience, a deep knowledge of one's own spiritual gifts, a profound sense of humility, a commitment to a healthy integration of work and play, and a willingness to grow and learn alongside others. All of this is grounded in a life shaped by a discipline of personal prayer, public worship, and other holy conversation. We seek to raise up clergy to be servants of the Gospel, who will be able to persevere in challenging circumstances, recognize areas for personal growth, and be willing to learn new skills and ask for help in doing so. We pray that all of our ordained clergy will "lead a life worthy of the calling to which [they] have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:1)

4. The ability to lead, organize, and equip others in ministry

"Leadership is authentic self-expression which creates value for others," says the Rev'd Doug Travis. Clergy in this diocese must not only possess a depth of faith and spiritual devotion but also the ability to lead others to find the same depth and devotion in their own lives. They should have a vision for the ministry of the Episcopal Church and the wisdom to guide others into discovering and using their own gifts in the service of the Gospel. The Diocese of Pennsylvania seeks to raise up clergy who have a heart for this kind of mutual ministry and vocational discernment. Ordained leaders in this diocese should be wise mentors and guides who are motivated by the desire to help others find the place for their gifts in the Kingdom of God.

5. A capacity for creative leadership

The Diocese of Pennsylvania seeks to raise up leaders who are able to develop and employ their sense of creativity in ministry. Our clergy must be able to thoughtfully discern new paths in the life

of the Church through a careful listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. They must also have the courage to follow where these paths may lead. Ordained leaders in the church should have gifts to listen, learn, gather support, and then lead their congregations in taking risks for the sake of the Gospel. Our clergy must be courageous enough to make honest mistakes and humble enough to learn from them. We are looking for priests who see opportunity and hope where others see decline, who find assurance and inspiration in the knowledge that Christ is present and active in the Church today.

6. The ability to lead congregations through change

We live in a rapidly changing world, and our congregations live in that world as well. This means that all of our congregations will face adaptive challenges as they seek to proclaim the Gospel in this world. We seek to raise up priests who can help our congregations to respond faithfully to God's calling of them into this unknown future. These priests see Grace in the process of transformation and change and possess the skills to help others see this Grace as well.

7. A willingness and ability to be vocationally flexible

The churches in the Diocese of Pennsylvania are in a variety of contexts in a variety of locations and with a variety of needs. We seek to raise up leaders who will be able to respond to this variety with flexibility and creativity. Few priests in this diocese are likely to serve in one role at one type of church in one city for their entire vocation. We recognize, too, that a growing number of parishes require clergy leaders who do not depend on them for their entire livelihood; therefore, we need to raise up priests who can offer their presence and their gifts in a part-time or non-stipendiary capacity. We are looking for clergy who can demonstrate flexibility in their vision of professional ministry in order to respond to God's call to them and to the Church in our world.

This document has been designed to support the discernment process in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. This discernment process was created by the Commission on Ministry, under the direction of the Rt. Rev'd Daniel G. P. Gutierrez. Materials for this process were produced by members of the Commission, in consultation with the Bishop, and include information from guides published by other dioceses, including The Episcopal Church in Minnesota, The Episcopal Diocese of New York, The Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande, and The Episcopal Diocese of Washington.

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