

Where Do Community Clergy Fit In?

God calls all believing, baptised members of the church to share in its ministry and mission.

“You are a chosen race, the King’s priests, the holy nation, God’s own people, chosen to proclaim the wonderful acts of God, who called you out of darkness into his own marvellous light.”

(1 Peter 2:9)

Each of us is a minister of the church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, often exercising our ministries in spontaneous and informal ways.

There are also many kinds of organised, formal ministries:

- ✦ **Commissioned Ministers** are elected or appointed by the parish, congregation or church organisation.
- ✦ **Licensed Lay Ministers** are chosen by the rector and parish council, receive training from the parish and diocese, and are licensed by the bishop.

- ✦ **Deacons** are ordained ministers of the church, who lead in worship and the church’s ministries of compassion.

Examples are caring for those with HIV/AIDS, working among the poor and needy, caring for the frail and elderly.

- ✦ **Priests** are ordained ministers of the church who take a lead in the pastoral, sacramental, teaching and preaching ministries. They can serve the church in many different capacities.

Examples are rectors, community priests and archdeacons.

Community Deacons and Priests are identified and receive training in the local community. They exercise their ministry in a voluntary capacity in their parish without being paid by the church.

The bishop, priests and deacons together make up the **clergy** of the diocese.

How Do I Become Community Deacon or Priest?

The **process** of becoming a Community Deacon or Priest is a **partnership** between you, your parish leadership and the diocese – all acting in submission and obedience to God.

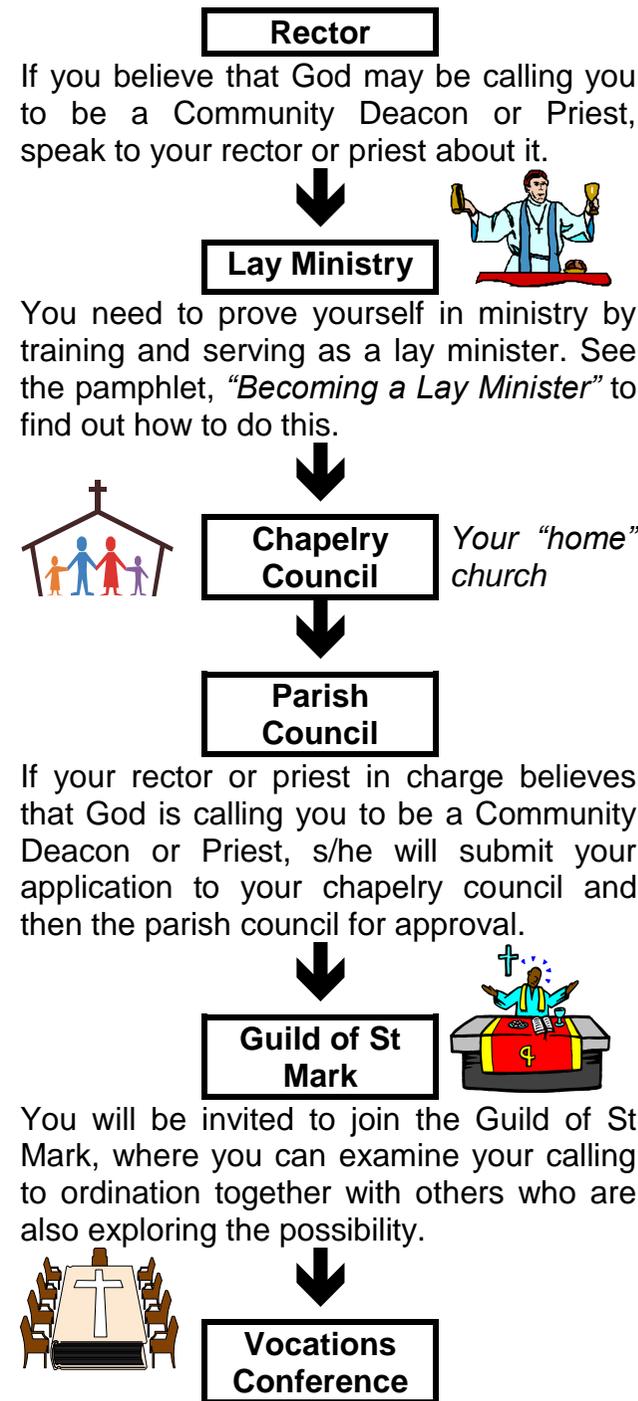
The final decision about your ordination is up to the bishop, who is advised by leaders of the church in the diocese.

Here are the steps along the way:

First, **make sure that you are a member “in good standing”** of your congregation and parish. The Anglican Prayer Book 1989 p 434 no. 82 gives a good idea of what this means. Among other things, we will expect you to:

- ✦ Have a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour.
- ✦ Be regular and frequent in worship, and active in the life of the church.
- ✦ Be setting an example in regular, sacrificial giving to the church in proportion to your income (tithing).
- ✦ Live an exemplary lifestyle in the community, which bears witness to the truth of the gospel of Christ.

This “flow chart” explains the steps along the way



The Diocese will invite you to attend a Vocations Conference, which seeks to discern how God is calling you into ministry – as indicated in the three blocks below:



(See pamphlet)

(See pamphlet)

If you are selected to train as a Community Deacon or Priest, the Vocations Conference will advise the bishop and department of training for ministries about the training you still need.

- ✦ **Community Deacons** are usually required to complete six recognised theological courses before ordination.
- ✦ **Community Priests** are usually required to complete at least a recognised Certificate or Diploma in theology before ordination.

There is no guarantee that you will be ordained.



Ordination
Training

Your training will be both theological and practical, and cover the **knowledge, skills** and **attitudes** (lifestyle) you need for your ministry as a Community Priest or Deacon. It will be a partnership between you, your rector or priest in charge and the department of training for ministries.



Decision on
Ordination
and
Licensing
as a
Deacon

The bishop will make this decision after receiving reports from those involved your training, your rector or priest in charge, and your parish council.



Ordination
as a
Deacon

Further
Training

If you are preparing for ordination as a Community Priest, you will need further training for that ministry.



Decision on
Ordination
and
Licensing
as a Priest

Ordination
as a Priest

This is just the beginning of your growth in ministry. You will continue to receive training. Make use of every opportunity!

Diocese of St Mark the Evangelist

To see vibrant, self-sufficient Congregations established and linked to each other for the purpose of sharing in:

- ✦ Resources
- ✦ Ministry and service
- ✦ Outreach and evangelism.



Becoming a Community Deacon or Priest