



The Commission on Ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of Western Michigan

535 South Burdick St., Ste 1, Kalamazoo, MI, 49007 • www.edwm.org

Chair: The Very Rev. Jared C. Cramer • rector@stjohnsepiscopal.com • 616.842.6260, ext. 22

Customary for Ordinations to the Priesthood or Diaconate

Congratulations on your achievement thus far. The following Customary will guide you in the process of planning for your ordination.

In the last year of your program of formation, you will be required to undergo a medical examination if it has been more than 2 years since your last canonically required physical. In addition, you will be required to undergo a psychological evaluation after being granted postulancy and before ordination. You must also submit letters of application to the COM, Standing Committee, and a letter from the sponsoring parish's vestry. Finally, you will contact the diocesan office to arrange a meeting with the Bishop.

- **The date, time and location of your ordination is only *official* after the invitation is released from the Bishop's office** (For your own planning purposes you will probably be given a tentative date, prior to completing all the requirements.)
- Deacons are customarily ordained in their sponsoring parish. Priests are ordained in the parish where they will serve their first cure. Exceptions to this custom may be made, but regardless you will want to confer with the bishop about the appropriate space.
- Your ordination is a time for those who have supported you through the process to celebrate along with you. Therefore it is important to include significant people who have accompanied you from discernment through ordination to participate in the liturgy.
- The liturgical roles you need to assign include the following (be sure to indicate that invitations are provisional, and dependent upon your successful completion of all canonical requirements for ordination):
 - Preacher (the Bishop, someone from your seminary, or another clergy person)
 - Presenters (at least one priest and one lay person)
 - Readers (Jewish Scripture and Christian Scripture Lessons)
 - Deacon of the Mass (who will read the Gospel Lesson)
 - Assistant to the Bishop (often a second deacon, but can be any order of ministry)
 - MC (often either the rector, vergar, or someone else from the parish hosting the ordination who is familiar with liturgy in the space)
 - Music- Choir, Musicians, Soloist(s)
 - Cantor if you would like (particularly appropriate for the litany for ordinations)
 - Acolytes (usually from the hosting parish)
 - Eucharistic Ministers, however many the parish generally uses for a liturgy of this size (if clergy are vested and serving at the Eucharist, they are also appropriate Eucharistic ministers—if there are not sufficient clergy serving at the Eucharist, then licensed lay people may be assigned)
 - Thurifer (optional)
 - Reception- hosting parish or caterer of your choice. (You may need to check bylaws of your church if you are planning on having alcohol.)
- Readings are chosen from those assigned in the Ordinal of the Book of Common Prayer. Alternatives must be authorized by the Bishop.
- Music during the service should be programmed as proscribed by the rubrics.
- If you are being gifted vestments they should be given to you prior to the date of your ordination so that they are ready to use in your vestiture during the liturgy.
- The diocese has stoles that are handed down for your use until you can purchase them. It is expected that you, in turn, will hand them down to the next person being ordained.
- You will be responsible for ensuring that service bulletins are provided for the liturgy (the parish might assist with this requirement). A draft must be submitted to (and approved by) the bishop prior to printing. Allow no less than two months for this process.

Our Mission, rooted in the Episcopal tradition, is to worship God, to follow Jesus Christ, to grow together in the Holy Spirit, and to serve the world.