

General Ordination Examination 2013

Please review the General Instructions before you begin work on this set of questions and again when you put your answers in final form.

Set 1: Liturgy and Church Music

Thursday, January 3, 2013, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

LIMITED RESOURCES: A printed one-volume annotated Bible; a printed *1979 Book of Common Prayer*; a printed *Book of Occasional Services*; a printed *Lesser Feasts and Fasts*; the printed *Enriching Our Worship* volumes; a printed *Holy Women, Holy Men*; and printed authorized Episcopal hymnals. **NO** electronic or Internet resources.

Create a liturgy for a nature-oriented event in your pastoral context. You may imagine any such situation: for example, the planting or harvesting of crops, the blessing of a fishing fleet, the planting of a community garden, the reclaiming of land after a natural disaster, or the blessing of animals.

1. In a well-organized essay of approximately 750 words:
 - A. Give the pastoral reason for the rite;
 - B. Explain the theological understanding of creation that informs your liturgical design.
2. In another essay of approximately 750 words:
 - A. Outline the celebration, explaining why you structured it this way and why you chose the liturgical texts, readings and music, showing how your choices conform to the rubrics of the liturgical books listed above;
 - B. Describe the roles of the members of the congregation, including the liturgical leaders;
 - C. Describe the liturgical choreography (the movement of the assembly, including the liturgical ministers) and the use of space.

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Set 2: Theory and Practice of Ministry

Thursday, January 3, 2013, 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

NO EXTERNAL RESOURCES

For three years you have been the clergy person in charge at St. Christopher's Church, a congregation in a populous community. You receive a phone call from a chaplain working with one of the local **hospice programs**. She shares with you that a 12-year-old girl has been admitted into the hospice facility with a terminal disease. She is being kept as comfortable as possible but is approximately a week from death and is unresponsive.

The family has indicated to the chaplain that they are members of St. Christopher's. They say they have been inactive at St. Christopher's for at least five years and do not know the clergy person there, though they still consider it their spiritual home. You do not recall ever meeting the family. The chaplain tells you that she would be willing to continue to minister to the family but also feels it important to at least let you know of the situation.

In an essay of approximately 1,500 words, clearly identify and explain the **theological, pastoral and practical issues** that inform what you choose to do or choose not to do. Include in the essay any other people or resources you might consult to help you reach your decisions.

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Set 3: Christian Ethics and Moral Theology

Friday, January 4, 2013, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

NO EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Jesus said, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint, dill, and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. It is these you ought to have practiced without neglecting the others.” (Matthew 23:23)

In this passage from Matthew, Jesus is quoted as criticizing the scribes and Pharisees for neglecting to practice justice (as well as mercy and faith).

1. In an essay of 1000 words, present and expand on a Christian understanding of justice, drawing on your knowledge of sources in Scripture and the tradition of Christian thought. Identify and differentiate at least three forms of justice commonly discussed in Christian ethics and moral theology.
2. In an essay of 500 words, explain in detail what it means for individual Christians and the Church as a body to practice these forms of justice.

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Set 4: Contemporary Society

Friday, January 4, 2013, 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

NO EXTERNAL RESOURCES

You are the rector of a congregation in a medium-sized city with a centrally located church building. For several years, yoga groups have met in your parish hall; a number of your members attend these classes. More recently, under the leadership of the last rector, the rise of interest in meditation brought a Zen Buddhist meditation group to meet in your chapel once a week; a few of your members participate in these meditation sessions. A group of Muslims has now approached you to ask if it could rent space for Friday prayers because the lease has expired on the last place it met.

Canonically, you know that the use of space is the rector's decision, but you wish to involve vestry members in replying to the request and setting future policy. They are looking to you for guidance.

In an answer of 1,000 words:

1. Relevant to the decision you must make, describe how these three religious practices (yoga, Zen meditation, Friday prayers for Muslims) relate to Christianity.
2. Explain how the relationships identified in Part 1 inform your decision about whether or not to agree to the request of the Muslims and whether or not to continue to allow the other two groups to meet in your facility.

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Set 5: Christian Theology and Missiology

Saturday, January 5, 2013, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

LIMITED RESOURCES: A printed one-volume annotated Bible, a printed one-volume Concordance, a printed *1979 Book of Common Prayer* and a printed *Hymnal 1982*. **NO** electronic or Internet resources.

Dorothy Sayers famously observed that if people depended upon the Church to answer the question, “What is the Trinity?” the vast majority of people would respond:

“‘The Father incomprehensible, the Son incomprehensible, and the whole thing incomprehensible.’ Something put in by the theologians to make it more difficult — nothing to do with daily life or ethics.”

Drawing on the allowed resources and your own understanding, write an essay of approximately 1,500 words explaining how the doctrine of the Trinity is relevant to “daily life or ethics.”

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Set 6: Church History

Monday, January 7, 2013, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

NO OUTSIDE RESOURCES

The *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* begins its definition of a *council* as: “A formal meeting of bishops and representatives of several churches convened for the purpose of regulating doctrine or discipline.” (ODCC, 3rd ed., [1997], p. 422)

The authority and impact of three “councils,” thus broadly construed, form the basis of this question.

1. The Council of Nicaea (325)
 2. The King in Parliament in relation to the Church of England in 1533
 3. The General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America in 1789
- A. Choose two of the three “councils.” In two essays of approximately 250 words each, set each one in its historical context, describing the circumstances for calling the “council,” the issue(s) that the “council” had to address, and the impact of the “council.”
- B. In an essay of approximately 500 words, compare the sources, exercise and reception of the authority of the Council of Nicaea to the sources, exercise and reception of the authority of another “council” you have chosen.
- C. Based on your discussion, evaluate in an essay of not more than 500 words how successful Church “councils” have been in regulating doctrine and discipline.

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Set 7: The Holy Scriptures

Monday, January 7, 2013, 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

LIMITED RESOURCES: A printed one-volume annotated Bible, a printed one-volume Concordance and a printed *1979 Book of Common Prayer*.
NO electronic or Internet resources.

A reminder: This is not a liturgical question; it seeks, rather, a careful discussion and application to contemporary faith and culture of a biblical mandate for repentance.

- A. In both Old and New Testament writings a call to God's people for repentance is clear and undeniable. In an essay of 500 to 750 words, explore this call through exegesis of the following texts:

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 and Matthew 4:12-17

Your essay should address the literary, historical, and theological highlights of each text and set forth the biblical case for repentance as represented by these texts.

- B. As an ordained person, you have just attended the monthly meeting of your Ecumenical Community Clergy Council. The topic discussed was "Preparing for Lent." One member had suggested that the group consider sponsoring "Ashes to go." She remembered some media coverage on Ash Wednesday 2012 showing clergy imposing ashes on street corners in the downtown business district and suburbs. She recalled that there was a great deal of positive reaction to this practice, stressing the theme that the churches were "meeting people where they are," and commenting that with people's busy lives, this was a visible way to reach out to the community. Another member was strongly opposed, asking, "What would be the biblical basis for this?" The group then had turned to you for your position on your colleague's original suggestion.

In an essay of 500 to 750 words, address the following questions:

1. In what ways does such a contemporary practice ("Ashes to go") respond faithfully to the call for repentance as articulated in Joel and Matthew?
2. In what ways does it not?