

GENERAL ORDINATION EXAMINATION 2009

Set 1: Holy Scripture

Monday, January 5, 2009, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

LIMITED RESOURCES: An annotated Bible (one-volume print editions only), the Book of Common Prayer

The covenant between God and God's people is central in the Bible, yet this relationship is portrayed in different ways. In a three-page essay respond to the following questions:

1. How and under what circumstances does Jeremiah 31:31-34 reinterpret the Sinai covenant introduced in Exodus 19-20?
2. In Luke 22:14-20, how and under what circumstances are the scriptural traditions of covenant re-appropriated?
3. The three passages that you addressed in questions A and B present different views of covenant. What problems of biblical interpretation are posed by reading these passages together?
4. How does covenant inform the Christian life?

Set 2: Christian Theology

Monday, January 5, 2009, 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

OPEN RESOURCES

Jesus said, "As the Father sent me, so I send you" (John 20:21).

In the church's reflection on its own mission activities, this "sending" and "being sent" of God has given birth to the theology of the missio Dei or mission of God.

For example, twentieth-century theologian Jürgen Moltmann stated, "It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfill in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through [German durch; also: from, by] the Father that includes the church."

In a unified essay of three pages, giving equal weight to each question, address the following:

1. How is the mission of God (missio Dei) manifested in the work of the Son and the Spirit?

2. What is the church's essential role in the mission of God? Give at least one concrete example of a mission activity of the church and show how it is in fulfillment of the mission of the Son and/or the Spirit.

Set 3: Contemporary Society

Tuesday, January 6, 2009, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

OPEN RESOURCES

The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) endorsed by 189 countries and adopted by The Episcopal Church in Convention in 2006 are:

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria, and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

After briefly situating the MDGs in a global perspective, pick one MDG and respond to the following questions in three essays of approximately one page each:

1. What are the biblical and theological foundations for addressing this MDG?
2. What substantive contributions to the realization of this MDG in contemporary society can The Episcopal Church make?
3. To achieve this MDG effectively, what essential political, economic, and cultural factors need to be taken into account at the parish and the diocesan levels?

Set 4: Liturgy and Church Music

Tuesday, January 6, 2009, 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

LIMITED RESOURCES: The Book of Common Prayer, EOW, the Bible

According to the Book of Common Prayer, the Holy Eucharist is "the principal act of Christian worship on the Lord's Day and other major Feasts" (p. 13). An outline of the shape of the whole rite of the Holy Eucharist is found in the Book of Common Prayer on pages 400-401, followed by two models for the Great Thanksgiving on pages 402-405.

Like any liturgy, the Eucharist enacts theology. In a three-page essay drawing on your theological understanding of the rite's texts and actions, describe:

- Two ways in which Episcopalians perceive participation in the Holy Eucharist as shaping the life and work of the Christian community, and
- Two ways in which participation in the Holy Eucharist shapes how we live, or seek to live, as individual Episcopalians.

Set 5: Christian Ethics and Moral Theology

Thursday, January 8, 2009, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

OPEN RESOURCES

Lesser Feasts and Fasts tells us that in March of 1965, Jonathan Daniels, a seminarian at the Episcopal Theological School in Cambridge, Massachusetts, heard the appeal of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to go to Selma, Alabama, to join in the campaign to secure the right to vote for disenfranchised African-American citizens in that state. One afternoon at Evensong, the words of the Magnificat spoke to him: "He hath put down the mighty from their seat and hath exalted the humble and meek. He hath filled the hungry with good things." In that moment, he said, "I knew I must go to Selma. The Virgin's song was to grow more and more dear to me in the weeks ahead." Daniels went to Selma that summer; in August, he and three fellow volunteers were arrested. Released six days later, they walked to a small store; a young black woman approaching the store, sixteen-year-old Ruby Sales, was threatened by a deputy sheriff. Pushing her aside to protect her, Daniels was killed by a blast from the man's shotgun.

Respond to the following question in an essay of three pages:

- How does a virtue ethics approach in moral theology provide a way to interpret and understand an example like that of Jonathan Daniels?

Set 6: Theory and Practice of Ministry

Thursday, January 8, 2009, 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

NO EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Part of your ministry in the parish where you have been assistant priest for a year is that of advisor to the youth group. The young people have indicated that they admire you and think of you as "one of them," who can be trusted to "keep their secrets." Several have said that they look up to you and depend on you because they feel that they cannot communicate as openly with their parents as with you. A boy and girl, both sixteen and still in high school, and both members of the group, come to you and tell you that she is pregnant, the boy admitting to being the father. They ask if you could arrange for an abortion; they do not wish their parents to be told.

In a three-page essay, address the following from the perspective of the assistant priest:

- Identify and elaborate upon the issues that the situation, as described, raises for you.
- How would you respond pastorally in this situation?

(N.B. Among a number of resolutions addressing abortion over the last forty years, General Convention adopted a resolution in 1994 that states, in part, "While we acknowledge that in this country it is the legal right of every woman to have a medically safe abortion, as Christians we believe strongly that if this right is exercised, it should be used only in extreme situations. We emphatically oppose abortion as a means of birth control, family planning, sex selection, or any reason of mere convenience.")

Set 7: Church History

Friday, January 9, 2009, 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

OPEN RESOURCES

The most recent Lambeth Conferences (1998 and 2008) can be viewed in part as continuations of debates over issues that originally surfaced in two much earlier historical developments, the founding of the Protestant Episcopal Church following the American Revolution and the "Colenso controversy" in southern Africa in the mid-nineteenth century.

In a three-page essay, give an account of each of these historical episodes and address the following questions:

- What were the tensions involved between the Church of England and its overseas offshoots?
- What issues raised by these events have an ongoing impact on current disputes over the nature of Anglican identity?