

GENERAL ORDINATION EXAMINATION 1996

The General Board of Examining Chaplains offers this examination as an exercise which is integrative of all seven areas in which the canons of the church require that a Candidate be examined and show proficiency before ordination.

Questions asked are ones to which persons with two and a half years of seminary education, or the equivalent thereof, should be able to give satisfactory answers.

The exam is intended to be a resource for Diocesan authorities as they attempt to judge their Candidates' readiness for ordination and to offer them guidance in their continuing education for ministry.

Planning and Writing Answers

1) Advice on answering questions:

- a) Be sure that your responses speak clearly and directly to the questions asked - and that they address all parts of every question.
- b) Note that each Set of questions focuses on certain of the "canonical areas." Be sure your answers do the same.
- c) Cite your sources when quoting, paraphrasing, or summarizing the thoughts of others and do not overdo this. Your own thoughts are what matters.
- d) Keep in mind the fact that, while your opinions and feelings are desired and valued - even sought by some questions - they will not take the place of factual knowledge or theological substance.
- e) If an audience is specified, keep such persons in mind and address them appropriately.

2) Reference materials: Open-Book: you may refer to any printed, written or electronic materials. Be sure to cite your sources. Limited Resources: you are limited to the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, the Hymnal, and the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church in printed or electronic versions but no other resources of any kind, printed, written, verbal or electronic. Closed-Book: rely entirely upon your own memory with no reference material of any kind.

3) Length of essays: The suggested word limits are an important part of the question asked. Overlong papers are hard to read and never rated as outstanding. If your computer program permits, note the number of words at the end of each question; otherwise ascertain roughly the number of words per page, count pages and multiply.

4) Anonymity is not optional. Be careful that you do not reveal your sex, race, seminary, diocese, or any other information which might make it possible for a reader to identify you. (Example: If you are to write a letter to your parish, close it "Yours in Christ," not "Your Sister [Brother] in Christ.") "Class notes" or "faculty lecture" is a sufficient footnote, not "Professor XX's class at XX Seminary."

Mechanics of Formatting and Typing Answers

1) The answers to all essay questions should be typed if possible. Candidates who rely on others to do their typing should read proof for accuracy but must not edit or alter the text delivered to the typist.

2) Type or write on one side of the paper only, using only letter size (8 1/2 x 11") 20 lb. white paper (this size and weight). If you use any other kind of paper, photocopy your answers on the proper paper and send us the copy.

3) Fill your pages. Do not start each question within a set on a new page. Do not put bibliography on a separate page if it will fit under your answer. Do not submit pages with only a few lines on them if you can avoid it.

4) Use black ink or a new black ribbon for typing or printing, especially with dot-matrix printers. From dot matrix printers, we want Letter Quality not Draft quality papers. Local administrators may allow Candidates to hand in answers in Draft quality printing, then replace these with copies done in Letter Quality or on a laser printer. Faint printing does not copy well and is hard to read. Candidates who reprint, and typists who copy hand-written responses must not edit beyond producing a neat typescript. If the typing of handwritten answers is not possible, use black ink and take special care to write legibly.

5) Type single space: double space between paragraphs, triple space between questions within any Set of questions.

6) Type size may vary: if you are using a typewriter either pica or elite is acceptable. For computer printers, use either 10 or 12 pitch (characters to the inch), or if you can vary type size, 12 point (this size in Times Roman) is preferred, but no smaller than 10 point (this size) nor larger than 14 point (this size).

7) Number all pages in each Set of questions consecutively. A Set of questions includes all you are asked to do at one time - either in a half day or full day. Do not number separately the pages containing your answers to the several questions within a Set. Always indicate on each page the total number of pages in the Set. (Example: Page 3 of 10 or Page 2 of 8). You may write answers to the Adult Forum and Coffee Hour questions more than one to a page; number these pages as you did the other sets.

8) The following information must appear at the top right corner of every page of your answers:
(Flush right) Your GOE identification number,
(Flush right) Set # (Roman numeral) - Question # - page # of total number of pages in the Set.
Example: (Your GOE number)
Set I, Question A, 1. a., Page 1 of 1

9) Set margins one inch all around. Allow at least one full inch margin above and to the right of your GOE identification number on all pages whether typewritten or handwritten.

10) Use a paper clip to hold pages together. Do not staple them.

11) Be sure to make a photocopy of all your work so that you can supply copies of any pages which may be lost in the mail or in the copy shop, and so you will have a record of what you wrote.

Finally

By heeding and following these instructions, you will insure that your exam represents your own best effort and that your pages will remain legible and be kept in order through much copying, collating, shipping and handling.

Please review these instructions frequently, and follow them carefully for your own sake as well as for the sake of those who will read and evaluate your work.

GENERAL ORDINATION EXAMINATION 1996

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

SET I Tuesday, January 2, 1996, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

LIMITED RESOURCES - You are limited in resource material to the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, the Hymnal, and the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church. You may use printed or electronic versions of these texts but no other resources of any kind, printed, written, verbal or electronic.

(Set I focuses on Liturgics and the Theory and Practice of Ministry. It also deals with Church History.)

As with virtually all congregations in your diocese, St. Chad's is eucharistically centered and has been so for fifteen years. The Sunday Eucharist has come to matter greatly to the congregation. During the last decade, economic decline in the region has reduced both the size of the congregation and members' incomes. As a result, support of St. Chad's has fallen sharply. The long-time Rector retired last June. In consultation with the Bishop, the Vestry has decided that it is no longer possible for St. Chad's to support a full-time priest. Because of its location in a remote corner of the diocese, it is very difficult to obtain supply priests for Sunday duty.

The parish where you are the Rector is St. Chad's nearest neighbor and the Bishop has asked you to "keep an eye" on its people. You offer to drive the hour's distance to be with them for a Wednesday evening celebration of the Eucharist each week - the only time you are regularly free.

The people of St. Chad's make fierce objection. They refer to the importance which the Eucharist has taken on for them as a community. They list practical problems that would occur on Wednesday evenings, including that some people work evenings and most children need to be doing their homework on week nights. They cite the opening rubric of the BCP: "The Holy Eucharist, the principal act of Christian worship on the Lord's Day...." (p.13).

You can only agree with them, but the fact is that they cannot have a priest in residence on Sundays. You are called to assist them in coming to terms with the present reality.

ANSWER BOTH PARTS OF THE QUESTION IN NO MORE THAN 1250 WORDS

(Cite appropriate canons and Prayer Book rubrics to support your answer)

A. Tell how you would go about helping the people accept a new arrangement for worship. Describe your approach, both for the short and for the long term, taking into account the following:

1. The theological and sociological significance of "the Lord's Day," historically and at present in the U.S. culture.
2. The significance of the ministry of the baptized, including in liturgy.
3. The Church's tradition that only priests or bishops preside at Holy Eucharist.

B. Suggest 2 or 3 plans for Sunday worship in the present circumstance, giving a rationale for each plan.

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SET II Tuesday, January 2, 1996, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

OPEN BOOK

(Set II focuses on the canonical areas of Christian Theology, and Theory and Practice of Ministry. It also deals with Holy Scripture.)

Dear Rector,

Our study group would like you to meet with us to talk about the resurrection. Some of our reading has been quite disturbing. A couple of authors speak of it as an hallucination. Some theologians seem to be saying that the resurrection was something that happened to the disciples and not to Jesus. Our group is surprised that there is not more agreement about the nature of the resurrection, and would like to hear from you. Does it make a difference what we think happened then, so long as we can say that Jesus is living with us now?

(signed) A. Parishioner, on behalf of the group

Prepare your introductory remarks, in no more than 1250 words, for discussion with the group, in which you will:

- A. Discuss the centrality of belief in the Resurrection of Jesus Christ for the Christian community and its theology.
- B. Explain what it means to say in the Liturgy, "Risen Lord, be known to us in the breaking of the Bread," in the context of questions about the actual nature of the Resurrection.
- C. Respond to the letter's question: "Does it make a difference what we think happened then, so long as we can say that Jesus is living with us now?"

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SET III Wednesday, January 3, 1996, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

OPEN BOOK

(Set III focuses on the canonical areas of Holy Scripture and Issues in Contemporary Society. It also deals with Ethics and Moral Theology and with Church History.)

The youth group in your church is studying the values implicit in the movies they like to watch. They have noted that many movies approve of violent acts when these are committed by a hero or heroine, but they do not think that is how Christians ought to live. The young people become disturbed when they realize that the Bible is full of stories of violence, and they wonder whether the principle embodied in the movies is also present in Holy Scripture. As examples of biblical passages that bother them, they mention Exodus 14:21-15:21 and Rev. 19:11-21.

ANSWER BOTH QUESTION A. AND QUESTION B.

- A. In an essay of **no more than 1250 words**, provide an exegetical treatment of each of these biblical passages that includes a discussion of the passage's historical context and its role in salvation history. Be sure to address the concern about violence.
- B. In a total of **no more than 1250 words**, and drawing on your exegetical work above, respond to all of the following questions, and explain your answers, using language and imagery appropriate to your teenaged questioners.
 - 1. What are the differences between the violence in the Bible and the violence in the movies?
 - 2. Does God exert power violently in order to fulfill salvation history? (Give evidence to support your answer.)
 - 3. How might we reconcile the view of God as mighty warrior with the commonly held view of God as the prince of peace?

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SET IV Friday, January 5, 1996, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

OPEN BOOK

(Set IV focuses on the canonical areas of Church History, and Theory and Practice of Ministry. It also deals with Holy Scripture, and Christian Theology.)

Your diocese is currently without a bishop. You have been appointed to the "profile/job-description/search" committee. The diocese is in poor shape financially.

At one of the first meetings of your committee a successful young business-woman, an advocate of current business principles of participatory management, asks jokingly then seriously:

"Why must we have a bishop? Couldn't we do without one and save that salary item in the budget? Individual churches largely handle their own affairs anyway. We really don't need a bishop for confirmation; parish clergy could do that more effectively themselves. The diocesan treasurer is an excellent administrator and could run the diocesan office. We could hire a therapist to deal with clergy problems. The Standing Committee or Convention can decide policy -- that is more democratic anyway. So why do we need a bishop?"

Prepare for the search committee a background paper of **not more than 2,500 words**, in which you defend the desirability of and necessity for a bishop. In your discussion, include consideration of at least the following:

- A. The biblical and patristic origins of the episcopacy;
- B. The reasons the English Church decided to preserve the episcopacy at the time of the Reformation;
- C. The modifications to the English pattern of the episcopacy made by the founders of the US Episcopal Church;
- D. The place of the episcopacy within the Episcopal Church's theology of Christian ministry.

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SET V Saturday, January 6, 1996, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

LIMITED RESOURCES - You are limited in resource material to the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, the Hymnal, and the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church. You may use printed or electronic versions of these texts but no other resources of any kind, printed, written, verbal or electronic.

(Set V focuses on the canonical area of Ethics and Moral Theology. It also deals with the areas of Holy Scripture, Liturgics, and Contemporary Society.)

A couple active and involved in your congregation who have been living together for some time come to see you. They tell you that they have decided not to have children. They ask you, "Are there reasons to get married other than having children?"

In an essay of no more than 1250 words, discuss how a Christian understanding of the moral goods of marriage invites them to marry in spite of their decision not to have children. Include in your answer at least the following:

- A. The moral goods of marriage as set forth in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer;
- B. The Biblical groundings of this understanding of marriage;
- C. The moral criteria for evaluating a decision not to have children.

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Please review the Instructions before you begin work on this question and again when you put your answers in final form. Note that this Set is in two parts of slightly different character and pace yourself so as to have ample time for the second part. Questions are on both sides of this page.

Set VI Saturday, January 6, 1996 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
CLOSED BOOK - Answer from memory only

Please conserve paper - do NOT begin each question on a new page.
Number pages as with other parts of this exam: ____ of ____.

PART A: COFFEE HOUR QUESTIONS

Parishioners often take the opportunity of informal contact with clergy during coffee hour to ask questions, some of which might deserve an hour's conference in the pastor's study. Given this reality, write an answer that responds briefly to the question. Unless otherwise indicated, assume that the questioner is a middle-aged adult.

**ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS IN TWO HOURS.
DO NOT WRITE MORE THAN 100 WORDS ON ANY ONE QUESTION.**

1. Can other books be added to the Bible? Aren't our experiences as significant as those of the ancient Hebrews and the early Christians?
2. I'm divorced and want to be married here in my home parish. I understand there is a procedure to be followed in the Episcopal Church. What's involved?
3. I heard that a rabbi took part in a service in Washington Cathedral. What's going on?
4. This year we celebrate the 1400th anniversary of Augustine's arrival in England. Who was Augustine and why is he significant in the calendar of the Episcopal Church?
5. I'm thinking about offering my name for nomination as General Convention Deputy. I know there will be several controversial issues under discussion. Can deputies be bound by instruction/direction by the Diocesan Convention or the Bishop? How much personal discretion might I expect to have in voting?
6. My daughter wants to be a Volunteer for Mission in Zimbabwe. I hate to have her go so far away. Couldn't she do just as important missionary work here at home? What is the importance now of our sending missionaries to other countries?
7. From a young teenager: How do I know if I'm saved?
8. In the recent financial scandals in our church, I've heard clergy talking about restitution. I thought we just forgave people when they asked for it. Are there conditions on forgiveness?
9. In my book club, we read John Donne's poetry last week. Some of it was erotic, even shocking. Then I came to a mid-week service and we celebrated his day. Why is such a person commemorated in the church calendar?

OVER

10. I like hearing from the King James Version of the Bible, and I don't think I ever hear it in our church. How is it decided which translation to use in public worship?
11. An older parishioner stops you after the service to ask, This morning we sang "Rise up ye saints of God" We used to sing "Rise up, O men of God." Who changed the words? Why?
12. What's the difference between theology and spirituality?
13. A friend of mine at a neighboring parish tells me that it is not possible to fire a Rector of an Episcopal Church. Can that be done and if so, how?
14. In Eucharistic Prayer B you say, "Jesus Christ, our Lord, the firstborn of all creation." What does that mean?
15. We never sing anything I know. Do we always have to sing from the 1982 Hymnal?

PART B: ADULT FORUM QUESTIONS

Adult classes and discussion groups often generate questions deserving substantive responses of some length, more extended and thoughtful than is possible in a "coffee hour" setting. While in some situations it might be possible to return with an answer in a later session, the task here is to "think on your feet."

ANSWER BOTH QUESTIONS IN ONE HOUR. ALLOW EQUAL TIME FOR EACH.

1. Since we're talking about ethics, I have a question for you. I have a pretty serious medical condition which kind of knocks me out from time to time. I'm also looking for a job, which I really need. If I reveal my illness, I probably won't be hired, but I feel guilty not telling about it. How do you go about making a decision like this--I mean, as a Christian, in a Christian way?
2. The House of Bishops has issued a Pastoral Letter on Racism, and General Convention has passed resolutions calling for the eradication of institutionalized racism. What could we do in our parish now to act within the spirit of the Pastoral Letter and resolutions?

[As part of your response to your questioner:

- A. Give some examples of institutionalized racism.
- B. Delineate a strategy for members of the parish to examine their own attitudes and values regarding racism as well as attitudes and values in the parish, listing some concrete activities and programs that might be employed.]