

GENERAL ORDINATION EXAMINATION 1995

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 3, 1995, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

CLOSED BOOK - Answer from memory only

(Set I focuses on the canonical area of Ethics and Moral Theology. It also deals with Contemporary Society and with Theory and Practice of Ministry.)

There is, among your parishioners, an aged couple with limited means and no relatives. They have taken great pride over the years in their self-sufficiency. The couple's welfare is a matter of concern to friends and to you as pastor. Both husband and wife are in poor health, are becoming forgetful, and are sometimes unable to get out for church, shopping, or other purposes. Friends and neighbors have functioned as an informal support network but feel they cannot sustain their efforts much longer. Among those involved in this network, some believe that arrangements need to be made now for a greater level of care. Others feel the need is not yet pressing and are concerned about possible resistance or resentment. Still others are not sure whose responsibility it is to provide for this couple's welfare.

RESPOND TO ALL FOUR PARTS IN A TOTAL OF ABOUT 1500 WORDS

For the purposes of this Set I only, imagine that the above situation exists in a parish and community familiar to you, but do not give the name, location, or other information that would allow the readers to identify you, the parish, or the community.

- A. List the resources for physical, emotional, and spiritual care available within the parish, as well as in the wider community.
- B. Discuss briefly the ethical values you seek to preserve in this situation and the ethical conflicts and dangers you hope to resolve or avoid in this situation.
- C. Who are the persons with the rights, responsibilities, or obligations to be included in the discussion of, and choice among, available alternatives for these people? For what reasons do you wish to include each of them?
- D. What do you consider to be reasonably achievable goals in this situation for the short and the long range?

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SET II Tuesday, January 3, 1995, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

OPEN BOOK

(Set II focuses on the canonical area of Church History. It also deals with Liturgics and with Christian Theology.)

Article XXXIV of the Articles of Religion, "Of the Traditions of the Church," makes a theological statement about ecclesial changes in history:

It is not necessary that Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth break the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly (that others may fear to do the like,) as he that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren.

Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish Ceremonies or Rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying. (Book of Common Prayer, p.874)

ANSWER BOTH PARTS IN ABOUT 700 WORDS EACH

- A. In what ways does this Article express the self-understanding of the English church during the Reformation era, in relation to both Roman Catholicism and Continental Protestantism, in the areas of theology, liturgy, and polity?
- B. How were the principles expressed in the Article reflected in the thinking and institutional organization of the Episcopal Church between the American Revolution and the General Convention of 1835? Consider both positive and negative aspects. Be as specific as possible.

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SET III Wednesday, January 4, 1995, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

OPEN BOOK

(Set III focuses on the canonical areas of Holy Scripture and Theory and Practice of Ministry. It also deals with Contemporary Society.)

For Independence Day, you are to preach on the propers "For the Nation" (Book of Common Prayer, p.930):

Isaiah 26:1-8
Psalm 47
Romans 13:1-10
Mark 12:13-17

ANSWER ALL PARTS OF BOTH A. AND B.

- A. In a background essay of about 1500 words in all, describe for **EACH** of the following groups the relationships existing between religion and the nation, and explain in each instance the challenges and opportunities presented to faithful people by those relationships:
 1. for the Hebrew people as reflected in Psalm 47 and Isaiah 26:1-8;
 2. for Christians in the early church as reflected in Romans 13:1-10;
 3. for Christians in the contemporary United States.
- B. Drawing on your background essay, write your sermon in about 1000 words.

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SET IV Friday, January 6, 1995, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
OPEN BOOK

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

You are the only priest in a small congregation that would like to grow. In your city, which is both ethnically and religiously heterogeneous, a group of churches (some from main-line denominations, some independent) have banded together to sponsor a city-wide evangelism effort and have invited all the city's churches to participate. The theme is to be "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." The Evangelism Committee of your congregation is meeting with you to decide how to respond.

Early in the discussion, Smith, a member of the committee says:

I believe we should participate a hundred percent in this. First of all, it's our Christian duty to proclaim the gospel to those who haven't heard it. You know, right after Jesus says, "I am the way and the truth and the life" in John 14 he says, "No one comes to the Father except through me." Now, in addition to having a lot of people who have no church at all, this city has a large Jewish population and more Muslims and Buddhists than you might think. I know what Christ has meant in my life, and I couldn't live with myself if I didn't take every opportunity to share that with other people. Besides, the Prayer Book says, "The mission of the Church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ." I know we won't make everybody in town Christian, but I think we're called to try to reach as many as we can.

Jones, a second member responds,

I'd just as soon not join with the others in this project. I can see calling on people who don't have a religion, but I'm not comfortable with the idea of trying to convert people who already have a religion of their own. After all, in that same passage from John, Jesus says, "In my Father's house are many mansions." People can find God through any religion, not just mine. Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, I believe it's the same God. My faith has meant a great deal to me in my life, but that's between God and me; I wouldn't want to impose my beliefs on anyone else. And so far as the mission of the Church goes, the Prayer Book also says, "The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships, proclaims the Gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love." If we start trying to proselytize Jews and Muslims in our community, I can't see that we'd be promoting justice, peace, and love. It's a pluralistic world, and we have to live in peace with our neighbors.

ANSWER ALL THREE PARTS

Evaluate these two points of view theologically by responding to the following:

- A. Analyze in about 1250 words how both Smith and Jones deal with the Christological claims of Christianity and with the mission of the Church.
- B. After a careful study of John 14:1-14, provide the Evangelism Committee with an essay of about 750 words demonstrating how your study informs this debate.
- C. In about 500 words describe the steps you would take to help the Evangelism Committee of your congregation wrestle with these issues as they decide on a course of action.

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SET V Saturday, January 7, 1995, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

OPEN BOOK

(Set V focuses on the canonical area of Liturgics and Church Music. It also deals with Theory and Practice of Ministry.)

You are the new priest at St. Mark's Church--a congregation of about 250 persons in a city of moderate size. The parish includes a vocational deacon. There is a pipe organ in good working order. The church building is 19th-century gothic revival; internal renovation reflecting 20th-century liturgical renewal occurred fifteen years ago.

As you prepare for the "Celebration of a New Ministry" (Book of Common Prayer, p.558 ff.), you reflect that "the ministers of the Church are lay persons, bishops, priests, and deacons" (Catechism, BCP, p.855) and that new ministry begins at Baptism when the baptized are welcomed with the words: "We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood." (BCP, p.308).

ANSWER ALL PARTS OF BOTH A. AND B.

- A. Design the "Celebration of a New Ministry" in such a way that it recognizes the continuing ministry of the congregation as a whole and its lay members in particular. With brief explanations for your choices, include in this design:
 - an outline of the order of service;
 - appropriate music;
 - all ministers of the liturgy, including your presenters and presenters of gifts;
 - any special "user friendly" instructions and directions for the congregation.
- B. Write an article of about 250 words for publication in the service bulletin that explains the theology of this "Celebration of a New Ministry," not only to parishioners but also to ecumenical guests who may not be familiar with this service or with the Episcopal Church.

9. Your predecessor never had Communion at funerals, nor did he preach. You do both. Why?
10. (From a teenager) Why do we refer to God as a person? I can't imagine that God is anything like me.
11. I've heard there were no bishops in America for nearly 200 years. How could we be Episcopalians without bishops?
12. I just heard about the ecumenical councils. What were they? Is that the same thing as the World Council of Churches today?
13. I see that the gospel for Ash Wednesday says we should wash our faces when we fast, so why do we use ashes?
14. In the Epistle this morning Paul says he became all things to all people. If that's what we're supposed to do, how can Christians stand for anything?
15. How can Christians run banks or invest in them? Doesn't the Bible say usury is wrong?

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. How can the Episcopal Church be both Protestant and Catholic? Didn't we separate from the Roman Catholics at the Reformation?
2. The Bible has all kinds of commandments that we don't follow. Since we don't get all our moral rules from the Bible, how are we supposed to know what's right and wrong?

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Set VI Saturday, January 7, 1995 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
CLOSED BOOK - Answer from memory only

Please write as legibly as possible and 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. (From an elderly person) I'm not sure I was ever baptized. Would it be a good idea to do it again just to be sure?
2. I understand we have an accord with the Lutherans. Does that mean it doesn't matter whether we go to a Lutheran or an Episcopal Church?
3. Who was Julia Chester Emery, and why was she added to the church calendar?
4. (From a young mother) My kid came home from school the other day, all excited because he found a \$50 bill on the street. I'm not comfortable letting him keep it. What do you think we should do?
5. Is it moral for a Christian to sign a Living Will? I can't decide if that would be interfering with God's will. What do you think?
6. I was taught that we stand to praise, kneel to pray, and sit to listen. Now, when we use Rite II, we seem to stand for prayer most of the time. How come?
7. Since animals don't have souls, why do some churches bless them on St. Francis Day?
8. The only time we can get everyone together for my daughter's wedding is the Saturday before Easter. Is it all right to schedule the wedding here on that day?