

GENERAL ORDINATION EXAMINATION 1979

SET I

Please respond to PART A. Answer either (a) or (b) in PART B, and one of the questions in PART C. DO NOT sign your name to your answers. Put your registration number, and the set and question number on the right hand top corner of each page. Here, and elsewhere in the examination, be sure to cite your sources, if you make use of any quotations.

Candidate's
Registration
Number

PART A

A group of serious inquirers in your parish has asked you to help them develop a program to consider what the Christian faith "really means." They say that, rather than discuss currently controversial topics, they want to consider some of the basic questions of human existence. The inquirers want to discover how Christianity addresses these questions and what solutions it offers to them.

How do you respond to these inquirers? Include in your response at least the following items:

1. A statement of what you believe to be the fundamental questions people face today.
2. An outline of a series of five or six discussion sessions in which you will help the group explore ways the Christian faith addresses these questions and some answers it offers to them.

PART B

Trace the history of either

(a) the Pelagian Controversy
or
(b) the Donatist Controversy

Assess the importance of the issue in its own day as well as the implications for our own time.

PART C (1)

You are on the clergy staff of a large urban parish located on the fringe of the multi-racial core of a major city. The congregation is about equally divided between low income families who live in the vicinity of the church, and affluent families who have moved to the suburbs but who still maintain an active membership in the parish. The parish has often been cited as a model of diverse groups working together to bring the influence of the Church to bear on the life of the city.

The city is now embroiled in controversy over a school desegregation plan advanced by the School Board. Because of residential patterns, many of the public schools have large concentrations of one race. In order to break up these concentrations, the Board proposes to give all students mandatory assignments and to transport the students by bus to the newly assigned schools. The School Board's proposal is made after extensive consultation with civic and ethnic groups. The Board is convinced that unless its plan is adopted, the school system faces costly and disruptive litigation that will result in a program ordered by the courts. The initiation of the Board's program, though, is contingent upon the adoption, by a referendum, of a special tax levy to meet the cost of bus transport.

The city is deeply divided on both the desegregation issue and the tax increase. Many people appear to be looking to the parish to provide leadership in this situation as it has so often done in the past. The divisions in the city, though, are reflected in your parish, and tension mounts in the parish as the date of the referendum approaches. Parishioners repeatedly raise a number of questions as they try to determine their responsibilities in this controversy.

The Rector and Wardens decide to try to answer some of the questions in a series of parish bulletin articles on Christian responsibilities. Each article will be 500 - 600 words long and will address one or more persistent questions such as:

1. If we are genuinely undecided about an issue, is it acceptable to refrain from voting, and thereby leave the decision to those who do have convictions about the issue? What are our Christian obligations in respect to voting?
2. What are the Christian's ethical obligations in a situation where the consequences may be financially expensive and perhaps personally distasteful? What recourse do we have, in Christian conscience, if we are committed to a principle, such as desegregating public schools, but actually cannot assume an added tax burden to accomplish the desegregation?

The Rector has asked you to write one of the articles.

Select either 1. or 2. above and write your 500-600 word statement. For the Rector's information, append an explanation of the source material you have used.

PART C (2)

Anglican Bishops at Lambeth stated: "We are not unaware that many today question the future of the family as a social unit. We are alarmed by the accelerating divorce rates especially in the western industrialized nations. Modern society places enormous emotional demands on a unit which is proving to be too small adequately to meet those demands. . .

"It is not sufficient to call for the creation of larger family units for we cannot reverse by our pronouncement the social economic and technological forces which have produced the western mobile small family pattern, but we can bear witness to some of the richness that the larger family provided in the past and to the emotional needs of all of us to be members of a larger loving and redeeming community or family. . .

"We urge a rethinking of that peculiarly western tradition which seems to isolate the elderly in separate communities." (The report of the Lambeth Conference, 1978, C.I.O. Publishing Co. pp. 62-63)

The congregation in which you minister is considering the establishment of an elderly persons' residence and adjoining nursing home. The Rector is strongly in favor of the proposal. The plan is to do this with the aid of wealthy parishioners, several of whom are retired, and with financial aid from governmental and church sources. The planning committee for the project, having read the above words from Lambeth-1978, ask you for your comments on the issue of whether or not to proceed.

- A. What are some of the factors and issues you believe should be considered?
- B. To what resources would you refer the planning committee?
- C. Outline a program of worship and study which would help the planning committee decide whether to build. Explain why you would include each element you list in your outline.

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SET II

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PART A

"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread which I shall give for the life of the world is my flesh." (John 6:51)

"Christianity is the most materialistic of all the great religions." (William Temple)

"If I am hungry it is a material problem; but if another is hungry, it is a spiritual problem." (Nicholas Berdyaev)

What are some implications of these statements for the several ways in which Christians have understood their Church's mission to the world throughout history and the relationship of Christianity to other world religions?

What is your own theological justification for Christian mission?

PART B (1)

There are still strong opinions and feelings on both sides of the question of Prayer Book revision. If the General Convention of 1979 adopts the Proposed Book of Common Prayer as the standard Book of Common Prayer, then should the Convention also authorize the continued use of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer?

Because you have so recently studied Liturgics as an academic discipline, your Bishop has appointed you a member of the Liturgical Commission. He asks you to prepare a balanced analysis of the pertinent issues on both sides of this question. "I want the people of this diocese," he says, "to know the arguments both for and against officially authorizing the continued use of the 1928 Prayer Book, if the Proposed Book is adopted as The Book of Common Prayer next fall. We need to have these issues analyzed and presented without any special pleading for one side or the other."

Remembering that both lay persons and clerics, and that both proponents and opponents of the Proposed Book of Common Prayer and the 1928 Book of Common Prayer will be reading your statement, prepare the analysis so that, regardless of your personnel preferences, either set of readers can obtain a clear understanding of the issues and of the advantages and disadvantages involved in either course of action—adopting the Proposed Book of Common Prayer and discontinuing authorization of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer, or adopting the Proposed Book of Common Prayer and also authorizing continued use of the 1928 Book of Common Prayer.

PART B (2)

Since June you have been priest-in-charge of a small congregation accustomed to using both the 1928 Prayer Book and Rites 1 and 2 of the Proposed Book of Common Prayer. Now you are ready to plan the main service for Advent I in Year C. Remembering that the commercial observance of Christmas has already begun and keeping in mind the dual aspect of Advent, give in detail the order of service you will use, including hymns. In what special liturgical or extra-liturgical ways would you mark the beginning of Advent and the Church Year? In one sentence, what will be the intention of your sermon?

PART C (1)

“For the high priest has been allotted his proper ministration, and to the priests their proper place has been assigned, and on the Levites their own duties are laid. The lay man is bound by the lay ordinances. Let us, brothers, each in his own order, strive to please God with a good conscience and with reverence, not transgressing the fixed rule of each one’s own ministry.”

The quotation above from the First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians shows that the concept of the laity as an order of ministry goes back to the first century A.D. Discuss the development of lay ministry through the history of the Church, dealing especially with its relation to ordained ministry.

PART C (2)

The First Amendment to the Constitution reads, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof . . .” This understanding of the relation between Church and State is an American innovation. Summarize significant variations in Church and State relations across the Christian centuries.

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SET III

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PART A

Psalm 104:25-32

Genesis 11:1-9

Acts 2:1-11

John 7:37-39a

The lections above are provided in the Proposed Book of Common Prayer for the Day of Pentecost.

1. What common themes and teachings are found in these selections?
2. Exegete these passages.
3. State briefly what would be your principal intentions and expectations for worship on that Sunday.
4. Summarize in a topical sentence and in a few paragraphs the sermon you would preach.

PART B (1)

A couple in the neighborhood of the parish you serve ask that you baptize their infant daughter on a particular Saturday during the spring when their parents will be visiting them. The couple are not members of the parish, but you saw them at the Christmas Eve service last year, and you have met them at various neighborhood gatherings. In the course of conversation you learn that the father was confirmed when he was a student at an Episcopal school and that the wife has a Baptist background. For a number of years neither has been an active member of any church. They indicate that they are planning a reception at their home following the service and hope very much that you will be present.

How do you respond to such a request? What theological and pastoral issues are involved? Give the rationale for your response.

PART B (2)

During the early weeks of Lent, a woman, who is a member of the parish of which you are Rector, calls and leaves a message for you. Her daughter, who has been divorced and now lives in another city, plans to be re-married in June and would like to have the wedding in her "home parish." The mother says that her daughter will not be able to meet with you until shortly before the wedding, but would like to reserve

the Church now for the date of the wedding. The mother asks that you call her if there is any thing she needs to know.

How will you respond? Indicate the issues which are involved, and describe what you will say to her.

PART C

More leisure time is becoming available to people, especially on weekends. The boom in weekend resorts, leisure time activities, and second or mobile homes appears to be on the upswing, and less time on the job would seem to be the future pattern for many of our people. This raises opportunities and problems for the Church. Choose one of the following situations and shape your answer around the issue of leisure time.

- (a) You are Curate in a suburban parish where many of the families take "ski vacations" every weekend. Several families have expressed an interest in 'doing something' on Saturday nights while they are away, perhaps some kind of Christian Education. The Rector asks you to design a program to meet this need. What would your program be?
- (b) You serve a downtown parish in a large urban area. Many of your parishioners leave the city on Friday and return Sunday evening. While week day services at noon are reasonably well attended, Sunday services, especially in the spring and summer, are poorly attended. You and your Parish Liturgical Committee meet to study this problem. What steps will you suggest? What does the issue of leisure time say to you and to the Church? What kinds of programs will you design or suggest?
- (c) You are a non-stipendary priest with no weekend obligations in any parish. You spend many weekends in your camper with your family. A group of campers at a campsite you frequent hear you are a "minister" and ask you to conduct Sunday services at the campsite. How will you respond and why?