

# 2017 General Ordination Examination

## Scale of General Criteria

Evaluators weigh GOE answers with the following in mind: *perception (and analysis)* of issues; *application* of resources; *demonstration* of knowledge; and *articulation* of views. These factors are implicit in all the two-level scales used for the entire GOE. Together with the two-level scales for each individual set, these factors give Evaluators clear criteria for deciding how well a paper addresses the questions. The two levels of these general criteria represent proficiency in the area being tested or a lack thereof, in accordance with Episcopal Church Canons III.15.2-4.

*Proficient:* The response gives evidence of a sound and perceptive understanding of the basic issues raised by the question(s) and how those issues relate to the canonical area being tested. Written presentation is clear and organized with apt use of source material.

*Not Proficient:* The response indicates largely erroneous, minimal or no understanding of essential issues in the area being tested or does not answer the question asked. Arguments that the paper offers may be flawed, ineffective or incoherent. Writing may be unclear, with little, inept or inappropriate use of sources.

## Set 1: The Holy Scriptures

### *Open Resources*

The Bible is a cornerstone of the Book of Common Prayer, grounding its theology and, in turn, The Episcopal Church's identity.

In an essay of about 1,000 words use your knowledge of Holy Scriptures to discuss the role the Bible plays in Eucharistic Prayer B. Within your essay, identify at least five scriptural quotations or references in this Eucharistic Prayer. Include quotations or references from both the Old and New Testaments. Choose one of these references or quotations and provide an exegesis that discusses its theological, literary, and historical context.

Criteria	Proficient	Not Proficient
Scriptural references or quotations	The answer accurately identifies at least five scriptural quotations or references within the Eucharistic Prayer B.  The answer includes quotations or references from both Old and New Testament sources.	The answer misidentifies scriptural passages or is inaccurate in its enumeration of them or has fewer than five quotations or references or lacks quotations or references from both Old and New Testament sources.

Exegesis	The answer examines a single quotation or reference in depth, offering appropriate literary, theological, and historical context for it.	The answer does not choose a single quotation or reference to examine or does not offer sufficient context for the quotation or reference.  The answer only superficially engages the chosen text or the cited context lacks one or more elements of literary, theological, or historical analysis.
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**A Proficient answer must satisfy the requirements of both criteria.**

## **Set 2: History of the Christian Church**

### *Open Resources*

Christian doctrines are often not formally articulated until challenged during times of stress, both civil and ecclesiastical.

Part A (about 700 words)

Choose one of the following documents. Identify an important Christian doctrine articulated in it, and explain the circumstances in Church and society at the time that resulted in the articulation of that doctrine.

1. The Nicene Creed (325; revised 381)
2. The Augsburg Confession (1530)
3. The Thirty-Nine Articles (1563)
4. *Pastor aeternus* of Vatican I (1870)
5. The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral (1888)

Part B (about 300 words)

Explain how the chosen document and its implications are still important and possibly controversial today, especially in times of stress in the interaction between Christianity and civil society.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Not Proficient</b>
Identifies Doctrine	The answer identifies and accurately describes at least one important doctrine enunciated or addressed definitively in one of the five documents.	The answer does not identify an important doctrine, or the doctrine is not accurately described from one of the five documents.

Historical Context	The answer provides the relevant historical context that explains why the selected doctrine in the chosen document emerged at that point in history to address the issues.	The answer provides no relevant historical context or provides an insufficient, inaccurate or irrelevant account to explain why the selected doctrine in the chosen document emerged at that point in history to address the issues.
Contemporary Application	The answer explains why and how the document is still relevant and/or controversial today; and provides evidence of this from situations and issues.	The answer gives an incomplete or unconvincing explanation of why and how the document is still relevant and/or controversial today and/or evidence of this from the contemporary scene is missing, weak or irrelevant.

**A Proficient answer must satisfy the requirements of all three criteria.**

### **Set 3: Christian Ethics and Moral Theology**

#### ***Open Resources***

#### **Background Information**

In October 2014, University of Pennsylvania bioethicist Ezekiel Emanuel published an article in the Atlantic Monthly headlined “Why I hope to die at 75.” In this article, he indicated what he identified as being his “views for a good life.” Emanuel argued that death is a loss, but equally, living too long is a loss -- one that “renders many of us, if not disabled, then faltering and declining, a state that may not be worse than death but is nonetheless deprived. It robs us of our creativity and ability to contribute to work, society, the world. It transforms how people experience us, relate to us, and, most important, remember us. We are no longer remembered as vibrant and engaged but as feeble, ineffectual, even pathetic.”

Writing at the age of 59, he projected that at 75 his life would be complete, so his preference would be to die. In the article he makes clear that he is opposed to euthanasia and assisted suicide, and anticipates that his demise would come from the refusal of all medical treatment after that age.

#### **Question**

Taking into account the background information provided above and the qualifications stated below, write a 1,000-word essay based in the Christian moral tradition that:

1. describes from a Christian perspective what constitutes a “good life,” and
2. articulates how such Christian ethical reasoning addresses the perceived and experienced losses that aging entails.

#### **Qualifications**

- Answer the question – which is about the “good life” and how that understanding informs our perspective on aging. You are *not* expected to read Emanuel’s article, or provide a summary of *any* of its content. Since the background information is a sufficient springboard for these issues, do not quote from, summarize or paraphrase any part of Emanuel’s article.
- Do not dwell on or elaborate upon the nature of the losses that may accompany aging, or upon a pastoral response to them. Following Emanuel’s lead, this question focuses on how we respond ethically to the perceived or experienced losses that aging might entail.
- You may refer to other resources, but you may only quote from the Book of Common Prayer and the Bible.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Not Proficient</b>
Christian perspective on a “good life”	The answer provides a description of a “good life” explicitly rooted in the Christian tradition of ethical and moral reflection.	The answer provides an insufficient description of what constitutes a “good life” or does not adequately ground its description of a “good life” within the Christian tradition of ethical and moral reflection.
The perceived and experienced losses of aging	The answer thoughtfully and effectively applies Christian ethical reasoning about the “good life” to the deprivations of aging.	The answer merely lists or simply discusses the losses of aging without specific reference to an ethics based in the Christian moral tradition or focuses on suicide or euthanasia or poorly addresses the losses of aging.
Qualifying Aspects	The answer incorporates the background material only as given.  The answer quotes only from the BCP or the Bible.  The answer focuses on the ethical perspectives of aging.	The answer diverts from the question by discussing, summarizing or quoting elements of Emanuel’s article not given in the question.  The answer quotes sources other than the BCP or the Bible rather than just referring to them.  The essay focuses on the nature of aging or upon responses to aging (e.g., pastoral) other than ethical responses.

**A Proficient answer must satisfy the requirements of all three criteria.**

## **Set 4: The Practice of Ministry**

### *Open Resources*

A mass shooting has just occurred in your town. None of the members of your congregation was directly affected, but they are deeply shaken by it and other murders that have become prevalent in the United States and elsewhere. You are the only parish priest in a congregation of about 90 worshippers on a Sunday.

### Question

The answer should be approximately 1,000 words.

First, briefly identify appropriate theological considerations that have a bearing upon your response to such events.

Second, write an overview of your pastoral response that displays the interrelationship of theology and the practice of ministry. Your overview should:

- Note the unique role of the Church, as an organization grounded in Christian faith, in responding to such tragedies.
- Identify the groups or constituencies in your congregation with whom you will speak and what you will say to them, e.g., lay leaders who work with children.
- Show awareness of the congregation's relationship to the surrounding community. Include the wider social context or situation associated with such an event and its aftermath.

Note: A mass murder can occur in a variety of settings such as a post office, school, nightclub, work place, church, or many others. You are free to fictionalize the scenario if it will help you, but remember that the unique role of the Church in society is not dependent on the specific setting of this tragedy. Be sure to keep the focus on what the question asks.

Criteria	Proficient	Not Proficient
Theological Considerations	The answer identifies appropriate theological considerations and recognizes the interrelationship between a theological understanding of tragedy and a pastoral response to members of a parish.	The answer does not clearly articulate the interrelationship between theological considerations relevant to the tragedy and the actions taken by a pastor in response to such an event.

<p>Presentation of Pastoral Response</p>	<p>The answer articulates the unique role of a parish church in responding to a tragedy affecting a community.</p> <p>The answer identifies key relevant groups and constituencies in the congregation that need to be engaged.</p> <p>The answer clearly identifies the role of lay leadership in the pastoral response.</p> <p>The answer presents an awareness of the congregation's relationship to the surrounding community and acknowledges the wider social context associated with such an event and its aftermath.</p> <p>The answer presents a clear plan for a response to the event that is pastorally appropriate to the situation.</p>	<p>The answer treats the role of the Church exclusively as one would a social service agency or community organization, ignoring the Church's grounding in Christian theology.</p> <p>The answer does not specify any group or constituency in the congregation needing to be engaged in a pastoral response.</p> <p>The answer either does not address or insufficiently sets forth the role of lay leadership in the pastoral response.</p> <p>The answer ignores or glosses over the wider social context dealing with such an event and its aftermath, including the congregation's relationship to the surrounding community.</p> <p>The answer is disorganized and does not present a clear plan for a pastorally appropriate response to the event.</p>
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**A Proficient answer must satisfy the requirements of both criteria.**

## Set 5: Christian Theology

### *Open Resources*

In the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, Eucharistic Prayers A, B, C, and D in Rite II all contain the phrase “This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.” In *Enriching Our Worship 1*, Eucharistic Prayers 1 and 2 contain the phrase “This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins.”

The different words, “many” and “all,” have a bearing upon the theological concept of universal salvation. In an essay of about 1,000 words, compare and contrast understandings of universal salvation and Christian particularism. Include one biblical reference and one Christian theologian that address the concept of universal salvation.

In concluding the answer, address how an understanding of either universal salvation or Christian particularism relates to an increasingly non-churched and religiously pluralistic society.

Criteria	Proficient	Not Proficient
Understanding of universal	The answer thoroughly describes a clear and accurate	The answer does not accurately describe a theology of universal salvation, or the

salvation	understanding of universal salvation, and includes a biblical reference and cites a Christian theologian.	description is superficial. The answer does not include a biblical reference or cite a Christian theologian.
Understanding of Christian particularism	The answer thoroughly describes a clear and accurate understanding of Christian particularism.	The essay does not accurately describe a theology of Christian particularism, or the description is superficial.
Implications for pluralistic and non-churched context	The essay provides a thoughtful and reasoned articulation of the implications of a theology of either universal salvation or Christian particularism in a religiously pluralistic and non-churched society.	Articulation of the implications of either Christian particularism or universal salvation for a pluralistic world is missing, superficial or not convincing or The essay does not address the reality of a religiously pluralistic and non-churched society.

**A Proficient answer must satisfy the requirements of all three criteria.**

## **Set 6: Christian Worship**

### *Open Resources*

Scenario: The inner-city church where you serve has a regular population of homeless people nearby. Several of them drop in for warmth or shelter and sometimes attend worship, especially the service that precedes the regular weekday soup kitchen. Several are known to some of the congregation, at least in a “hello in passing” relationship. One of these homeless folks, a woman in her early 30s called Josie, dies suddenly. Among her effects are a well-thumbed Book of Common Prayer and Bible. A member of her family will cover expenses and has asked you to make arrangements for her funeral.

The events after her death should include the Burial of the Dead service itself (burial office alone vs. burial office with Eucharist, and who will give a homily), plus at least one of these: vigil, reception of the body, graveside committal, or a reception following the liturgy.

In the first half of your answer, give a cogent explanation for your choices of liturgies, rites and events. How would you arrive at various decisions about your choices, and whom might you invite to help?

In the second half of your answer, provide an outline/chart/or service bulletin for the Burial Office listing your choices for liturgical texts, scriptural readings, and musical elements, if any. Give references for specific readings, hymns, service music, etc., with the rationale for your choices. Give these by page number, hymnal number, or specific scriptural citation rather than quoting the texts themselves. In addition to the Book of Common Prayer, you may use the *Enriching Our Worship* series and any of the authorized hymnals.

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Not Proficient</b>
Planning process	The answer adequately describes the decisions that	The answer discusses decisions fleetingly or not at all, and makes little

	<p>need to be made, including the process for making decisions and for which people or groups might be involved.</p> <p>The answer articulates the rationale for the process well.</p>	<p>or no mention of the process or people who might be involved.</p> <p>The answer includes no, little, weak or poorly explained discussion of the rationale of the process.</p>
Liturgies, rites, and events	<p>The answer discusses and makes a choice for the Burial of the Dead (along with the choice and rationale for the homilist and whether or not to celebrate the Eucharist).</p> <p>The answer chooses and discusses at least one of the other ancillary events.</p> <p>The answer provides an explanation for the choice of events.</p>	<p>The answer discusses only the liturgy for the Burial of the Dead.</p> <p>The answer does not choose any other events.</p> <p>The answer does not provide any explanation for choices or gives a minimal explanation for the choice of events.</p>
Table/chart/bulletin of liturgical elements (including music, Scripture, liturgical texts, etc.)	<p>The answer provides a clearly organized, coherent plan for the various liturgies and rites.</p> <p>The answer includes a solid rationale for the choices.</p> <p>The answer clearly identifies sources and items referenced by page number, hymn number, or Scripture citation.</p> <p>Choices comply with rubrics and general practice.</p> <p>The answer adequately explains the other choices.</p>	<p>The plan provided is disorganized, fragmented and may not link to the discussion in the essay portion.</p> <p>The rationale for choices is missing or weak.</p> <p>Complete texts for readings, prayers, hymns, etc., are written out instead of using page or verse references.</p> <p>The answer ignores BCP or <i>EOW</i> rubrics.</p> <p>The answer does not explain choices outside “usual custom.”</p>

**A Proficient answer must satisfy the requirements of all three criteria.**