



IMPORTANT QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER BEFORE SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR HOLY ORDERS

At a Vocational Seminar, Canon Mary MacGregor (retired), daughter of an Episcopal priest, offered some diagnostic questions to help persons evaluate their sense of call to ordained ministry. These questions are perceptive and provocative. They are recommended for your contemplation. The questions themselves point to significant gifts that are necessary to function in a healthy way in ordained ministry.

- What are my spiritual gifts and how have I put them to work in the church thus far?
- Am I able to relocate my family to attend seminary, receive an assignment, and be open to future calls?
- How sacrificial have I been in the giving of my time and talent to lay ministry? Have I volunteered regularly without being asked?
- Have I been a member of more than one Episcopal congregation? How is my perception of congregational life limited if I have been a member of only one or two congregations?
- Am I a leader? How do I describe my leadership style in the context of ministry? What leadership positions have I held (in a secular or church setting) that motivated others to action? Do I enjoy that role? Have I helped to develop other leaders?
- How tough is my hide? How have I handled judgment and criticism from others? How aware am I of the judgment and criticism that comes with ordination?
- Am I willing to become humble and be a servant to other people's needs for the rest of my life, many times sacrificing my own needs?
- How have I taken on the challenge of proclaiming Jesus Christ to persons in my family, acquaintances and people in my work place? How seriously have I taken the Great Commission? Do I share my faith story easily?
- How have I demonstrated "love of my neighbor as myself?" Do I see the good in even difficult people and situations? How have I demonstrated the unconditional love of Jesus Christ to all sorts and conditions of people? Give examples.
- What do I do to grow and deepen my devotional life? Do I take time to pray daily, remembering others in my prayers as well as myself? Have I read about the lives of the mystics of the church and am I acquainted with their sincere and extraordinary contemplative lives?
- How do I use the Bible as a constant companion? Do I read it regularly? How does its content excite and energize me? What more about the Bible am I eager to learn; – its origin, its revelation, the application of its truths to my life as well as to the lives of others?
- What is my knowledge of the history of the Anglican Church and its development as the Episcopal Church in the United States?
- What is my knowledge and comprehension of Anglican liturgy and theology?