



DIOCESE OF TRURO  
DISCOVERING GOD'S KINGDOM  
GROWING THE CHURCH

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# The Shared Discernment Process

## Candidate Information



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## Introduction

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “The Harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers into his harvest.” Matthew 9:37-38

Welcome to the shared discernment process!

**The Church** needs to discern the call of God among all God’s people. Christians are called to love and serve others by using their particular strengths and gifts. Some are called to service in the authorised ordained ministry as a deacon or priest. The diocese is delighted that you are prayerfully considering, with others, whether this pathway is for you. It is a shared process of discernment. There is you and your relationship with God. There is your church community. There is the Diocese of Truro. There is the national Church of England. All are involved in discerning whether or not this could be God’s call for you. It is an exciting time, but it is also a vulnerable time and will require honesty, openness and much prayer.

**At this point** you have met with your incumbent and spoken with others to consider your sense of call. You have met with the Diocesan Director of Ordinands and considered the initial meeting pack. You have agreed to provide your identity documents and complete necessary Safeguarding steps. Now you are ready to embark on the next stage of the discernment journey. It will take time - usually about a year or more. It will take energy, focus and prayer. You will be supported by your A/DDO who will walk with you through the process and help you develop. There will be meetings, tasks and maybe placement work to do. You will attend a national discernment panel (Stage One Carousel Day). You will be interviewed by the sponsoring bishop. If he is prepared to sponsor, then you will attend a further national discernment panel (Stage Two). The outcome will then be considered. At each stage you will be supported, advised and helped.

**Sometimes candidates**, or the diocese, may discern that this call is not for them and they will leave the process. This decision is fine - it is not a failure - just a sense that ordination is not the call at this time.

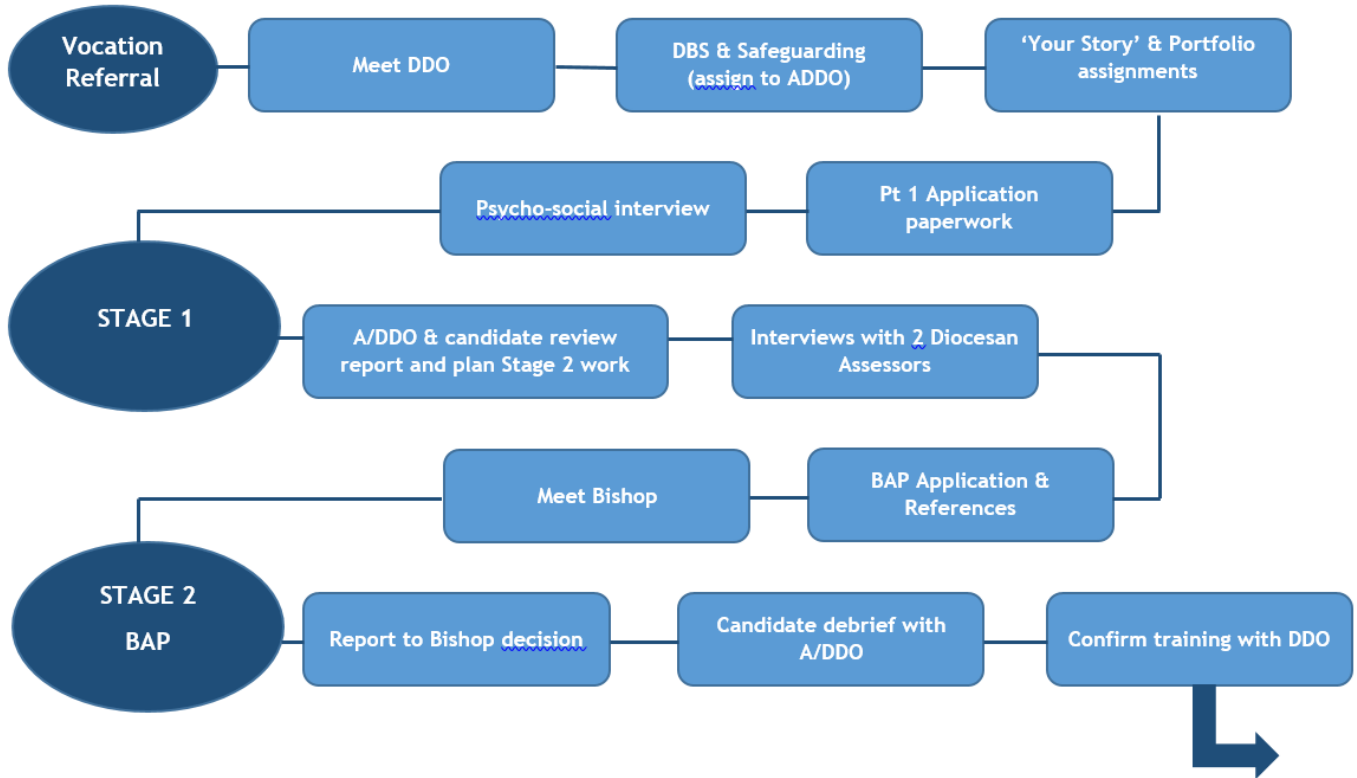
Some other door will open that is right for them. Some may not be recommended at Stage Two and this is hard to hear having travelled so far down the road, but the same is true. It is not a failure - just a step of guidance on the journey through life. If this happens support is provided.

**Overleaf is a picture** of the Shared Discernment process that shows each step in turn. As you look at it consider this prayer - a collect from the Common Worship Ordinal:

*'God our Father, Lord of all the world, through your Son you have called us into the fellowship of your universal Church: Hear our prayer for your faithful people, that in their vocation and ministry each may be an instrument of your love, and give to your servants now to be ordained the needful gifts of grace; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen'*



## The Process of Discernment:



## The Six Qualities

From Autumn 2021 the Six Qualities are the discernment framework which will be used by Ministry and dioceses to shape the process. The qualities have been carefully developed with the ordinal in mind. They will guide and enable the process to be measured and help discern if someone is called to be in one of the following ministries:

**Priest - Incumbent** potential to become a Vicar/Rector of a parish/Benefice with leadership and oversight responsibility. Usually paid (stipendiary) and deployable. They will usually live in a vicarage/rectory.

**Priest - assistant** potential to be an assistant priest. Usually self-supporting (unpaid) they will work in a team under the guidance of an incumbent priest and usually live in their own home.

**Distinctive Deacon** all who train will become a deacon for one year until they are ordained priest. However, some people sense God calling them to the distinctive diaconate. This is a self-supporting (unpaid) ministry and again they usually work in a team under the guidance of an incumbent. Having said that it is possible for some distinctive deacons to operate at incumbent level (eg a hospital chaplain who manages a team could be a distinctive deacon functioning at incumbent level because of the responsibility). The process takes account of this.

**Pioneer Ministry (ordained)** potential to function as a pioneer in the church. We will help you explore your potential for a pioneer ministry, and explore your possible ministry as either an incumbent or assistant status priest, or permanent deacon. Currently you will have to attend a Pioneer Panel, alongside participating in the discernment process as described here.

In discernment it will be really important for you to understand the Six Quality framework as these are the characteristics that individuals need to inhabit. The Six Qualities are:

**The Call To Ministry** - The overall sense of vocation for a candidate, their ability to understand and articulate it, and an exploration of where this might lead.

**Love for God** - Living a life which is holy and faithful, reliant on God and rooted in scripture, worship and the living traditions of the faith.

**Love For People** - Prayerful compassion for others and a desire to share and nurture faith. An ability to build trusting relationships which enable collaborative leadership.

**Wisdom** - A candidate's maturity and character. Their courage, robustness, curiosity, leadership and openness to learning.

**Fruitfulness** - Ministerial and missional impact and effectiveness. An ability to tell the story of God's love, to teach, witness, embrace difference and lead.

**Potential** - Openness, growth and agility of mind, heart and skill. An ability to see and respond to where God is at work, navigating the future in the company of Christ.

**Four Domains.** Each quality will be explored across the four domains of:

**Christ, Church, World and Self.**

**Selectors** will be looking for integrated lives and ones that inhabit the qualities across all four domains. As you can see there will be much to explore and think about. Discernment will be both exciting and challenging at the same time. Some of it will feel familiar and comfortable and some of it will feel very new and uncomfortable. The national selectors have provided the grids on the following pages to help you understand what they are looking for.

<b>Priest</b>	<b>Christ</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>World</b>	<b>Self</b>
<b>Love for God</b> <i>The candidate...</i>	Is reliant on God and lives out an infectious, life-transforming faith	Is rooted in Scripture, the worship of the Church and the living traditions of faith	Whole-heartedly, generously and attractively engages with God's world	Is prayerful and studies the Bible
<b>Call to Ministry</b> <i>The candidate...</i>	Responds to the call of Christ to be a disciple	Understands the distinctive nature of ordained priestly ministry	Is committed to being a public and representative person	Articulates an inner sense of call
<b>Love for People</b> <i>The candidate...</i>	Welcomes Christ in others, listens, values and respects; cares for those in poverty and the marginalised	Builds relationships which are collaborative and enabling	Shows God's compassion for the world	Has empathy and is aware of how others receive them
<b>Wisdom</b> <i>The candidate...</i>	Is inquisitive, curious and open to new learning	Shows Leadership that enables thriving and healthy churches, handles conflict, and can lead in mission	Is robust and courageous and prepared to take risks	Is a mature and integrated person of stability and integrity
<b>Fruitfulness</b> <i>The candidate...</i>	Embraces the different and enables others to be witnesses	Shows the capacity to exercise sacramental, liturgical and effective teaching ministry	Shares faith in Christ and can accompany others in their faith	Has resilience and stamina
<b>Potential</b> <i>The candidate has potential to...</i>	Grow in faith and be open to navigating the future in the company of Christ	Manage change, and see the big picture	See where God is working in the world and respond with missionary imagination	Be adaptable and agile



<b>Distinctive Deacon</b>	<b>Christ</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>World</b>	<b>Self</b>
<b>Love for God</b> <i>The candidate...</i>	Is reliant on God and lives out an infectious, life-transforming world-focussed faith	Is rooted in scripture, the worship of the Church and the living traditions of faith	Whole heartedly, generously and attractively engages with God's world	Is prayerful and studies the Bible
<b>Call to Ministry</b> <i>The candidate...</i>	Responds to the call of Christ to be a disciple	Understands the distinctive nature of ordained diaconal ministry	Is committed to being a public and representative person of the Church in the forgotten corners of the world	Articulates an inner sense of call grounded in service
<b>Love for People</b> <i>The candidate...</i>	Welcomes Christ in others, listens, values and respects and has a special care for those in poverty and the marginalised	Builds relationships which are collaborative and enabling	Shows God's compassion and care in the world in multifaceted contexts and with social agencies	Has empathy and is aware of how others receive them
<b>Wisdom</b> <i>The candidate...</i>	Is inquisitive, curious and open to new learning that connects church and world	Shows instinctively collaborative leadership that enables healthy churches to be bridge-builders in their communities	Is robust and courageous in reflecting the world to the Church and the Church to the world	Is a mature and integrated person of stability and integrity
<b>Fruitfulness</b> <i>The candidate...</i>	Embraces the different and animates others to be witnesses and servants	Shows the capacity to exercise diaconal sacramental and liturgical ministry and effective and enabling teaching ministry	Is a storyteller of God's love and agent of God's kingdom of justice	Has resilience and stamina
<b>Potential</b> <i>The candidate has potential to...</i>	Grow in faith and to be open to navigating the future in the company of Christ	See the big picture in their context and within it, enable a Christian community to serve	See where God is working in the world and to read the signs of the times	Be adaptable and agile

## The A/DDO & DDO

The DDO and ADDO are there to walk with you along the journey. They help you prepare, develop your thinking and practice, and will administer the various process steps shown on the flow chart. They will write supporting papers. At various times you will need to see other people and they will agree this with you. They may suggest placements. They will say when they think that you are ready to attend a Stage One Carousel day or see the bishop. It is the bishop that has to sponsor you to attend a Stage Two panel. The A/DDO is a really significant person in your discernment process. It is important that you help them to do their job, by listening well, carrying out tasks on time and running with their advice. The DDO can be available at any stage if one or both of you need further advice - just ask.

## Community of Vocation

Once a term we bring together all those in the discernment process (usually at Epiphany House on a Saturday). We work together as a group to learn, discuss current issues and interact as a group. This enables practise in group skills and is preparation for the national selection process. This is an essential part of the diocesan discernment process.

## Meeting Diocesan Assessors

Diocesan Assessors are used to advise and provide objective viewpoints into the process. They also give you practise for when you will meet national selectors. They are involved before Stage One and before Stage Two. At Stage During your Stage 1 process you will be asked to have a meeting with one of our psycho-social assessors. This interview is a very personal experience and will look at areas of your personal and private life including early family life, sexual experience, addiction and mental health. It is a mandatory part of the national discernment process and is also a part of our safeguarding protocols. After the interview the assessor will provide a confidential report to the A/DDO. The A/DDO will discuss this with you. If they recommend that you are ready then your they will arrange for you to attend a

Stage One panel. At Stage Two we ask two assessors to give you 2 more in depth interviews, as preparation for BAP.

## Meeting the Sponsoring Bishop

The Bishop of Truro sponsors all our diocesan candidates.

Sponsorship means that the Bishop is convinced that the sense of call is genuine and should be tested at a Stage Two panel. In other words they are placing their name to your application and need to be sure that the process has been helpful and formative and that you are ready for Stage Two. If they are not sure they may suggest a pause to the process while more work is done before you return to them. This interview is key and very prayerful. The bishops do not want people attending Stage Two who they do not think are ready.

## Stage One and Stage Two Panels

Discernment panels are provided by “Ministry”, the Church of England’s central body that oversees selection and training. Ministry ensure that nationally there is consistency of approach across the whole Church of England when it comes to discernment and selection. The grids shown earlier are the discernment tools that national selectors use when coming to their decisions. The selectors are lay and ordained, male and female, young and senior. They are recommended for the role by diocesan bishops and are trained to undertake the task by Ministry. The panels are advisory and make recommendations to the sponsoring bishop at Stage Two as to whether or not a candidate may commence training for ordained ministry.

### Stage One Panel

This is called a Carousel Day. It is held regionally and takes place over a half day (morning or afternoon). It may also take place online. The day consists of six micro interviews of 15 minutes duration with six different selectors. Each one will explore a different quality area. Stage One is advisory and a candidate has to attend this stage before going to Stage Two. A short report is produced for the diocese to consider and it will highlight areas for development, or major concerns that will need to be dealt with before a candidate progresses to Stage

Two. For example; it could be that the panel advises that a long placement period is undertaken in another church so that a candidate gains experience in a different setting. The Stage One report will form part of the paperwork at Stage Two, so it will be important to show what development has taken place between the two stages. Remember that the qualities are about inhabiting and forming the dispositions needed for ordained ministry in the Church and this formation is what the selectors are looking for. Some candidates may not progress further than Stage One and that is fine.

### **Stage Two Panel**

This is an extended process. Lengthy paperwork and references have to be in place provided by the candidate and the A/DDO. The bishop needs to sponsor at this point. Stage Two is residential for one night (it may be possible to access daily if a candidate's circumstances require it). There will be worship. There will be a significant group exercise. There will be two interviews of 90 minute duration with two selectors interviewing. The panel will produce a more detailed report and the outcome will be advisory to the bishop with one of five possible recommendations. The bishop will consider the report and communicate their decision having consulted with the A/DDO.

## **Training**

On recommendation there is a need for ordination training. Your A/DDO will discuss this with you and then the DDO once the outcome of Stage Two is known. It is ultimately for the bishop to decide where candidates train, but most attend a course of their choice. Tuition Fees are paid by the diocese and maintenance grants (if applicable - there are restrictions and not everyone is eligible) will be sorted at the time. This college part of training is known as Phase 1. The next is Phase 2 which is the curacy and comes after college. It is a period of 3-4 years training in a parish under the supervision of a training incumbent. All ordinands have to undertake a curacy (called the Title Post).

## Preparatory Work

Now that you have a picture of the basic process, you can embark on the journey with your A/DDO. As stated before their role is to support, guide and advise you. They will suggest guided reading; meet with you regularly; set assignments and tasks; arrange placements and other things. Please work with them positively and develop knowledge, skills and practice. They will particularly help you theologically reflect on aspects of call and ministry. They want you to inhabit the dispositions shown in the Six Qualities for yourself and so continue what should be a lifetime of learning, curiosity and development.

**Spiritual Director.** As well as your A/DDO we advise that you have a spiritual director/accompanier/mentor, in place for you. They can provide much needed valuable spiritual support outside the process. Candidates have often told us that such external, objective support is helpful to them. It will also encourage you to embed some of the spiritual disciplines into your devotional life and encourage you to try new ones.

### Working on your portfolio

To help you and your A/DDO we have designed a portfolio for you to work on. This is intended to help guide your discussions and to assist you to keep evidence of the work that you have done. Your A/DDO will guide you and set the agenda with you.

We will ask you to work on 6 assignments all connected to the Carousel Process. They will cover the following areas: Priesthood/Diaconate, The Church of England, Communicating Christian Faith, Practical & Pastoral Care, Living as a Disciple, Engaging with the World, (See Conversations & Formations document). You will agree with your A/DDO which of your assignments will be longer written pieces (2 - 2,500 words) and which may involve a presentation and use of images or other media. There may be subjects to cover and work to do not suggested here. The main point is to keep a portfolio of your reflections and work done. Be prepared to use pictures and metaphor, as well. Be as creative as you like. If you use the portfolio well, you will be able to see all your collective work and progression; the A/DDO can see it; and so can the sponsoring bishop if required. Keep it in electronic format so you can keep on refining it.

## Safeguarding and Legal Requirements

### Documents

All candidates have to provide identity evidence. This is required at the start of the process and candidates cannot attend Stage One Carousel Days without this in place. They have to provide evidence of baptism (Trinitarian) and episcopal confirmation. If a candidate is from overseas they will need evidence of indefinite right to remain and work in the UK. These legal documents are required by the lawyers at the time of ordination and should be in place before proceeding to a Stage One Panel.

### Marriage after divorce

The Canon C4 rules of the Church of England Canons (governing laws) stipulate that for candidates for ministry who are re-married following divorce, and the previous partner is still living, there is a need to apply for Faculty for a Canon C4 exemption. This even applies where the spouse of the candidate has remarried following divorce and their former partner is still alive. This is a legal process. If Canon C4 exemption is required then the DDO will give appropriate advice at the time, but early on. Application for a Faculty is a lengthy process and the Archbishop of Canterbury's and the Bishop of Truro's offices will be involved. If this process applies the actual faculty has to be in place by Stage Two.

### Safeguarding is really key for all people.

It is the responsibility of everyone to keep children, young people, and vulnerable adults safe in church and society. The subject is not just about awareness and training important though these matters are. It is about having attitudes and a culture that positively engages with the matter and helps others to do so too. All of us need to help, but those seeking to be authorised ordained ministers must set a public example and have very high standards when it comes to training and modelling good practice. There is a need to embed the subject as a given.

**Candidates must complete Basic and Foundation Safeguarding Training** modules online and undertake an Enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check as a prospective ordinand. This is required right at the start of the process.

## Safer Recruitment

Application forms, CV's, Disclosure Forms, references and other documents are all required by the process to ensure safe, secure and proper practice is adhered to when it comes to discernment and recruitment. Candidates have to engage positively with this not as a chore but a necessary and proper requirement.

Candidates cannot attend a Stage One panel without all the above evidence in place.

