

ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF SOUTH CAROLINA



CLERGY ENDORSEMENT GUIDELINES

For Rectors and Vicars Sponsoring a Parishioner for Ordination

**To follow regular meetings with a parishioner aspiring toward
discernment for Holy Orders**

Dear Rectors and Vicars,

Thank you for the time, prayer, and pastoral care you have invested in walking alongside a parishioner who is discerning a call to Holy Orders.

If, after completing your discernment meetings you believe your parishioner should continue in the diocesan discernment process, your next responsibility is to prepare a clergy letter of endorsement. You will also be asked to complete the online Clergy Checklist.

Your endorsement is one of the most significant contributions you make to the Church's discernment process. Because it is written by the priest who has exercised pastoral oversight and knows the aspirant personally, it provides the Bishop and Commission on Ministry with an informed assessment of the aspirant's readiness to continue in discernment.

Please prepare your endorsement on parish letterhead and email it to:

The Revd Canon Jim Lewis jlewis@adosc.org

The Revd Joyce Harder jharder@adosc.org

The following guidelines are intended to assist you in preparing a thoughtful, candid, and evidence-based recommendation.

Preparing Your Letter

While every endorsement will be unique, the following areas should ordinarily be addressed.

- Your relationship with the aspirant (length of time known and pastoral context).
- Evidence of a genuine call to ordained ministry that has been tested over time.
- Spiritual maturity, including prayer life, love of Scripture, sacramental faithfulness, and growth in holiness.
- Character and integrity, including reputation, humility, emotional stability, and trustworthiness.
- Family life (if applicable), including marital stability and spousal support.
- Demonstrated gifts for ministry, such as leadership, pastoral care, service, and initiative.
- Teaching ability and doctrinal soundness, including faithfulness to Scripture and Anglican theology.
- Temperament for pastoral ministry, including resilience, conflict management, and ability to receive correction.
- Ability to serve faithfully within Anglican polity, including respect for episcopal authority and a willingness to serve collaboratively.
- Fruitfulness in ministry, supported by specific examples.
- Areas for growth or concerns, stated candidly and charitably.
- A clear recommendation to either the vocational diaconate or the priesthood, stating whether you endorse further discernment, endorse with reservations, or do not recommend at this time.
- Letters should be specific, truthful, and evidence-based, avoiding vague praise or exaggerated claims.
- Include the aspirant's email address and cell phone number.

Final Recommendation

Please conclude your letter by clearly stating one of the following recommendations:

- ☐ Recommend continued discernment toward the Priesthood.
- ☐ Recommend continued discernment toward the Vocational Diaconate.
- ☐ Recommend continued discernment toward the Priesthood or Vocational Diaconate with stated reservations.

Financial Information

Before submitting your endorsement, please review these financial responsibilities with your parishioner.

Expense	Amount	Responsibility
Psychological Evaluation	\$750	Aspirant \$250 • Parish \$250 • Diocese \$250
Ordination Fee	\$200	Sponsoring Parish

Payment instructions will be provided at the appropriate time.

Required Submission

Before your parishioner may proceed to the next phase of discernment, please complete both of the following:

- ☐ Submit your Clergy Letter of Endorsement to Canon Lewis jlewis@adosc.org and Deacon Harder. jharder@adosc.org
- ☐ Complete the [online Clergy Checklist](#) (JotForm)

What Happens Next?

Once your endorsement letter and completed Clergy Checklist have been received, the Diocese will contact your parishioner to complete the remaining the Timeline Phase One requirements, including meeting with Canon Jim Lewis. Toward the end of the Timeline Phase Two, the aspirant will be invited to meet with Bishop Edgar to discuss continuing in the diocesan discernment process. The remaining steps of the two Discernment Timelines ([Vocational Diaconate](#); [Priesthood](#)) are self-explanatory.

Thank you for the prayerful care you give to those exploring a call to ordained ministry. Your pastoral guidance, encouragement, and honest assessment are essential to the Church's discernment.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In Christ Alone,

The Revd Joyce Harder
Coordinator of Ordinations and Events
jharder@adosc.org
843-452-6083