



# **Ordained Ministry in the Diocese of Bendigo**

Revised October 2015

**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*

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# Introduction

*Bishop Andrew Curnow AM  
Bishop of Bendigo*

The Diocese of Bendigo welcomes your interest in ministry in this Diocese. Ministry is undertaken by all God's people in both lay and ordained roles within the Church and wider community.

This booklet is primarily aimed at those enquiring about ordained ministry, but reading it will affirm your lay ministry and may also encourage your interest in ordination.

Ordained ministers have a particular responsibility to ensure that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is modeled, passed on, explained and lived out. This is their vocation or calling.

Each enquirer must therefore be identified by the Church as called by Christ for their distinctive ministry and to be able to personally acknowledge Christ's call.

In the Diocese of Bendigo the question of ordination is very much at the discretion of the Bishop, but to assist him in this process the Bishop has established a Board of Ministry.

The Board of Ministry is responsible for:

- Encouraging ministry development across the diocese
- Fostering vocations to the ordained ministry
- Applications from candidates for selection for consideration by the Bishop for ordination and the Selection Process



- Overseeing the training, formation and development of ordination candidates
- Post ordination training

The Board is currently chaired by The Very Reverend John Roundhill, Dean of Bendigo, and is made up of highly qualified and experienced clergy and laity: three appointed by myself; two *ex officio* and up to three co-opted members.

The Anglican Diocese of Bendigo is part of the Anglican Church of Australia and covers a large part of central and north-western Victoria. The diocese includes some 40 parishes, non-geographic congregations, agencies and community-based ministries. Parishes are organized under three archdeaconries, Bendigo, St. Arnaud and Goldfields, and six deaneries: Bendigo East, Bendigo West, Campaspe, Loddon, Mallee and Mount Alexander.

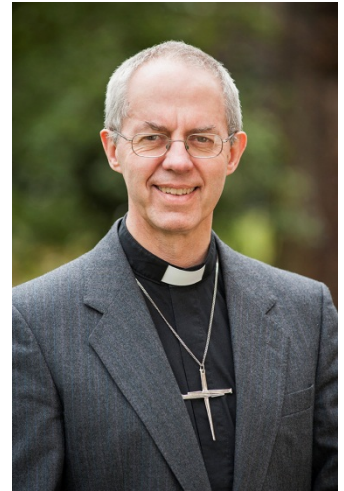
All enquiries about candidature and ordination should initially be directed to the Ministry Development Officer, Heather Marten whose contact details are on page 24.

# A message from the Archbishop of Canterbury

*Archbishop Justin Welby*

All who are baptised are called to ministry, whether that is lay or ordained. The Church needs a wide variety of ministers in order to serve all people. God calls young people and older ones, wealthy and poorer. The Church's ministers come from all walks of life, social classes, ethnic backgrounds and educational abilities.

You may be feeling excited, anxious, uncertain or inadequate but the Holy Spirit will lead, prepare and equip you as you move forward in faith and obedience. Above all be open to God's surprises!



## Do you have a calling?

The good news is Yes! You have! Our first calling is to live life in all its fullness and to represent Christ in the world. This is our common calling as Christians.

But there is a further calling, a particular calling, sometimes called a 'vocation' which is not for everyone but may be for you. This particular calling is to serve God and all people through one of the Church's authorised lay or ordained ministries. For this particular calling you have to allow your sense of vocation to be tested by the Church through its discernment processes.

## Have you got a vocation, a call from God?

The short answer to that question is yes you have! God calls us because he loves us. As Christians, we are all called by virtue of our baptism to be in Christ: to grow into ever closer union with him and to live out our lives in response to his life, death and resurrection. For each of us that involves living in a particular way and becoming a particular kind of person: someone who reflects something of the life of Christ. That is our primary vocation: to represent Christ in the world. As one of the great spiritual writers put it:

*Christ has no body now on earth but ours,  
No hands but ours, no feet but ours;  
Ours are the eyes through which to look out  
Christ's compassion to the world  
Ours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good,  
And ours are the hands with which he is to bless men and women now.*  
St Teresa of Avila (1515-82)

This is our common calling as Christians.

But there is a further calling, a particular calling, which is not for everyone but may be for you. This particular calling is to serve God and all people through the Church's ordained ministries. For this particular calling, it isn't enough simply to be convinced yourself that you have a vocation. You have to allow your sense of vocation to be tested by the Church through its discernment processes. It is the Church that validates and authorizes that calling.

## What are the marks of a vocation?

In exploring whether you are called by God to ordained ministry, you will probably be asked to meet a number of people from the Board of Ministry who are experienced in discerning vocation. They will help you to discover whether you show signs of having a vocation to ordained ministry. There are lots of marks of a vocation but the following four are particularly important:

## 1. Do you have a personal sense of call?

You may have a strong inner conviction that God is calling you, however, the way you experience that conviction will vary. It might be a nagging feeling over time that will not go away. It might come as a bolt out of the blue that this is what God's will is for you. However you experience a call of God, it is likely to be persistent and will not go away. Your sense of calling needs to be tested by the Church.

## 2. Has your sense of call been recognized by others?

If you feel a sense of call, it is a good idea to share it with your Parish Priest or Chaplain and your family and friends – those you can trust – to see whether they can see God's calling in you. Those who know you well will be able to be honest about whether they can see you in the role you feel called to. Indeed they may have spotted it a long time ago and are waiting for you to recognize it for yourself.

## 3. Is your sense of call realistic?

Given the kind of person you are, with your particular strengths and weaknesses, have you got what it takes to fulfill your vocation? Answering that question involves you in a candid and searching self-assessment. It is important to remember that God will never call you to something which is beyond your capacity to fulfill. Although it needs to be remembered that without God none of us has a capacity for anything. Often God calls and then grows us into the capacity to fulfill our calling. Through God's grace, we might be surprised at what we could be capable of.

## 4. Is your sense of call informed?

Do you know what you are letting yourself in for? At one level, of course, none of us knows what we're letting ourselves in for! That's what makes the vocational journey so exciting and full of surprises. Nevertheless, it is important to have some understanding of the expectations and demands that will be placed upon you if you are to fulfill your vocation. You need to have some understanding of



what is involved in mission and ministry in a changing society and the kind of tasks that you may be called upon to undertake.

In the Bible there are many examples of people being called in different ways. You might like to read some of the following passages and use them as a way of reflecting upon your own sense of call and the range of different ways in which God calls.

The Call of Abraham:	Genesis 12
The Call of Moses:	Exodus 3
The Call of Samuel:	I Samuel 3.1-10
The Call of Saul:	I Samuel 9 and 10
The Call of David:	I Samuel 16.4-13
The Call of Isaiah:	Isaiah 6.1-8
The Call of Jeremiah:	Jeremiah 1.4-9
The Call of Mary:	Luke 1.26-38
The Call of Peter:	Luke 5.1-11
The Call of the First Disciples:	John 1.35-46
The Call of Mary Magdalene:	John 20.1-18
The Call of Peter:	John 21.15-19
The Call of Paul:	Acts 9.1-22
The Call of Lydia:	Acts 16.14-15
The Christian Calling:	Ephesians 1.3-14

## What could you be called to?

As you try to discern what it is that God may be calling you to, it's important to consider all the possible options in the diocese.

### Ordained Ministry

The Anglican Church of Australia affirms the three-fold ministry of: Deacon, Priest and Bishop. This booklet considers the first two of these orders, of which there are three expressions of being deacon or priest in the Diocese of Bendigo:

- Stipendiary (Paid)
- Ordained Local Minister (OLM)
- Ordained Pioneer Minister (OPM)

But let us begin with an introduction to the ordained ministries of Deacon and Priest.

Most ordained ministers are priests (also known as presbyters). Their work is to build up the Body of Christ in the Church and in the world through the celebration of the sacraments, teaching, preaching and pastoral care. It is a ministry of leadership and mission, enabling all Christian people to realise their potential as they witness to Christ in the world.

But priesthood is not only about what a person is; it is also about their life experience. Through the lives they lead, priests point to the life of Christ crucified and risen, encouraging all God's people to show love, care and compassion and to strive for justice and peace. As they do this, priests share in people's sorrows and joys as they walk with them on their individual journeys. For some, this ministry is exercised full-time, for others it is exercised as they continue in their on-going occupations, as OLMs or OPMs.

The ministry of a deacon is to be a servant and ambassador, both within the Church and in the wider community. A person who is accepted for ordination as a priest is first ordained as a deacon. Then, after a period of normally a year, he

or she is ordained to the priesthood. This reminds us that humble service and reaching out to others are at the heart of priestly ministry.

However, some are called to be life-long distinctive deacons. These are people who are called to ordained ministry but not as priests. Their ministry encapsulates the ambassadorial and servant nature of all Christian ministry.

In the Diocese of Bendigo, candidates for stipendiary ministry should normally be less than 50 years of age and for OLMs and OPMs, normally less than 57 years of age.

### Priests

called of God and the Church to live and work  
as a priest, a pastor and teacher...  
proclaim the gospel...  
seek the lost, announce God's justice...  
preaching the word of God...  
declaring God's forgiveness and blessing...  
faithfully ministering the sacraments...  
be a pastor...be a teacher...  
lead the people of God...  
love and serve the people...

*From the Ordination of Priests*  
APBA p. 793

### Deacons

called to the office of deacon...  
to be an ambassador of Christ...  
serving God as you serve others...  
proclaim the good news...  
love mercy, and walk humbly...  
Strengthen the faithful, teach the young ...  
ministering among the sick, needy...  
pray and work for peace and justice...

*From the Ordination of Deacons*  
APBA p. 785

To be a deacon in the Anglican Church you must be 23 years of age and to be a priest 24. Generally people seeking ordination must be under 60 years of age. The Board of Ministry may consider some variations to the upper age of ordination.

## Expressions of Ordained Ministry

In the Diocese of Bendigo persons enquiring about ordained ministry should also consider its three expressions:

### 1. Stipendiary Ordained Ministry:

This expression is the most common in the Diocese and includes most parish based stipendiary (paid) clergy. It assumes clergy in this category:

- Have undertaken a tertiary qualification in theology
- Believe they are called to ministerial leadership within the established parochial system of the Church
- Recognise that their gifts for ministry will combine evangelism with pastoral care, preaching, teaching and leading worship.

This expression of ordained ministry will aim to develop the life of the People of God in a parish context for the service of God in the Church and wider community. Sometimes in this Diocese this expression can also have chaplaincy responsibilities added to it in a hospital, prison or with the Police, Fire Brigade/CFA etc.

### 2. Ordained Local Ministry (OLM)

OLM Ministry in the Diocese of Bendigo is seen primarily as an assisting ministry to the stipendiary clergy. However, those ordained as priest or deacon in this category are fully priest and fully deacon wherever they are licensed to minister. OLMs can operate in all parishes across the diocese as assistant clergy.

Some core values and assumptions behind this expression of ordained ministry are:

#### **Vocation:**

The call is primarily seen as coming from the Church rather than the candidate. The experience so far in this diocese has been of the Bishop “tapping possible

candidates on the shoulder”, or from a process of discernment where in local congregations candidates are nominated by the congregation. The call here is a recognition of the ministerial leadership and qualities that the candidate has already demonstrated.

### **Contextual:**

A rediscovery of the local or contextual dimensions of ministry. OLM ministry is arising in this diocese out of a situation that can best be described as “local church – locally grown”. While it might seem best suited in rural settings, experience in the UK shows it is adaptable to all parish situations. As stipendiary ministry has a greater element of oversight in it, OLM offers an ordained ministry that is deeply embedded in the local community.

### **Collaborative Learning:**

One of the strengths of OLM is its emphasis on learning in a team situation. In many ways it emulates the apprenticeship model of learning: the learner is placed with an experienced practitioner who from day one imparts their experience, wisdom and learning to the OLM priest or deacon. The Diocese of Bendigo offers an OLM training programme.

### **Flexibility:**

Those in OLM are not fully stipendiary, but most will be paid some stipend and allowances in recognition of the ministry they are undertaking. The Bishop sees the development of OLM ministry across the diocese as making a significant contribution to under-girding stipendiary ministry and at the same time allowing for a new and exciting expression of ministry in its own right.

Most people who become OLMs will stay in a particular area, but the Bishop holds the view that OLM describes a style of ministry rather than a geographically defined unit. In other words, the term ‘local’ is seen as referring to the locally originating call, not the locus of deployment. Thus in this diocese, OLMs may minister across deaneries or clusters.

### 3. Ordained Pioneer Ministry (OPM)

The term Pioneer Ministry has evolved out of the Church of England, and adopted to recognise the ministry of people who:

- Are starting or sustaining a 'fresh expression' of church, a form of church for our changing culture established primarily for the benefit of people not yet members of any church.
- Are already ministering in a context outside of church structures. This may include street ministry, youth work, and social justice, ministry in a secular workplace or place of recreation. It can be anywhere people gather.

The Diocese of Bendigo recognises the call of persons to Pioneer Ministry and is seeking, through the Board of Ministry, to establish this expression of ordained ministry. It particularly embodies the deacon's call to be an ambassador of Christ in the wider world.

The Board has established the following list of qualities for those considering Ordained Pioneer Ministry:

- Authentic integrated understanding of this ministry
- Capacity to innovate and initiate
- Mature and developed devotional life
- Well developed abilities to initiate change and enable others to face it in a flexible and balanced way
- Demonstrate maturity and robustness in the face of the demands of pioneering ministry
- Self motivation
- A good understanding of Gospel and Culture

- A clear vision of how pioneer ministry fits with the Church's wider mission
- An ability and desire to work collaboratively
- A commitment to the diocese and its mission, vision and values.

The training and ongoing supervision of Pioneer Ministers will be determined by the Board of Ministry. Some will engage in this ministry full time, while others will combine it with existing occupations. In the Diocese of Bendigo it will be non-stipendiary.

## Have you got what it takes?

If you feel called to ordained ministry or accredited lay ministry, you will have to let your sense of vocation be tested by The Board of Ministry appointed by the Bishop to exercise discernment on behalf of the Church.

Those trying to discern your vocation will be asking themselves *two* questions:

***Do you believe, so far as you know your own heart, that you are being called by God to ordained ministry?***

***Do you believe, so far as you know your own heart, that you have the necessary gifts and potential to fulfill your sense of vocation?***

They are fundamental questions. In order to answer them, those discerning your vocation will want to focus on nine aspects of your life. These nine aspects are called the Criteria for Selection. You will need to have fulfilled satisfactorily these nine Criteria for Selection if the answer to the two fundamental questions above is to be yes. You will also have satisfactorily completed the Application Form and nominated Referees.

**The Criteria for Selection are as follows:**

### I. Vocation

You should be able to speak of a growing sense of being called by God to ministry and mission, referring both to your own inner conviction and the extent to which

others have recognise it. Your sense of vocation should be obedient, realistic and informed. You should also be able to demonstrate ways in which your vocation has had an impact on your life.

**Questions:**

*What signs have you perceived that God may be calling you to ministry?*

*Who else has perceived your vocation?*

*What effect has your vocation had upon you?*

## 2. Christian Faith

You should show an understanding of the Christian faith and a desire to deepen your understanding of it. You should demonstrate a personal commitment to Christ and a desire and capacity to communicate the gospel. You should be able to make connections between faith and the complex demands of contemporary society.

**Questions:**

*What is your gospel? What is the heart of the good news you want to share?*

*What experiences in your life have strengthened or weakened your faith?*

## 3. Christian Spirituality

You should show commitment to a spiritual discipline, involving individual and corporate prayer and worship, including a developing pattern of disciplined daily prayer, Bible study and regular receiving of Holy Communion. Your spiritual practice should be such as to sustain and energise you in training and ministry. You should demonstrate a connection between your prayer life and daily living and show an understanding of God's activity in your life.

**Questions**

*What is your pattern of prayer?*

*From where do you receive spiritual support and guidance?*



#### 4. Ministry within the Anglican Church of Australia

You should show a commitment to a ministry of gospel proclamation through word and sacrament, pastoral care and social action. You should demonstrate an understanding of your own tradition within the Anglican Church of Australia (ACA), an awareness of the variety of traditions and practice it encompasses, and show a commitment to work within that variety. You should be able to speak of the distinctiveness of ministry within ACA and of what it means to be a deacon or priest. You should have some knowledge of the Diocese of Bendigo.

##### **Questions**

*What do you appreciate most about the Anglican tradition, with its roots in the Church England?*

*In your experience, what makes a good minister?*

#### 5. Mission and Evangelism

You should demonstrate a wide and inclusive understanding of God's mission to the world that permeates your prayer, thinking and action. You should be able to articulate what it means to proclaim the good news of the kingdom and be able to speak of Jesus Christ in a way that is attractive and appropriate. You should show an awareness of how changes in culture and society have an impact on the life of the Church. You should also show potential as a leader of mission and a commitment to enable others in mission and evangelism.

##### **Questions:**

*How have you experienced God's mission to the world?*

*What does it mean to you 'to proclaim the good news of the kingdom'?*

#### 6. Relationships

You should show an awareness of your strengths, weaknesses and vulnerabilities in order to demonstrate a capacity to build and develop healthy personal, pastoral and professional relationships, together with an awareness of the power dynamic inherent within such relationships. You should show evidence of integrity in all aspects of your life and relationships – emotional, psychological, physical, sexual,

financial and more generally in matters of honesty. You should show an ability to listen to others and demonstrate a willingness to negotiate over disagreements.

**Questions:**

*How well do you relate to others?*

*What kind of relationships do you need to sustain you in your vocation?*

## 7. Personality and character

You should show an appropriate degree of self-awareness and self-acceptance, and sufficient maturity to sustain the demanding role of a minister. You should be able to face change and pressure in a flexible and balanced way. You should be a person of integrity and be seen as such by others. You should demonstrate a desire and capacity for further self-development and growth.

**Questions:**

*What are your main strengths and weaknesses?*

*How well suited temperamentally are you to the ministry to which God may be calling you?*

## 8. Quality of Mind

You should have the necessary intellectual capacity and quality of mind to undertake satisfactorily a course of theological study and to cope with the intellectual demands of ministry. You should demonstrate a desire and commitment to engage in theological study and a willingness to embark upon lifelong ministerial and theological formation. You should exhibit a readiness to reflect and enquire.

**Questions:**

*How best do you learn? Is it by listening, watching, reading or other ways?*

*What would excite you most about theological training?*

## 9. Leadership and Collaboration

You should demonstrate an ability to offer leadership in the Church community and to some extent in the wider community and to guide and shape the life of the Church community in its mission to the world. This includes a capacity and

willingness to draw on and develop the abilities of others. You should be a witness to the servant ministry pattern of Christ and show evidence of providing an example of faith, love and discipleship which is inspiring to others.

**Questions:**

*What has been your experience of exercising leadership?*

*How good are you at working alongside and motivating others?*

*What is your preferred style of leading?*

**Apart from the Criteria for Selection, those discerning your vocation may ask you about:**

**Your family (where this applies)**

Just as in other areas of life, those who offer themselves for Christian ministry must be ready to consider the implications this will have for their families.

Being a visible representative of the Church can make considerable demands on the whole family, and your family (as well as you) must be prepared to acknowledge the difference this will make. There will almost certainly be social and financial implications. Being faithful to your vocation will be costly in all sorts of ways and will involve sacrifice.

Those discerning your vocation will want to be assured that you have taken account of this and that your family is supportive of your calling.

**Your health**

Those discerning your vocation to the ordained ministry will want to be assured about your general health and any particular problems which may affect your ability to cope with the demands of professional ministry.

## The Board of Ministry Selection Process

When the Bishop considers the time is right to test your vocation further he will ask the Board of Ministry to convene a Selection Conference and invite you and other candidates to attend it. Selection Conferences are held from time to time as required.

A Selection Conference is usually held in Bendigo over the period of half a day. At it you will meet other men and women who are also further testing their vocation. You will also meet and spend time with members of the Board of Ministry – both lay and ordained.

### Before the Selection Conference

When you completed your *Application Form for Registration as a Candidate for Holy Orders* you will have provided the names and address of at least three referees. The Chair of the Board of Ministry will have written to these referees and obtained their references, which will have provided helpful information to assist the members of the Board of Ministry at the Conference.

Several weeks prior to your attendance at the Selection Conference you will be required to write two short papers, of no more than one typed A4 page each, on subjects relating to your sense of vocation and ordination. The two short papers also provide valuable information for the members of the Board conducting the Selection Conference.

### At the Selection Conference

The aim of the Selection Conference is to discern God's will for you and the other candidates attending with you. We aim to conduct the Selection Conference in as relaxed a manner as possible. The Board of Ministry members will have been praying for you as well as about their important responsibilities.

At the half day Selection Conference you will be greeted and welcomed by the Chair of the Board of Ministry who will further explain the process and introduce you to the members of the Board with whom you will be meeting. You will meet six Board members in groups of two over three meetings and converse with them in these meetings.

The meetings cover the nine selection criteria:

- *Vocation*
- *Faith*
- *Spirituality*
- *Anglican Ethos (Ministry in the Anglican Church of Australia)*
- *Mission and Evangelism*
- *Relationships*
- *Personality and Character*
- *Quality of Mind*
- *Leadership and Collaboration*

What happens in these meetings will help the members of the Board of Ministry get to know you as a person and help them discern your vocation. Following the three meetings there will be an opportunity to relax over morning or afternoon tea and to meet with the Chair of the Board of Ministry to ask any questions that may have arisen for you.

### After the Selection Conference

Following a Selection Conference, and several days of prayer and reflection, the Board of Ministry members will prepare their recommendation for each candidate to the Bishop. This recommendation is advice to the Bishop and the decision about your future rests with him. The advice to the Bishop will take one of the following three forms:

**1. Recommended for training and ordination**

This means the way is open for you to embark on training and prepare for ordination.

**2. Conditionally recommended for training and ordination**

This means that your recommendation is dependent upon certain conditions being fulfilled, perhaps supplying further information, undertaking some preparatory study or serving in a parish for a period of time as a testing of your vocation.

**3. Not recommended for training and ordination**

It is important to emphasise that this is not a denial of your vocation to

Christian service and witness, but rather a call to fulfill it in ways other than ordained ministry. The Board of Ministry will help you explore other ways of responding to your sense of calling to serve God.

On receiving the recommendation from the Selection Conference the Bishop will write or speak with you in order to inform you of his decision. If the recommendation is for you to proceed further for training and ordination you will be required to:

- Provide a current medical certificate indicating good health
- Undergo a psychological assessment
- Undertake a National Police Check
- Undertake a Working with Children Check
- Undertake a Safe Ministry Check

## What about Training?

### Stipendiary Ministry:

The norm for those seeking ordination in this category is that they should have completed a recognised tertiary qualification in theology and/or ministry. They may have done this at a theological college, university or training college. Some candidates may have done it by extension. The Board of Ministry will need to see a transcript of the candidate's courses and results, and work with each candidate to plan their study and formation.

### Ordained Local Ministry (OLM)

Those seeking ordination as OLMs undertake the diocesan-based Ministry Training and Formation Programme. The Programme for the academic component uses the Trinity Ministry Certificate.

## Ordained Pioneer Ministry (OPM)

For the time being, OPM candidates will be managed depending upon each individual candidate's training and formation requirements.

All candidates in each category of ordained ministry in the Diocese of Bendigo will have to satisfy the Board of Ministry's requirements prior to ordination.

## Post Ordination

All ordinands will be expected to attend and participate in the Training in Ministry (TIM) Programme for up to three years. TIM normally meets at least six times a year.

All clergy are encouraged to have a mentor and a spiritual director.

All clergy in their first parish will be under the supervision of the Bishop, Vicar-General, an Archdeacon or senior priest.

In addition to the above, all clergy holding the Bishop's Licence will be required to attend:

- The Annual Clergy Conference
- The Annual Clergy Retreat
- The Diocesan Synod
- Rural Deanery Meetings
- Other Diocesan events and training initiatives, as presented from time to time

## Other Information

All Clergy must abide by:

- The Victorian Provincial Professional Standards Act and Protocol
- The Clergy Code of Practice/Faithfulness in Service

All Clergy in the Diocese of Bendigo are provided with:

- A Diocesan Directory
- A Diocesan Cycle of Prayer
- *A Pastoral Handbook for Anglicans* (Acorn, 2001)
- A Diocesan Clergy Manual

When made a deacon candidates are provided with a copy of the New Testament, and when priested with a copy of the Bible.

For ordinations in the Diocese of Bendigo the liturgical colour is red and candidates will be required to wear a red stole and white alb.

All Clergy in the Diocese of Bendigo must hold the Bishop's License. This allows them to operate in the particular ministry and category to which they are appointed.

## For Further Information *or to talk to someone about vocation*

Contact: The Reverend Canon Heather Marten  
Ministry Development Officer  
Diocese of Bendigo

Phone: 03 5443 4711

Email: [mdo@bendigoanglican.org.au](mailto:mdo@bendigoanglican.org.au)

Address: PO Box 2  
BENDIGO VIC 3552



## Some Prayers for Vocation

Lord, you call us to be story-tellers:  
planting your explosive news into our defended lives; locating us in the script of  
your human history.

You call us to be trailblazers;  
living in your future that we receive only as gift; subverting the fixed, fated world  
of new horizons.

You call us to be weavers:  
tracing, stretching, connecting the knotted threads; gathering up unraveling,  
disconnected lives.

You call us to be fools for Christ's sake:  
bearing life's absurdities and incongruities; puncturing our seriousness and  
grandiosity.

You call us to be hosts:  
welcomers of the sacred, intimate, transfiguring;  
lavish celebrants of our communities and homecomings.

You call us to be poets:  
artists and illuminators of inner space;  
naming, invoking, heralding your ineffable presence.

You call us to be gardeners:  
sowers, cultivators, nurturers of fragile lives;  
benefactors of your gratuitous harvest.

You call us to be conductors:  
celebrating polyphony, coaxing symphony;  
orchestrating the praise of your inhabited creation;

Lord, you lavish gifts on all whom you call.  
Strengthen and sustain us and all ministers of your church,  
that in the range and diversity of our vocation,  
we may be catalysts of your kingdom in the world,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

*Roger Spiller (1944 - )*

Father,  
I know you love me and have plans for me.  
But sometimes I am overwhelmed by the thought of my future.  
Show me how to walk forward one day at a time.  
May I take heart while I search openly,  
    learn all about the choices,  
    listen to others for advice,  
    and pay attention to my own feelings.  
By doing these things, may I hear your call to live a life  
    that will let me love as only I can,  
    and allow me to serve others  
    with the special gifts you have given me.  
I ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

All Highest and Glorious God,  
Cast your light into the darkness of my heart,  
Grant me right faith, firm hope, perfect charity, profound humility,  
With wisdom and perception, O Lord, so that I may always and everywhere seek  
to know and do what is truly your holy will, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen**

*St Francis of Assisi (1181-1226)*

Father, I abandon myself into your hands.  
Do with me whatever you will.  
Whatever you may do I thank you.  
I am ready for all, I accept all.  
Let only your will be done in me and all your creatures.  
I wish no more than this, O Lord.  
Into your hands I commend my soul.  
I offer it to you with all the love of my heart.  
For I love you Lord and so need to give myself,  
surrender myself into your hands without reserve  
and with boundless confidence  
for you are my Father.

**Amen**

*Charles de Foucault (1858—1918)*

## **Call to discipleship**

Christ, whose insistent call  
disturbs our settled lives:  
give us discernment to hear your word,  
grace to relinquish our tasks,  
and courage to follow empty-handed  
wherever you may lead,  
so that the voice of your gospel  
may reach to the ends of the earth.

**Amen**

*Janet Morley, A Prayer Book for Australia, p.210*

## **Ministry**

God our Shepherd,  
in every generation you call  
ministers of your word and sacraments.  
Equip them to preach the gospel,  
to care for your people  
and to show forth the fruit of the Spirit in their lives;  
in the name of Jesus our Saviour.

**Amen**

*A Prayer Book for Australia, p.211*



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