

# Clergy Application Resource

## A. Introduction:

The process of appointing a new incumbent is one of the most important processes in the life of the diocese, of a parish, and in the lives of clergy. This is a time of discernment, reflection, and prayer for all who are involved in the process.

This document is meant to assist clergy who are looking for a new appointment in the Diocese of Toronto. It addresses the appointment process, resume preparation, applying for a new appointment, offers suggestions of questions you as a cleric might want to ask, and how to prepare for the interview.

## B. Appointment Process

In the Diocese of Toronto, a new Incumbent is appointed by the [Area Bishop](#) following recommendations of the Parish Selection Committee (PSC). The process of appointing a new Incumbent is outlined in Canon 10, section 2 of the Diocesan Canons. It is important that you review [Canon 10](#) and to update yourself on the appointment process. Other clerical appointments are also outlined in Canon 10. Priest-in-Charge section 2, Associate Clergy and Curates, section 4, and Honorary Assistants section 5.

Prior to any cleric considering applying for a new appointment she/he must first speak with their current Area Bishop. If you are a cleric from another Diocese you must first have your Bishop's permission and your first contact in the Diocese of Toronto will be the Diocesan Executive Assistant. The Area Bishop will assist you in discerning the right appointment for the gifts you bring to a parish.

The current list of vacant clerical appointments can be found on the diocesan website under [Clergy in Motion](#). If you are interested in receiving information about a specific parish please contact the Area Bishop. The Area Bishop will forward a copy of the parish profile if it is appropriate to do so.

## C. Preparation of a Resume:

Appendix A provides a template for clergy resumes in the Diocese. Remember that the resume is your first introduction to a parish selection committee ("PSC"). Focus on information from the parish profile that the committee has identified as a parish requirement. Also remember the reader; you want to tell them enough information but you do not have to say everything you have accomplished in your resume. A good resume should be no more than 3 pages in length.

## D. Forwarding Your Resume:

Once the resume is completed forward the resume to the Area Bishop. It is not appropriate to contact any member of the PSC directly without the knowledge and permission of the Area Bishop.

### **E. The Applicant List**

The Area Bishop receives the names of the applicants on behalf of the PSC. In addition to those priests who submit their names for consideration, the Area Bishop may contact priests to solicit their interest. From these names, the Area Bishop will prepare a list of applicants to be interviewed by the PSC.

### **F. Interview**

The purpose of the interview is to provide an opportunity for the PSC members and the cleric to learn about each other, and to discover as best as possible whether there is likely to be a good fit. The interview is therefore a process of information exchange in which both priest and PSC members ask questions and listen to each other talk about their respective gifts, needs and aspirations and is a time of prayerful reflection.

### **G. Types of Interviews**

The Diocese recommends a semi-structured interview in which the PSC members ask a number of questions in a consistent format making sure there is an opportunity for follow up questions which explore and clarify important matters. The PSC will make sure there is ample time allotted for you to ask questions.

### **H. Interview Preparation:**

Here are some guidelines to assist you in your preparation for the interview.

- Review the parish website (if available).
- Review the parish profile.
- Anticipate possible questions. Be prepared to talk about yourself and give specific examples.
  - Tell us about your ministry experience?
  - What are your strengths / in what areas do you need to grow as a priest?
  - How do you attend to your spiritual life?
  - Why did you apply for this appointment?
- Prepare follow up questions for the interviewers from the information you have gathered. (See Appendix B)

### **I. During the Interview:**

Things to consider on the day of the interview and during the interview.

- Be on time.
- Remember that the entire time you are on site is part of the interview process.
- Be professional even if you know parish staff members and the interview team.
- Be prepared for a board style interview.

- Listen and ask for clarification, if you are unclear about a question.
- Always make sure you **answer the question** that has been asked.

#### **J. Parish Selection Committee Visit**

The PSC members will attend at least one service of worship conducted by you at your current appointment. Only a few members will visit at one time.

The PSC have been reminded that the traditions and customs they observe in the service may reveal more about your ability to adapt to that parish than it does about your personal worship preferences.

#### **K. Offer of appointment**

It is the responsibility of the Area Bishop to make an offer of appointment to the appropriate applicant. The Area Bishop begins the discussion regarding stipend, housing and benefits.

Questions about stipend and benefits are not asked during the interview process. It is the responsibility of the Area Bishop to work with the Churchwardens and the cleric to arrive at mutually agreed upon stipend and benefits. You may discuss housing arrangements however, if it is important for you to understand if the parish will pay a housing allowance or if the expectation is you will live in a rectory.

#### **L. Announcements**

You will decide with your current bishop and the area bishop when it is appropriate to make an announcement. Please review “Leave Taking Procedures.”

#### **M. Confidentiality**

Generally there are a number of clergy being interviewed for the same appointment. It is important that you maintain confidentiality throughout the process (not discussing the interview or the stage the process is in) with anyone other than immediate family members. Much damage can result from an inappropriate comment. By maintaining confidentiality, you are showing respect to yourself, your colleagues, the parish selection committee, and the area bishop.

## Appendix A

**Name**  
**Address**  
**Phone Number**  
**Email address**

### **Ministry Style**

This section should provide the reader with a general overview of who you are as a priest, your strengths in ministry, your ecclesiological preferences and background. What do you feel you are being called to do in ordained ministry? What form of ministry do you tend to emphasize? What is your liturgical style? How do you see your ministry in relation to the ministry of the laity? The challenge is to keep this section to less than five lines! Since it is so difficult to express some of these things you may want to complete this after you have finished the other sections.

### **Ministry Objectives**

This section gives you the opportunity to elaborate a little more on those things you feel called to in your ministry. What would you like to accomplish in parish ministry in the next five years? What areas of ministry are most important to you as a leader of a Christian community?

### **Gifts, Skills and Abilities**

God gives us many gifts and we are the stewards of these gifts. In this section state the forms of ministry which have been identified as your strengths. Where in your ministry do you get the most affirmation?

### **Parish Placements and Work History**

State your present position and work back chronologically. Each position should include a start and end date, position title, church/organization name and address.

### **Events, Programs, Special Projects, Committee participation...**

This section should support the gifts section above with tangible evidence. For example, if you say you are a gifted fund raiser then you should state in this section all the fundraising projects you have been involved in.

### **Educational and Professional Qualifications and Professional Development Experiences**

State your degrees, diplomas and certificates along with the school name, address and dates of completion. These should be listed in order of most recently acquired. You should also indicate clearly when you have been involved in ongoing continuing education. What have been your professional development learning experiences? Explain their significance.

## **Ordination Dates**

|        |      |         |        |
|--------|------|---------|--------|
| Deacon | Date | Diocese | Bishop |
| Priest | Date | Diocese | Bishop |

Canonical Residence

## **Diocesan and Community Involvement**

In this section list activities you have been involved in outside the parish.

## **Hobbies and Interests**

## Appendix B

**Possible Interview Questions to ask the Parish Selection Committee.** You can ask other questions if you choose.

1. If an important decision needs to be made in the parish, to whom do the members look for the blessing or approval?
2. What is your dream for how the parish might look ten years from now?
3. What “tradition” in the parish are you not willing to let go?
4. Name an event that has shaped you as a community. If negative, what steps has the parish taken to address the situation?
5. What is the legacy you want to leave to the next generation?
6. What was the topic of your last contentious business meeting?
7. What is your fondest memory of the church?
8. What is the number one recommendation you have received in your search for a new priest?
9. How long was your previous Incumbent in the parish? Why did he/she leave? What was the impact of his/her leaving on the parish?
10. What is the greatest financial challenge of the parish?
11. What is the state of your Screening and who looks after the program?
12. What opportunities for parish growth have you identified? What steps have been taken to realize this new growth?
13. If I were chosen as your new incumbent, what one piece of advice would you offer me on my first day?
14. What scripture story best describes your parish at this time?
15. What administrative expectations will you have of your new priest?
16. Describe the “average” parishioner at the parish, i.e. age, religious practice.
17. What percentage of parishioners volunteer in any capacity? Estimate the percentage if you do not know the actual number.
18. What do you see is the greatest strength of the parish?
19. What do you see is the greatest weakness/challenge of the parish?
20. What excites you about the parish?
21. What important item for you do you wish was in the Parish profile that is not included?
22. What topic/item was most debated about when completing the Parish profile?
23. What was the greatest insight for you while completing the parish profile?
24. Who do you see is responsible for church growth?
25. If I met a non-parishioner downtown and I told them I was new in town and that I was considering joining the parish, what would they most likely tell me about you?
26. What kind of leadership do you prefer? Do you need your priest to operate like a CEO, or as a collaborative member of the team? Do you want the incumbent to cast vision, or help form one? Do you already have a good vision, and if so, what is it?
27. How strong is your lay leadership and how do they interact with clergy leadership? What types of difficult issues have you dealt with in the past, especially the recent past? What issues are your leadership team currently wrestling with?
28. Describe your experience of finding people to take on leadership roles?
29. How do leaders discern what God’s calling the parish to be and do?
30. How do people discern and exercise their gifts for the building up of the community, for reaching out beyond the parish-community? How are they encouraged to do so?

31. What kind of training and accountability mechanisms exist in the parish for clergy and lay leaders?
32. What kinds of spiritual development activities exist and how do you know if and when they're effective?
33. A) Tell me about the liturgy, teaching and preaching you're used to.  
B) What ongoing changes are you making to these, and how do they come about, get decided on?
34. How formal and nimble are your structures and decision-making mechanisms? How broadly and transparently are decisions made? Tell me about a recent major decision that went well, and one that went badly, and why they turned out like they did.
35. How creative and adaptive are you in liturgy, what new things have you tried recently? How have they gone, how do you integrate learnings into your decision-making processes?
36. What does a typical Sunday morning look like? How many services do you have? What happens that is atypical?
37. If you had to describe the parish on a continuum from liturgical to non-liturgical, where would it fit, and why would you place it there?
38. Tell me about a service lately that was memorable for some reason.
39. What types of groups do you have (ACW, Teens, Bible Studies, Outreach committees, etc.)? [Should be in the parish profile and could be dropped from this list]
40. How important are the groups to connecting people and how have newcomers connected into groups recently?
41. Are group leaders part of the leadership of the parish, and how frequently do they meet for planning &/or training, both short and longer term?
42. How do you assess the needs of the parish and set priorities?
43. How do you assess needs in the community outside the parish-community for outreach and/or evangelism?
44. How do parishioners feel about Evangelism and what does that mean in your context?
45. What kind of outreach/evangelism do you do?
46. How do conflicts get resolved? Tell me about a recent conflict that was handled well and what made it conclude that way? Tell me about a conflict that was left to fester or was not resolved effectively.
47. What are the major issues that form your current discussions?
48. In what ways do you connect with the Diocese and the greater Church?
49. How is your parish involved at the Diocesan level? Are their parishioners who are involved with Diocesan working groups or committees?
50. Does someone from the parish attend Diocesan training events? If so, what events?
51. How would you characterize your future prospects, and what big directions or courses are you charting?