



# Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island

## Policy 1.1.21 - Community of Associate Parish Priests

### EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

#### BACKGROUND

Our goal through education and formation of CAPP clergy is to ensure that, as spiritual leaders, they are competent for the current and emerging church.

The nature of ministry within the Diocese of NS & PEI is evolving and changing rapidly. The reality of these changes directly impacts the scope and shape of CAPP ministries, and the ways they are deployed in our Diocese. CAPP clergy have long served a vitally important leadership role in local parishes and beyond, and our trust and reliance upon their ministry, their call, their generosity of spirit and their willingness to serve will likely only increase.

To meet these changing days, we believe CAPP clergy should be educated and formed in a number of key areas, as outlined in our vision document – Call, Charism, Character and Competencies (attached). As a result, our expectations and requirements for education and formation have shifted to meet this vision. Today's emergent leadership requires a strong formation in discipleship practices, missional priority and adaptive spirit-led leadership.

#### OVERVIEW

Discerners for CAPP clergy come from varied and diverse backgrounds from across our Diocese, with immense variations in previous vocational experience and education. Most discerners, because of personal life circumstances, are not able to dedicate three years to full-time traditional theological educational and formation. They also come with varying levels of theological proficiency and experience in the church. Given this, our educational requirements need to be flexible, individualized, adaptive and focused on competencies, not credentials;

- **Competencies, not Credentials** – A competency-based model of education, rather than a credential-based model, will be more effective for moving our discerners forward. The goal of studies is not the accomplishment of a diploma or graduate certificate but developing the capacity for theological reflection and critical theological thinking in emergent leaders. It is a priority to remove educational barriers, without compromising their preparation, so that those whom God has called into this ministry are best equipped and released to express their priestly ministry. By identifying crucial areas for competency development, discerners, in consultation with the Vocations Coordinator, choose an education path that assists them in stretching and honing, maturing and growing their capacity as leaders. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Competencies are drawn from *Competencies for Ordination to the Priesthood in the Anglican Church of Canada* (General Synod, Toronto, 2013). *Iona Report: The Diaconate in the Anglican Church of Canada* (General Synod, Revision Date - September 2025) Source: Bishop's Office

- **Individualized** – Given the differences in geography, available resources, prior educational level and work experience each discerner’s educational path must be individualized. This process begins with a prior-learning assessment for each person. It will recognize the wealth of their abilities, the proficiencies they have gained throughout their journey, and identify particular areas of further learning and growth.
- **Flexible** – By approving access to many different educational institutions and possible programs of study, discerners gain the flexibility to study and learn in ways that best suit their life and learning needs. Given the focus on competencies, discerners can freely move toward prior-approved courses that will best address their learning needs rather than limit them to one institution or program.
- **Adaptive** – A discerner’s path to acquiring the necessary educational competencies may also include guided study of a particular topic or even exceptions or exemptions based on personal circumstances and the results of the prior learning assessment. As well, over the course of discernment and assessment, a discerner may be asked to complete additional courses or studies as the nature of their call or expression of ministry shifts and or is clarified.

All of the above are decided in consultation with and prior approval of the Vocations Coordinator and the Diocesan Bishop.

## **CORE EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

The core Education Requirements for those discerning calls to the Community of Associate Parish Priests:

- **Theology and History**
- **Biblical Studies (Old Testament/New Testament)**
- **Pastoral Care**
- **Spirituality and Discipleship**
- **Mission, Evangelism and Imagination**
- **Systematic, Contextual Theology and Ethical Decision-Making**
- **Anglican Liturgy & Identity**
- **Transformational Preaching**

CAPP discerners are required to complete up to 10 credit courses from an approved institution. Additional elective courses, supervised field experiences, ministry coaching, and other learning initiatives may be assigned, depending on the specific needs of the discerner and parish setting, and the understanding of the nature of the specific call to ordained ministry.

Discerners are not required to fulfil their required courses from one educational institution but may choose courses from various colleges and universities. They must provide proof that they have successfully met the requirements of the course and received course credit.

These educational preparations are complemented and enhanced by Diocesan formation processes for discerners. All discerners will participate in an integrative experiential formation involving reflective practice, academic integration, and skills application which builds competency in ministry identify formation.

### **Approved Institutions for Theological Study**

- **Atlantic School of Theology**
- **Huron College**
- **Queen's College**
- **Thorneloe School of Theology**

### **COURSE SELECTION AND APPROVAL**

Approval of courses should be directed to the Vocations Coordinator prior to enrollment. Please be aware that Diocesan requirements may differ from Institutional program requirements. Our objective is to ensure that discerners enrol in the courses that the Diocese believes best serves personal and professional development, as well as the fulfillment of future ministry responsibilities.

### **LIFE-LONG LEARNERS**

Once a discerner completes their educational requirements for the CAPP program, they are encouraged to continue to study so as to “make them a stronger and more able minister of Christ.” *BAS p 647* Again, this should be a conversation with the Vocations Coordinator.

### **EVALUATIONS**

Discerners are required to submit course evaluations to the Vocation Coordinator, as they are essential for future assessment processes, such as Pre-Ordination Reviews.

### **REIMBURSEMENT OF APPROVED TUITION FEES**

The Diocese has limited resources available to assist discerners with their studies. Any approved courses from an authorized institution are eligible for reimbursement, as outlined below:

For discerners studying at Atlantic School of Theology,  
Once a discerner has been declared a postulant of the Diocese, tuition fees at the Atlantic School of Theology (AST) will be covered by the King's Visitor's Fund, which was established after the founding of AST.

For discerners studying at other institutions,  
Once a discerner has been declared a postulant of the Diocese, tuition fees for approved courses in a recognized program, will be fully covered.

Additionally,  
Prior to being declared a postulant, there may be some assistance available to discerners to defray up to 50% of tuition costs of approved courses in a recognized program as part of their discernment. Please contact the Vocations Coordinator for more detail.