



## **Electoral Nominating Committee (ENC)**

Nominations for Suffragan Bishop to be elected at Synod 2023

### **Application Questions: The Venerable Mike Stewart**

#### **Please provide a statement of coming to faith.:**

Brought up in a non-religious, yet loving home, I had no Church background or upbringing until the age of 15, when everything changed. Up until that point, music, mates, and clothes were my world. Our next-door neighbour at the time is a Christian and a good friend of my Mums and had been praying for her for around four years. Quite unexpectedly, one Sunday morning, Mum went round to the neighbours' house and asked to go to Church with her. It wasn't long after that, Jesus met her in a powerful way. She couldn't keep it to herself and began to talk to me and the rest of the family about Jesus. I wasn't sure what to make of it all.

One wintery night in November (1980) I suddenly woke up with my heart pounding in my chest. I sat up and knew that Jesus Christ was in my bedroom and had woken me up. I heard His voice ever so gently say, "Follow me." I was initially afraid. After rushing into my parents' bedroom and asking Mum what to pray if you want to become a Christian, I went back to my room, knelt down by the side of my bed and gave my life to Jesus.

That night the Good Shepherd sought and saved a lost Sheep and I have loved Him and tried to follow him ever since.

#### **1. What strengths and weaknesses do you look for in discerning if someone is called to ordination to the priesthood/presbyterate?**

The Priesthood is both a weighty Office and a sacred treasure, as the Ordinal makes clear. Each candidate for Ordination is selected in accordance with the Canons of our Province and Diocese and exhibits a manner of life suitable for the exercise of this ministry. As with the Office of Deacon, there are four stages to Ordination to the Priesthood. A candidate is called, tried, examined, and admitted.

Our Canons are clear on the requirements needed for Ordination to the Priesthood. I will summarize them here; The candidate must be baptized and confirmed, sufficiently instructed in Holy Scripture and the

doctrine, discipline, and worship of ANiC, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and a wholesome example and pattern to the entire flock of Christ. The biblical requirements for the Office of Deacon recorded in 1 Timothy 3. 8-13 remain to the Office of Priest. In addition, the candidate for the Priesthood in accordance with Holy Scripture is to be above reproach, not self-pleasing but self-controlled, upright, holy, disciplined, temperate, hospitable, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, not a recent convert, one who loves what is good and one who has a good reputation with outsiders. Able to preach and teach, holding firmly to the gospel and Holy Scripture as it has been taught in order to encourage others by sound doctrine and to refute those who oppose it (1 Timothy 3. 1-7; 5.17; Titus 1. 6-9.) They are to manage their own family well (1 Timothy 3. 4-5, 12; Titus 1.6.) If married, they remain married to their Spouse for life. In accordance with Canon Law, no person shall be admitted to Holy Orders who has divorced and while the divorced spouse yet lives has remarried, or whose Spouse has been previously remarried and divorced. Pastoral exceptions may be made by the Archbishop after consulting with the Provincial House of Bishops.

Each candidate for the Priesthood is to be thoroughly trained in the doctrine and discipline of Holy Scripture as found in the Creeds, the Book of Common Prayer (1662,) The Ordinal and the 39 Articles of Religion. The candidate is also to be trained in the Polity and Worship of ANiC. This will include studies in Holy Scripture, Church History, Anglican Studies, Doctrine, Liturgical Studies, Moral Theology and Ethics, Ascetical Theology, Practical Theology, The missionary work of the Church and Pastoral Care.

The saying is trustworthy: If anyone aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a noble task (1 Timothy 3. 1.) It is indeed both wonderful and weighty!

Under the leadership of +Dan and Rev. Sean Love (Diocesan Ordination Chaplain,) our Diocese has a clear and thorough Ordination Process, for which we can be thankful. As the introduction to the process makes clear, 'As Anglican Christians, being nourished by God's Word and Spirit, we are eager to identify, equip and deploy ministers of the gospel to faithfully teach and preach God's word, and shepherd the flock of God in Parishes and Church Plants from sea to sea.' Discerning a call to Holy Orders begins in the context of the local Church to which the candidate belongs.

During my 21 years of Ordained ministry at Saint Matthew's, Abbotsford B.C. we developed a robust Parish discernment process as the first and necessary stage of the Diocesan Discernment Process. Over the years we have helped train, support and encourage numerous candidates who are now serving in the Diocese as Deacons and Priests. This has been one of the many joys of my ministry. In addition to the Scriptural and Canonical requirements listed above, I look for the following strengths or qualities, in coming alongside someone who senses a call to Ordination.

- The first question of 'The Examination' in the Ordinal that the Bishop asks is this, 'Do you believe in your heart that you are truly called, according to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, and according to

the Canons of this Church, to the Order and ministry of the Priesthood?” To which the Ordinand responds, ‘I do so believe.’ There must be a **strong sense of call**, tested and affirmed by the Church, at the local and diocesan level. This call is to be readily articulated, reflected on, and prayed over. It is this sense of call that will sustain the Priest over the long haul of ministry. However one hears it, the Priest in one form or another must have heard Jesus say, “You are to be a Priest in my Church.”

- **A strong devotional life.** Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?” (John 21. 15.) Love for Jesus Christ is the heartbeat of any Christian ministry, Lay or Ordained. Love for Jesus who saves, redeems, and calls. Of course, the only real qualification for Christian ministry is the Holy Spirit. A strong devotional life is chiefly exhibited in a deepening prayer life and encountering the transforming presence of God through the reading of the Scriptures. The spiritual disciplines of the Church, along with spiritual direction, regular Retreats and comfort in silence and solitude are habits that the Ordinand must cultivate.
  
- **A strong commitment to the local Church.** As a messenger, watchman and steward of the Lord, the Priest must regularly call to mind that the people they are called to serve, and feed, are members of the Lord’s family. The sheep of Christ for whom he shed his blood. Ministry is a gift never to be taken for granted. We are to exercise our ministry with joy and not with groaning (Hebrews 13. 17.) In Word and Sacrament, the Priest is at home in the local Church, among the people.

When it comes to weaknesses, what I look for more than anything else is an awareness of those weaknesses and a willingness to own them and be accountable for them. In writing to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul decided to know nothing among them except Jesus Christ and him crucified (1 Corinthians 2. 2) and to boast only of his weaknesses, that the power of Christ might rest on him (2 Corinthians 12. 10.) One must learn to pray and think theologically about one’s weaknesses as we will never outrun them in ministry. Burnout often comes when we refuse to deal with unresolved issues in our lives. A humble demeanor toward ourselves and others is vital. A willingness to seek counselling and spiritual direction, be part of an accountability group of people with whom we can be honest, and trust is such a necessary gift to have. Isolation is dangerous. We are wounded healers redeemed by Christ, nothing more, nothing less. “Tell me about your struggles” must be part of the Ordination discernment process.

*‘Come, Holy Ghost, our souls inspire, and lighten with celestial fire.’*

## **2. Identity issues, along with the desire for autonomy from God, are driving wholesale change in North American society. How would you help ANiC stand firm in the truths of the Christian gospel without alienating the world we are called to reach with the gospel?**

A basic definition of 'autonomy' would be self-governing, self-directing and morally independent. Our Anglican Catechism, 'To Be A Christian' (ACNA) in answer to the question 'What is the human condition?' states, *'Though created good and made for fellowship with our Creator, humanity has been cut off from God by self-centered rebellion against him, leading to lawless living, guilt, shame, death and the fear of judgment. This is the state of sin. (Genesis 3. 1-13; Psalm 14. 1-3. Matthew 15. 10-20. Romans 1. 18-23, 3. 9-23.)'* This remains the human condition. Separation from God, one's neighbour, creation, and oneself. These are the consequences of sin, to which every human being is subject (Romans 3. 23.) People's 'quiet desperation' (Thoreau) is not so quiet these days. Key issues of our time such as identity, sexuality, race, 'cancel culture' and the sanctity of life, are always to be viewed through the lens of Holy Scripture for our Diocese. Training our Clergy and Congregations in Biblical Literacy, theological reflection and spiritual direction helps to give both the confidence and the tools to engage with society compassionately and truthfully on these important issues. Equipping people with the 'ability and motivation to read the Bible with sufficient understanding so that they can explain its basic meaning, having sufficient knowledge and skill to use resources that enable them to discern the basic meaning of a biblical text. It includes the ability to apply this discerned meaning, i.e. biblical wisdom, to contemporary life. Biblical literacy only attains its full potential when scriptural truth (i.e. wisdom) is applied for salvation and shalom individually and collectively in Canadian society.' (Northwest Centre for Biblical and Theological Literacy.) The Christian gospel remains good news for all people. It is vital for the Christian to retain confidence and fluency in the power of the gospel (Romans 1. 26.) The light of the everlasting gospel; God rules and created all things including you and me, mankind sinned and is separated from God and deserves God's punishment of death. God in his great love provided his only Son Jesus Christ, the perfect solution and sacrifice for our sin. Jesus gave his life on the cross and died there for our sins and rose again, destroying the power of sin and death and opening to us the free gift of God which is eternal life. We can then respond to this good news with thankful hearts and believe in our heart that Jesus saves us through what he has done on the cross. We repent and turn away from our sin and receive Jesus as our Saviour and Lord and follow him in the power of his Spirit who lives within us and in fellowship with his followers. This is the power of God for salvation for those who believe.

Much of our western culture is founded on biblical principles and ideals, a lot of which is being eroded

away or re-written in our day. Society no longer shares our Christian assumptions. The triumph of the self to determine one's reality and world view is now paramount. To question it is felt to be oppressive, deeply offensive and regarded as a personal attack. We must acknowledge that autonomy is a deeply personal thing and goes to the very heart of a person's belief about themselves and the world they inhabit.

'Autonomy issues' then are about people. Individuals who, according to Scripture, are created and loved by God. It is people we are talking about. Let the theologians and the pastors be at the forefront of our witness, as we seek to both stand firm in the truths of the Christian gospel, and not alienate but engage with people, across the cultural divides. The cross of Christ still stands supreme as the bridge between God and man, and man with his neighbour.

I believe one also must be honest and admit that the Church has not always faithfully represented her Lord. We have much to repent of. We are as prone to bigotry as anyone else. We have too often not treated people from differing backgrounds and ethnicities, sexual orientations, or beliefs, with compassion and understanding, including the role of women in society. Christianity is now regarded by many as a repressive, dangerous, and outdated religion. At her best, the Church has contributed much to societal reforms, upholding the dignity of persons made in the image of God. It is important for us as Christians in seeking to think through and engage with others in dealing with the very complex issues of our day to go back to our Bibles, and to where the story begins, Creation. Man is a created being and true freedom is found not in asserting our independence, but in affirming our dependence upon our Creator, and in so doing, becoming who we are made to be. People don't need to be re-defined; they need to be restored. Identity is not for us to create. God has declared us "very good" (Genesis 1. 31.) Mankind lives in a world made by a loving God, we do not have to create ourselves, we are made in God's image (Genesis 1. 26.) 'We are creatures, not machines' (Vaughan Roberts.) 'You are not here by chance' is the message we have to offer people going through an 'identity crisis.'

The current issues of our day can be very worrying for Christians. Churches should be supporting groups who are engaged at the cultural and political level, seeking to raise the Christian voice among law makers and to protect the rights of Christians to uphold our convictions and to live by them, and to protect the rights of the unborn and our duty of care to the suffering and the dying. The sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death is under great attack and must be fought for, as the basic right and dignity that underlies all others. Above all else, the greatest thing our culture needs to hear is the gospel of Jesus Christ. In answer to the question, 'What is the Gospel?' our Anglican Catechism states, 'The Gospel is the good news that God loves the world and offers salvation from sin through his Son, Jesus Christ. (Psalm 103. 1-13. Isaiah 53. 4-5. John 3. 16-17. 1 Corinthians 15. 1-5.) We are not our own, we have been bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6. 19, 20.) That price is the precious blood of Jesus, God's only Son. The God who made us is the God who loves us and rescues us from ourselves and the state of sin. Through the cross we are reconciled to God, who tells us who we are. With him we have a glorious future. We are not alone. We are not lost. In Christ we are being transformed to completion. This is the

good news the Church has to offer as we welcome people from all walks of life to be part of the Christian community, where the Kingdom of God is made manifest and where we love one another as he has loved us, that the world may know that we are his disciples (John 13. 35.)

In order to help ANiC stand firm in the truths of the Christian gospel and not alienate the world we are called to reach, I would seek to affirm and support the work of our respective Diocesan ministries and groups in equipping people to reach out with Christ like compassion and truth. Packer College and 'Anglicans for Life' are just two examples of this. I would also encourage every member of ANiC to have a copy of our Anglican Catechism, and encourage robust Catechesis be taught in every Parish throughout the liturgical year. I would also aim to invite top Christian thinkers and educators in providing training and resources for Clergy in engaging with today's cultural issues. The recent Clergy Meetings on Zoom with Sharon Fox and Dr. Margaret Cottle are great examples of this. I would also encourage the work of the 'Biblically Grounded' and 'Bold Witnesses' Task Force and leaders, in keeping these priorities before us as a Diocese.

### **3. Give examples of how you have provided for the identifying, training, and care of both new and seasoned lay leaders.**

To equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ (Ephesians 4. 12.)

Identifying, training and care for Lay Leaders are key aspects for any healthy and thriving Church. A Christ-like leader is one who empowers others. 'A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher' (Luke 6. 40.) The greatest leader who ever lived is Jesus Christ. Any read of the Gospels will show that he had a strategy to develop leaders-he aimed to reproduce himself in them' (Leighton Ford.) Genuine leadership at its core is about the empowerment of others. Jesus both empowered and transformed through relationship, teaching and example, 'If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.' (John 13. 14, 15.) Eventually he would give his life for them.

The importance of this issue is not up for discussion. A relationship mindset, rather than a corporate one, is I believe, key to developing Lay Leaders in the Church. It's also not so much about getting the job done (although that needs to happen at some point) as it is about developing people whom, God has gifted, to become the people that he has called them to be. There are no shortcuts to this. A commitment over the long term is required. Again, Jesus is the supreme example of this. Jesus called his disciples 'to be with him' (Mark 3.14.) Being with Jesus is the essence of discipleship. His disciples are intimately connected with his life. 'Shepherding people means to help them grow; it demands thoughtfulness about 'how to make the other one great' and it implies nothing less than the act of true friendship for others.' (Klaus

Bockmuehl.) In calling them his friends, Jesus was transforming sheep into shepherds.

Throughout my ministry of 34 years in three Parishes and in various contexts and backgrounds, I have sought to empower and equip others for the work of ministry. As an Ordained Minister I realize that the Church's ministry is not about me, but about the people of God in that locale. The body of Christ that gathers week by week around the Lord's word and table and in homes, who live their lives in various places, and among others whom I could never reach. One can develop all the courses in the world on training people for various roles in the Church's life and ministry, but there is no substitute for sharing life with the people we are called to serve and giving your time to them. My style of leadership is highly relational. Presence over programmes. People over projects.

Some examples then from my own ministry include bringing people with me when I am invited to preach in different Churches and at various events. Helping others to identify and use their gifts for ministry in the local Church and beyond. Encouraging Lay participation in worship services as much as possible. Modelling the importance of being part of a team. Modelling the importance of accountability, feedback, and vulnerability. Praying regularly with others. Provide frequent supervised ministry opportunities across the spectrum of Parish life and ministry. Write to people giving encouragement. Call them to express appreciation and thanks for their ministry. Affirm their role before others. Ask not just 'what they are doing' but 'how they are doing.' These are but a few examples that highlight the importance of establishing relationship.

In terms of more 'formal' training, it has been a joy to help launch and develop our 'Saint Matthew's School of Anglican Life and Ministry,' who's mission is to 'systematically develop the laity in the fullness of Christian doctrine and practice by making mature disciples of Christ.' We introduce the purpose of the School in the following way, 'Anglicanism has historically had a large vision of the Church and its place within it. The Anglican story includes influences from, and an affinity with, the best of the Celtic, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox churches, as well as, the Reformed, Evangelical, Charismatic, and healthy Liberal traditions. The Anglican Way has always been to seek a comprehensive 'Via Media' (Middle Way) that includes the best of all traditions. The cultural context that the Church finds itself in today is one of pluralism, historic amnesia, theological thinness, and individualism, which frequently leads to divisiveness. This context creates confusion. Saint Matthew's School of Anglican Life and Ministry (SOALAM) offers courses to help you learn, grow and serve based upon solid grounding in Holy Scripture. In achieving this we will glorify Jesus Christ by joyfully proclaiming 'ancient faith for today's world'.

It is a delight to see Various Courses and our Catechism classes flourish again post-covid, under the leadership of our Associate Priest, Fr. David McElrea.

*'Ministry is what we leave in our wake as we follow Jesus'* (Gerald Hartis.)

'Prayerfully led by the Holy Spirit to cultivate faithful generations of equipped, engaged and effective disciples of Jesus Christ, bearing witness to his love through word and deed' (Saint Matthew's Vision Statement.)

#### **4. Please give an example of how you have worked well with a team in Gospel ministry. What strengths do you bring to team ministry?**

Saint Matthew's Anglican Church, of which I currently hold the honour of being the Rector, requires team-based ministry at various levels and sizes. This includes the Clergy Team, Staff Team, Executive Committee, Parish Council, along with teams of leaders for the many and varied ministries in the Parish, and across the age spectrum, as we seek to fulfil our mission to, 'Glorify Jesus Christ by joyfully proclaiming ancient faith for today's world.' In order to experience gospel ministry in its richness, depth and breadth, developing teams is necessary. The Rector does not have the monopoly on gospel ministry! I rarely want a decision to rest with me alone (sometimes the Rector must make this call,) but want to take the time to bring others in on a decision and acquire shared ownership as much as possible.

In answer to this particular question, I will address my role as Chair of our Church Staff Team during the pandemic. Currently Saint Matthew's has three full-time Staff members and three part-time Staff members. As we all know, navigating through the recent pandemic was a challenge to say the least. None of us had any grid to go on, and I felt as though I was merely leading by the skin of my nose most of the time. Traversing the uncharted waters of Church life during the pandemic was going to require a team effort at every level! Decisions that needed to be made along the way, regarding how to move to online Worship when we were unable to meet in person. What forms of Service to offer, both via Livestream and pre-recorded. How to navigate meetings via 'Zoom.' What outside Worship Services would look like, from Drive-thru and Drive-in. How people would register when we were limited in attendance numbers. How to conduct Pastoral visitations and Occasional Offices. How to organize teams of people who would phone people on our membership list, particularly those who were vulnerable and living alone, and provide feedback on how they were doing. What to do about masks and vaccines, singing or no singing. How to administer the Sacrament, and just how to communicate all these changing decisions to our congregation in an informative and inspiring way. In all these decisions was the underlying question, 'how can we stay connected as a Church community and how can we honour Christ and remain faithful to him in the midst of all this?' Helping one another think biblically around all these issues was key. These were decisions we all faced as Churches, and it was heartening to know that we were all going through similar things. I am very thankful to our Bishops for initiating the weekly Clergy Gatherings on Zoom to help and support us in the midst of all that.

It was important for us to meet regularly as Staff, often daily, and check in with one another, not just in



what we were doing but how we were doing in ourselves. I continued to work from my Office in the Church building, most of our Staff worked from home for a while. We used social media a lot to communicate, deliberate and pray. Whenever a change in restrictions given by our Province of B.C was announced, I called a meeting to decide what to do. I would not make decisions on my own. Shared ownership was vital, in consultation with our Wardens, Parish Council, and Health Committee. As Rector, I was the one who largely wrote to the congregation or made a video announcement regarding changes as they occurred in how we were meeting as a Church, at any given juncture. This included some special messages for the children of our Congregation. Our Parish Administrator is supremely gifted in matters of technology, for which I, and our whole Parish family, are continually thankful. Each Staff Member brought their particular gifts and strengths to bear, as we weathered this storm, not knowing how long it would last. For example, our Associate Priest, Fr. David McElrea stressed the importance of getting the Sacrament to people on a regular basis. This led us to offer Drive-thru Communion from very early on and was warmly received by our people. Our Youth Pastor at the time, ordered banners for our Drive-in Services which people could listen to via their car radio frequency, as well as our Drive-thru events and outside fellowship times. He also delivered regular gifts and video teachings to our Youth. Our Children's Leaders did a similar thing with amazing boxes of materials for each family, and regular teaching videos. We all felt it important to be as creative as possible as a team, while at the same time offering what could be maintained. As Chair of our Staff Team, I felt it important to be honest about my own struggles with how I was doing, and to invite each Staff Member to share how they were doing. We prayed, we read the Scriptures and we reminded ourselves that eventually things would get better. Praise God, we are still here!

All in all, these past few years have served to highlight for me the importance of team ministry for gospel witness and service. Pray God to raise up teams for his glory! I would not operate for long without them!

In terms of any particular strengths that I bring to a team, I think that overall, it is encouragement and support for the team members. Keeping prayer and bible study central to every meeting and open sharing, are key ingredients in every team meeting that I lead. My experience of Parish life for over thirty years helps bring a somewhat seasoned approach, but in reality, you would need to ask the team members themselves.

I memorized the following Collect to use at any given time, when meeting with various teams throughout the pandemic, *Go before us, O Lord, in all our doings with your most gracious favor, and further us with your continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in you, we may glorify your holy Name, and finally, through your mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.* (BCP. 2019.)

## **5. What are the challenges for you in this kind of ministry? What is unique about the role of Suffragan bishop and what are the important attributes needed to serve well in this role?**

'Be to the flock of Christ a Shepherd,' (Ordination and Consecration of a Bishop. ACNA BCP 2019.) I believe the primary call for any Bishop, Diocesan or Suffragan, is to be a Shepherd. In the prayers from the Order of Service just quoted, the three-fold priorities for the Shepherd are specified:

- diligently preaching the word of God.
- duly administering the holy Sacraments.
- providing godly discipline.

This means that the new Bishop must give his time primarily to prayer and the study of the Scriptures. He is to be a learner as well as a leader. He is to be a man of prayer, ever deepening and growing in the knowledge and experience of God as revealed in the Scriptures. He shares this call with his Clergy and people, and is to be a 'wholesome example' for them to follow. He is also to consult and draw upon the wisdom and learning of trusted theologians, spiritual directors, and counsellors that God has raised up within the Diocesan family and beyond. Like any Christian, the Bishop is to continually keep company with God.

It also means that like any Priest, the Bishop is at home when at the Altar and celebrating the holy Sacraments of the Church among the people. Some Sacraments are rightly reserved for the Bishop alone to Celebrate (Confirmation, Ordination) and some parts of the Eucharistic Liturgy are rightly reserved for the Bishop if present. While it is not possible for Bishops to be present in each Church very often, when they are there to preach the word of God diligently and duly administer the holy Sacraments, it provides the powerful visual and liturgical presence of the Chief Shepherd amidst the flock of Christ, and serves as a symbol of Christ himself, the Good Shepherd who feeds his people in word and sacrament. Being present where possible is a priority for a chief pastor.

'By the tradition of Christ's One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, ANiC Bishops are consecrated for the whole Church and are successors to the Apostles through the grace of the Holy Spirit given to them. They are chief missionaries and chief pastors, guardians and teachers of doctrine, and administrators of godly discipline and governance' (ANiC Canons 1.10.2.) Godly discipline and doctrine go together. This also means then as an overseer of the flock, the Bishop is called to propagate, teach, uphold and defend The Faith as set out in our Diocesan Constitution and in obedience to the Scriptures relating to the Office of a Bishop, Priest and Deacon (namely, 1 Peter 5. 203, 1 Timothy 3. 8-13, 1 Timothy 3. 1-7, 5.17. Titus 1. 6-9.) As an administrator of godly discipline, doctrine and governance, the Bishop must continually familiarize himself with the faith defined as has been handed down, and with the canons, constitution and

bylaws of our Diocese and Province and work collaboratively with fellow Bishops, Council and Staff to ensure godly discipline and governance. The Bishop is solemnly bound to conform his life and ministry to the Scriptures, and to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of Christ as this Church has received them (The Ordinal.) He is to defend against all 'divers and strange doctrines' with all diligence (Hebrews 13. 9.)

'Where the bishop is present, there is the Catholic Church' (Ignatius of Antioch.)

What is unique to the role of Suffragan (assisting) Bishop is that he serves as an assistant to the Diocesan Bishop in overseeing the spiritual and administrative affairs of the Diocese, with a focus on the western region of our Diocese. The key responsibilities and qualifications are set out in the Job Description found on our Diocesan Webpage and include important aspects such as providing gospel preaching and teaching in ANiC Churches and at Diocesan Clergy and lay gatherings as needed. Provide pastoral leadership, guidance, and support for Clergy, lay leaders and congregations across the western provinces, and pray regularly for Clergy and their families. Conduct regular Episcopal visits to all Churches in the western region which includes Confirmations and Ordinations. Collaborate closely with Diocesan leadership in carrying out our Diocesan mission and vision. Provide leadership and support for Diocesan programmes, initiatives and events as needed, and work with Parish selection committees to identify applicants for leadership roles as needed.

Our Canons set out the nine criteria for the Episcopate;

- Be a person of strong faith and prayer.
- Be pious, have good morals and exhibit Godly character.
- Have a zeal for evangelism.
- Have demonstrated evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.
- Possess the knowledge and gifts which equip him to fulfill the office.
- Be held in good esteem by the faithful.
- Be a Presbyter at least 35 years old.
- Not be divorced and remarried, whose spouse has not been previously married and divorced, unless the Archbishop consents to waive this condition.
- Have demonstrated the ability to lead and grow ANiC.

Particular qualifications for the Suffragan Bishop include the demonstration of a sincere love for Jesus and His gospel ministry, the authority of the Bible, evangelism, discipleship, and the mission of ANiC. Demonstration of preaching and teaching gifts, along with gifts of leadership and pastoral care. The ability to inspire and motivate others and strong communication and collaborative skills. Knowledge and understanding of Anglican theology, liturgy and tradition and familiarity with Canon Law and governing regulations of ANiC.

Anyone in their right mind would be challenged by the requirements of this position! The demands are extensive, and I imagine, unrelenting. It is all a challenge. A particular challenge for me would be the travel involved. I was converted to Christ at age 15 with no Church background or upbringing, when he appeared to me and softly spoke, "follow me." This call is as real to me today as it was then and is the only reason that I am allowing my name to stand for the position of Suffragan Bishop. I am not worthy of such a role but believe that the one who calls is faithful, and gives His Holy Spirit for the Office and work that we are called to do. I am a Pastor at heart and would endeavor to encourage and cheer our Clergy on in their invaluable work set in the midst of a sinful and wounded world, in the knowledge that whatever we do for the Lord is not in vain (1 Corinthians 15. 58.)

## **6. Our ordination vows and the 39 articles state that "Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary for salvation". From your reading of the Bible, what are those necessary things?**

In presenting a Bible to the new King in Britain's Coronation Service, the Moderator of the Church of Scotland declared, "This book is the most valuable thing that this world affords. Here is wisdom; this is the royal law; these are the lively oracles of God." The King James Bible translators wrote in 1611, 'God's sacred word...is that inestimable treasure that excelleth all the riches of the earth.'

In his book, 'Essential Truths For Christians' A commentary on the Anglican Thirty-Nine Articles and an Introduction to Systematic Theology. John H. Rodgers makes the point that the fact that the Articles of Religion discuss Scripture first in terms of its sufficiency for salvation is very instructive. He goes on to say that 'One may read the Holy Scriptures with other concerns in mind, but until one reads them from the perspective of a lost sinner in need of God's salvation, one has not yet read them as they were written to be read.' (Page 169. 2011 edition.)

This Article is referring to salvation in its fullest Biblical extent. Justification, (deliverance from God's wrath at the final judgment and restoration to His favour in Christ) sanctification, (deliverance from the enslaving power of sin and death and being increasingly conformed into the image of Christ) and glorification (fully and finally transformed into the likeness of Christ and to share in the new and eternal life that shall be revealed in the final consummation of all things when Christ returns.) Concerning this divine work of salvation, the Scriptures are fully complete and sufficient. Nothing need be added or subtracted on any conditions for salvation beyond what is stated in Scripture. *'But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus* (2 Timothy 3. 14, 15.)

The great tradition of the Church is truly founded upon the Scriptures and is our Apostolic heritage as Anglicans. The faith, doctrine, discipline, and order of the Church, rooted in her worship and witness, expressed in her liturgies, forms rites and sacraments, is firmly based upon the knowledge of God, which is essential to salvation, as revealed in the Scriptures. This faith is summarized in the three Creeds of the Catholic Church and set forth in the four councils of the undivided Church. The stipulations of Creedal faith as revealed in the Scriptures are the necessary things.

The Scriptures make it clear that God has a unified plan for all of history and that is to unite all things in Christ (Ephesians 1. 10.) to the praise of His glory (Ephesians 1. 12.) When the fullness of time had come in His plan, 'God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law' (Galatians 4. 4-5.) The work of Christ on earth, supremely through His death and resurrection, is the climax of history, whereby God accomplished the salvation that history had been moving toward throughout the Old Testament. We look back on Christ's completed work and look forward to the final consummation of His work. Christianity is Christ. He is the final and complete sacrifice and solution for sins. This is the good news of the gospel, and the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes (Romans 1. 16.) For the Apostle Paul, 'the gospel' is not just a call to initial saving faith in Christ, but a call to a daily walk of faith. *'For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast'* (Ephesians 2. 8, 9.) God's grace (power, here) not only offers salvation but secures it. Alleluia! The ESV Study Bible makes plain, 'Faith is a confident trust and reliance upon Christ Jesus and is the only means by which one can obtain salvation.' The whole process of salvation is a gift from God and in every respect is not our own doing.

'The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, taken together and read in the light of Christ, are sufficient for salvation in the full sense of salvation and for a coherent statement of faith. Nothing may be added to them or subtracted from them. Churchly traditions are significant, but they are subordinate to and must be tested by the Canonical Scriptures' (John H. Rodgers. Ibid. page 178.)

Thank God for His sacred word, that inestimable treasure that excelleth all the riches of the earth.'