

## Provincial Synod – 2018 ACPO Report

Each year, a number of candidates for the ordination to the priesthood present themselves to their respective Bishops. They, in turn, send them to the Advisory Committee on Postulants for Ordination (ACPO). This step continues to be an important part on the road to discernment for the priesthood in our Anglican Church. It is one part which stands alongside parochial, diocesan and theological education components.

A weekend conference would typically involve prayer and worship, training of the assessors, interviews with the candidates, sessions with the Secretary and Chaplain, and writing assessment reports. It is an intense, yet spiritual time, for both the candidates and the assessment team.

In the last triennium, ACPO has had the privilege and honour of walking beside 39 candidates at our annual conferences. The diocesan breakdown is as follows: Montreal (3), Quebec (4), Fredericton (11), Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island (8), Western Newfoundland (2), Central Newfoundland (7) and Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador (4). These candidates have shown they are bringing a number of varied gifts to the Church.

On the assessment side, I am pleased to report our pool is constantly growing. I have made it my patter to bring a number of new assessors each year so they can learn from the returning assessors. This mix has proven to be a positive aspect of each conference. It should be noted assessors are recommended by the Bishop of their Diocese and added to the pool of assessors. At each conference, the team is made up from that pool taking into consideration a number of balances such as gender, cleric/lay, age, and diocesan representation.

Typically, a conference would be capped at 15 candidates; although some years have gone as high as 18 but the higher number offers many additional challenges. For every candidate, one assessor is invited, so the number of people at each conference is dependent on the number of candidates.

In a world with changing needs, ACPO finds itself in a period of flux. The role of a priest in 2018 is certainly different than the role as defined 50 years ago. With frustrations on all sides, our new National ACPO Bishop, the Right Reverend John Watton, has taken the lead in bringing all four Provincial Secretaries and Bishops to discuss issues and solutions whereby we can make this process of discernment more effective and relevant in today's church. This is both a challenging and exciting time.

Lastly, I offer my thanks to all Bishops and their diocesan staff for the work they do in getting all the ACPO materials in order before they reach my office. It continues to be a great honour and privilege to serve as Secretary for this Province. I continue to pray for this most important ministry in the discernment of our priestly candidates.

Respectfully submitted,

The Reverend Canon Leo A. Martin  
Secretary

