

## **FWM Appendix 10**

### **“Equipping the Saints: Local Initiatives in Theological Education” A Consultation at Mt. Carmel Spiritual Centre in Niagara Falls, ON, February 13-17, 2017**

#### **1. Introduction and Background**

In 2007, General Synod passed a motion convening a national gathering to “create a strategic plan for the future needs for ordained ministry in the Anglican Church of Canada,” and develop standards for theological training. In January 2010, a group that included bishops and people involved with priestly formation met at Manoir d’Youville in Chateaugay, Quebec. Results included General Synod 2010’s creation of the Primate’s Commission on Theological Education and Formation for Presbyteral Education, which produced the “Competencies for Ordination to the Priesthood” that are currently in use.

“Equipping the Saints” is a product of work done by the Task Force on Presbyteral Ministry, created by General Synod 2013, under the aegis of Faith, Worship, and Ministry (FWM), to follow up on the Competencies document and help to integrate it into the life of the Church. Our first act was to ask dioceses how they are using the document and what might assist them in doing so. Although a written survey got the predictably few responses, personal conversations elicited more informative results. We discovered that a number of dioceses were developing programmes for non-Master of Divinity (M.Div.) training of priests, while some other dioceses (and bishops) were uncertain what to make of such programmes or, perhaps more importantly, the priests ordained from them.

The Task Force concluded that a national consultation would be an appropriate venue to address these questions. This consultation would follow up on the 2010 discussions but with narrower terms of reference: to discuss alternatives to the M.Div. as training for priests and the status/roles of priests in Christ’s church, ordained by the Anglican Church of Canada, who emerge from alternative programmes.

To that end, the Task Force invited bishops, diocesan people involved with presbyteral formation, leaders in alternative presbyteral training programmes, and seminary representatives to a consultation at Mt. Carmel Spiritual Centre in Niagara Falls, ON, February 13-17, 2017. We envisioned a conversation driven by questions raised by bishops and dioceses, both before and during the consultation period.

#### **2. Preparation**

After funding was secured through generous grants from the Anglican Foundation and AllChurches Trust, the Task Force met twice in person and five times by phone/video conference. Our first face-to-face meeting occurred November 2-4, 2015 at the national office in Toronto. The second meeting was hosted by the Diocese of Ottawa Synod Office, December 12-13, 2016.

Eileen Scully canvassed dioceses to ascertain suitable dates. The most available were in the week that we chose: February 13-17, 2017. Our initial hope had been to host the consultation in Western Canada, where a significant proportion of diocesan-based programmes are concentrated. Unfortunately, we were unable to find a facility that could accommodate a group of the anticipated size during that period. Consequently, we booked Mt. Carmel Spiritual Centre in Niagara Falls, ON, which proved to be an excellent choice, with enough spaces – large and small – for our purposes. Mt. Carmel has a substantial number of guest rooms, with alternative spaces nearby, good food, and helpful staff; it is also familiar to many because it hosts other Anglican Church events.

Eileen also spoke with bishops across the country, asking them to identify questions and issues for consideration. Alternative presbyteral preparation schools and programmes were asked to submit materials to help others understand the structure and work of these arrangements. These items were made available in an online Dropbox, so that participants could review them prior to the consultation. During the consultation, items were routinely added, so that this Dropbox has become a helpful archive of material on this field of work and on the consultation itself.

### 3. Attendance

The Task Force is pleased to note that representatives attended from all but three dioceses. We were missing only the Arctic, the Indigenous Spiritual Ministry of Mishamikoweesh, and Ontario.

Also represented were: the Faith, Worship, and Ministry Committee; Atlantic School of Theology; the Centre for Christian Studies; The College of Emmanuel & St. Chad; Henry Budd College; Huron University College; Kootenay School for Ministry; the Military Ordinariate; Qu'Appelle School for Ministry; the Saskatoon diocesan clergy training programme; St. John's College; Threshold Ministries; Trinity College; and Wycliffe College. Both the Primate, the Most Rev'd Fred Hiltz, and the National Indigenous Bishop, the Right Rev'd Mark MacDonald, were present.

We regret that fewer Indigenous representatives were present than we had hoped. This limited our ability to discuss Indigenous priestly training, although Mark MacDonald and the Rev. Kara Mandryk, of Henry Budd College, ably assisted us in this area.

### 4. Structure of the Consultation

The consultation was designed to provide opportunities for five kinds of activities: formal presentations, to increase awareness of the issues, developments, and options; group reflections on the presentations; marketplace groups, enabling participants to follow specific interests; free time, for personal interaction; and plenary round-ups, for people to share conclusions and suggestions.

This arrangement worked well. Less time might have been accorded to individual presentations on the various local training programmes, with more focus upon efforts to compare-and-contrast. The influence of a single model (Kootenay School of Ministry) resulted in some repetition.

### 5. Liturgies

Nicola Skinner and Becca Whitla provided leadership in this area, assembling a rich variety of liturgies adapted from the *Book of Alternative Services* and "Liturgical Texts for trial use and evaluation." Numerous participants in the consultation shared liturgical leadership roles. The music came from a variety of sources and was international in flavour. Colin Johnson, hosting for the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario, presided at the opening Eucharist. Joanne Mercer preached. Mark MacDonald and Nicola Skinner co-presided at the closing Eucharist. Bill Harrison preached, reminding us that our work on changing forms of presbyteral training and leadership serves the mission of a transforming church.

### 6. Informal Relationships

Fostering informal relationships was one of the central purposes of the consultation. To that end, we incorporated both extensive group engagement and substantial free time for relaxed interaction. During presentations, participants sat in groups mixed by categories: ordained/lay, east/west, local training programme/diocese/seminary, and male/female. This encouraged the sharing of different viewpoints, as groups reflected on insights gained from the presentations that we heard.

Marketplace groups (see below) were voluntary, both in leadership and in participation, drawing together people with common interests. Social evenings and Thursday afternoon's free time enabled participants to mix and pursue conversations.

Some groups made intentional use of free time in order to foster the work that they came to do. Notable among these were participants from Western Canada, who met on Thursday to discuss ongoing cooperation in the preparation of clergy and lay leaders.

## 7. Presentations

Bill Harrison led off on Tuesday morning, discussing the expansion of the presbyteral role in the Western church; he pointed to the initial task of sacramental leadership in the medieval church, followed by a series of additions: teaching and preaching in the Reformation and Counter-Reformation, scholarly criticism in the Enlightenment, social justice and therapeutic counselling work in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and a focus on leadership in the contemporary world. He asked us to consider four questions: 1) Can we imagine priests who aren't trained for all of these? 2) Have we lost the purpose of church in the midst of all these pressures? 3) Do we need to consider the training of priests in relation to formation for other ministries? 4) What is the significance of the language of "mixed economy" or "mixed ecology" for priestly ministry today and tomorrow?

Janet Marshall completed Tuesday morning with a discussion of teams. She focused upon two themes: 1) the centrality of teamwork to contemporary understandings of ministry, and 2) a reminder of teamwork norms. Teams are defined as: 1) having collaborative purpose, performance, and product; 2) meshing of function and mutual support; and 3) possessing shared leadership. They serve us well in our contemporary regionalized, complex, and collegial forms of ministry. In order for them to be successful, we must build trust. Janet helped us to think about ways to sustain teams.

Fred Hiltz focused upon the need for the development of priestly character. The Primate reminded us of the excellent work of the Theological Education in the Anglican Communion group and the helpfulness of their reports, including the formation grids and the Signposts document, and drew our attention to the importance of integrating the local with larger, catholic, concerns. He also reminded us of the Competencies document and called us to re-visit it, asking that we consider its usefulness and ways that it might be adapted for local use. He suggested that we consider creating a Standing Commission on Theological Education. The Primate called us to attend to a focus on mission, and to take seriously the need for a new missionary impulse oriented to the Kingdom. Ultimately, he asked us to ensure that all priests might develop true Christ-like character, shown in presiding, preaching, offering pastoral care, prayer, and being artists of community.

On Wednesday morning, Kara Mandryk talked about the work of Henry Budd College for Ministry. She has recently arrived at the College, which continues to be active in preparing Indigenous leaders for the church. The College is in a discernment period, looking to clarify how it will carry its work forward.

Mark MacDonald spoke about differences between Indigenous discernment and preparation for ministry, on the one hand, and the predominant methods in the Anglican Church of Canada. He emphasized the role of community in discernment, noting that the call to priestly leadership usually comes through the community, rather than from an individual herself or himself. Moreover, the community continues to be part of the process throughout the work of formation, so that removing a candidate to a distant seminary is unhelpful. When the time of leadership comes, the community remains, so that the role of a priest is not solo but is part of the exercise of leadership in the community by the community. This demands an entirely different approach to theological formation than is commonly envisioned.

On Wednesday afternoon, local training programmes made presentations, talking about their curricula and systems of formation. John Privett and Anne Privett spoke about Kootenay School of Ministry, which requires nine 21-contact hour, long-weekend, intensive courses for completion. KSM uses almost entirely faculty with doctoral degrees, drawing from seminaries, parish clergy, and other available scholars. Catherine Harper discussed the Qu'Appelle School for Mission and Ministry, which provides a mixture of weekend workshops, retreats, weeklong courses, and independent study; some of its offerings are in conjunction with Briercrest College and Seminary, in Caronport, SK. Shawn Sanford-Beck outlined the approach of the Diocese of Saskatoon, which uses a combination of retreat weekends and supported independent study. Iain Luke described the current work of The College of Emmanuel & St. Chad, which is being re-oriented to support local training programmes. Joanne Mercer, Rick Singleton, and John Watton discussed Queen's College at Memorial University, which is moving into support for local training programmes.

## 8. Marketplace Groups

The Marketplace Groups developed out of the questions posed by bishops and dioceses prior to the consultation and out of group discussions in response to presenters.

Jay Koyle, chair of FWM, opened the Marketplace Group portion of the consultation on Thursday morning, inviting participants to identify topics in which they have an interest and would appreciate a group discussion. He reminded everyone of the need for someone to facilitate each group and someone to record each group's reflections, using the appropriate form.

Brief summary of group input:

### i. Diverse Priestly Ministries/Discernment and Formation/Local and Universal

We need more thorough discernment processes for ministry, including lay ministry. ACPO can be unhelpful for presbyteral discernment because of its Eurocentric approach to call and simple Yes/No conclusions, and it does not reflect on other sorts of ministries. Dioceses are encouraged to post their processes for discernment on their websites. We need more conversation across dioceses about discernment, formation and competencies

### ii. Types of Priestly Ministry/Types of Training/Equity Issues

Equity issues arise in relation to compensation. We need to examine remuneration on the basis of the following equity considerations:

- How can we treat all priests equitably?
- How can we treat those who have received training for priestly ministry in the same way equitably?
- How can we treat those who are assigned the same or comparable tasks or responsibilities equitably?
- Should and how should we factor in the livelihood needs of those who exercise ministries for the church? Should and how should we factor in a declared lack of need for financial compensation for a ministry in treating those who exercise ministries equitably?
- With respect prohibited grounds of discrimination – Aboriginal priests and women priests are more often non-stipendiary. How can be more just?
- How can we strive to treat those who exercise similar ministries equitably across the country?

iii. More Effective Training of Preachers

There are plenty of resources for training preachers. Schools are encouraged to focus on training lay preachers, in addition to ordained. Preaching needs to be done regularly, and heard/assessed/feedback provided.

iv. Next Steps

Much of the conversation of this group found its way into the “Things to Think About” (below). Additionally, the group encourages the whole church to begin a conversation about how laypeople, deacons, priests, and bishops fit into a missional model of the church suitable for the unfolding 21<sup>st</sup> century. If there is a move toward national standards for preparation for forms of ministry, consistent with such a vision, then the provincial level might be a helpful place to begin formulating standards.

v. Iona Report – Facilitating Discussion in Dioceses

Dioceses and theological schools are invited to consider combining their local certificate, EfM programs or academy-based programs (e.g. M.Div., L.Th., B.Th., M.T.S.) with action/reflection leadership training in community (*Learning on Purpose*) plus in-person or on-line formation (*Ministering by Word and Example* or *Images of Diakonia*), and a continuing education component using a portable Mentor-training module offered by the Centre for Christian Studies.

vi. Partnerships Between Dioceses and Colleges for Training

Both dioceses and colleges need to reach out to one another, in order to clarify both the needs to be filled and the resources available; the colleges are receptive to partnerships. Other provinces may be wise to consider having a Commission on Theological Education. There should be a national office to and for theological education, and a permanent database showing what’s available. The annual Heads of Anglican Colleges meeting could include leaders of other schools for ministry. Seminaries might be able to contribute training for trainers to serve local programmes.

vii. Formation of all the Baptized

The church needs a more effective model for discipling, including: experience, content, reflection, re-formation. Modelling the faith and God’s gospel is central to the church’s mission. This involves enabling people to behave, belong, and believe.

viii. Local Formation and Discipleship

Local formation depends upon strengthening the work of discipling people in the community. That enables the community to identify people who are called to presbyteral ministry, especially as they undertake tasks. The Diocese of Qu’Appelle has a model of Vocation Weekends that may be helpful with discernment. There is a need for good screening, including psychological testing, early in the discernment process.

ix. National L.Th. Standards/Wider Theological Education

A national L.Th. standard, and perhaps a General Synod Licentiate, would be a helpful basic qualification as bi-vocational and non-stipendiary priests are growing more common. Further formation would be expected and could lead to the M.Div. for priests for whom it is appropriate. Questions were raised about the significance of this for seminaries and ecumenical relationships.

x. National Faculty

The group strongly supported the creation of a national faculty list, both for teaching availability (ideally with an indication of preferred scheduling) and for consultation about curriculum and assessment.

9. Things to Think About

i. Another Conversation

The assembled group was almost unanimous in asserting that another meeting to continue the discussion is necessary. Debate was not around the question of “if.” Instead, we were occupied with the issues of timing and agenda. A strong preference was expressed for another consultation in **3 years’ time**; the group does not believe that we can wait more than 5 years and sooner would be better. The landscape of ministry and ministerial formation is shifting quickly enough that more frequent meetings are productive. While being aware of the costs and energy that a consultation demands, the group also expressed the belief that the meeting would offer significant return on investment in greater efficiency and effectiveness in ministry formation programmes.

This consultation grew out of the work of the Task Force on Presbyteral Ministry and was organized by the Task Force and associated staff. Necessarily and appropriately, the result was a consultation focused upon developments in presbyteral formation and ministry, specifically. Some participants found this unduly limited, while most recognized that there were sufficient issues to be considered in this area to justify a conversation defined thus particularly. However, the group was quite clear that the next consultation should cover the breadth of ministerial formation: lay, diaconal, and presbyteral. Some participants asked that the next consultation be more obviously driven by considerations of mission, as our church seeks to reach out to people who would not traditionally have shared in our life.

ii. National Faculty List – Who/How/Where?

This consultation inherits the idea of a National Faculty List from the D’Youville meetings. The need seems to be greater than ever, as the number and variety of alternative preparation arrangements grows. Participants are convinced of the necessity of this and would like to move forward. The primary questions are about the construction and location of the list. FWM is urged to consider whether it might sponsor such a project, perhaps in connection with the work desired under the next item for discussion: a mechanism for strengthening relationships among programmes.

iii. Mechanism for Strengthening Relationships Among Programmes

The growing complexity of theological education systems, which seems to be necessary for a world of increasing complexity, suggests to the participants that some kind of ongoing national interaction and coordination is desirable. Both seminaries and other diocesan programmes are looking at sharing resources, including faculty, course options, and library facilities. Some mechanism will be needed to find ways to do these things efficiently. One possibility might be to locate a “single desk” for this work within the FWM context. This could be handed to FWM staff. Another option might be to follow up on a suggestion might by the Primate: a National Commission on Theological Formation and Education.

iv. National Commission on Theological Formation and Education

Without going into great detail, the Primate placed before us the idea of a standing National Commission on Theological Formation and Education. Given the variety of matters to be continued from the consultation, this idea may be worthy of further discussion. Under the umbrella of FWM, this body might take responsibility for carrying out any tasks emerging from the consultation that FWM regards as helpful and wishes to move forward.

v. ACPO

Participants were in general agreement that conversation is needed with ACPO. Some expressed concern that ACPO is not suitable for Indigenous persons moving toward ordination because of the emphasis upon a sense of personal call, which clashes with the Indigenous emphasis upon the community’s call. Many noted that ACPO is not designed to work with candidates who are not and will not be undertaking seminary training or with those who do not anticipate stipendiary clergy employment. Also discussed was a sense that ACPO is used differently by different dioceses, with some expecting that it will serve a larger discernment role; questions were raised about whether ACPO might be more helpful if it addressed the question of what sort of ministry a candidate is called to, rather than simply affirming or rejecting a call to ordained presbyteral ministry. Alternatively, there may be some value in clarifying for bishops and dioceses the limits of ACPO’s usefulness.

vi. Bishops’ School in Canada

Bp. John Privett recommended that we consider holding a Bishops’ School for Canadian bishops, suggesting that the growing complexities of our particular ministry situation are such that neither the British nor the American school serve our needs adequately.

vii. House of Bishops and the Preparation Conversation

The growing movement to ordaining presbyters with preparation other than the M.Div. represents a shift away from a norm, though one of recent vintage and from which there have always been departures. The landscape of ministry preparation is shifting as the nature of the church changes. Participants expressed a hope that the House of Bishops will discuss the transformations that are occurring and give thought to the new structures that are both developing and in need of creation.

#### viii. General Synod L.Th.

A number of participants noted that General Synod has offered academic qualifications in the past. Rooted in the discussions of one of the Marketplace groups, some urged that General Synod consider offering the Licentiate in Theology as the basic national expectation for ordination. The benefit of this approach is that various programmes and institutions across Canada could offer courses, which would then be accessible to everyone. General Synod would establish categories of preparation, guided by the Competencies document and existing programmes, and set minimal requirements for completion. Programmes would then be free to focus on their strengths and together we could provide solid and broad training. Challenges to this idea were noted: a) L.Th. and related programmes differ significantly in structure, intention, and expectation, so that General Synod's requirements would need to be flexible and programmes would need to be open to modifying their approaches; and b) local training programmes have generally been designed to suit particular circumstances, so operating under guidelines established elsewhere would represent a significant cultural shift for them. Challenges notwithstanding, participants expressed an interest in having the conversation about a national L.Th. under General Synod aegis.

#### ix. Provincial Commissions on Theological Education

Currently, the only ecclesiastical province with a functioning Commission on Theological Education (COTE) is Ontario. The concentration of seminaries, other schools and programmes providing theological education, and large dioceses in Ontario undoubtedly accounts for both the need and possibility of sustaining that COTE. However, the development of other programmes in a variety of places across the country suggests that growth of COTEs elsewhere may be valuable at this time.

#### x. Affordability of Theological Education

The costs of theological education continue to grow, although seminaries and universities are to be commended for ongoing efforts to control tuition and provide scholarship and bursary support. Some participants identified financial considerations as a significant barrier to preparation for presbyteral ministry and asked that all efforts be made, at a national and provincial level, to find ways to limit expenses and help with costs for those who choose to attend seminaries. This concern was raised especially in light of the declining number of permanent, stipendiary, positions for clergy in today's church.

#### xi. Indigenous Spiritual Leadership

Participants expressed concern that the consultation was unable to address needs for support in the development of Indigenous presbyters and other leaders. Moreover, the contributions of Mark MacDonald and Kara Mandryk made clear that we have much to learn from Indigenous ways of being that can help us through our years of challenge. Although we were unable to identify appropriate courses of action to resolve these questions, participants believe that laying them before FWM and the church national is important.

### 10. Assessment

We received helpful feedback through an online survey requesting comments on the conference. Over 1/3 of participants responded. Feedback was strongly positive overall, with a definite



sense that the consultation was worth the time, effort, and money. There is a general consensus that another such meeting should take place, not later than three years away. A question arose about the decision to provide Thursday afternoon off: some valued this as conversation and meeting time, while others would prefer that the conference be compressed and finish on Thursday evening.

11. Organizing Committee

The organizing committee consisted of the members of the Task Force on Presbyteral Ministry serving as of 2015, with the additional assistance of Becca Whitlaw and support of national staff, Eileen Scully and Dayjan Lesmond.

The Ven. William Harrison, chair

The Rev. Karen Egan

The Rev. Joanne Mercer

The Ven. David Selzer

The Rev. Nicola Skinner

Becca Whitla (not on Task Force)

Eileen Scully, Director of Faith, Worship, and Ministry

Dayjan Lesmond, Assistant to Faith, Worship, and Ministry and Communications