**GUIDANCE SHEET FOR INCUMBENTS Re: CANDIDATES FOR ORDAINED MINISTRY**

It is important that a candidate is referred to the DDO by their incumbent with confidence, after careful discussion. If a candidate is referred too soon or without enough reflection, it can cause problems later, for a non-recommendation becomes increasingly painful for the candidate the further along the process they are. Below are some suggestions to help.

1. **Is the candidate the sort of person who might be called to ordained ministry?**

***Personality*:** works well with other people and shows sensitivity and courtesy
can encourage and enable others
people turn to them for advice and help
is reliable and trustworthy

***Commitment*:** attends church regularly and is willing to get involved in the congregation
sticks with a task or obligation
can speak about their faith and what it means to them
responds creatively to conflict or disappointment

***Spirituality*:** is growing in their prayer life and understanding of Christian faith
 connects their relationship with God to their own life and the community

1. **Are there signs that God is calling them?**

***A strong inner sense*** that God wants them to serve in this way. It may be sudden or gradual, but will always be persistent. They should be able to talk about their call.

***Recognition by others*** who are honest and know the candidate well. They may have spotted the vocation before the candidate did.

***Realism.*** Candidates should have enough self-knowledge of their gifts, strengths and weaknesses to be able to judge if their call is realistic, subject to God’s grace.

***Knowledge*** of what they are being called to. Do they know what mission and ministry in today’s world actually involves? Have they read and talked to others about it?

1. **What is the SEC looking for?**

Here is a summary of the Criteria for Selection:

**Vocation:**  a sense of vocation to the ordained ministry; understanding what it means to be a deacon or a priest.

**Ministry within the SEC:** awareness of what public ministry in the SEC involves, and its contemporary context.

**Spirituality:** evidenceof a committed and nourishing spiritual life, one that has an effect on their life and engagement with the world.

**Personality and Character:** self-awareness and stability; ability to cope with change; integration of life experiences.

**Relationships:** healthy personal and professional relationships; ability to manage of conflict; potential pastoral skills.

**Leadership & Collaboration:** vision and inspiration; nurturing others’ gifts; awareness of their own leadership style.

**Faith:** understanding andcommitment to the Christian faith; ability to connect faith with life and communicate it effectively.

**Mission and Evangelism:** a strategicunderstanding of mission in contemporary culture; being a potential leader of mission.

**Quality of Mind:** ability to undertake training and formation; a desire to learn and reflect; capacity to facilitate learning

1. **What should the incumbent do next?**
* **Don’t** announce a candidate’s intention to explore a vocation to ordained ministry too widely in the congregation, in case the candidate has to withdraw from the process later on
* **Don’t** push things too fast; allow the momentum to build up gradually
* **Do** give the candidate some exposure to ‘up-front’ leadership, but without raising expectations too high
* **Do** be aware of the huge impact your own story and enthusiasm (or the reverse) will have on a candidate
* **Do** contact the DDO with a considered recommendation of the candidate when you feel the time is right
* **Do** pray for the candidate throughout their vocational journey