

# OA Formation Process

A three year process in preparation for taking the Promise as a life long commitment.



## Purposes

In a process of training, mentoring, and implementation the member moves forward in three broad areas of formation.

1. Parish development
2. Growth in the spiritual life and emotional intelligence
3. Incorporation into the Order's Life and Ethos

## Parish Development

The member is engaged in two interrelated activities:

1. The shaping of the parish toward increased health and faithfulness and
2. Becoming a competent parish development practitioner

*The marks of parish development we seek in our parishes are:*

1. The daily life and ministry of the baptized is at the center of parish energies

The central rhythm of all parish churches is the movement of members from renewal in their baptismal identity and purpose to life and ministry in their workplace, civic involvements, and with families and friends. The parish church is called to support people as instruments of God's love and light in all of life. It's really about us learning to better cooperate with the organic processes of the parish—people become salt and light in Eucharist, prayer, learning and community so they might be salt and light in daily life.

For many parishes this involves a shift from asking lay members to focus on the institutional needs of the parish to a focus on the daily life of its members in the world. This calls for leadership that attends to the parish's institutional needs in an effective and efficient manner while giving more attention to and respect for the baptized person's daily life.

2. The parish is an effective community of formation in Christ

This is a process of formation that accepts people where they are and invites them to grow. We assume that the most significant way in which that happens is as people participate in a healthy parish community. It is the total culture of the congregation that shapes the person. So, we give our attention to shaping the parish in a way that has a critical mass at the center of faithful people, proficient in the Christian life; and that makes space for the whole variety of people in all stages of spiritual growth—the stable as well as the more immature and tentative, the Christmas and Easter person as well as the vicarious person connecting through their family of special occasions.

Formation is also helped by:

- The Sunday morning experience is consistently excellent and focused on the Eucharist and an opportunity for community life such as coffee hour.
- There is a systematic learning process for adult members including basic orientations to participation in the Eucharist and Anglican Spirituality, assisting members to accept responsibility for their spiritual lives by shaping rule of life that fits their personality and life circumstances, and a core foundations course made up of several modules offered over several years.

### 3. The parish is grounding in, and expresses an Episcopal/Anglican ethos

The Anglican tradition offers tremendous opportunities for individual choice and innovation, while also providing the stretch and challenge that each of us needs to grow up into the full stature of Christ. Anglicanism has a culture, an ethos. The descriptions of that ethos will vary in emphasis and working but they tend to all point in a common direction. We hear of comprehensiveness, personal holiness, worldly holiness, of being rooted in communal daily prayer; sacramental, pastoral and incarnational. For a fuller description see this page on Anglican Ethos.

### 4. The parish has an emotionally healthy climate

There is a critical mass of members with the skills of self-awareness, empathy, self-control and the exercise of leadership.

### 5. The parish is vibrant

Parish life has energy; it creates a “buzz” that excites the congregation and spills over to the wider community. It is an attractive energy and impacts membership growth. The Sunday morning Eucharist and community time is consistently wonderful.

6. Parish leaders have the skills they need to effectively manage the polarity of adaptation to address the contemporary society while maintaining institutional integrity, identity and integration.

### 7. The parish is addressing areas that are barriers to health

Things that are “out of whack” are acknowledged and dealt with. The elements of parish life are mostly in alignment: income-expenses, the energy and funds to carry out the vision we have; liturgical space or number of services to match the number of attendees, and so on

## Growth in the Spiritual Life and Emotional Intelligence

The member establishes a disciplined spiritual life grounded in an Anglican spiritual map, e.g., (Threefold Rule of Prayer (Mass, Office, Personal devotions) In Your Holy Spirit map (Mass – Office – Community – Reflection – Service) and that is consistent with the Rule of the Order.

The member also engages a process of self-assessment, receiving feedback, and reflection in expanding his/her emotional and social intelligence—Self awareness (of own emotions,

accurate self assessment of strengths, weaknesses, blindside), Social Awareness (empathy), relationship management (leadership), and Self management (self control).

Both endeavors are engaged in a process of action-learning.

## Incorporation into the Order's Life and Ethos

The task is to understand the ethos, practices, and stories of the Order.

## General comment of the formation process

The process is directed at accomplishing the member's development in the goal areas. So, there are a number of specific workshops, readings, and other activities to engage.

The process is also dependent on the member's good judgment and ability to self-initiate. Elements of the process may be adapted to fit the member's needs and desires. How the member goes about such adaptation is an important indicator of commitment and competence.

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## Action Plan First Year

Standard Process. To be adapted by the member



Workshops	Begin the Church Development Institute (or Shaping the Parish or other comparable program) Also complete a week long workshop -- Human Interaction Workshop (5 days or more)
Reading	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>In Your Holy Spirit: Traditional Spiritual Practices in Today's Christian Life</i>, Michelle Heyne, Ascension Press, 2011</li> <li>2. <i>In Your Holy Spirit: Shaping the Parish Through Spiritual Practice</i>, Robert A. Gallagher 2011, Ascension Press</li> <li>3. <i>Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church</i>, Robert A. Gallagher 2008, Ascension Press (read all with focus on understanding the four core frameworks and material on Pages 15 – 16, 50 – 51, 107 – 121, 142 – 156, 205 - 206</li> <li>4. <i>PDF on Developmental Initiatives</i> draft material from <i>Interventions: Methods and Processes for Building Healthier Parishes</i>, Michelle Heyne &amp; Robert Gallagher, Ascension Press, [To use in relationship to Developmental Initiative]</li> <li>5. <i>Eucharistic Spirituality: From Audience to Congregation</i>, R. A. Gallagher [draft material until the book is published]</li> </ol>
<b>Developmental Initiatives – DIs</b> are carried out in consultation with your guide. There may be a document to use as a starting place.	<p>Establishing a pattern of Eucharist, Office, and reflection in your parish to the extent you can influence that.</p> <p>Establishing a process in which parishioners are helped to accept more responsibility for their spiritual lives. Including developing a Rule of Life.</p>
<b>Coaching Worksheets &amp; conversation</b>	<p>Coaching is around four things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Establishing a personal pattern of Eucharist, Office, and reflection. Doing the same in your parish to the extent you can influence that.</li> <li>-The DI's and the related learning process</li> <li>-Emerging issues and dynamics</li> <li>-Learning from process of parishioner feedback and your own self-assessment; relate to learning done in the human interaction lab (or other)</li> </ul>
The Stories	<p>The formation of OA – Focus on 1983 – 88. Interview Bob Gallagher and Scott Benhase. Diocese of Pennsylvania, inner city parishes. Mary Laney's story and participation. Ascension as a name? Transitions. CDI. Read on the web site "History" page. Also on the web site "Stay in the City", "Spirituality and the Urban Parish" and "To make a Beginning."</p>
OA Practices	<p><i>Taking on habits of recollection and reverence</i></p> <p>Begin engaging practices connected with the Order, for example, daily intercession for the Order, and weekly for each person associated with the Order; reflect regularly on the "Spirituality" themes in the Rule and the Promise; use one of the Ascension collects each week as you say the Office; use OA after your name; wear the habit as appropriate.</p> <p><i>Feast Days</i></p> <p>Place on your calendar four days to be celebrated yearly; preferably in the Holy Eucharist.</p>

	<p>Feast of the Ascension</p> <p>January 8, 1983: eleven people ended their retreat before the altar at St. Helena's Convent by making a commitment to participate in the formation of the Order.</p> <p>January 30, 1988: Eleven professed members and companions stood before Bishop Roger White, in the Chapel of the Good Shepherd at General Theological Seminary and made the three year promise of the Order: "My promise is to seek the presence of Jesus Christ in the people, things and circumstances of my life through stability, obedience and conversion of life," Emmett Jarrett, a friend of the community, preached. He called on us to be a sign of contradiction, hope and love to the world, and to the Church. He called us to friendship with God and with each other. "We are created to be God's friends. God made us for that. Christ lived and died as one of us, and went into heaven to take our humanity into the very life of God, and that we might become God's friends. Christian community in general and your form of it in particular is made for friendship and by friendship. We are to foster friendship with God by being friends ourselves."</p> <p>Feast of Saint Benedict July 11</p>
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## Action Plan Second Year

Standard Process. To be adapted by the member



Workshops	Conflict Management Workshop (5 days or more)
Reading	<p><i>Seeking God: The Way of St. Benedict</i>, Esther de Wall, Liturgical Press. (Read chapters 2-5)</p> <p><i>Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times</i>, Alban, 2006, Peter L. Steinke</p> <p><i>Pastoral Theology: A Reorientation</i>, Martin Thornton, SPCK, 1961 The Episcopal Bookstore in Seattle has a source that is reprinting the document. [Was also issued by Cowley as <i>The Heart of the Parish: Theology of the Remnant</i>, 1989.] Chapters 2 through 8 and 18 through 22.</p> <p>Readings from -- <i>Interventions: Methods and Processes for Building Healthier Parishes</i>, Michelle Heyne &amp; Robert Gallagher, Ascension Press, 2012          Vol 1 Contents: Theology of the Parish Church, Intervention Considerations, First Interventions, Congregational Options          Vol 2 Contents: Shaping the Parish through Spiritual Practice, the Parish as a System, Stages of Development Models, Covert Processes, Congregational Development and the Diocese</p> <p>Read the "History of Parish Development in the Episcopal Church" (available on the web)</p>
Developmental Initiatives	<p>Training and coaching initiatives</p> <p>Rule of Life</p> <p>Anglican Spirituality</p>
Coaching Worksheets & conversation	<p>Coaching is around two things:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-The DI's and the related learning process</li> <li>-Emerging issues and dynamics</li> <li>-Processes of feedback and self-assessment</li> </ul>
The Stories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scott Benhase – Inner city and interracial work. Ohio Convention. How he connected to OA</li> <li>• Bob Gallagher –founding of the Church Development Institute and establishing the core elements of all the major training programs in parish development. Interview</li> <li>• Michelle Heyne regarding CDI and development of Shaping the Parish.</li> </ul>
OA Practices	Identified in coaching process with your guide.

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## Action Plan Third Year

Standard Process. To be adapted by the member



<b>Workshops</b>	A third lab – selected in consultation with your guide
<b>Reading</b>	<p><i>Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence</i>, Goleman, Boyatzis, McKee, HBS Press, 2002.</p> <p>Readings from - <i>Interventions: Methods and Processes for Building Healthier Parishes</i>, Michelle Heyne &amp; Robert Gallagher, Ascension Press, TBA            Vol 1 Contents: Theology of the Parish Church, Intervention Considerations, First Interventions, Congregational Options            Vol 2 Contents: Shaping the Parish through Spiritual Practice, the Parish as a System, Stages of Development Models, Covert Processes, Congregational Development and the Diocese</p> <p><i>The Corporate Culture: Survival Guide</i>, Edgar Schein, Jossey – Bass, San Francisco, 1999. Preface, Chapters 1 – 4 and 9.</p> <p><i>The Nearness of God: Parish Ministry as Spiritual Practice</i> by Julia Gatta</p>
<b>Developmental Initiatives</b>	Web site Incorporation processes
<b>Coaching Worksheets &amp; conversation</b>	Coaching is around two things: -The DI's and the related learning process -Emerging issues and dynamics -Processes of feedback and self-assessment
<b>The Stories</b>	Interview three members about their efforts for parish development. The relationship of their spiritual discipline and those efforts. For example, Bishop of Georgia. Creating a total system for parish development. His roots in urban ministry and interracial congregation's. Lowell Grisham – the challenge of a university parish with a troubled history. Michelle Heyne –from laity perspective in her parishes, also as consultant. Susan Latimer – Overall development in several parishes.
<b>OA Practices</b>	Identified in coaching process with your guide.

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