

Role of the Laity and Clergy

“You then, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus; and what you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well.”

Timothy 2:1-2

Understanding that a faith community consists of many individuals with different gifts, it is recommended that a variety of adults will participate in the leadership of any preparation program. Candidates benefit from a variety of relationships with adults when on a journey of faith: pastor, priest, teacher, friend, mentor, and co-seeker.

Lay leadership:

This is an important time for encouraging the gifts of laypersons to participate as teachers and leaders. It is the role of clergy to identify appropriate individuals following “safe church guidelines.” Those who have participated in education programs such as EFM (Education for Ministry), trained as lay catechists or Godly Play storytellers can be good resources. However, it is important that they receive support for this task, especially in the areas of scripture and Anglican traditions.

Besides the traditional instruction, experiential and hands-on learning are important elements of spiritual formation. An important role of any leader is to provide a safe, supportive environment in which deep dialogue can occur. Knowing “all the answers” is not as important as being open, engaging the questions, and being seekers in relationship with one another.

Clergy leadership:

The priest-in-charge of a congregation has oversight responsibility in the preparation and presentation of candidates for Confirmation, Reception, and Re-Affirmation. The clergy have an important leadership role in teaching, selecting team members, and modeling relationships. It is a time for a priest to develop rapport with young people and the adults moving toward reaffirming their Baptismal promises.

If a member of the congregation attends (or plans to attend) boarding school, the clergy can help the family establish a relationship with the school chaplain. This may simply involve notifying the administration of the young person’s participation in the home faith community and of their imminent arrival. The congregation may keep in contact through correspondence and praying for them in the weekly Prayers of the People. The clergy can provide a bridge between home and school, insuring a supportive environment for an often-difficult transitional time in a young person’s life.