

# Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin

## Licensed Ministry

### Canons Relevant to Licensed Ministry

#### **Canon III.4.1.a**

A confirmed communicant in good standing or, in extraordinary circumstances, subject to guidelines established by the Bishop, a communicant in good standing, may be licensed by the Ecclesiastical Authority to serve as Pastoral Leader, Worship Leader, Preacher, Eucharistic Minister, Eucharistic Visitor, Evangelist, or Catechist. Requirements and guidelines for the selection, training, continuing education, and deployment of such persons, and the duration of licenses shall be established by the Bishop in consultation with the Commission on Ministry.

#### **Canon III.4.2.a**

The Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith may request the Ecclesiastical Authority with jurisdiction to license persons within that congregation or other community of faith to exercise such ministries. The license shall be issued for a period of time to be determined under Canon III.4.1.a and may be renewed. The license may be revoked by the Ecclesiastical Authority upon request of or upon notice to the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.

#### **Canon III.4.2.b**

In renewing the license, the Ecclesiastical Authority shall consider the performance of the ministry by the person licensed, continuing education in the licensed area, and the endorsement of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith in which the person is serving.

#### **Canon III.4.2.c**

A person licensed in any Diocese under the provisions of this Canon may serve in another congregation or other community of faith in the same or another Diocese only at the invitation of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight, and with the consent of the Ecclesiastical Authority in whose jurisdiction the service will occur.

## Licensed Ministries

**Pastoral Leader:** (according to Canon III.4.3) “a lay person authorized to exercise pastoral or administrative responsibility in a congregation under special circumstances, as defined by the Bishop.” Currently in the Diocese of San Joaquin there are no Pastoral Leaders, and no program for training them.

**Worship Leader:** (according to Canon III.4.4) “a lay person who regularly leads public worship under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.” Worship Leaders exist in the Diocese of San Joaquin, particularly in parishes there is no regular clergy. There is no current fixed training for this ministry, although plans are being made for it.

**Preacher:** (according to Canon III.4.5) “a lay person authorized to preach. Persons so authorized shall only preach in congregations under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.” In the diocese of San Joaquin preachers are generally licensed for congregations without regular clergy. There is currently training for this ministry and those interested should approach the Chair of the Commission on Ministry.

**Eucharistic Minister:** (according to Canon III.4.6) “a lay person authorized to administer the Consecrated Elements at a Celebration of Holy Eucharist. A Eucharistic Minister should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.” This is an active ministry in the diocese, in most cases exercised when there are not sufficient clergy for the distribution of Holy Communion at the Eucharist. Regular training is provided by the Commission on Ministry.

**Eucharistic Visitor:** (according to Canon III.4.7) “a lay person authorized to take the Consecrated Elements in a timely manner following a Celebration of Holy Eucharist to members of the congregation who, by reason of illness or infirmity, were unable to be present at the Celebration. A Eucharistic Visitor should normally act under the direction of a Deacon, if any, or otherwise, the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.” This a ministry distinct from that of Eucharistic Ministers and requires specific training in and gifts of pastoral care, and well as safeguarding training. There is currently no fixed training for this ministry.

**Catechist:** (according to Canon III.4.8) “a lay person authorized to prepare persons for Baptism, Confirmation, Reception, and the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, and shall function under the direction of the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation or other community of faith.” Currently in the Diocese of San Joaquin there are no Catechists, and no program for training them.

**Evangelist:** (according to Canon III.4.9) “a lay person who presents the good news of Jesus Christ in such a way that people are led to receive Christ as Savior and follow Christ as Lord in the fellowship of the Church. An Evangelist assists with the community’s ministry of evangelism in partnership with the Presbyter or other leader exercising oversight of the congregation, or as directed by the Bishop. Currently in the Diocese of San Joaquin there are no Evangelists, and no program for training them.

## Discernment Process

The licensing process is initiated at the parish/mission level in consultation with the clergyperson in charge. If there is no clergyperson in charge, then in consultation with the Bishop's Warden or Senior Warden. Either a person may feel called to a particular ministry and approach the clergyperson/warden, or the clergyperson/warden may sense someone's calling to a licensed ministry and approach them. Equally, a member in the congregation may feel someone is called to a particular ministry and approach the clergyperson/warden. While there are number of ways this initial phase may happen, it always arises out of relationship and conversation, in the context of mutual discernment.

Subsequently, the person discerning a call to a licensed ministry should (with the recommendation of their clergyperson/warden) approach the Chair of the Commission on Ministry (COM) to determine next steps, including training. In the case of some licensed ministries there is regular annual training offered. This takes place at a central location (or in exceptional cases online). With the approval of the Bishop (through the COM) more local training can happen depending on the availability of trainers.

Once training is completed, the COM will recommend to the Bishop that those attending be licensed (or not). To those the licensed the Bishop's office will send their license via email. All licenses are good for one year, and must be renewed. It is expected that before each year (ideally a month before a license is due to expire) the minister will write the Bishop (copying the Chair of the COM) reporting on their work and petitioning for a renewal of their license or not, as the case may be.

In all matters, any questions or concerns should be addressed to the Chair of the Commission on Ministry, currently The Rev'd Luis Rodriguez at [frluis@stpaulsbak.org](mailto:frluis@stpaulsbak.org).