

THE FORMATION OF NOVICES

IN THE

Anglican Society of Jesus

Societas Iesu Anglicana

*Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam
Ut Omnes Unum Sint*

A Directory Governing the Novitiate,
Issued as a Companion Document to the Constitutions and the Rule of Life

DRAFT — For Deliberation and Discernment

Anno Domini MMXXVI



PREAMBLE

“And when eight days were fulfilled for circumcising the child, his name was called Jesus, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.” The formation of a Companion of the Anglican Society of Jesus begins, as every vocation begins, in a hidden season of preparation — a season in which the seed is not yet the plant, but is already, by the grace of God, ordered toward what it shall become.

The Novitiate is the seedbed of the Society. It is the season in which an Aspirant, having heard and tested the call to campaign for God under the standard of the Cross, is formed in the spirit, the discipline, and the charism of the Anglican Society of Jesus, and in which the Society, in turn, tests and confirms that call. St. Ignatius Loyola called this first season of religious life a time of "probation," not in the sense of suspicion or trial for its own sake, but in the sense of a testing that clarifies and confirms a genuine vocation — or, with equal charity, reveals that the call lies elsewhere.

This Directory sets forth, in greater particularity than the Constitutions or the Rule of Life provide, the governance, the criteria, the course, and the rites of the Novitiate. It is issued as a companion document to those two foundational texts and possesses no authority independent of them. Where any provision of this Directory should appear to conflict with the Constitutions or the Rule of Life, the Constitutions and the Rule of Life shall govern, in accordance with the order of authority they themselves establish.

The Anglican Society of Jesus, admitting to profession both single and married Companions and requiring neither a vow of celibacy nor a life held wholly in common, is properly to be classified, under Canon III.14 of the Canons of The Episcopal Church, as a Christian Community rather than a Religious Order. What this Directory terms an Aspirant — the season preceding admission to the Novitiate — corresponds to what the Canons and other Christian Communities commonly term a Postulant. The Society's own path toward official recognition under Canon III.14 — a multi-year course of documented common life, sponsorship by a Bishop Visitor, and annual reporting to the Standing Committee on Religious Communities of the House of Bishops — proceeds on its own timeline, considerably longer than and distinct from the Novitiate of any individual Companion described in this Directory. The Society gratefully receives, throughout that longer course, the mentorship of the National Association of Episcopal Christian Communities (NAECC), and this Directory has been prepared with attention to the common practice of the Christian Communities gathered in that Association.

Because the Society's Companions come to the Novitiate by different roads — some newly introduced to the Spiritual Exercises, others long formed in them — this Directory recognizes more than one Pathway by which the Novitiate may be pursued, set forth in full in Article 7. And because the Society's Companions are, for the most part, married or single persons rooted in a particular parish, diocese, and secular vocation rather than members of a common household, this Directory also sets forth, in Article 11, the Society's developing understanding of Apostolic Availability: the interior freedom proper to Ignatian mission as it is to be lived by Companions who remain, for the whole of their vowed life, planted in a particular place.

Let this Directory, like the documents it serves, be held with the lightness proper to an instrument of the Spirit — precise enough to guide, but never mistaken for the life it exists to protect and to form.

CHAPTER I

Of the Governance of Formation

Article 1 — The Superior General and the Government of Formation

The formation of novices is, in the last analysis, the responsibility of the Superior General, who holds, under the Constitutions, the admission of candidates to the Novitiate, the final approval of the profession of vows, and the overall direction of the Society's life and mission.

The Superior General exercises this responsibility in one of two ways, as the Society's circumstances require: either by directly accompanying novices in the manner described in Article 2 below, or by appointing one or more Novice Directors to whom the day-to-day accompaniment of novices is entrusted, while the Superior General retains full canonical authority over the Novitiate.

The Superior General shall, in either case:

- Receive and act upon the petition of every Aspirant seeking admission to the Novitiate;
- Approve, upon the recommendation of the Novice Director, the Pathway of the Novitiate — among those set forth in Article 7 — best suited to each novice's circumstances, life commitments, and prior spiritual formation;
- Receive periodic reports from the Novice Director, or maintain direct and regular contact with each novice, throughout the Novitiate;
- Conduct, personally or through a delegate, at least one formation review with each novice at the conclusion of each season of the Novitiate;
- Make the final determination, upon the recommendation of the Novice Director and in consultation with the novice's spiritual director, as to a novice's continuance, extension, or dismissal from the Novitiate;
- Receive the annual manifestation of conscience of each novice, as prescribed by the Rule of Life;
- Make the final determination as to a novice's readiness for the profession of First Vows;
- Preside, or arrange for the presidency of the Society's Bishop Visitor or the Bishop Visitor's representative, at the liturgy of profession;
- Communicate, as appropriate, with the Diocesan Bishop of any novice who is ordained or a postulant for Holy Orders;
- Maintain the Society's relationship with its Bishop Visitor under Canon III.14, and with the Standing Committee on Religious Communities of the House of Bishops, including such membership and formation records as the Society's own path toward recognition as a Christian Community may require.

No novice shall be admitted to the Novitiate, continued within it, dismissed from it, or advanced to Vows, save by the authority of the Superior General.

Article 2 — The Novice Director

Until such time as the office of Vicar for Formation is formally established by the General Congregation, the Superior General shall appoint one or more Novice Directors from among the professed membership: persons of evident holiness of life, sound formation in the Ignatian tradition, and pastoral wisdom, to accompany novices in the ordinary course of the Novitiate.

The Novice Director bears responsibility, under the Superior General, for:

- Recommending to the Superior General, near the outset of each novice's Novitiate, the Pathway described in Article 7 best suited to the novice's circumstances, life commitments, and prior experience of the Spiritual Exercises;
- The oversight of each novice's observance of the Novitiate Rule of Life, including the Daily Office, the Examen, and the reception of Holy Eucharist;
- The arrangement of the novice's Spiritual Exercises, whether given directly or through a qualified director of the Exercises, in accordance with the Pathway pursued;
- The assignment and supervision of the apostolic experiments described in Article 7;
- Regular formational conversation with each novice, not less than monthly, concerning the novice's progress, adjustment to community and mission, and growth in the spirit of the Society;
- The preparation of a formation report on each novice, submitted to the Superior General at the conclusion of each season of the Novitiate;
- A recommendation to the Superior General, at each review, as to the novice's continuance, extension, or dismissal;
- Instruction of novices in the history, Constitutions, Rule of Life, and charism of the Society, and in the Anglican liturgical and theological inheritance that forms it.

The Novice Director exercises a ministry of the external forum: a formational, not a sacramental, accompaniment. Every novice shall have, in addition to the Novice Director, a spiritual director distinct from the Novice Director, to whom the novice's interior life and matters of conscience are entrusted in confidence. The Novice Director's report to the Superior General concerns the novice's observance, disposition, and readiness as these are externally manifest, and not the confidential content of spiritual direction, which remains the province of the internal forum and, in its fullest expression, of the novice's own manifestation of conscience to the Superior General.

Where the National Association of Episcopal Christian Communities has assigned the Society a mentor from among its member communities, the Novice Director shall maintain contact with that mentor as a resource for best practice in the formation of novices.

Nota Bene: In a small or founding community, the Superior General may for a season serve directly as Novice Director. The distinction of offices set forth in this Article remains, even where one person for a time holds both; the distinction between formational accompaniment and sacramental confidence must never be collapsed, whoever exercises the two roles.

CHAPTER II

Of the Call to the Novitiate

Article 3 — Criteria for the Selection of Aspirants

In accordance with the Constitutions, the Society welcomes as Aspirants all baptized Christians in communion with the Anglican Communion, lay or ordained, single or married, who give evidence of being drawn to Ignatian spirituality and apostolic mission in the Anglican context. This welcome, and every criterion set forth below, is extended and applied without regard to gender or sexual orientation, and applies equally to lay Companions and to those ordained to the diaconate or the priesthood. Admission to the Aspirancy, and thence to the Novitiate, is a matter of grave and mutual discernment, and shall have regard to the following criteria:

- A credible and sustained sense of vocation to the Anglican Society of Jesus, tested over a period of Aspirancy of not less than one year under a Companionship Rule of Life, in regular spiritual direction;
- Sufficient maturity of Christian faith and practice to undertake the disciplines of vowed religious life;
- Freedom from canonical or other grave impediment to the profession of vows;
- Psychological and physical fitness for the demands of the Novitiate and of vowed life, attested by appropriate evaluation;
- Satisfactory completion of a Background Check and the Safe Church, Safe Communities Training required by The Episcopal Church, in keeping with the Society's Fourth Vow and its particular charge for the protection of children;
- A stability of life circumstances — whether of employment, health, or family — sufficient to sustain a year, or more, of intensive formation;
- If the Aspirant is married, the free, informed, and continuing consent and support of the Aspirant's spouse;
- A positive recommendation from the Aspirant's spiritual director;
- Where the Aspirant is ordained or a postulant for Holy Orders, a letter of good standing from the Aspirant's bishop.

The discernment of these criteria belongs jointly to the Aspirant, the Aspirant's spiritual director, and the Superior General (or the Superior General's delegate), and is undertaken as an exercise of Ignatian discernment rather than mere administrative screening.

Article 4 — Requirements for Entry to the Novitiate

An Aspirant seeking admission to the Novitiate shall:

- Submit a formal written petition to the Superior General, setting forth the Aspirant's sense of call and readiness;
- Provide letters of reference from the Aspirant's spiritual director and, where applicable, from the Aspirant's spouse, employer, or bishop;
- Complete satisfactorily the period of Aspirancy described in Article 3;
- Complete a Background Check and the Safe Church, Safe Communities Training required by The Episcopal Church, verified in the manner the Society's process requires;

- Disclose such matters of health, finance, and personal circumstance as bear materially on readiness for the Vow of Simplicity and for the disciplines of the Novitiate;
- Indicate, in consultation with the Novice Director, an initial sense of which Pathway described in Article 7 the Aspirant expects to pursue, including whether the Aspirant has previously made the Spiritual Exercises in full, subject to confirmation by the Superior General at admission;
- Meet personally with the Superior General, or the Superior General's delegate, for a culminating discernment interview.

Upon satisfactory completion of these requirements, the Superior General shall formally admit the Aspirant to the Novitiate. Admission is ordinarily marked by a simple Rite of Admission, held in the context of the Daily Office or the Holy Eucharist, and is fittingly, though not necessarily, held near a principal feast of the Society's calendar, such as the Feast of St. Ignatius Loyola.

CHAPTER III

Of the Novitiate

Article 5 — The Objectives of the Novitiate

The Novitiate exists to discern, to form, and to confirm. Its objectives are:

1. To discern and confirm, through prayer and lived experience, the novice's vocation to the Anglican Society of Jesus, and the Society's own discernment of that vocation.
2. To root the novice in the spirit and charism of the Society: to be a contemplative in action, finding God in all things, in all places, and in all persons.
3. To form the novice in the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola as the primary and constitutive instrument of the Society's own formation and of the novice's ongoing spiritual life.
4. To form the novice in the Anglican liturgical, sacramental, and theological tradition that will shape the whole of the novice's vowed life.
5. To grow in self-knowledge and in that interior freedom — the indifference of the First Principle and Foundation — without which no vow can be freely and joyfully professed.
6. To test, through direct experience of prayer, community, and apostolic service, the novice's capacity to live the vows of Simplicity, Fidelity, and Obedience.
7. To prepare the novice, in mind, body, and spirit, for a lifelong commitment through the profession of First Vows.

Article 6 — Expectations of Novices

A novice of the Anglican Society of Jesus is expected to:

- Observe faithfully the Novitiate Rule of Life established by the Novice Director in accordance with this Directory and the Rule of Life;
- Submit, in matters pertaining to formation, to the guidance of the Novice Director and the authority of the Superior General;
- Maintain regular, honest engagement with a spiritual director distinct from the Novice Director;
- Offer an honest and unreserved manifestation of conscience to the Superior General at the times prescribed;
- Undertake, with generosity, the apostolic experiments assigned during the Novitiate;
- Participate, to the degree circumstances allow, in the common prayer and community life of the Society;
- Observe simplicity and transparency in the use of personal and material resources, as a living test of the Vow of Simplicity;
- Begin, throughout the Novitiate and whatever Pathway is pursued, to cultivate the interior freedom the Society calls Apostolic Availability, described more fully in Article 11;
- Treat fellow novices and all members of the Society with charity and confidentiality;
- Recognize, and act upon, their own freedom to withdraw from the Novitiate at any time, without prejudice to their standing before God or the Church.

The Society, for its part, recognizes an equal freedom not to invite a novice's continuance, exercised always with charity, transparency, and pastoral care for the novice's ongoing vocation, wherever it may lead.

Article 7 — The Pathways of the Novitiate

The Novitiate extends for a period of not less than twelve months, in accordance with the Rule of Life, whatever Pathway is pursued. In recognition of the different roads by which novices come to the Society — some newly introduced to the Spiritual Exercises, others already formed in them — the Society recognizes three Pathways by which the Novitiate may be undertaken. The Pathway for a given novice is proposed by the Novice Director and approved by the Superior General near the outset of the Novitiate, having regard to the novice's prior spiritual formation, life circumstances, and vocational readiness, and may be adjusted thereafter only with the Superior General's approval. Whatever Pathway is pursued, it shall equally secure the objectives of Article 5 and satisfy the benchmarks of Article 9 before a novice may be recommended for profession.

Nota Bene: The Nineteenth Annotation ordinarily requires some eight months to complete in the midst of daily life, in addition to the Daily Office, the Examen prayed twice daily, and regular spiritual direction. The Society does not add further formational burden atop the Exercises themselves while they are in progress, and for this reason distributes the several elements of formation across a longer course where the Nineteenth Annotation is the chosen means of prayer, as Pathway B below reflects. The Rules for the Discernment of Spirits, moreover, are treated in every Pathway as a subject deserving dedicated instruction in its own right, and not merely as an implicit feature of the Exercises.

Pathway A — The Thirty-Day Silent Retreat (Twelve Months)

This Pathway is ordinarily proposed for a novice newly undertaking the Spiritual Exercises who is able, by circumstance and vocation, to make the Exercises in their traditional, integral form.

First Season — Foundation (Months 1–3)

- Orientation to the history, Constitutions, Rule of Life, and charism of the Society;
- Establishment of the novice's daily Rule of Life: the Daily Office, the Examen prayed twice daily, and regular reception of Holy Eucharist;
- Introduction to the novice's spiritual director, distinct from the Novice Director;
- Continued formation in the Anglican liturgical year, the Book of Common Prayer, and the sacramental tradition;
- A first, brief manifestation of conscience to the Superior General, offered as an initial exchange rather than a formal review.

Second Season — The Exercises and the Life of Prayer (Months 4–6)

- The heart of the Novitiate's formation in prayer: the Thirty-Day Silent Retreat should be taken during this season;
- Deepening formation in the Ignatian Rules for the Discernment of Spirits;
- A first apostolic experiment, ordinarily a period of direct service among the poor or marginalized, in fidelity to the Society's second apostolic preference.

Third Season — Apostolic Experiments (Months 7–9)

- Assignment to one or more further experiments, which may include: parish ministry, chaplaincy exposure in a hospital or place of incarceration, catechetical or educational work with the young, an experience of manual or humble labor, or exposure to the ministry of spiritual direction;
- Continued spiritual direction, Examen, and observance of the Daily Office;

— A review with the Novice Director and the Superior General or delegate.

Fourth Season — Discernment and Preparation for Vows (Months 10–12)

- A comprehensive review of the whole Novitiate year, conducted jointly by the novice, the Novice Director, and the Superior General;
- A final and full manifestation of conscience for the Novitiate year;
- A formal discernment interview concerning readiness for First Vows;
- Preparation and submission of the novice's petition for profession;
- A retreat of preparation, ordinarily of not less than eight days, undertaken immediately before the Rite of Profession;
- Liturgical and practical preparation for the Rite described in Article 12.

Pathway B — The Nineteenth Annotation (Eighteen Months)

This Pathway is ordinarily proposed for a novice whose circumstances — family, employment, or health — commend making the Exercises in the midst of daily life, over an extended season, rather than in a single silent retreat.

First Season — Foundation (Months 1–3)

- Orientation to the history, Constitutions, Rule of Life, and charism of the Society;
- Establishment of the novice's daily Rule of Life: the Daily Office, the Examen prayed twice daily, and regular reception of Holy Eucharist;
- Introduction to the novice's spiritual director, distinct from the Novice Director;
- Commencement of the Nineteenth Annotation;
- A first, brief manifestation of conscience to the Superior General, offered as an initial exchange rather than a formal review.

Second Season — The Exercises and the Life of Prayer (Months 4–6)

- The heart of the Novitiate's formation in prayer: continuation of the Nineteenth Annotation;
- Continued spiritual direction, Examen, and observance of the Daily Office.

Third Season — Prayer and the Discernment of Spirits (Months 7–9)

- Completion of the Nineteenth Annotation;
- A dedicated course on the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits, ordinarily undertaken in the ninth month, once the Exercises themselves are complete;
- Continued spiritual direction, Examen, and observance of the Daily Office.

Fourth Season — Anglican Formation in Common Prayer and Service (Months 10–12)

- Continued formation in the Anglican liturgical year, the Book of Common Prayer, and the sacramental tradition;
- A first apostolic experiment, ordinarily a period of direct service among the poor or marginalized, in fidelity to the Society's second apostolic preference;
- Continued spiritual direction, Examen, and observance of the Daily Office;
- A mid-course review with the Novice Director and the Superior General or delegate.

Fifth Season — Apostolic Experiments (Months 13–15)

- Assignment to one or more further experiments, which may include: parish ministry, chaplaincy exposure in a hospital or place of incarceration, catechetical or educational work with the young, an experience of manual or humble labor, or exposure to the ministry of spiritual direction;
- Continued spiritual direction, Examen, and observance of the Daily Office;
- A further review with the Novice Director and the Superior General or delegate.

Sixth Season — Discernment and Preparation for Vows (Months 16–18)

- A comprehensive review of the whole Novitiate, conducted jointly by the novice, the Novice Director, and the Superior General;
- A final and full manifestation of conscience for the Novitiate;
- A formal discernment interview concerning readiness for First Vows;
- Preparation and submission of the novice's petition for profession;
- A retreat of preparation, ordinarily of not less than eight days, undertaken immediately before the Rite of Profession;
- Liturgical and practical preparation for the Rite described in Article 12.

Pathway C — For Novices Who Have Previously Made the Spiritual Exercises (Twelve Months)

This Pathway is proposed for a novice who, before entering the Novitiate, has already made the full Spiritual Exercises — whether the Thirty-Day Silent Retreat or the Nineteenth Annotation — under competent direction. Such prior formation does not shorten the Novitiate, which remains, as for every novice, not less than twelve months; it does, however, shape the manner in which the Exercises are engaged during the Novitiate itself.

First Season — Foundation (Months 1–3)

- Orientation to the history, Constitutions, Rule of Life, and charism of the Society;
- Establishment of the novice's daily Rule of Life: the Daily Office, the Examen prayed twice daily, and regular reception of Holy Eucharist;
- Introduction to the novice's spiritual director, distinct from the Novice Director;
- Continued formation in the Anglican liturgical year, the Book of Common Prayer, and the sacramental tradition;
- Review, between the novice and the Novice Director, of the novice's prior experience of the Spiritual Exercises, to determine the form and length of the retreat of renewal described below;
- A first, brief manifestation of conscience to the Superior General, offered as an initial exchange rather than a formal review.

Second Season — The Renewal of the Exercises and the Discernment of Spirits (Months 4–6)

- A retreat of renewal, of not less than eight days, under competent direction, in which the Spiritual Exercises already known to the novice are made again, with their interior content ordered specifically toward the election to enter the Anglican Society of Jesus, as the Rule of Life requires;
- A dedicated course on the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits;
- Continued spiritual direction, Examen, and observance of the Daily Office.

Third Season — Apostolic Experiments (Months 7–9)

- Assignment to one or more further experiments, which may include: parish ministry, chaplaincy exposure in a hospital or place of incarceration, catechetical or educational work with the young, an experience of manual or humble labor, or exposure to the ministry of spiritual direction;
- A first apostolic experiment, ordinarily a period of direct service among the poor or marginalized, in fidelity to the Society's second apostolic preference, where this has not already occurred;
- Continued spiritual direction, Examen, and observance of the Daily Office;
- A review with the Novice Director and the Superior General or delegate.

Fourth Season — Discernment and Preparation for Vows (Months 10–12)

- A comprehensive review of the whole Novitiate year, conducted jointly by the novice, the Novice Director, and the Superior General;
- A final and full manifestation of conscience for the Novitiate year;
- A formal discernment interview concerning readiness for First Vows;
- Preparation and submission of the novice's petition for profession;
- A retreat of preparation, ordinarily of not less than eight days, undertaken immediately before the Rite of Profession;
- Liturgical and practical preparation for the Rite described in Article 12.

Nota Bene: The four, six, and four season structures described above are the ordinary course of each Pathway. The Novice Director, with the approval of the Superior General, may adjust the sequence or duration of particular experiments to the circumstances of a novice's vocation, provided that the objectives of Article 5 and the benchmarks of Article 9 are substantially met, along whatever Pathway is pursued, before any recommendation for Vows is made.

Article 8 — Criteria for Continuance in the Novitiate

The discernment of a novice's continuance is ongoing throughout the Novitiate, and is not reserved to its conclusion alone. At the conclusion of each season of the Novitiate, whatever Pathway is pursued, the Novice Director and the Superior General shall consider:

- The novice's fidelity to the Novitiate Rule of Life;
- Evident growth in self-knowledge, humility, and interior freedom;
- The novice's capacity for community, obedience, and apostolic collaboration;
- The absence of any impediment — canonical, psychological, relational, or otherwise — that would render the profession of vows imprudent;
- The continued and confirmed sense of call, tested in prayer and in the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits.

Upon the recommendation of the Novice Director, and in consultation with the novice's spiritual director, the Superior General may extend the Novitiate beyond the minimum term where further discernment or formation is warranted, may transfer a novice from one Pathway to another where circumstances change, or may conclude the Novitiate where continuance no longer appears prudent. In every case, such a determination shall be communicated to the novice with pastoral charity and, wherever possible, in a manner that honors the novice's continuing relationship with the Society and the wider Church.

Article 9 — Benchmarks of the Novitiate

Before a novice may be recommended for the profession of First Vows, the following benchmarks shall ordinarily have been met, whatever Pathway has been pursued:

1. Completion of the Spiritual Exercises according to the Pathway pursued under Article 7 — the Thirty-Day Silent Retreat, the Nineteenth Annotation, or the prescribed retreat of renewal for those who had previously made the Exercises — with the interior content ordered toward the election to enter the Society, as prescribed by the Rule of Life.
2. Dedicated formal instruction in the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits, whether given as part of the Exercises themselves or, as in Pathways B and C, as a distinct course.
3. Establishment and sustained observance of a stable daily Rule of Life: the Daily Office, the Examen prayed twice daily, and regular reception of Holy Eucharist.
4. Completion of not less than two apostolic experiments in distinct forms of ministry.
5. Regular ongoing meetings with a spiritual director, not less than monthly, throughout the Novitiate.
6. Regular formational meetings with the Novice Director, not less than monthly, throughout the Novitiate.
7. Not less than one substantive manifestation of conscience offered to the Superior General during the Novitiate, in addition to the concluding manifestation described in Article 7.
8. Demonstrated instruction in the Constitutions, the Rule of Life, and the Anglican liturgical and theological tradition.
9. A completed discernment interview and a written petition for the profession of First Vows.

CHAPTER IV

Of the Discernment for Profession

Article 10 — Criteria for Determining Readiness for Vows

The decision that a novice is ready to profess First Vows rests, finally, with the Superior General alone, who may consult the Council of the Society in reaching it. That decision shall have regard to the following criteria:

- A free, informed, and unconstrained desire on the novice's part for admission to the Society, uncoerced by any external pressure, expectation, or circumstance;
- A vocation confirmed, and not merely felt, through the discipline of the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits exercised during the Spiritual Exercises and throughout the Novitiate;
- A demonstrated capacity to live the three vows of Simplicity, Fidelity, and Obedience as these are articulated in the Constitutions and the Rule of Life;
- Sufficient doctrinal, liturgical, and theological formation to sustain a vowed Anglican religious life;
- The affirmative recommendation of the Novice Director;
- The affirmative recommendation of the novice's spiritual director as to the novice's interior freedom and readiness — an attestation of readiness, not a disclosure of the confidential content of direction;
- Where the novice is married, the continuing free and informed consent of the novice's spouse;
- The absence of any impediment under the Canon Law of The Episcopal Church.

Where these criteria are met to the Superior General's satisfaction, the Superior General shall invite the novice to profess First Vows and shall arrange the Rite of Profession described in Article 12. Where they are not yet met, the Superior General may extend the Novitiate, in accordance with Article 8, rather than proceed to profession.

The Society's understanding of the interior freedom proper to apostolic mission — what this Directory calls Apostolic Availability — bears directly upon the capacity to live the Vow of Obedience named above, and is treated more fully in Article 11 below.

Article 11 — Of Apostolic Availability

The readiness to be sent wherever the mission of God requires has long been named, in the Ignatian tradition, Apostolic Availability: an interior freedom that holds no place, task, or comfort as more precious than the call of Christ mediated through the Society's discernment. The Anglican Society of Jesus receives this charism gladly, and understands it in a manner suited to the particular character of its own membership.

Most Companions of this Society are not members of a common household free to be missioned from place to place. They are, for the most part, married or single persons who remain, for the whole of their vowed life, rooted in a particular parish, diocese, family, and secular vocation — a rootedness proper to the parochial and diocesan structure of Anglican polity itself. For such Companions, Apostolic Availability cannot rightly be understood chiefly as a readiness to relocate at the Society's or the Church's request. So understood, it would be neither practicable for those with spouses, children, and settled callings, nor, on reflection, the deepest meaning of the Ignatian charism it claims to serve.

The Society understands Apostolic Availability, rather, as an interior disposition of freedom — the indifference of the First Principle and Foundation — lived out within, and not apart from, a Companion's given place. A

Companion is apostolically available who holds their present parish, ministry, household, and daily work without the disordered attachment that would prevent them from recognizing and serving Christ precisely there; who remains, in spirit, a pilgrim even while stable in body; and who does not allow rootedness in place to harden into the possessiveness of "the thing" in place of God. Such a Companion finds God in all things by finding the mission already given in the community where they stand, rather than by seeking a different or larger field in which to be found.

This disposition bears directly on the exercise of sacerdotal and non-sacerdotal ministry alike. A Companion's Apostolic Availability is exercised as fully in the sacraments, in preaching, and in spiritual direction as in the ordinary, civic, and communal work undertaken in the same place — service among neighbors who may never become members of the Companion's own congregation, and who need not be pursued toward that membership to be served in the name of Christ. The Society regards the articulation of ministry rooted in a particular place, oriented to the Kingdom already being built there, as a legitimate and needed witness within a wider Church too often shaped by a corporate expectation that advancement in ministry requires relocation to a larger charge, a larger congregation, or greater resources. Where the ordinary discernment of that wider Church proves unable to receive this articulation, the Society understands its own charism, in part, as offering the vocabulary and companionship by which such conversations may be renewed.

None of this diminishes the true obedience owed, in due order, to Christ, to the novice's bishop where ordained, and to the Superior General. Apostolic Availability, rightly understood, preserves rather than forecloses the readiness to say yes should the Society or the Church, through its ordinary processes of communal discernment, require something further of a Companion. Such further sending remains a possibility to which every Companion's freedom is oriented; it is simply not, for a Companion planted by circumstance and vocation in a particular place, the ordinary expectation of that place's own service, which is itself the mission being asked of them.

Because this understanding of Apostolic Availability resonates closely with the historic ministry of the Vocational Diaconate — a ministry likewise defined by service exercised in the world rather than withdrawal from it — the Society welcomes Vocational Deacons among its Companions without reservation, regarding this articulation as complementary to, and not in competition with, the diaconal vocation as the wider Church already knows it.

Novices are formed in this understanding of Apostolic Availability throughout the Novitiate: through instruction given in the course of whichever Pathway is pursued under Article 7, through the apostolic experiments there described, and through ongoing conversation with the Novice Director and spiritual director concerning the novice's own place, ministry, and household. The presence of this interior freedom — rootedness without possession, stability without confinement — is among the matters the Superior General shall weigh, together with the criteria of Article 10, in judging a novice's readiness for the profession of First Vows.

CHAPTER V

Of the Rite of Profession

Article 12 — A Liturgy for the Ending of the Novitiate and the Profession of First Vows

The following order is provided for the guidance of those preparing the Rite of Profession. It is ordinarily celebrated within the Holy Eucharist, presided over by the Superior General and, where possible, in the presence of the Society's Bishop Visitor or the Bishop Visitor's representative, in accordance with the Constitutions, the Rule of Life, and Canon III.14. The Rite may be adapted, with the Superior General's approval, to local circumstance, provided that the form of vows prescribed by the Constitutions remains unaltered in substance.

The Gathering

The community assembles for the Holy Eucharist. The novice to be professed sits among the community rather than in a place of distinction, until called forward.

Entrance Hymn and Collect of the Day

The Liturgy of the Word, with lessons chosen by the novice in consultation with the Superior General

The Presentation

After the Gospel and homily, the novice is called forward by name.

Superior General: N., you have completed your Novitiate among us. Do you seek, this day, to be received into the Anglican Society of Jesus through the profession of First Vows?

Novice: I do so seek, by the grace of God.

Superior General: Have you sought this vocation in prayer, and tested it through the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola, and through the counsel of your spiritual director and your Novice Director?

Novice: I have.

Superior General: Do you come to this profession freely, and of your own will, seeking nothing but to serve God and God's people under the standard of the Cross?

Novice: I do, God being my helper.

The Examination

Superior General: Will you observe the Constitutions and the Rule of Life of this Society, and submit yourself, for the sake of the Gospel, to its governance and discipline?

Novice: I will, with God's help.

Superior General: Will you seek, in all things, to find God: in prayer and in action, in this Society and in the whole of your life, as a contemplative in action?

Novice: I will, with God's help.

The Litany

The community kneels. A Litany of the Saints, or a litany suited to the occasion, is sung or said, the novice lying prostrate or kneeling before the altar according to local custom.

Litany of the Saints (or a form provided for the occasion)

The Profession

The novice rises and, facing the Superior General and the community, makes the following vows, using the form prescribed by the Constitutions of the Society:

The Form of Vows in the Anglican Society of Jesus

Almighty and eternal God,
I, [full name],
understand how unworthy I am in your divine sight.
Yet I am strengthened by your infinite compassion and mercy,
and I am moved by the desire to serve you.
I vow to your divine Majesty,
before the most holy Virgin Mary and the whole communion of saints in heaven and earth,
Simplicity, Fidelity [being single / married] and Obedience
in the Anglican Society of Jesus.
I promise, with God's help,
that I will enter this same Society
to spend my life in it forever.
The name of this community is the Anglican Society of Jesus.
I understand all these things according to the Constitutions of the Society.
Therefore, by your boundless goodness and mercy,
and through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ,
I humbly ask that you accept this total commitment of myself
as pleasing in your sight.
Amen.

The Reception and the Vow Cross

The Superior General receives the written and signed form of vows, which is placed upon the altar. The Superior General then invests the newly professed Companion with the vow cross of the Society.

Superior General: N., in the name of the Anglican Society of Jesus, and by the authority committed to me, I receive you as a Companion of this Society. Receive this cross, the sign of your profession and of the standard under which you now serve.

Congregation: Deo Gratias.

The Superior General may address the newly professed Companion briefly, welcoming them by their new designation: N., ASJ.

The Peace and the Eucharist

The Peace is exchanged, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist continues in the usual manner, the newly professed Companion communicating among the first of the gathered community.

The Sending

At the conclusion of the Eucharist, before the final blessing, the Superior General may address the newly professed Companion and the community.

Superior General: Go now, N., ASJ, a Companion in this Society, to seek God in all things, in all places, and in all persons, for the greater glory of God.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam • Ut Omnes Unum Sint

CONCLUSION

Of the Spirit in Which This Directory Is to Be Observed

This Directory is offered in service of persons, not the reverse. Its criteria, seasons, and benchmarks exist to protect the freedom and the integrity of a genuine vocation — the Society's no less than the novice's own — and never to substitute procedure for discernment or form for the Spirit that gives form its life.

Let every Novice Director and every Superior General who administers this Directory remember that the Novitiate exists for one end alone: that a soul, tested and formed in the school of the Spiritual Exercises, may come freely to say, with St. Ignatius, Take, Lord, and receive — and that the Society, in receiving that gift, may be found faithful to the trust thereby placed in it.

Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam

Ut Omnes Unum Sint

Received for deliberation and discernment by the founding members of the Anglican Society of Jesus.