



St Catherine's Seminary is the name of the internal study and training program of the Old Catholic Apostolic Church

OCAC Priestly Training Program

This document outlines the study material and course for those training to be priests in the Old Catholic Apostolic Church. It is envisaged that practical experience be gained during study, by accompanying an experienced priest as they take services and with practical assignments. You will have been through the minor orders and Deacon's (Pastors) training prior to this course.

It is necessary for you to read and become familiar with the material on the OCAC website. There is considerable material on this website, but you will need to book read extensively too. We do not have a prescribed book list, but give the questions that you will be asked in each study unit. It is up to you where you do the research and get the information you need to complete the study units. There is a large portion of independent learning involved, and you can choose the books or videos to use in addition to any specific ones listed below.

Existing priests joining from other churches may be exempted from some or all of this course depending on the circumstances.

OCAC priestly training uses the concept of performance based learning. That is to say you progress upon meeting specific performance requirements under your mentor's guidance. If you have difficulty, you don't 'fail' - you just keep working until you meet them - but likewise, you won't get through by merely 'showing up' or sending minimal material. Your mentor will guide and assist you in this progression. You must have already completed the OCAC pastor's course. You will have been in minor orders, and the level of deacon is reached on completion of the Pastors Training Course

The Path

The path for training in the sacerdotal at OCAC takes the following steps:

1. Application Form completed and sent (this is the ordination/incardination form as used by OCAC – on the website)
2. On receipt of the form, we will assess and propose a likely path of progression depending on the circumstances as described on the application. This will be where we decide which previous experience or study can be accepted as prior learning.

3. Interview. All candidates will attend an interview which may be online. References will be taken up and background checks done, including verifying qualifications.
4. Upon acceptance which will be by writing or email; the candidate is appointed a mentor who will guide the remaining steps of the process. Often, your mentor will be some distance from you and will communicate with you online.
5. A practical study plan will be agreed between the mentor and candidate, based on the material below. It is expected to complete the Pastors Training Course prior to this course.
6. A web-page on the OCAC website will be created, carrying credentials and information about the candidate as a trainee priest (likely to be shown as deacon or pastor). This is so that churches and nursing homes, hospitals etc. have some point of reference for information and as a contact point.
7. Although learning and development is a never ending process, the candidate will be ordained priest when the required levels of skill and expertise are reached.
8. Continue your learning and discovery whilst practicing your pastorate. 'The only way to stay still, is to keep moving forward' *Bishop Adrian, Patriarch, OCAC.*

Reading List

Read the OCAC website generally, and refer to other suitable web resources.

Visit the web pages of the various Religious Orders and Societies in OCAC to identify the charism and intent of each.

Visit the web pages of the various national OCAC churches and Provinces to identify the similarities and differences amongst them.

There is no set reading requirement. Candidates may read or search whichever sources they choose. Wikipedia is a good reference resource.

Practical Assignments

Confessional Training

This will be with your mentor, who will 'role-play' some scenarios that you may encounter when hearing confessions.

Spiritual Leadership

You will need to develop your own style, but every priest is a Spiritual leader and guide. Watch other priests taking worship, celebrating Mass or Eucharist and dealing with people. Try and learn as much as you can from observing what and how they do it.

Public Speaking Skill

You will need to be able to speak competently in public, for example to speak when leading worship or taking meetings. Practice this skill with your mentor, and you will be assessed on this.

Skill at Holding a Service

You will need to be able to competently hold services of Mass, Benediction and Services of Blessing. Practice doing this at home and with your mentor; you will be assessed on this.

Prayer Delivery

You will need to be able to lead others in prayer, and to be able to pray in public and when others are listening to you. Practice this in your own home, but take each opportunity that arises to pray openly in public.

Hostility

You will need to stand up for your, or other's beliefs from time to time – even those you don't agree with. Work through your plan with your mentor.

Study Units

You will need to answer all the following questions unless exemption is granted by virtue of prior learning or experience. The preferred method is word-processed document or email as they can be done at any time and sent to your mentor for assessment, however those with special needs may be able to deliver their answers verbally.

Study One - Salvation

So what exactly is Salvation?

1. 'We are each responsible for our own salvation'. Comment.
2. How much does our belief of salvation drive us to be 'our brother's keeper'?
3. Christ made the ultimate sacrifice for our salvation. Discuss.
4. If we are 'saved' can we 'lose' our salvation?

Is Salvation a response? Or a reward?

5. Is salvation a reward for a sinless life?
6. Argue for and against salvation being a response to our belief in Jesus.
7. How does the contemporary world view salvation?
8. How can we bring others to salvation? And should we do it? Discuss.

Study Two - Confession

1. How will you prepare yourself to hear a confession?
2. A confessional commands the utmost confidentiality. During a confession, you hear something very serious indeed which is either a crime that has been committed, or one soon to be committed. How will you decide: What, How much, Who to and the manner in which you divulge anything, whilst keeping confidence and also acting in a safeguarding role?
3. Is a corporate, congregational confession less effective or worthy than a private confession?

4. What is atonement and how does this figure with confession?
5. Write an essay as a commentary on the following: ‘If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us, but if we confess our sins God will forgive us’.

Study Three – What does 'Real Presence' mean?

1. Give an outline of what is happening during Mass.
2. Many Protestant, Evangelical or Pentecostal Christians deny the Real Presence as understood by many Catholics. Yet they will recount Jesus’ words saying: ‘Wherever one or two are gathered in my Name, I will be there with them’. Explore the differences and similarities between these views.
3. How would you explain the value of prayer to someone who denies the concept of 'real presence'?

Study Four - Church

-in general

1. Explain the role of scripture in the Mass.
2. Explain why a priest should be present at Mass. Is communion among friends less effective if a priest is not there?
3. We are called to baptise those who Christ calls. Is total immersion the only way to baptise? Explain using examples from the Bible and your own experience.

-about OCAC

4. How can the Theology of Salvation be brought in Healing (Unction)?
5. In an essay, describe how healing works.
6. How does the Holy Spirit empower in sacrament?
7. Being a priest is about the sacramental; being a pastor is about practical serving: is it as simple as that?
8. The church’s liturgical year carries what significance for the modern priesthood?

Study Five - The Practical Priesthood

1. Aren’t priests and pastors the same thing? You answered this in the pastors training course. How do you answer now?
2. When someone has come to you for help or advice, when and how do you involve others in this duty of care?
3. Expound the concept of 'care of souls' and explain how you will exercise this in your priesthood.
4. Upon ordination, you will be a priest forever. Why is this? How is it likely to affect you?

5. Explain what each vestment is and the meanings of the vestments. What secular roles wear vestments? How are vestments different from uniforms? How does this matter?

Upon reaching a suitable point; after prayer and discussion with your mentor and your bishop, an appointment to the priesthood will be made. A date will be set for an ordination service and a licence outlining the ministry which will be followed. The Old Catholic Apostolic Church will then support and encourage that serving, and support you in it.

Learning never ends, being a priest is always a 'work in progress' and you will be no different. 'We never arrive: but the joy is in the journey...!' *Bishop Adrian, Patriarch, OCAC Worldwide.*

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