Week 6

Episcopal Formation Part 1

# Course Overview

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This week we look at the book, Episcopal Formation: The Second Edition, Chapters 1 thru 4. We examine briefly the discernment, vetting, equipping and empowering process.

We learn about developing a devotion life and its importance to ministry.

We close out by looking at the nature of the Episcopacy and the Formation Process.

# Course Materials and other Resources

***Episcopal Formation: The Second Edition,*** by Archbishop Thomas Henry Jr

# Read the following Scriptures:

Acts 20:28, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Samuel 16:1-13

# Course Study Guide

Let’s begin by defining a few words that we will be using in our discussion this week.

**Episcopal** – of or relating to a bishop: **episcopal** authority; governed by or having bishops

**Formation** – the action of forming or process of being formed. coming into being, genesis, development, evolution, shaping. As it relates to this program we take the word formation from the words of St Paul in Romans 12:1, 2 – being transformed by the renewing of one’s mind. The Greek word is **metamorphóō** – to change into another form, to transform, to transfigure.

**Discernment process** – discernment is a decision-making process that honors the place of God's will in our lives. It is an interior search that seeks to align our own will with the will of God in order to learn what God is calling us to.

**Vetting** – vetting is investigating (someone) thoroughly, especially in order to ensure that they are suitable for a job requiring secrecy, loyalty, or trustworthiness; to make a careful and critical examination of (something).

**Presbyter** – is the anglicize version of ***presbuteros***. Properly, a mature man having seasoned judgment (experience); an elder.

**Read chapters 1 thru 4 of *“Episcopal Formation: The Second Edition”***

**What is the Discernment & Vetting Process?**

**God does the calling** – I think this point is lost among many. They assumed because we elect or appoint bishops that God is not involved in the process, but that is far from the case. Ultimately, it is God who calls. It is God who manipulates the seasons. He would bring one down, to exalt another. This is clearly seen in Acts 20:28 – God is the one who makes one EPISCOPOS so that they may shepherd (***poimen*** or pastor) the church of God.

We have not taken the time to seek God about whom he wants as bishop, apostle, pastor and elder in the church. We like Samuel have assumed because of appearance they are whom the Lord has chosen. While man looks at the outside, God looks and knows the heart. So we have many times promoted those whom the Lord has rejected.

Discernment is needed so that we may discern the will of God and see if God is actually calling the person to the office we seek to fill.

Another problem in the church is Identifying the call on a person life. Many times we have correctly discerned there is a call, but we have fail to identify the call. This is important. Because ministry can be any of the ministries in 1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11, Romans 12:6-10.

You go through the vetting process so that you may KNOW THOSE WHO LABOR AMONG YOU.

After vetting, then you equip and empower for service.

**Developing a Devotional Life**

We need to avail ourselves of the various means of grace.

We have to pray and study.

All of us must develop our own personal schedule where we meet God in prayer and worship.

# Nature and Mission of the Episcopacy

In order to under the Episcopacy, our doctrine must be correct and the foundation we have must be right. Because our development as a bishop is grounded in the foundational truths of our faith as Christians.

The nature of God and how he works through us in Ministry.

Understanding the nature of Christ

Understanding the nature of the church

All of these are key to understanding the nature and mission of the bishop.

# The Formation Program

The formation program involves four dimensions – human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral.

Human formation –

Our flaws cannot outweigh our message. Understanding the vessel is always flawed, while the message is always perfect. Understand that we will always make mistakes. This underscores the need for an accountability partner, spiritual director and advisor.

We are, however, called to be mature. Growth and maturity is a process and it does not happen overnight.

Human Formation also involves correct understanding of human sexuality. It involves the 7 areas mentioned on pages 17 and 18 in your books.

Human formation allows us to understand who we are and what we are capable of doing and the gifts we bring to the table. It also should make us aware of our own broken and need for a savior.

Spiritual Formation –

Is about knowing God and not just having a general knowledge of God, but an experiential knowledge of God. I know God by experience. I have experience with him and he with me. I know him in the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings and being made conformable to his death.

My life has been literally transformed by the very gospel I preached. And I am doing the things necessary to maintain that walk with the Lord.

Intellectual Formation –

Involves getting the wisdom and knowledge you need to support your ministry. Having the intellectual foundation – education, doctrinal and apologetical training.

Pastoral Formation –

Bishops are not just overseers, they are pastors. They are charged with shepherding the church of God. They are first and foremost shepherds and not administrators. They together with the deacons are charged with pastoral care.

**Course Schedule**

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| Week | Subject | Course Information |
| 1 | The Holy Scriptures | Inspiration, The Canon, Original text |
| 2 | Sacramental Theology | Reformed verses Roman Catholic View of Sacraments |
| 3 | Church History Overview | Ages of Church, Continuity, Reformation |
| Week | Subject | |
| 3 | Exam on Holy Scriptures and Sacraments (Online) Feb 29th | |
| 4 | The Liturgy and the Bishop | |
| 5 | Catholicity: Creed and Apostolic Succession | |
| 6 | Episcopal Formation Part 1 | |
| 7 | Episcopal Formation Part 2 | |
| 8 | Episcopal Formation Part 3 | |
| 9 | Review | |
| 10 | Episcopal Formation Part 4 | |
| 11 | Episcopal Formation Part 5 | |
| 12 | Episcopal Formation Part 6 | |
| 13 | Review | |
| 14 | Program Review | |

# Homework

**Answer the following:**

Define Episcopal.

Define Formation.

What is the vetting process?

What are some things that will aid in the development of a devotional life?

What is meant by the phrase: There is a priesthood of all believers, but not a presbytery of all believers?

What are the basic elements of the Formation program? Briefly explain each element.

We call this ***formation*** instead of catechism. Define Catechism.

Name some of the foundational truths of the faith that ministry is base on.