



The Anglican Diocese of the Southwest Profile for Our Next Bishop

In the 2019 Prayer Book service for the ordaining and consecrating of a bishop, the Archbishop says:

Brother, the Holy Scriptures and the ancient Canons command that we should not be hasty in laying on hands and admitting any person to authority in the Church of Christ, which our Lord purchased with no less price than the shedding of his own blood; so before we admit you to this Office, we will examine you, in order that this Congregation may know how you will conduct yourself in the Church of God.

Long before the Archbishop examines you in the context of that service, we ask you to examine yourself in light of the needs of the Anglican Diocese of the Southwest. We ask you to do so deliberately, prayerfully, and with the help of godly fellow believers whom you trust. You alone know your own heart best and whether or not God is calling you to the office of Bishop among us. To help you with your discernment process, we offer the following priorities developed by clergy and laity from across our Diocese.

We desire a bishop who loves God, has a rich personal relationship with him, and is an able preacher and teacher. Like Jesus who only did what he saw the Father doing, our new bishop will be practiced in seeking God and following his direction. Our bishop will have a deep and lively relationship with God and inspire us to do the same by his example, his preaching and his teaching. He will trust in the present-day work of the Holy Spirit and encourage us to seek both the gifts and the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

We desire a pastor who listens well and is personally interested in getting to know us. The clergy in particular need an advocate and friend who is fair minded and remembers the challenges of ministry – especially in smaller congregations and missions. Our bishop will support both men and women in holy orders while also respecting the diversity of perspectives on this within the ACNA. The laity in particular have asked for a bishop who will love the people he leads and invest time in getting to know us all in our varied parish settings.

We desire a leader who understands the necessity of building consensus and who is an able administrator. Take a moment to consider your own parish leadership style. Is there a broad consensus among your people for the direction you are leading? Do you gather many perspectives before coming to a decision affecting everyone? Have you tapped into the gifts of a wide variety of people in your parish to achieve that shared vision? Do you identify and train leaders who can raise

up others? Are you faithful in following through on plans and promises? To put things plainly: Once the vision is affirmed, are you self-disciplined and organized enough to see that the job gets done?

We desire a bishop whose passion for the Gospel will lead us forward in planting new churches. We are blessed with a vast territory and hundreds of cities and towns that we have not yet reached. Our new bishop will devote himself to raising up church planters from among us and from anywhere they may be found throughout Mexico and the United States. Because church planting can be an expensive enterprise, we will need a bishop with basic skills in fundraising. Many of our people have requested that our new bishop be conversant in Spanish. If you do not presently speak Spanish, we expect you will commit to developing this skill early in your episcopate.

We desire a youth-oriented bishop who will actively support our ministry among children, teenagers, and young adults. Our bishop's love for our younger members should be obvious to all. His commitment of time and resources in his current parish will reflect this. He will work with local clergy and lay leaders to reach and disciple young people throughout our Diocese. He will look for young people who may be called to ordained leadership and personally encourage them as they seek God's leading.

Finally, we desire someone who is resilient in body, mind, and spirit. As bishop, you will serve congregations in two nations with vast distances from one congregation to the next. It will seem that you are always travelling by car or air, and this can be challenging at times. Be honest with yourself. Are you in good physical and mental health? Can your marriage adapt to many nights away from home? Along with a lively devotional life, have you learned to exercise regularly and to rely on a few trusted souls with whom you can share your deepest burdens? Are you in this for the long haul?

Now that you have a better grasp of our priorities, we ask you to consider the following: Does the thought of leading us forward in mission and ministry bring a thrill to your heart? Does your wife (if you are married) feel this same way? Do you truly have the gifts and experience necessary, and does your ministry at present bear this out? If so, we earnestly invite your application, and we joyfully look forward to taking the next steps together. Whether God says no somewhere along the way, or he calls you to that examination before the Archbishop on the day of your consecration, know that we are deeply honored you are testing this calling. May we all hear God's voice clearly. Our prayers are with you.

Committee on Nominations
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