

# CANON XIX

## Relinquishment or Abandonment of the Ministry

### 1. Relinquishment

- a) Any priest or deacon wishing to relinquish the exercise of the ordained ministry, may so declare in writing, according to the form prescribed in Schedule A. The form of relinquishment duly signed and witnessed, shall be delivered to the bishop of the diocese in which the said priest or deacon is registered.
- b) The bishop, having consulted personally where possible with the priest or deacon, shall communicate in writing to the person so declaring acceptance of the relinquishment.
- c) The bishop shall give notice of the relinquishment to the Primate and all diocesan bishops of The Anglican Church of Canada according to the form prescribed in Schedule B.
- d) Relinquishment of the exercise of the ordained ministry removes from the priest or deacon the right to exercise that office, including spiritual authority as a minister of Word and Sacraments conferred in ordination. Any license held for which it is an indispensable qualification for such person to have such ministry shall be null and void.
- e) The bishop or successor in the See may terminate such relinquishment and reinstate the priest or deacon in the exercise of the ordained ministry. Notice thereof shall be communicated to the Primate and all diocesan bishops of The Anglican Church of Canada.
- f) If, following consultation and due enquiry, reinstatement is declined, the priest or deacon may appeal to the metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province. The metropolitan shall attempt to mediate between the parties and, if unsuccessful in resolving the matter, shall refer the request to the provincial court. If the bishop refusing such appeal shall be the metropolitan the appeal shall be made to the other diocesan bishop of the province senior by the rule of the province.

### 2. Abandonment

- a) Any priest or deacon, who has not relinquished the exercise of the ordained ministry and has:
  - i) abandoned The Anglican Church of Canada either by public renunciation of its doctrine or discipline, or by formal admission into another religious body, or in any other manner;
  - ii) abandoned the practice of the ordained ministry of word and sacraments for a period of two years, unless prevented from doing so by illness or other reasonable cause (including retirement);
  - iii) engaged in secular employment without the written consent of the bishop of the diocese where registered to the substantial detriment of the ordained ministry;

shall be presumed to have abandoned the exercise of ordained ministry. Notice to this effect shall be sent to the priest or deacon according to the form of declaration prescribed in Schedule C, along with a copy of this Canon.

- b) It shall be the right of the priest or deacon to submit to the bishop within 60 days either:
  - i) a statutory declaration that the facts alleged in the notice are untrue, or
  - ii) a retraction of the acts and declarations which constitute a renunciation of the doctrine and discipline of The Anglican Church of Canada, or which led to admission into another religious body, or other act of abandonment, or
  - iii) an undertaking to cease secular employment.
- c) The bishop shall then make due enquiry into the matter. If then of the opinion that the circumstances set forth in the notice are true, or that the retraction or undertaking, if any, is unacceptable, the bishop shall affirm in writing that the priest or deacon has abandoned the exercise of the ministry. If the bishop is of the opinion that the circumstances set forth in the notice are not true, or if the retraction or undertaking is acceptable, then the notice of abandonment shall be revoked in writing.
- d) Should the priest or deacon not oppose the notice in writing within 60 days from the date thereof, the bishop shall then affirm that the priest or deacon has abandoned the exercise of the ordained ministry and shall notify the person in writing of this decision.
- e) The bishop's affirmation of abandonment of the exercise of ordained ministry removes from the priest or deacon the right to exercise the office, including the spiritual authority as a minister of Word and Sacraments conferred in ordination. Any licence held for which it is an indispensable qualification for him or her to have such a ministry shall be null and void.
- f) The bishop shall give notice of the abandonment of the exercise of the ordained ministry to all metropolitans and diocesan bishops of The Anglican Church of Canada according to the form prescribed in Schedule D.
- g) On application of the priest or deacon the bishop or a successor in the See may restore such priest or deacon to the exercise of the ordained ministry. Notice thereof shall be communicated to all metropolitans and diocesan bishops of The Anglican Church of Canada.
- h) A priest or deacon may appeal an affirmation of abandonment of the exercise of the ordained ministry or a refusal of reinstatement to the metropolitan of the ecclesiastical province. The metropolitan shall attempt to mediate between the parties, and, if unsuccessful in resolving the matter, shall refer the request to the provincial court. If the bishop affirming the abandonment of the ordained ministry shall be the metropolitan the appeal shall be made to the diocesan bishop of the province senior by the rule of the province.

### **3. Bishops**

- a) The provisions of parts 1 and 2 of this Canon shall also apply to bishops of The Anglican Church of Canada. In such cases the metropolitan of the province in which the bishop resides shall perform the functions assigned by these sections to the bishop in the case of members of the clergy. In the case of a provincial metropolitan, the Primate shall perform the functions assigned by these sections to the bishop in the case of clergy. In the case of the Primate, the metropolitan senior by election shall perform the functions assigned by these sections to the bishop in the case of members of the clergy.
- b) The right of appeal defined in sections 1 f) and 2 h) of this Canon shall lie in the case of a bishop with the provincial House of Bishops, and in the case of a metropolitan, to the provincial metropolitans not involved in the case.

*Schedule A*

**Relinquishment of the Exercise of the Ministry**

I, ....., having been admitted to the office of bishop/priest/deacon of The Anglican Church of Canada, have voluntarily relinquished the exercise of that ministry according to the terms of Canon XIX of the General Synod of The Anglican Church of Canada.

Witness ..... Signed .....

Date .....

*Schedule B*

**Notice of Relinquishment of the Exercise of the Ministry**

This is a notification that ....., having been admitted to the office of bishop/priest/deacon in The Anglican Church of Canada, has voluntarily relinquished the exercise of that ministry according to the terms of Canon XIX of the General Synod of The Anglican Church of Canada.

The date from which this relinquishment is effective is .....

Signed .....

Date .....

*Schedule C*

**Notice of Presumption of Abandonment of the Exercise of the Ministry**

To ..... , this is to advise that under the terms of Canon XIX (enclosed) of the General Synod of The Anglican Church of Canada you are presumed to have abandoned the exercise of the ministry to which you were ordained.

This notice is based on the following facts:

.....  
.....

Date ..... Signed .....

Witness ..... Bishop of .....  
Chancellor or Registrar

*Schedule D*

**Notice of Abandonment of the Exercise of the Ministry**

This is a notification that ....., having been admitted to the office of bishop/ priest/ deacon in The Anglican Church of Canada, has abandoned the exercise of that ministry according to the terms of Canon XIX of the General Synod of The Anglican Church of Canada.

Signed .....

Date .....

*Schedule E*

**Notice of Reinstatement To Ministry  
(after prior relinquishment)**

To: The Primate and all diocesan bishops in The Anglican Church of Canada

This is notification that I have reinstated . . . . [name] . . . . to the exercise of ordained ministry in The Anglican Church of Canada, pursuant to General Synod Canon XIX, section 1 e).

The reinstatement was effective on . . . [date].

Signed .....

Bishop of the Diocese of ..... [\*]

Date .....

[\* Note: The Bishop making the reinstatement must be the diocesan Bishop or the successor to the diocesan Bishop who accepted the relinquishment.]

*Schedule F*

**Notice of Restoration To Ministry  
(after prior abandonment)**

To: The Primate, Metropolitans and all diocesan bishops in The Anglican Church of Canada

This is notification that I have restored . . . . [name] . . . . to the exercise of ordained ministry in The Anglican Church of Canada, pursuant to General Synod Canon XIX, section 2 g).

The restoration was effective on . . . [date].

Signed .....

Bishop of the Diocese of ..... [\*]

Date .....

[\* Note: The Bishop making the restoration must be the diocesan Bishop or the successor to the diocesan Bishop who affirmed the abandonment.]