

*3.0 CONTINUING EDUCATION OF
THE LAITY*

“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.” 2Timothy 2:15

This admonition to Timothy along with the whole counsel of Scripture has carried into the Canons of ACNA and the Diocese of Western Anglicans wherein lay persons are reminded of their responsibility to continue their instruction in the Faith so as to remain effective ministers of Jesus Christ.

These identical Canons state:

1. “The people of God [that is, the clergy *and* the laity] are the chief agents of the mission of the Church to extend the Kingdom of God by so presenting Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit that people will to put their trust in God through Him, know Him as Savior, and serve Him as Lord in the fellowship of the Church.
2. “The effective ministry of the Church is the responsibility of the laity no less than it is the responsibility of the Bishop and the priests and deacons.
3. “It is incumbent for every lay member of the Church to become an effective minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, one who is spiritually qualified, gifted, called, and mature in the faith.”
4. “The duty of every lay person” [per ACNA canons] includes a duty to “engage regularly in reading and studying Holy Scripture and the Doctrines of the Church,” to “Continue their instruction in the Faith so as to remain an effective minister of Jesus Christ,” and to “devote themselves to the ministry of Christ among those who do not know Him.”

The importance of these provisions in terms of the future development of our Church cannot be overstated: not only does the laity share equally with the clergy in the governance of ACNA and of this Diocese, but congregation growth and successful church planting depend in no small measure on the informed, effective participation of lay persons in extending the Kingdom of God in our communities.

Concerning Duties and Responsibilities of the Laity

Section 1.01 *The Ministry of the Laity*

The people of God are the chief agents of the mission of the Church to extend the Kingdom of God by so presenting Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit that people will come to put their trust in God through Him, know Him as Savior, and serve Him as Lord in the fellowship of the Church. The effective ministry of the Church is the responsibility of the laity no less than it is the responsibility of the Bishop and the priests and deacons. It is incumbent for every lay member of the Church to become an effective minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, one who is spiritually qualified, gifted, called, and mature in the faith. This Diocese may by Canon establish standards for the ministry of the laity.



Section 1.02 *Specific Duties and Responsibilities of the Laity*

It shall be the duty of every layperson of this Diocese to:

1. Worship every Lord's Day in a Church unless reasonably prevented;
2. Engage regularly in reading and studying Holy Scripture and the Doctrines of the Church;
3. Observe their baptismal vows, lead an upright and sober life, and not give scandal to the Church;
4. Present their children and those they have led to the Lord for baptism and confirmation;
5. Give regular financial support, with the biblical tithe as the minimum standard of giving;
6. Practice forgiveness daily according to our Lord's teaching;
7. Receive worthily the Sacrament of Holy Communion as often as reasonable;
8. Observe the feasts and fasts of the Church set forth in the Anglican formularies;
9. Continue their instruction in the Faith so as to remain an effective minister of Jesus Christ;
10. Devote themselves to the ministry of Christ among those who do not know Him.

Congregations and Church Plants of this Diocese must implement and sustain an effective program(s) of Christian education, or catechesis, that addresses and facilitates these ACNA objectives, so that members of the congregation are taught to become – and to continually develop their abilities as – effective ministers of Jesus Christ, not only within but beyond the boundaries of the local church.

