



## MINISTRY DEVELOPMENT

### FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ORDINANDS

#### Some principles to bear in mind

*“For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not first sit down and estimate the cost, to see whether he has enough to complete it.” Luke 14.28*

Our Lord’s words concerning Christian discipleship were never truer than as they apply to our particular calling to ordained ministry. It is a great privilege to be called to service as a minister in the Church of Jesus Christ but as with the early disciples, the personal costs can often be very high. As a Diocese we will do all we can to help you to complete your training and formation and to support you in your ministry, but you will have to be prepared for what can be a very testing time particularly in the area of personal finances.

The Diocese of London aims to provide adequate financial support for sponsored ordinands and their families during their training at college. Individual cases will vary but we ask you to be open and honest with your Area Director of Ordinands who will be in a position to guide and advise you and please bear in mind the following general points:

- The diocese guarantees maintenance support at the level agreed in the national guidelines;
- The money available to the diocese for the payment of these grants is raised in parishes and we have an obligation to exercise careful stewardship of it (the overall cost to the Diocese each year is now in excess of £1.5 million);
- All diocesan grants are means tested: in some cases the family income may be such that no grant is payable;
- You are giving sacrificially by offering yourself for ordination and you are very likely to have significantly less disposable income during training (and indeed after ordination) than you have at present. You must therefore be prepared to adjust your lifestyle and perhaps make some hard spending decisions.
- You are expected to ‘maximise the potential’ of any income, e.g. interest from savings and income from property, in order to contribute as far as possible to your own maintenance. (Selling up and putting everything into offshore accounts or long-term bonds is not in the spirit of our partnership in the Gospel!)
- If you wish to get married during training you need to obtain the good will of your bishop and their permission for you to continue in training after the marriage. The financial implications of this need to be considered carefully as they do if you plan to have children whilst in training;
- Spouses or civil partners of ordinands without dependent children are expected to work and to contribute to the family budget. Permission for a spouse or partner not to work must be given by the sponsoring bishop and is only granted in exceptional circumstances. If a decision is taken by you as a couple to have children whilst in training, this will have implications financially and also on the length of training or level of qualification so please take time to consider these and consult with your ADO and college.

- If you have sizeable debts you should not start training until a strategy for repayment has been agreed with your Area Director of Ordinands as debts can be a bar to ordination.
- On occasions there may be significant and extraordinary items of expenditure required to enable your training to continue e.g. the cost of renewing or extending a visa. These costs will not normally be covered by the diocese.

In the first instance your Area Director of Ordinands is the person to talk to in the first instance about finances during your training. As soon as you are recommended for training you will receive information and application forms on the maintenance support provided which you should complete and return to Elaine Saunders the Finance Support Officer. She is also happy to answer any questions you may have.

Elaine Saunders,  
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020 7932 1218.

To reiterate whilst it is a privilege to be called to ordained ministry in our affluent society, it is unlikely that as an ordained minister you will ever be more than 'comfortable' and you may therefore be called to make very different decisions on lifestyle choices individually and as a family. Indeed you may find yourself looking to the state to provide additional financial support, just as many others in our parishes do. Indeed, there is a shortage of men and women who are prepared to serve God in parishes that include more than their share of the poor and socially excluded.

As a Diocese we will do all we can to support you through the years of training and formation and to equip you for ministry, but it is also important that you are prepared and recognise the implications of ministry particularly on family life and personal finances.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Neil Evans". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

The Revd Dr NEIL EVANS  
Diocesan Director of Ordinands