

PASTORAL PROVISION

As many of you will have heard, Bishop Jenky on May 24 will ordain me, along with five distinguished seminarians, to the priesthood. Many will wonder how it is possible for a married man to be ordained in the Latin-rite. The material below explains, in brief, how Pope John Paul II created the Pastoral Provision for convert Episcopal ministers nearly 30 years ago. Today, Pope Benedict himself must grant approval for the local ordinary to ordain a candidate whom he has put forward under the Pastoral Provision. Those interested in additional information are encouraged to visit www.pastoralprovision.org. DG

In 1980, the Holy See, in response from priests and laity of the Episcopal Church who were seeking full communion with the Catholic Church, created a Pastoral Provision to provide them with special pastoral attention. The Pastoral Provision is under the jurisdiction of the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith whose Delegate directs the working of the Provision.

Under the Provision the ordination of married Episcopal priests was made possible. It also authorized the establishment of personal parishes in dioceses of the United States in response to the request of former faithful of the Episcopal Church in which they may retain certain liturgical elements proper to the Anglican tradition. The special liturgy was subsequently approved by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Committee for the Liturgy of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Pastoral Provision is a service rendered to the bishops of the United States by which former Episcopal ministers who have been accepted as candidates for priestly ordination receive theological, spiritual, and pastoral preparation for ministry in the Catholic Church.

Since 1983 over seventy men have been ordained for priestly ministry in Catholic dioceses of the United States; seven personal parishes have been established and the Book of Divine Worship has been authorized.