

Guide for Group Discussion/Solo Consideration of Nominees for the 12th Bishop of Springfield

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the minds of those who shall choose a bishop for this Diocese, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. -BCP page 818, #13

1 Timothy 3:1 says that an *episkopos* (bishop) should be above reproach, faithful to his or her spouse, temperate, sensible, respectable, an apt teacher, not a drunkard, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money, a disciplined parent, and well thought of by outsiders.

The Book of Common Prayer (<https://bcponline.org/> Episcopal Services -> The Ordination of a Bishop -> The Examination p. 517-518) asks that a bishop be faithful in prayer, faithful in the study and application of Scripture, bold in proclaiming the gospel, one who both enlightens the minds and stirs up the conscience of the people, capable of nourishing Christians from “the riches of God’s grace,” prepared to guard the faith, unity, and discipline of the church, and merciful to all, compassionate to the poor and strangers, and a defender of those who have no helper.

Additionally, our Diocesan Profile <https://www.episcopalspringfield.org/wp-content/uploads/Diocesan-Profile-2021.pdf> describes the qualities important to those within the Diocese of Springfield for a new bishop. It suggests that our next bishop should be honest, open-minded, and caring, an effective communicator with an inclusive leadership style who can foster community, communicate a Christ-centered theology, and confront social sins such as marginalization, oppression, poverty, and racism. Their life should be deeply formed by faith in Jesus Christ, and they should, like Jesus, live and work among us here in the Diocese.

The names and background information of nominees announced on September 14th – check the Diocese website for more information <https://www.episcopalspringfield.org/bishop-search/>

Now that the nominees are announced, please take time in a group setting or individually to consider:

1. Which nominees seem most likely to have the qualities required by Scripture?
2. Which nominees seem most likely to have the qualities required by the BCP?
3. Which nominees seem most likely to have the qualities important to the Diocese as outlined in the Profile?
4. Are there any differences you can note to the answers to questions 1-3?
5. Which qualities are important to you for the next bishop?
6. Which nominees seem most likely to have the qualities you prioritize?
7. Does your response to question 6 differ from your responses to questions 1-3?

If you are a Clergy or Lay Delegate to the Nominating Synod on October 16, 2021, please consider your answers to the above questions. If you are not a delegate, please take time to share your thoughts with your church’s delegates to the Nominating Synod.