



*St. Catherine's Seminary is the name of the internal study and training program of the Old Catholic Apostolic Church.*

## **OCAC Preparing for Chaplaincy Training Module**

### **Formal Chaplaincy**

This document will attempt to outline the general procedures for students as well as clergy in the Old Catholic Apostolic Church (OCAC) to initiate a personal chaplaincy.

A chaplaincy is the office, post, station, or incumbency of a chaplain. Dependent upon this definition is, of course, the definition of a chaplain:

- # 1 : Clergy attached to a branch of the military
- # 2 : Clergy attached to an institution, such as a jail or prison or hospital
- # 3 : Clergy attached to labor or trade unions
- # 4 : Clergy attached to governmental protective services, such as police, fire, or emergency medicine

#1 will likely not apply to students or graduates of St. Catherine's. Most military branches require an accredited degree and actual military rank to be a chaplain. The OCAC, however, as an independent institution, is free to accept retired military chaplains into its clergy structure; such qualified clergy may continue *ad hoc* to their former military branch if that is allowed. Denomination restrictions will vary from country to country. For example, the Royal Navy of the UK lists its accepted churches here:

<https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/careers/roles-and-specialisations/services/surface-fleet/chaplain>

The Old Catholic denomination is not currently listed as of 2023, but it is interesting to note that in 1982 the US Navy had a chaplaincy code of “548” for the Liberal Catholic Church. Requirements change, so consult a military representative.

#2 and #4 will definitely require formal training and certification. Since the OCAC has as its Primate the United Kingdom, an Internet query of:

“chaplaincy legal requirements uk”

yields this URL as the first to be returned:

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/chaplaincy/>

As another example, this query:

“how to become an uk police chaplain”

yields this URL:

<https://www.policechaplaincy.uk/how-do-i-become-a-chaplain>

As is evident, the formation of queries will also be unique to your specific geographic area of responsibility. With respect to option #3, labor and trade unions, simply find their web site, e-mail, or social media and contact them directly. Better yet, befriend a union member or join a union, too.

Even if you do have formalized chaplaincy or pastoral counseling training, the following page on the OCAC web site contains pertinent informational resources:

<https://liberalcatholics.uk/pastoral.xhtml>

Compliance with civil regulations and laws is essential. Although OCAC clergy is non-stipendary and not considered employees, civil litigation is still a possibility.

## **Informal Chaplaincy**

The section above dealt specifically with a formally contracted or agreed-upon chaplaincy that might require national or local certification. There are, however, at least 3 methods of informal chaplaincy that present immediate opportunities for making an impact:

- # 1 : Mass or prayer service at an elder or homeless center
- # 2 : Participating in a prison correspondence program
- #3 : Volunteering at a food bank or soup kitchen

An example query of:

“prison pen pal correspondence program uk”

yields the following URL:

<https://prisonfellowship.org.uk/our-work/letter-link/>

Potential informal chaplains will still need the approval of the sponsoring organization. Many may ask for you to formally sign-in on a visitor log, and some may even do cursory background checks.

These may seem to be a “gray chaplaincy”, but they certainly meet the Francis of Assisi theory to “preach the gospel and, if necessary, use words.” Without any pressure, simply mention your association with the OCAC; suggest that they review the web site; and certainly suggest that they learn about independent catholicism. Some people may be reticent about non-Roman apostolic succession, and some may quickly let you know.

More importantly, simply listen to any problems and concerns they have, and try to help them find an appropriate venue of help. ASK if they would like to pray or be prayed for.

Compliance with civil regulations and laws is essential, even in an informal setting. Although OCAC clergy is non-stipendary and not considered employees, civil litigation is still a possibility.

Whether a formal or informal chaplain, be cognizant of the fact that both inter-denominational and inter-faith situations may present themselves.

*“Whenever you did it for any of my people, no matter how unimportant they seemed,  
you did it for me.”*

*Matt 25:40 (CEV)*

### General Diagrammatic Procedure

