

Frequently Asked Questions

Below are some answers to questions we are often asked, if your answer isn't here do contact us.

Please note that this document covers both the ways of belonging. Where the answer is slightly different for Integrated or Immersive, we indicate in bold.

1. How much does it cost?

The Community of St Anselm doesn't get any central Church funding. We are dependent on community members and generous donors. We don't choose members based on their ability to pay. However, giving financially is an important way to express the value that each member places on community membership. If you are accepted, you will be able to talk to a member of our team about setting goals for fundraising and giving. You will never be alone in this and you may be surprised by how God wishes to use others to bless you.

The costs to run the community (including all community engagement from September to the end of June) for each member is: **Immersive: £23,000, Integrated: £3,600.** For more details on finances and how to donate please see the 'Finance' document on the website.

2. Why the age limit?

The Community of St Anselm is open to those 20 - 35 years old. By focusing on adults early in their careers, Archbishop Justin Welby hopes the Community will help reintroduce a lifestyle of contemplative prayer, discernment and spiritual formation to a generation which has never experienced it.

By gathering young adults from around the world, the Community brings together people who have very little common ground other than their love for Jesus. Being in a roughly similar stage of life helps people relate to one another as brothers and sisters. You can find out more about the traditional forms of monastic or Religious Life in the Church of England [here](#).

3. Why the white robes?

Each member is given a white prayer robe called an Alb (from the Latin for white) for the duration of their membership. You will use it when we pray together. It represents our unity. We come from so many different cultures and church traditions, yet despite our differences, divisions and often painful histories, when we come to God in prayer, we are brothers and sisters in the same family and we belong together.

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It represents our status as forgiven human beings who are being cleansed and healed day by day because of Jesus' finished work on the cross. It represents our hope – that one day we will all stand, from every nation, tribe, people and language, worshipping God together.

4. What is daily life like?

Integrated: Initially the same. As an integrated member it's all about how being part of the community integrates into your ordinary life of work, study etc... Alongside this, membership of the community will introduce you to spiritual practices for daily life. Members will meet at least once per week to eat, share and learn together. Spiritual accompaniment takes place regularly too. Periodically, we will go away on retreat enabling moments of immersion in the community life and time to go deeper with God.

Immersive: The central building block of every day in the community is prayer rooted in real life. Joining with our sisters and brothers across the word and the across time, we pray morning and evening and celebrate the Eucharist regularly. Every day involves shared meals and most days will have a period of silence. We also make time for community tasks, periods of worship, sharing and spiritual accompaniment. Some days will have periods of study and of service to others. Periodically, we will go away on retreat and though the prayer and shared meals remain, the schedule looks a little different. Will I be able to keep in touch with friends and family? Yes! Although you will reduce the use of phones and other communications quite a lot, we understand it is important to be able to stay in touch with family and friends – especially if you are far away from home. We do have WIFI everywhere...

5. What's a spiritual accompanier?

Someone to walk the journey with you who is a little further up the road. This is not spiritual direction. You will not find they give you the 'answers' but rather offer a mirror back to help you see what God is saying to you. To help you trust that you can hear the voice of God in your life.

6. Is it just for Anglicans?

The community is open to all Christians from any denomination, church or tradition. Our sincere hope and prayer is that through the experience of community we will learn from the strengths of our different experiences and styles of worship. Each year the community is comprised of a large variety of very different traditions. This is a blessing – enabling us to experience first-hand the treasures of different parts of the Christian family.

7. What kind of prayer, study and service?

We follow the example of Jesus, like His first disciples did, and learn from him to pray to our Father with boldness and simplicity. You will be encouraged to take daily personal prayer times led from specific exercises and to experiment with praying corporately in different ways. We discuss our prayer life with others and lay aside our busyness on retreats.

We study to learn more about the faith we profess. For **integrated** members the times of study follow a pattern of teaching, testimony and sharing with daily exercises. There are no exams to pass! For **immersive** members a day a week is dedicated to teaching and reflection. There isn't a curriculum, but we draw on leading theologians and practitioners to inspire us. In learning together, we deepen our community life and help each other to understand the depth of our journey as Christians. This is anchored by retreats.

We follow the Franciscan insight that becoming more like Jesus is inseparable from serving others, especially the poorest in society. We believe it is here that we find the unexpected teachers. Community members are encouraged to find local charities and agencies, engaging with the poor and marginalised, with those in need, both in the immediate area and further afield. We can help with finding the right place. We ask **integrated** members to devote about an hour per week to stepping outside of your normal life to serve others. **Immersive** members spend two days a week serving in local charities.

8. What is worship like?

Throughout this year in God's time, you will experience a wide array of different worship styles from formal to informal, loud to silent and in small groups or as part of large congregations. We are a charismatic community, in that we believe in the power of the Holy Spirit to transform us and all we say and do. Our daily worship is in the Anglican tradition, but community members are encouraged to bring elements of their own church's worship to the life of the community.

9. What is a Rule of Life?

Communities and individuals around the world live by a rule of life. It's not a set of rules (which can be confusing) as much as an expression of how we live together well. The St Anselm rule draws from the Rule of St Benedict and helps us to gather round the core aims, responsibilities and the many joyful opportunities we share as a community. It gives us the chance to keep one another accountable to a shared set of values, while honouring the traditions we've inherited from many generations of faithful believers.

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We sometimes talk about our rule as like the handrail on the stairs. It's always there showing the way and is there for us to hold onto when we need it. Each year we discuss the same words afresh and seek God's inspiration to guide us in our shared life together. The rule of life is available on the website.

10. How do I apply?

Check the 'Is it for me?' document first, if the answer is yes then hit the apply button on the website to begin the online form.

The application process involves an online form which asked for some basic information about you and some questions about why you want to come and join us. Please do not feel this is a test. It is simply there to help us discern together if the community is the right place for you. The online form normally has two stages, the second is additional questions which take a little longer to answer and go into more depth. The final stage is an interview which is normally done via skype.

Please be assured of our prayers during the process and don't be afraid to ask (by using the 'contact us' section of the website) if you have any questions.

Immersive applications normally open in November of the year before and close at the end of March. **Integrated** are normally open until the end of July.