



## DIACONATE FORMATION

**DEACONS:** Deacons are public ministers of the Catholic Church, ordained for the three-fold ministries of the Word, Liturgy, and Charity. At present, there are more than 80 active deacons serving in parishes and special ministries throughout the Diocese. Fundamentally, a deacon is a Man of Service who is called from the Church Community to a lifelong and public commitment to service through the sacrament of Holy Orders. Deacons are men who are best characterized as “having a servant’s heart.” Their lived faith is one of caring for others, helping where needed, and giving of themselves in the works of their parish community and/or the Diocesan Church.

**MINISTRIES:** Deacons serve in a variety of ministries: as parish ministers, prison chaplains, hospital chaplains, diocesan administration and services. New deacons might be assigned to their home parishes but should realize that deacons could also from time to time be asked to take on a new assignment in the diocese. Deacons minister under the authority of the Bishop and are assigned to assist in his overall ministry.

**PROGRAM OF FORMATION:** Prior to admission to formation, those desiring to apply for the diaconate will complete a detailed application and participate in a series of interviews, psychological evaluations, and other pertinent discernment programs to ensure the men are properly discerning a call to the clergy.

There are four areas or dimensions of formation: the *human*, the *spiritual*, the *intellectual* and the *pastoral*.

### THE HUMAN DIMENSION

The human dimension of formation has as its goal helping the men in formation unlock their human potential and develop their personalities in such a way that by the time of their ordination, they will be a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their encounter with Jesus Christ.

### THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION

The human dimension is incomplete without reference to the spiritual dimension of formation, where our new life of Baptism is developed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The first goal of spiritual formation, therefore, is to establish and nourish those attitudes, habits, and practices that will set the foundation for a lifetime of spiritual growth through disciplined prayer and faithful perseverance.

### THE INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION

The intellectual or academic formation has three principal purposes: to provide intellectual nourishment, to provide an instrument for vocational discernment, and to equip the future deacon with all that he needs to be a credible witness to the faith and a clear spokesman for the Church.

### THE PASTORAL DIMENSION

The purpose of the pastoral dimension is to help the man in formation discern his gifts for ministry in the areas of service to the Word, at the Altar, and charity to the poor and suffering. A secondary purpose of formation in the pastoral dimension is to provide the candidate’s wife and family a suitable occasion to explore more fully the demands that ministry may place upon the family after ordination.

**LOCATION:** All classes meet at Saint Catherine of Alexandria Parish in Tulsa, Oklahoma

**WIVES:** Spouses are highly encouraged to attend wives formation during your husband’s academic weekend. Also, it is recommended that the wives of deacon candidates attend the Priscilla Society activities which occur all throughout the year. The Priscilla Society is the permanent Deacon wives group.

# DIACONAL FORMATION ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

## PERSONAL REQUIREMENTS

- Must be male, fully initiated into the Roman Catholic Church (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) for a minimum of five (5) years.
- Must be at least 35 years of age and not older than 60 at time of application.
- Must be actively involved in the Church, and faithful in the practice of the Faith.
- Must be registered and known in a parish and recommended by his pastor.
- Must be a citizen of the United States or a permanent resident at time of application
- Must enjoy a sound ethical and moral reputation in both the Church and civic community.
- Must disclose all possible canonical irregularities and impediments for the reception of Holy Orders.
- Must demonstrate maturity and balance, self-knowledgeable, open to growth and change
- Must have sufficient academic background to successfully understand, internalize, and complete all course material, which usually means a high school education, GED or higher degree. ESL courses may be necessary.
- Must possess financial security with a history of steady employment. Be aware that frequent travel or reassignment could hinder your success in the program.

## HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

- Must enjoy good physical and mental health with no condition that would impede diaconal ministry.
- If there is a history of substance abuse, have achieved sobriety for at least five (5) years and continue to participate in a recovery program.
- If a history of grave addiction exists, (e.g. gambling, sexual, etc.) have demonstrated a freedom from addictive behavior for at least five (5) years and continue to participate in a recovery program.

## FAMILY REQUIREMENTS

- If married, must be married for at least five (5) years and be in a positive, stable, and sacramental marriage, enjoying the full support of his spouse. Should his wife precede him in death, he must be willing to remain unmarried and celibate.
- If widowed, have at least two (2) years to heal and recover from the loss of his spouse.
- If single, he must be single and celibate for at least three (3) years before he can apply to demonstrate that he enjoys a stable, settled life, has a history of healthy relationships, and is able and willing to accept the gift of celibacy, understanding the full implications of this charism.
- Must be able to give the time required for study and service without detriment to family or employment

## SPIRITUAL AND MINISTERIAL REQUIREMENTS

- Must be prayerful and committed to further spiritual formation.
- Must engage in regular participation of the Church's Sacramental life.
- Must have good Christian reputation and personal integrity. Maintain an active involvement in the ministry of Jesus Christ.
- Must participate in faith enrichment opportunities such as Bible study, retreats, adult education, etc.

For more information contact:

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