



DISCERNMENT PROCESS

Many young men first notice a quiet stirring long before they ever contact the Vocations Office: a restlessness at Mass, a question that will not leave them, or a sense that the Lord may be asking something more than they had planned for their life. That interior movement is often the first grace of a vocation. It is good and it is real. It is not yet, however, formal discernment.

Formal discernment with the Diocese of Brownsville is a defined process of accompaniment. It is not something a man undertakes on his own, but a path in which he is accompanied by the Vocations Directors, his pastor, and his spiritual director.

INQUIRER

Initial Inquiry

The man contacts the Office of Vocations or is referred by a priest. The Office of Vocations responds and forwards the inquiry.

Visit with Pastor

The man introduces himself to his parish pastor, discusses the self-assessment form, completes the "Get to Know your Pastor Form", and begins serving in the parish.

DISCERNER

Visit with the Vocations Directors

The Director of Vocations and the Associate Director review the inquiry and meet with the prospect. During this meeting, a plan for discernment is established and the expectations of discerners are explained.

D180

The discerner participates in regular meetings with the Vocations Directors, vocation events, retreats, parish ministry, and ongoing assessment of sincerity, maturity, spiritual readiness, and openness to priesthood.

Meetings with the Vocations Directors and with a spiritual director should take place at least every thirty (30) days. A man is considered to be in formal discernment with the Diocese of Brownsville only upon entering D180.



CATHOLIC DIOCESE
OF
BROWNSVILLE

OFFICE OF VOCATIONS

APPLICANT

Following a period of accompaniment in D180, a discerner may be invited to proceed to the next phases of the process:

- **Invitation to Apply**
- **Application Review**

The stages are **Inquirer**, then **Discerner**, then **Applicant**.

If accepted by the Diocese of Brownsville for priestly formation, the applicant is thereafter referred to as a **Seminarian**.