

Selection Criteria for Admission

From : National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

GENERAL CRITERIA – MYSTERY OF VOCATION

Behavioral patterns discerned among exemplary deacons:

- A “natural inclination of service to the ...Christian community” and to all in need.
- Psychological integrity.
- A capacity for dialogue, which implies a sense of docility and openness.
- The ability to share one’s faith, yet listen respectfully to other points of view.
- The capacity to listen carefully and without prejudices – respecting people in the context of their religion, race, sex, ethnicity and culture.
- Good communication skills and public speaking ability, with potential for preaching, catechizing and evangelization.
- A sense of responsibility that includes the fulfilling of one’s word and completing one’s work.
- Self-directed and collaborative accountability.
- Balanced and prudent judgment.
- Generosity in service.
- The ability to lead, motivate, facilitate, and animate others into appropriate action and service.

Spiritual and evangelical qualities of deacons include:

- A discernment of a call to the office of deacon.
- A sound faith and a good Christian reputation.
- Active involvement in the Church’s apostolate, with demonstrated leadership in the area of social concerns and justice.
- Personal integrity, maturity and holiness.
- Regular participation in the Church’s sacramental life.
- Evidence of recognized, ongoing love and commitment to the Church’s life and service – pastor/administrator/parish director, pastoral staff, parish council, family and friends.
- Participation in faith enrichment opportunities –retreats, days of reflection, adult education programming or lay ministry formation.

- Understanding and willingness to accept the demands of formation and subsequent lifelong learning and commitment to diaconal ministry.
- If married, a positive and stable marriage, with understanding/ approval of applicant’s spouse. If single, a mature and celibate state of life.
- Active membership in a Christian community for at least five years, with at least two years in the current parish.
- Capacity for obedience and fraternal communion.
- A deep spirituality and prayer life.

Particular law in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee includes:

- At least 30 years, but no older than 60 years, of age at the start of formation.
- Written endorsement and ongoing support of the pastor/ administrator/parish director throughout the years of formation.
- Sufficient economic security and job stability.
- Demonstrated fidelity and love for all that the Church teaches.

Other Criteria

- Good health, ability to handle college-level work and function in an adult learning environment.
- Is capable of giving serious attention and time to theological study, spiritual growth, pastoral ministry and personal transformation in a multicultural setting.
- Has a love for the Church and the ability to adapt to the future needs of the Church.
- Demonstrates active involvement in an apostolate at the parish, including – charity, justice, advocacy, faith formation, liturgy and parish life. Exhibits servant leadership.
- Free of canonical impediments or irregularities (CIC, cc. 1040-1042).
- Proof of U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status.

ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE



Diaconate Formation

3501 S. Lake Drive, St. Francis, WI 53235-0900

Phone: 414-758-2202

Email: diaconateformation@archmil.org

PERMANENT DIACONATE



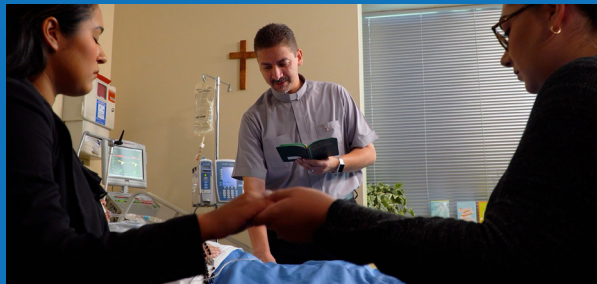
ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE
DIACONATE
Where love becomes service.

Why a Deacon?

Diaconal ministry works hand in hand with both priestly and lay ministry as a sacrament to bring about the Kingdom of God. Deacons are men with a charisma and a calling to radical availability for service to the People of God, the Church. The deacon's vocation calls him to collaborate with the bishop and the priests in an exercise of a ministry which is not of their own, but the Word of God, calling all to conversion and holiness. It is a ministry of reconciliation, of outreach to the most marginalized and those most in need of care, of education and justice. The diaconate was not reinstated because we have a shortage of priests or lay ministers, but to relieve the shortage of ordained deacons. It was restored as "a living icon of Christ the Servant within the Church ... a visible sign or sacrament of the Lord Christ himself."

WHOEVER wants to
become **GREAT** among you
must be your **SERVANT...**

– (MARK 10:43)



What is Expected of Deacons?

The deacon serves the bishop, with certain expectations:

- An understanding that he has a diocesan responsibility, a calling to serve in a variety of settings.
- Competence in the ministry of the Word, as evangelizer and teacher, Liturgy as sanctifier, and of Charity and Justice as witness and guide.
- A willingness to serve the diocesan Church wherever needed, even at the fringes of society.



**"Deacons, going the distance
to serve the People of God."**

The Service of a Deacon

Deacons are ordained to assist the bishop in his pastoral service; he appoints them to their assigned ministry. Deacons are typically given a parish and encouraged to have diocesan – or "extra-parochial" – assignments, primarily in agencies such as hospitals, jails, prisons, nursing homes and shelters.

In the parish, Deacons serve in a variety of ministries including social ministry, outreach, ministry of care, OCIA, Christian formation and youth ministry. Some deacons, whose ministry is primarily extra-parochial, have a "liturgical" assignment in a parish where they serve at the altar and preach.

- **Ministers of the Word:** They teach, preach and proclaim the Gospel.
- **Ministers of sacraments:** They preside at funeral vigils, gravesides, Baptisms, marriages and blessings. They are ordinary ministers of Holy Communion.
- **Ministers of charity:** They provide outreach to those who are forgotten on the fringe of society – the poor, the sick, the homeless, the outcast. They serve in the social arena, calling forth the gifts of the community in service to others.

Admission Process Outline

From: National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons In the United States. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

- Contact Diaconate Formation to schedule a personal meeting, obtain informational materials and to begin an initial assessment of your readiness for admissions.
- Discuss your interest in the diaconate with your spouse, if married, family and pastor/administrator/parish director for their feedback and signs of support, encouragement or resistance.
- Secure a spiritual director – **not your** pastor/administrator/parish director or pastoral staff – to begin discerning a potential vocational calling to the diaconate.
- Review and prayerfully consider the criteria for a vocation to the diaconate.
- Attend the inquiry for discernment sessions. This is required for both inquirer and, if married, his spouse.
- Interview with a Canonist following completed sessions.
- Pursue pastor/parish director endorsement after clearance from canonical interview.
- Complete the application/selection process following pastor/parish director endorsement.

Formation Process

From: National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons In the United States. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

1st – 2nd Year of Formation: Aspirancy spouses have specific attendance requirements. At the end of the aspirant path, following a comprehensive assessment, the bishop selects his candidates for continued diaconal formation; those selected celebrate the public, liturgical Rite of Candidacy.

3rd – 5th Year of Formation: Candidacy, a 3-year period of intense formation.

3rd Year Thematic Focus: Lector

4rd Year Thematic Focus: Acolyte

5th Year Thematic Focus: Deacon

Post-Ordination: A 5-year process of continuing formational opportunities for newly ordained deacons and, if married, their spouses.