

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC  
ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA



# Memo

**Date:** March 4, 2019  
**To:** Pastors  
**From:** ✠Wilton D. Gregory, *Archbishop of Atlanta*  
**Re:** Admission to Aspirancy for the Permanent Diaconate

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I am writing to you to request that you submit to me the names of men in your parish whom you believe might be worthy applicants for formation to the Permanent Diaconate. Please feel free to consult with your parish clergy and members of the laity in your efforts to identify men who might have the potential to serve the Church in this vocation. I would also ask that you personally speak with the men that you will be recommending to me to assess their current level of service in your parish and community, as well as their interest in the Diaconate. Recommendations for prospective candidates can be submitted at any time.

In speaking with the men about the Permanent Diaconate, please advise them that the selection process is a rigorous one, and that not all who are nominated enter formation, and that not all that enter formation are called to ordination.

Please pay particular attention to the attached Guidelines for Admission to Formation. These guidelines outline the various requirements that must be met by the men in order to apply for admission to the Aspirancy year of formation.

The men who you nominate and their wives will be invited to attend the all-day Information/Inquiry Sessions on Saturday, September 21, 2019 and Saturday, October 5, 2019. Following those sessions, men who feel called to the Diaconate may submit applications for admission to the next Aspirancy class.

Please submit to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate the names of any men you would like for me to consider right away. You may send submissions to [psimmons@archatl.com](mailto:psimmons@archatl.com).

Please feel free to contact Mrs. Penny Simmons, Associate Co-Director of Formation at 404-931-1848, or Deacon José Espinosa, Associate Co-Director of Formation at 404-906-7163, if you have any questions about the attached Guidelines for Admission or any other aspect of formation for the Permanent Diaconate.



### **Who May Apply for Admission to Aspirancy for the Permanent Diaconate**

To apply for admission to the Aspirancy Path of formation for the Permanent Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Atlanta, a man must meet the requirements that are delineated below. **For an application to be accepted an applicant must:**

- Have a willingness to make a life-long commitment of service to the Church. The applicant will be asked to give assurance that if he is ordained he will be able to serve in the archdiocese for the foreseeable future.
- Be in good standing in the Church, having been a member for no less than five (5) years and lived within the Archdiocese of Atlanta no less than three (3) years or have a letter from his Ordinary giving permission for him to be formed for the Permanent Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Atlanta.
- Have his application actively supported in writing, by his wife and his pastor.
- **Minimum age for a single applicant is thirty (30) and the maximum age is sixty (60).**
- **Minimum age for a married applicant is thirty-five (35) and the maximum age is sixty (60).**
- **The applicant should be no older than sixty-five (65) at time of ordination.**
- **A single man must be committed to “celibacy” subsequent to ordination.**
- **A married man must be committed to “celibacy” subsequent to ordination should his wife die before him.**
- Be a citizen of the United States of America, a Permanent Resident holding a valid “Green Card” or a resident on a valid U.S. Visa. Applicants on a U.S. Visa will be required to provide evidence that their Visa remains valid on an annual basis.
- Have stable employment and a fiscally sound financial history.
- Be without a criminal record.
- **Be of sufficient mental and physical health to complete a minimum of five years of formation and after ordination, serve in an active capacity for a minimum period of 10 to 15 years.**
- Possess a minimum of a high school diploma and be capable of college level studies.
- Must be able to read, write and speak the English language. During formation, papers may be written and submitted in Spanish (or other languages as approved) if the applicant’s first language is not English.
- If married, be married for at least five (5) years in the Sacrament by the Roman Catholic Church, and be able to provide evidence of a stable and growing marriage.
- If any annulments are required (applicant or wife), they must have been received prior to applying.
- Be able to provide their families with adequate quality time as a husband, father and son (without putting an undue burden on their wives) during formation.

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- Possess a significant history of active participation in pastoral ministry in his parish.
- Be committed to serving the Archdiocese of Atlanta after ordination.
- Be capable of committing to a minimum of two (2) Saturdays per month and three (3) weekends per year to formation and studies (in general, a minimum of ten (10) hours per week will be necessary for studies and ministerial work).
- Commit to be present for all required classes, days of reflection, ministry participation and retreats throughout the formation program.

Applications to the Aspirancy year of Formation to the Permanent Diaconate will be accepted from any man who has attended the required information/inquiry sessions.

There is a “due date” for applications. However, any applications received after that date, will be accepted and considered for application process the year after received. Applicants should bear in mind that the interview and evaluation process can take between 6-8 months to complete. Successful applicants will be admitted to the Aspirancy class that begins in the January following their acceptance.

All men who attended the two inquiry sessions will receive the application form via email.

Please direct any questions to Penny Simmons ([psimmons@archatl.com](mailto:psimmons@archatl.com), 404-931-1848) or Deacon José Espinosa ([jespino@archatl.com](mailto:jespino@archatl.com), 404-906-7163).