



Memo

Date: July 19, 2021
To: Pastors
From: Archbishop Gregory J. Hartmayer, OFM, Conv.
Re: Inquirers for formation for the Permanent Diaconate

I am writing to you to request 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 assess their current level of service in your parish and community as well as their interest in the diaconate.

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 outline the various requirements that must be met by the men in order to apply for admission to the aspirancy year of formation. If ordained, they must be willing to accept an assignment given by the archbishop.

The men and their wives who you nominate will be invited to attend two virtual all-day information/inquiry sessions beginning on Saturday, September 25, and continuing on Saturday, October 9. During the information and inquiry sessions, the men will be given detailed information on the history of the diaconate and ministry of the deacon; spirituality of the deacon; the role of the wife of a deacon; celibacy should his wife die before him; the application process and diaconate formation; as well as documentation to be included with the application, including certificates of baptism and marriage issued from the church within the last six months; etc. The applicant must have received the sacrament of confirmation. Following those sessions, men who feel called to the diaconate may submit applications for admission to the next aspirancy class. The application process takes six to eight months.

Please submit to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate the names of any men you would like for me to consider. You may make that submission by email to Penny Simmons, Co-Director of Diaconate Formation, at psimmons@archatl.com.

Please feel free to contact Penny Simmons at 404-931-1848 or Deacon José Espinosa at 404-906-7163, co-directors of diaconate formation 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 in 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 in an assignment given by the archbishop.
- Be in good standing in the church, having been a member for not less than five (5) years and **lived within the Archdiocese of Atlanta not 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 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.
- 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 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 six-eight 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 by email the application form.

Please direct any questions to Penny Simmons (psimmons@archatl.com 404-931-1848) or Deacon José Espinosa (jespinosa@archatl.com 404-906-7163).