



Memo

Date: June 17, 2024

To: Pastors

From: The Most Reverend Gregory J. Hartmayer, OFM, Conv., Archbishop of Atlanta

Re: Inquirers for formation to 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, that not all who are nominated enter formation and that not all who do 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 me.

The men who you nominate, and their wives, will be invited to attend two virtual all-day information/inquiry sessions beginning on Saturday, September 28, and continuing on Saturday, October 12. During the information and inquiry sessions, the men will be given detailed information on the history of the diaconate and ministry of the deacon. Other topics will include the 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. Documentation to be included with the application, including certificates of baptism and marriage issued from the church of baptism within the last six months, will also be covered among other items. 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 at psimmons@archatl.com.

Penny (404-931-1848) and Deacon José Espinosa (404-906-7163) are co-directors of Diaconate Formation, you may contact them if you have any questions about the attached guidelines or any other aspect of formation for the Permanent Diaconate.