

LET THE SPIRIT GUIDE YOU

DISCERN THE VOCATION OF

DEACON



OVERVIEW

The ministry of the Permanent Diaconate is new, yet in another sense, ancient; it traces its roots to the time of the Apostles.

The Diaconate flourished as an official ministry in the Early Church but, in time it became a step toward priesthood and, thus, became a transitional office. The Second Vatican Council restored the Permanent Diaconate as a unique way to serve the people of God in a threefold ministry of word, sacrament and charity.

The Deacon is empowered by his bishop to administer infant Baptism, witness Marriages, officiate at wakes, funerals and burial services, administer sacramentals, preside at prayer services, distribute Holy Communion, proclaim the Gospel and deliver the homily.

The Deacon's ministry of charity calls him to areas of need in which he demonstrates particular expertise or talent. These areas may include hospital/hospice chaplaincy, prison ministry or other works designed to assist the poor and marginalized members of society.

CANONICAL & DIOCESAN REQUIREMENTS

An applicant for Deacon Formation must...

- Be an active, fully initiated (received Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) male member of the Roman Catholic Church for a minimum of five (5) years.
- Be a legal resident of the United States and have resided in the Diocese of Honolulu for a minimum of three (3) years.
- Be able to fulfill formation requirements extending over a period of five (5) years.
- Be able to speak, understand, read and write English to appropriate levels of competency.
- Have attained a High School Diploma or equivalent and demonstrated the ability to do advanced academic studies via prerequisite on-line work. (see Academic Prerequisites)
- Have a history of active service and demonstrated proven leadership in parish or diocesan ministry.
- Have demonstrated ability to relate well to people regardless of ethnic, racial, or cultural background, sex, religion, or economic status.
- Have the potential ability to represent the Church in applying Gospel values to contemporary concerns and issues.
- Be in full acceptance of Magisterial teachings.
- Be of mature faith, good reputation, and have a sense of the nature of the Permanent Diaconate as a vocation in Holy Orders.
- Be in good physical and mental health.
- Minimum Age: Applications will be accepted from men age 30, or will attain age 30 at the beginning of the Aspirancy Year .
- Maximum Age: Typically age 60. With consideration for the duration of formation process and the desired minimum longevity of post ordination service (10 years), applicants at or over age 60 may be accepted for consideration based on an assessment of good general health.



CONCERNING MARRIAGE AND CELIBACY

MARRIED APPLICANTS

Must be in a stable valid marriage in the Catholic Church for a minimum of five (5) years immediately prior to application.

Wife must provide written consent of her willingness to allow her husband to enter formation and be willing to attend formation weekends with her husband.

Family Responsibility: The rigors and time commitment necessary for successful completion of the formation process can place significant stress on the family. As the well-being of the family is of primary concern, couples must give due consideration to the care requirements of their minor children or other family members requiring their direct care. This reality must be carefully weighed in the final decision to enter formation.

UNMARRIED APPLICANTS

An unmarried applicant must understand the current Church discipline requiring celibacy for life for the Permanent Deacon. He should discuss this requirement thoroughly with his pastor, a priest, or an unmarried deacon.

WIDOWED APPLICANTS

In consideration of the grieving and readjustment period following the loss of a spouse, applications from widowers will be considered after three (3) years have elapsed from the date of loss.

ACADEMIC PREREQUISITES

To prepare applicants for the academic program, successful completion of three (3) designated courses (Catholic Beliefs, Introduction to Scripture and Survey of Catholic Doctrine) offered “on-line” through the Virtual Learning Center for Faith Formation (VLCFF) will be required prior to entering Aspirancy Year (the first year of Formation).

Information on registration for the VLCFF is available through the University of Dayton at <http://vlc.udayton.edu/>

For assistance in registering for VLCFF courses, please contact Lina Carahasen in the Deacon Formation Office at (808) 203-6718 or lcarahasen@rcchawaii.org

Note: Completion of these courses does not guarantee acceptance into the Deacon Formation Program



INQUIRY & APPLICATION

- The admission of applicants to the formation process involves a rigorous process of application, interview, scrutiny, evaluation, and discernment. The goal of this process is to discern which men are called by the Church to a vocation of permanent ordained service to the Church.
- Becoming a deacon is a calling from God. We encourage you to explore the various resources and information about the diaconate on our website and elsewhere and continue to discern and pray.
- Applications will be accepted only after attendance at one of the Deacon Formation Inquiry Weekends at St. Stephen Diocesan Center.
- Married applicants must attend the weekend as a couple. Applications will not be accepted without the wife's attendance.
- All expenses (including airfare for neighbor islanders) will be borne by the diocese. Voluntary donations to offset the expense will be accepted upon completion of the weekend.
- Visit the website below for dates and details of inquiry weekends.



DIOCESE OF HONOLULU | OFFICE OF PERMANENT

DEACON FORMATION

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