OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

Requirements for Application for Admission into the Aspirancy Program

1. Be a male, baptized and confirmed in the Roman Catholic Church for a minimum period of five years, active and faithful in the practice of the Faith;
2. Be actively involved in the Church, that is registered in the parish or mission, well known, and highly recommended for the aspirancy program by his pastor and fellow parishioners;
3. Have demonstrated active service, works of the apostolate, and leadership in parish and/or diocesan ministry;
4. Enjoy sound ethical and moral reputation in both the Church and civic community;
5. Be free from all canonical irregularities and impediments for the reception of Holy Orders;
6. Be able to express and verbalize the reason the man believes he has a potential calling to the diaconate;
7. Possess natural gifts for ministry, demonstrate maturity and balance, and enjoy good physical and mental health with no condition that would impede diaconal ministry;
8. Be prayerful and committed to further spiritual formation;
9. Be at least 30 years old and no older than 54 at the time of application;
10. Have successfully completed at least 2 years of college, be able to do advanced academic work and understand theological concepts;
11. Be married for a period of at least five years in a stable and sacramental marriage, enjoying the full support of his spouse who will participate actively in the Permanent Deacon Formation program. Potential applicants who have been divorced and have remarried in the Church will be considered on a case by case basis. If an applicant is accepted into the aspirancy phase or even if accepted into the candidate phase of formation and begins to experience serious marital discord, separation or divorce, the aspirant/candidate will be requested to withdraw from the program or take a leave of absence.
12. Be willing to remain celibate if his wife precedes him in death;
13. If widowed have at least two years to heal and recover from the loss of his spouse;
14. If single enjoy a stable, settled life, a history of healthy relationships, and be able and willing to accept the gift of celibacy, understanding the full implications of this charism;
15. If a history of substance abuse exists have achieved sobriety for at least five years and continue to participate in a “recovery” program;
16. If a history of grave addictions exists, e.g. gambling, sexual, etc. have demonstrated a freedom from these addictive behaviors for at least five years and continue to participate in a “recovery” program.
17. The man discerning a vocation to the Permanent Diaconate and his spouse are required to understand that the Bishop can assign an aspirant to a parish during his period of formation other than his home parish. If ordained to the Diaconate, the Bishop will assign a deacon to a parish/entity in the Diocese where needs exist, mindful the assignment may not be the deacon’s home parish. Assignments will be based on the needs of the Diocese at a given time. An applicant is expected to embrace this understanding or he may not be admitted to the aspirancy program.

An exception from any of the above requirements, only for a grave reason, is reserved to the Bishop of Pensacola-Tallahassee.