



ARCHDIOCESE OF PORTLAND IN OREGON

Criteria for Diaconate Applicants

Similarly, deacons must be dignified, not deceitful, not addicted to drink, not greedy for sordid gain, holding fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. Moreover, they should be tested first; then, if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. ... Deacons may be married only once and must manage their children and their households well. Thus those who serve well as deacons gain good standing and much confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus.

— 1 Timothy 3:8–13

Sacramental: fully initiated (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist), male, at least 5 years continuous practicing Catholic prior to application, good standing vouched for by pastor.

Age: minimum 35 years and maximum 65 at ordination; exceptions require Archbishop's dispensation.

Health: good physical and mental health.

Residence: must be three year resident of Archdiocese of Portland, must be a citizen or permanent resident of the US.

Interpersonal: sound moral character; sense of vocation to service, able to represent the Church well as a public person and to work well with others in the Church and in the world.

Prayer: man of prayer, open to action of the Holy Spirit upon his life, i.e., has an active spiritual and prayerful life prior to entering into aspirancy and formation, with spirituality to be strengthened during formation.

Faith: man of mature faith who professes and lives what the Catholic Church teaches; demonstrated ability to work in a cooperative spirit with pastor, other priests, deacons and parish staff; relates well to people regardless of background, sex, religion, ethnicity or economic circumstances.

Parish: is presently active within his parish community: history of involvement in parish community or experience of leadership in the parish community.

Sponsorship: must be sponsored by a pastor or archdiocesan-appointed parish administrator.

Finances: possesses financial security with a history of steady employment that does not require frequent travel or reassignments, i.e. financially stable and self-sufficient (since no salaried employment is guaranteed with ordination) and able to serve in the Archdiocese (not often absent).

Service: demonstrated record of active service, i.e. proven leadership within parish; or in addition a diocesan agency or civic community; a self-starter who can organize and implement with little supervisory attention; history and reputation of service more extensive than simply liturgical or parish functions.

Marriage/Spouse/Family: if married:

- At least five years in a stable, civilly registered and canonically valid marriage
- Has full support of spouse, who will participate actively in the training program as required
- Enthusiastic support of family
- Family enjoys a good reputation in the community
- Parental responsibility to young children is adequately supported in consideration of time commitment to study and service

Divorce/Nullity: may be divorced only once; wife may be divorced only once; decree(s) of nullity required; must be sponsored by and serve in a parish different from the one(s) where either spouse was a member during any failed marriage; all paternal and financial responsibilities fulfilled; ineligible if applicant showed grave causal responsibility (e.g. abuse, infidelity, criminality, pathology); if remarried must be validly married for at least five years.

Note: marital problems during formation such as separation or divorce require a leave of absence from the program. Grave causal irresponsibility (e.g. abuse, infidelity, criminality or pathology causing scandal) requires termination from the program.

Celibacy: If widowed or divorced, applicant must be celibate even if granted a decree of nullity; applicant must be prepared to lead a celibate life for the sake of the kingdom if wife dies.

Unmarried: if single prior to application, must have stable settled life (five years after annulment or death of spouse); have a history of healthy relationships; must understand the implications of the charism of celibacy; must understand commitment to celibacy at ordination.

Language: must be able to effectively communicate (hear and comprehend, speak, read and write) in English to the level of being able to serve in the Archdiocese of Portland. English proficiency sufficient to handle graduate education is not absolutely required but is highly desirable.

Education: desirable to have a college degree; must have a high school diploma or foreign equivalent. Must be willing to commit to an educational program leading to a master's degree in a theological discipline or equivalent as determined by the Archdiocese (equivalent in foreign language may be arranged on an individualized basis).

Commitment: must be willing and able to make a lifetime commitment to serve the archdiocese; must be willing to promise obedience to the Archbishop and his successors.