

Checklists

The following pages represent checklists to guide the Nominee, Postulant, Candidate, and Ordinand step-by-step through the Holy Orders process of the Diocese of Minnesota. However, to understand the full meaning of the process The Commission on Ministry urges you to read the entire handbook. Checklists are only one way of keeping track of the steps. The narrative portion of the Handbook explains in greater detail the enabling canons and rationale for the process. The official Forms also contain information about the supporting documents which need to accompany the forms being submitted at each stage of the process.

We strongly encourage persons making the journey toward ordination to use the checklists to record things accomplished and to set goals or deadlines for completing future steps.

The Commission on Ministry takes this opportunity to remind you that it is your responsibility to know the process, anticipate deadlines, set goals, and follow through.

Questions arising in areas not covered in this Handbook should be addressed to the Coordinator of Vocations at 612-871-5311 or 1-800-596-3839.

From Explorer to Nominee

1. ___/___/___ Initiate and meet with the priest in charge of the congregation or community of faith to which the Explorer belongs, after at least one year of active confirmed membership, to discuss the sense of call. The priest, familiarized with the "Role of the Sponsoring Priest" section of this handbook and checklist, engages in prayerful listening. If the priest hears a possible call, the Explorer and priest decide upon who will be the Sponsoring Priest (usually, but not always, the priest in charge of the faith community). The Sponsoring Priest seeks resources from the Advisor for Holy Orders.
2. ___/___/___ The Explorer enters into spiritual direction with a person other than the Sponsoring Priest
3. ___/___/___ The Explorer and the Sponsoring Priest collaborate in forming a local discernment committee to meet for no less than 6 months and no more than 18 months. Once the committee is formed, the Explorer or the Sponsoring Priest contacts the Coordinator for Vocations who gives the request to the Local Discernment Committee Consultant(s) who then contacts the Explorer directly to set up a time for the consultant to visit and train the committee.
4. ___/___/___ The Explorer enters into local discernment.
5. ___/___/___ Once local discernment reaches conclusion (whether to lay, diaconate, priesthood or monastic orders), the Sponsoring Priest is notified and attends the final meeting to celebrate the work and offer prayers of thanksgiving. The Sponsoring Priest reports the conclusion to the Vestry/Bishop's Committee and, if the Explorer is discerned for ordained ministry, asks for written affirmation and signatures (Form #2, Nomination for Postulancy). The chairperson of the committee fills out and has the Sponsoring Priest sign Form #15 (Notification of Discernment). The original is sent to the Bishop's office and a copy to the Local Discernment Committee Consultant
6. ___/___/___ The Explorer completes and sends the following documents in one packet to the Bishop's office:
 - Application for Holy Orders, Form #1
 - Recent photograph
 - Brief, typewritten autobiography (3-6 pages) that includes:
 - The Explorer's personal strengths and areas needing improvement
 - Differences, as the Explorer sees them, between Ministry of the Laity and Holy Orders

- Participation in Church throughout the Explorer's lifetime and ministries/leadership performed
- The Explorer's family's feelings about ordination
- Skills the Explorer brings to ordination that will help him/her earn a living

- In a separate essay (1-2 pages) entitled "Sense of Call," the Explorer describes his/her vocation to Holy Orders, which order he/she seeks and his/her history of reflection on this vocation.
- Official academic transcripts from institutions of higher learning
- A recent resume, if available
- All letters from the members of the local discernment committee
- Form #2 (Vestry/Bishop's Committee Nomination for Postulancy)
- Form #3 (Waiver of Information)
- Report on Supervised Ministry Project or if a project was not assigned, the Explorer's written reflection on his/her ministry work
- If the person is nominated for the Priesthood and if permission to apply to seminary for early admission and financial aid is sought, Form #4 (Request for Early Seminary Application) is included in this mailing
- 30-minute impromptu essay on a topic assigned by the Board of Examining Chaplains.

7. ___/___/___ The Explorer will be notified by the Coordinator of Vocations when the above packet of forms is received in the Bishop's office.
8. ___/___/___ The Explorer confirms with the Sponsoring Priest that the Sponsoring Priest's letter of recommendation, and any supervised ministry project reflections have been sent to the Coordinator of Vocations' office.
9. ___/___/___ When the Coordinator of Vocations' office is in receipt of all paperwork, the Explorer officially becomes the Nominee.

The Permanent Diaconate

Nominee to Postulant (Permanent Diaconate)

1. ___/___/___ The Bishop, being in receipt of all necessary paperwork and finding no impediment to proceeding, grants Postulant status to the Nominee.

Date of Postulancy: _____

Postulant to Candidate (Permanent Diaconate)

1. ___/___/___ The Postulant begins writing Ember Day Letters to the Bishop at the four Ember times during the year: the week after the first Sunday in Lent, Pentecost, Holy Cross Day, and December 13.
2. ___/___/___ The Postulant continues in spiritual direction with a person other than the Sponsoring Priest
3. ___/___/___ The Postulant makes an appointment with a physician for a medical examination and asks the physician to mail Form #5 (Medical Examination) to the Bishop's office when completed.
4. ___/___/___ The Postulant calls the Coordinator of Vocations for permission to schedule an appointment for the psychological evaluation at North Central Career Development Center. (NCCDC will not make an appointment with anyone whose name has not been forwarded from the diocesan office.) The Explorer takes Form #6 (Psychological Evaluation) and a copy of Form #3 (Waiver) to the first appointment.
Note: The appointment with NCCDC should be scheduled to take place at least 2 months before Diocesan Discernment Conference (that is, the appointment must take place before November 1 or April 1.)
5. ___/___/___ Once appointments have been made with NCCDC, The Postulant calls the Coordinator of Vocations and requests an appointment with the Bishop for six weeks after the second appointment with NCCDC.
6. ___/___/___ The Postulant fills out and returns the background check questionnaire from Oxford Document Management Co.

7. ___/___/___ If the medical, psychological, and local discernment reports show no impediment, the Postulant meets with the Bishop and is invited to attend the next Diocesan Discernment Conference.
8. ___/___/___ The Postulant attends the Diocesan Discernment Conference and is contacted by phone within 24 hours with the decision of the committee.
9. ___/___/___ The Bishop responds to the Postulant by letter with a report written in collaboration with the members of the Diocesan Discernment Conference.
10. ___/___/___ After receiving the letter, the Postulant makes an appointment with a psychiatrist from the diocesan list and requests the psychiatrist send the Bishop Form #7 (Psychiatric Evaluation). The Postulant also gives the psychiatrist a copy of Form #3 (Waiver).
11. ___/___/___ The Postulant is contacted by and meets with the directors of the Diaconal Formation Program and is given information about the program including start dates, pastoral care and supervised field education assignments.
12. ___/___/___ Given a favorable psychiatric evaluation and background check, the Postulant submits Form #8 (Application for Candidacy) with the accompanying documentation requested on the forms. Originals are sent to the Bishop's office, copies to the Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee.
13. ___/___/___ Meet with Commission on Ministry for candidacy interview. Commission on Ministry sends letter of recommendation to Bishop with copy to the Standing Committee.
14. ___/___/___ There being no impediments, the Postulant is admitted to Candidacy by the Bishop upon the opening date of the formation program.

Date of Candidacy: _____

Candidate to Deacon (Permanent Diaconate)

1. ___/___/___ Enter the Diaconal Formation Program.
2. ___/___/___ Candidate continues writing Ember Day Letters to the Bishop and continues in spiritual direction with a person other than the Sponsoring Priest.
3. ___/___/___ Letter from training program Mentors to Commission on Ministry stating the status of preparation at six-month intervals during formation.
4. ___/___/___ Completes coursework and written canonical examinations in the spring of the second year of formation:
 - a. Holy Scriptures: Contents and background
 - b. Church History: A general outline
 - c. Christian Theology: The Church's teaching as set forth in the creeds and An Outline of the Faith, commonly called the Catechism
 - a. Christian Ethics and Moral Theology
 - e. Diakonia and the diaconate
 - f. Studies in human awareness and understanding, including racism, sexism, ageism, and other related areas
 - g. Liturgics: The contents and use of the Book of Common Prayer
 - h. Practical training and experience in ministry and pastoral care
 - a. Field Education in other than home congregation
 - b. Spiritual development and discipline
5. ___/___/___ Letter from Examining Chaplains to the Bishop and Commission on Ministry stating the status of oral examinations.
6. ___/___/___ Plans for any remedial work are given to the Candidate by the Examining Chaplains with a completion date that is prior to any date for ordination.
7. ___/___/___ Letter from Commission on Ministry to the Bishop stating the status of preparation and affirming the completion of all canonical requirements including the status of any assigned remedial work.
8. ___/___/___ Form #11 (Application for Ordination) sent to the Bishop, the Commission on Ministry, and the Standing Committee.
9. ___/___/___ Form #12 (Recommendation for Ordination) sent to the Bishop, the Commission on Ministry, and the Standing Committee.

10. ___/___/___ Letter from the Bishop to Standing Committee recommending ordination.
11. ___/___/___ Standing Committee certifies canonical requirements have been completed and recommends Ordination for Candidate; sends recommendation to Bishop.
12. ___/___/___ Letter from the Bishop to the Candidate concurring with the Standing Committee and stating the time and place of ordination. Psychological and medical evaluations and background checks may need to be updated if they will be older than 36 months at the date of ordination.

Date of Ordination to the Diaconate: _____

The Priesthood

Nominee to Postulant (Priesthood)

1. ___/___/___ The Bishop's office, being in receipt of all necessary paperwork for application to Postulancy, the Nominee calls the Coordinator of Vocations to receive directions for setting up an appointment with North Central Career and Development Center (NCCDC) for a psychological evaluation. (NCCDC will not make an appointment with anyone whose name has not been forwarded from the Bishop's office.)
Note: The appointment with NCCDC should be scheduled to take place at least 2 months before Diocesan Discernment Conference (that is, the appointment must take place before November 1 or April 1.)
2. ___/___/___ The Nominee makes an appointment with their physician for a medical examination. At the appointment the Nominee gives the physician a copy of Form #3 (Waiver of Information) and a blank copy of Form #5 (Medical Examination) for the physician to fill out and send to the Bishop's office.
3. ___/___/___ The Nominee, having made the appointment with NCCDC calls the Coordinator of Vocations and requests an appointment with the Bishop for six weeks after the second appointment with NCCDC.
4. ___/___/___ The Nominee takes Form #6 (Psychological Evaluation) and a copy of Form #3 (Waiver) to NCCDC and is tested and evaluated.
5. ___/___/___ The Nominee meets with the Bishop to discuss the discernment, sense of call, financial resources, and the medical and psychological evaluations. Given no impediments, the Bishop may invite the Nominee to attend the next Diocesan Discernment Conference (currently held in January and June).
6. ___/___/___ The Nominee attends the Diocesan Discernment Conference.
7. ___/___/___ The Nominee receives a phone call from the Diocesan Discernment Committee within 24 hours of the end of the conference, telling the Nominee the results of the discernment.
8. ___/___/___ The Nominee receives a letter from the Bishop shortly after the conference, giving the Nominee a report written in collaboration with the Diocesan Discernment Conference members
9. ___/___/___ The Nominee receives, fills out, and returns the background check paperwork from Oxford Document Management Co.
10. ___/___/___ The Nominee makes an appointment with a psychiatrist, choosing from a list of approved psychiatrists from the diocese.

11. ___/___/___ The Nominee is evaluated by the psychiatrist, giving the psychiatrist a copy of Form #3 (Waiver) and a blank copy of Form #7 (Psychiatric Evaluation) and asking the Psychiatrist to send the results of the evaluation to the Bishop's office.
12. ___/___/___ The Bishop, being in receipt of the psychiatric evaluation and the background check and finding no impediment, admits the Nominee as a Postulant in the Diocese of Minnesota.

Date of Postulancy: _____

Postulant to Candidate (Priesthood)

1. ___/___/___ The Postulant, under the guidance of the Bishop and the Board of Examining Chaplains, makes an approved plan for formation.
2. ___/___/___ Postulant begins writing Ember Day Letters to the Bishop.
3. ___/___/___ Postulant begins seminary.
4. ___/___/___ Incorporated into the Postulant's formation plan are two units (250-300 hours each) of Supervised Field Education.
Unit 1 completed ___/___/___
Unit 2 completed ___/___/___
5. ___/___/___ Clinical Pastoral Education is completed between junior and middler years. The CPE supervisor sends an evaluation of the student's abilities to the Diocesan Office and the student sends a copy of his/her self-evaluation of the CPE experience.
6. ___/___/___ Postulant contacts the Commission on Ministry and submits an official transcript of grades in the spring of Middler year with a letter of evaluation from the seminary.
7. ___/___/___ Postulant submits Form #9 (Application for Candidacy), to the Bishop's office with copies sent to the Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee.
8. ___/___/___ Postulant requests the Sponsoring Priest submit Form #10 (Recommendation for Candidacy for Priesthood) to the Vestry/Bishop's Committee of sponsoring congregation to sign and send to the Bishop's office, with a copy going to the Commission on Ministry and Standing Committee.
9. ___/___/___ Postulant and Sponsoring Priest meet with the Commission on Ministry and COM certifies by letter to the Bishop that the Postulant is continuing in formation and recommends Candidacy.
10. ___/___/___ Upon receipt of the documents and there being no impediment to further progress, the Bishop admits the Postulant to Candidacy.
11. ___/___/___ The Bishop's office informs the Candidate, the Sponsoring Priest, the Commission on Ministry, the Standing Committee, and the Dean of the Candidate's seminary of the official date of candidacy.

Date of Candidacy _____

Candidate to Transitional Deacon

1. ___/___/___ The Candidate sits for General Ordination Examination in January of senior year.
2. ___/___/___ The Candidate receives a letter from the Bishop after GOE results have been reviewed by the Examining Chaplains of the diocese. If necessary, the letter will include instructions from the Examining Chaplains assigning additional work in areas of the GOEs which showed weakness.
3. ___/___/___ The Candidate must be at least 21 years of age before applying for ordination to the Transitional Diaconate (III.8.6.(b)).
4. ___/___/___ No one will be ordained to the transitional diaconate within six months of being made a Candidate, nor within one year of being made a Postulant (III.8.6.(c))
5. ___/___/___ If the medical examination, the psychological evaluation, or the background check have taken place more than 36 months prior to ordination as a Transitional Deacon, they must be updated. (III.8.2.(e).(4))
6. ___/___/___ The Candidate submits Form #11 (Application for Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate), to the Bishop's office, with copies sent to the Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee. (III.8.6.(d).(1))
7. ___/___/___ Form #12 (Recommendation for Ordination) is sent to the Bishop's office with copies to the Standing Committee and Commission on Ministry. (III.8.6.(d).(2))
8. ___/___/___ The Candidate requests a transcript of grades and letter of recommendation for ordination from his/her seminary to be sent to the Bishop's office. (III.8.6.(d).(3))
9. ___/___/___ The Commission on Ministry sends a letter of recommendation for ordination to the Standing Committee. (III.8.6.(e).(3))
10. ___/___/___ The Candidate contacts the Standing Committee for interview.
11. ___/___/___ Standing Committee certifies that all canonical requirements have been met and, there being no impediments, recommends ordination to the Bishop by written communication signed by a majority of the whole membership. (III.8.6.(f))
12. ___/___/___ The Candidate receives written notification from the Bishop that he/she concurs with the recommendation of the Standing Committee and sets the date, time, and place for ordination.
13. ___/___/___ The Candidate attends a retreat with the Bishop prior to ordination.

14. ___/___/___ The Candidate meets with the Chair of the Commission on Liturgy and Music to assist in planning the ordination service.

Date of Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate: _____

Ordination to the Priesthood

1. ___/___/___ The Deacon continues to write Ember Day Letters to the Bishop.
2. ___/___/___ The period of time for a transitional diaconate is a minimum of six months. Deacons must be at least 24 years of age to be ordained to the priesthood. (III.8.7.(a).(2))
3. ___/___/___ Psychological and medical evaluations and background checks may need to be updated if they will be older than 36 months at the date of ordination. (III.8.7.(a).(3))
4. ___/___/___ The Deacon submits form #13 (Application for Ordination to the Priesthood), to the Bishop's office, with copies sent to the Commission on Ministry and the Standing Committee. (III.8.7.(b).(1))
5. ___/___/___ Form #14 (Recommendation for Ordination) is sent to the Bishop's office with copies to the Standing Committee and Commission on Ministry. (III.8.7.(b).(2))
6. ___/___/___ The Deacon requests a transcript of grades and letter of recommendation for ordination from his/her seminary to be sent to the Bishop's office. (III.8.7.(b).(4))
7. ___/___/___ The Deacon requests a letter of evaluation and recommendation from the supervising priest at the congregation where the Deacon is serving.
7. ___/___/___ The Commission on Ministry sends a letter of recommendation for ordination to the Standing Committee. (III.8.7.(b).(5))
8. ___/___/___ Standing Committee certifies that all canonical requirements have been met and, there being no impediments, recommends ordination to the Bishop by written communication signed by a majority of the whole membership. (III.8.7.(c))
9. ___/___/___ The Deacon receives written notification from the Bishop that he/she concurs with the recommendation of the Standing Committee and sets the date, time, and place for ordination.
10. ___/___/___ The Deacon attends a retreat with the Bishop prior to ordination.

Date of Ordination to the Priesthood: _____