

## Becoming a Deacon

Deacons are defined not by what they do in the Church but by who they are. The process of being ordained or “becoming” a deacon is lengthy. As ministers of the Church, it is a serious commitment in which a man follows Christ the Servant.



If you are a man who is involved in the mission of the Church through ministry and formation and you feel that perhaps God is calling you to something more, then you may want to explore the possibility of ordination to the permanent diaconate.

The process begins with prayer and discernment which includes discussions with family members, friends, and with your pastor. If a genuine call to service in the Church is present, it may mean that you are called to be a deacon.

If you are recommended by your pastor and feel the calling, you will be invited to meet with a member or members of the formation team. They will help you get going, ask some questions of you and your spouse (if you are married) and answer your questions. You will also be invited to join a small faith community of others who are in deacon formation.

The formation process takes at least five years and involves monthly formation meetings, on-line learning, supervised field education and much more.

Below are the criteria established by the Archbishop for those seeking ordination as a permanent deacon:

### **General Criteria for Deacon Applicants**

*“...deacons must be respectable men whose word can be trusted, moderate in the amount of wine they drink and with no squalid greed for money. They must be conscientious believers in the mystery of faith. They are to be examined first, and only admitted to serve as deacons if there is nothing against them...”* 1

*Tim. 3:8-12*

The applicant for the Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe should be a man who:

- Is committed to and lives out Gospel values of justice, charity and service.
- Has shown leadership qualities in parish/diocesan ministry for the past five years.
- Has a prayerful disposition.
- If married, is in a stable and happy marriage (2 years minimum) and whose wife and children support him in pursuing the diaconate.
- If not married, is willing to commit to celibacy.
- Situations of divorce/annulment will require special approval, in general, no more than one divorce/annulment and no children from the first marriage.
- If a convert to the faith, baptism or profession made over 5 years prior to application.
- Is living within the geographical boundaries of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe as a permanent resident of the United States.
- Is capable of college level work in theological studies and is open to spiritual and ministerial formation. (Has at least a high school diploma (no GED)).
- Can successfully pass a thorough criminal and financial background check.

- Is no younger than 30 and no older than 55 years to enter the process (must be at least 35 and no older than 60 at ordination)
- Is capable of giving serious attention and time to theological study, spiritual formation and ministry.
- Has a stable work history (2 years).
- Has a positive attitude towards the Church and is flexible in adapting to the future needs of the Church.
- Is formally presented for the diaconate by his pastor who will see that he is mentored during the 5 years of formation.
- Must be physically and psychologically healthy.
- Should demonstrate grateful fidelity to all that the Church teaches.

Academically, candidates are expected to complete, successfully, the college level courses offered through the Formation for Christian Service Program or equivalent program approved by the Director of Formation.

Successful completion of a course means receiving a grade of C or higher. This standard applies to all courses.

Those men whose first language is not English may have to take the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) and receive a score that represents an acceptable fluency in English.

Ministerially, it is expected that candidates have been actively involved in the Church's apostolate in their parish or Catholic agency. This may include programs of social ministry, educational ministry, liturgical ministry, parish council, and so forth. Ministry in the area of social ministry has been the specific realm of the diaconate since its birth in the Apostolic Church (Acts 6:1-6). These ministries include serving the poor, the hungry, the sick, the homeless, the handicapped, the elderly, the imprisoned, life issues, and so forth.

For more information, please [CLICK THIS LINK](#) and you will be directed to a contact form.