APPLICATION FOR THE PERMANENT DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM



ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO Office of Diaconal Ministry and Formation

The following information is provided for all those men who are contemplating an application for formation and discernment for eventual ordination to the Order of Deacon. In past years there has been an understanding by some that, after several years in church ministry, diaconal service is "the next step" in ministry to the People of God in the Catholic Church. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Others have assumed that, after formation and ordination, the archdiocese would just assign them to their "home parish". These and many other assumptions about the formation and ordained ministry of the Order of Deacon are manifestly incorrect. This introduction to the application for formation and discernment for the diaconate is provided to help dispel some of these misconceptions and provide information about others.

The diaconate is a ministry of service to the People of God, in this case, for ministry within and throughout the Archdiocese of San Antonio, in obedience to the archbishop and his successors and, likewise, obedience to the pastor of the parish or supervisor in other places of assignment. Therefore, after ordination, a deacon should expect to be assigned wherever the archbishop needs a deacon with the particular gifts and abilities of each deacon. That assignment may be to hospital ministry, ministry to the incarcerated, ministry to the elderly or ministry to any parish or other ministry within the archdiocese. Finally, and most importantly, service to the People of God as an ordained deacon is a call from God – not a desire on the part of the individual, the individual's wife, the pastor or anyone else other than God. It is a call that is discerned within the heart of each person and through prompting of the Holy Spirit. Formation for the diaconate can help with that discernment; but it cannot produce it.

In order to apply for the diaconate, you must be at least 35 years old; be a fully-initiated, practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church for at least 4 years; if married, in a good, stable marriage and married in the Church for at least 5 years; and no more than 59 years old at time of application.

Formation for ordination to the diaconate, in this archdiocese, is currently a program of study in Church History, Catechism of the Catholic Church, Theology, Canon Law, Ecclesiology, Spanish Language, Sacred Scripture, Homiletics, practicums and many other subjects and areas particular to the diaconate. It is currently a **five-year program** of study consisting of **two evenings per week and one to two Saturdays per month. Each evening class is held from 6:30pm to 9:00pm at the Mexican American Catholic College (MACC). The all-day Saturday sessions** may be at MACC or other locations determined by the Director of Diaconal Ministry and Formation. Also, **wives of all men** aspiring to the diaconate **are required to be present for all classes and Saturday retreats** and other events scheduled for the purpose of discernment including preparation for, and the celebration of, promotions to sub-diaconate status (i.e. lector, acolyte). Further, this 5-year formation is a time, both on the part of the individual and the archdiocese, to discern whether ordination for the ministry of service as a deacon is appropriate.

Tuition for the five-year formation program is provided by the Archdiocese of San Antonio. However, the cost of all required books and other educational materials are the responsibility of each aspirant. The cost of these books and materials may be approximately \$500.00 per year, or \$2,500.00 over the course of the formation program. Anyone discerning a call to the diaconate should be prepared to handle this financial responsibility. There are, however, ways to mitigate the cost of books by purchasing used books through the internet or from men who have been recently ordained through this archdiocese's program or sourcing needed funding from your parish if your parish has the resources to help.

April 30, 2024 is the Deadline for receipt of your application in this office.

A properly completed application, including letters of recommendation, must arrive this office by the above date for your application to continue in the selection process. Applications received after the above deadline, or incomplete applications, will require that a new application be completed and may, then, be considered for the formation class of 2028.

Please follow the directions in this application carefully and answer all requests for information fully!

Your application must be accompanied by the following. <u>Please us as a checklist and include in your application in the order listed.</u>

	1.	Completed Application – all requested information responded to completely
	2.	Pastor's recommendation letter (This is in addition to the pastor's endorsement on
		page 11.)
	3.	Proof of citizenship or permanent resident status (Birth Certificate, passport; certified
		record of residency)
	4.	Copy of High School Diploma or G.E.D., College degree, Post graduate degree (As
		applicable)
		Transcripts from High School, College, Post graduate academics (As applicable)
	6.	Updated Baptismal Certificate (dated within the past 6 months) annotated with date
		and place of your First Communion; Confirmation; and Church Marriage (if
		applicable)
	7.	Previous marriage(s) documentation such as divorce decree and annulment (applicant
		and/or wife as required)
		Medical report or brief statement from your Doctor
		Formal signature from your pastor and Parish Seal Affixed (Page #10 on application)
Ш	10	.Spiritual Autobiography – Please follow attached directions and format for
		spiritual autobiographical essay
		One 2 X 2 head and shoulder photo of yourself
		. One family photo
		. Support letter from wife <u>signed by her</u> (If applicable)
		. Your Personal Faith Statement, signed by you. (See page 9)
Ш	15	. <u>Two letters of recommendation</u> from priests (other than your actual pastor) and/ or
_	1.0	deacons <u>signed by them</u> . (emailed or unsigned letters are unacceptable)
		. Letter of recommendation from Parish Council (If one in existence in your parish)
		. Proof of Hospitalization Insurance
		. Proof of employment
		. Resume
		. Notary seal affixed
Ш	21	. Criminal Background Check form completed and included

Date of Application: / /

Full Name:			
Complete Address: _	Last	First	Middle
			#
Work Phone #		E-Mail_ Parish	
		Address	
Parish Phone #		City	
Pastor Introducing th	e Applicant:		
Date of Birth	<u>/</u> /	Age at time of applicati	on
Place of Birth			
Date of Baptism:	//(Complete Address of Church	of Baptism
Date of Confirmation	n//	Church and City of Con	firmation
RACE & ETHNICI	TY: Caucasian/W	hite □ African American/Bla	nck ☐ Hispanic/Latino ☐
Asian/Pacific Islande	r 🗌 Native Ameri	can or Other	
•		if limited ability, explain) E	English ☐ Spanish ☐ Other ☐
MARITAL STATU	S: (Check One)		Month Day Year
Single ☐ Married by	Church Widow	/er ☐ Divorced ☐ (If Applicable)	Date of Marriage//
Church, City & State	of Marriage		
If you are divorced, v	was that marriage i	in the Catholic Church? Yes[☐ No ☐
*If you (and/or your decree of divorce mu			narriage license, as well as a copy of your
			eaning that your marriage was in the ecree must be provided with your

*If you were married civilly and your marriage was blessed by the Church, a current baptismal record with

this notation must be provided with this application.

** If you have been married in the Church less than five (5) years, you may not apply for the formation program until you have completed that requirement.

Wife's Full Name				
Wife's Date of Birth	//	Place of Birt	n	
Wife's Religion			Is your wife a conv	ert? Yes 🗌 No 🗆
Wife's Occupation				
Wife's Contact information	n: Cell #		Email address:	
CHILDREN:				
Name	Sex			
		//		
		//		
		///		
Name		Sex Age	Home:	Relationship
EDUCATION: ** Includ		s from each educ		
EDUCATION: ** Includ	le transcript			
EDUCATION: ** Includ	le transcript	s from each educ	cational institution at	tended!
EDUCATION: ** Includ	le transcript	s from each educ	cational institution at	tended!
EDUCATION: ** Includ	le transcript	s from each educ	cational institution at	tended!
EDUCATION: ** Includ		Dates	cational institution at	tended!
EDUCATION: ** Includ		Dates Dates Dates	To //////	tended! Grades Completed
EDUCATION: ** Includ		Dates Dates Dates	To //////	tended! Grades Completed
	le transcript	Dates From Dates From Dates From Dates	To	tended! Grades Completed
EDUCATION: ** Includ High School College/University	le transcript	Dates From Dates From Dates From Dates	To	tended! Grades Completed

MILITARY SERVICE:		
Branch	Dates	Type of Discharge
	From To	
	//	
	/	<u> </u>
WORK EXPERIENCE:		
Employer's Name:		
Employer's Phone #	No. of Years with P	resent Employer
List last two Employers:		
Name	Address	Type of Work
How long you lived in Texas	? g out of the Archdiocese of San Antonio?	
If, yes, - When and for what		
	vour general state of health?	
HEALTH: How would you characterize		

Have you been chronically ill in the last five years: Yes _ No _ If yes, what is the diagnosis?				
Have you had a complete physical examination in the last three years: Yes _ No _				
Are you taking any drugs for a serious, chronic condition: Yes _ No _				
Diabetes High Blood Pressure Other				
Is your condition manageable? Yes No				
Have you or your spouse ever had any problem with the use of alcohol or drugs: Yes ☐ No ☐				
If yes – Explain				
Name and Phone # of family Physician (Your physician's general statement of the condition of your health must be attached)				
MARRIAGE: Do you consider your Marriage to be wholesome and stable?				
Have you had any serious marital difficulties? Yes No If yes – Explain				
Have you discussed the permanent diaconate with your wife? Yes \ No _ What is your wife's attitude toward your application to enter formation? (Answer in DETAIL here AND attach a signed letter from your wife giving her personal view on your request for admission into the Diaconate Formation Program)				

Canon Law does not permit a deacon to remarry if his wife precedes him in death. (Dispensations can be made only by Rome through petition) Do you understand this? Yes _ No _ Do you accept this? Yes _ No _				
What are your children's attitudes toward your application for Diaconate Formation?				
PARISH: What parish ministries are you involved in at the present time?				
Have you been involved in any diocesan activities in the last 3 years? If yes, what were they?				
COMMUNITY: What civic activities are you involved in at the present time?				
What organizations or clubs (business, civic, social, etc.) do you belong to?				
Are you prepared to set aside any other activity that might interfere with pursuing the permanent diaconate formation program (other than employment)? Yes \(\sqrt{No} \sqrt{No} \sqrt{(If no, explain.)} \)				
Have you ever been arrested or charged with a crime (other than minor traffic violations)? Yes \(\subseteq \text{No} \subseteq \) If you answered "Yes", explain.				

What, if anything, is there anything in your background that could cause scandal to the Church?
What, if anything, in your background might prevent you from being a credible witness to the Gospel?
Have you ever been accused of inappropriate behavior with a minor? Yes \(\subseteq \text{No} \subseteq \) If you answered "Yes", what were the circumstances?
List any honors, awards or recognitions you have received:
What particular strength will you bring to the church as a permanent deacon?
Are either you or your wife (if married) on paid staff at any parish in the archdiocese? If so, state who is or paid staff, name the parish, the position held and for how long.
If either of you are on paid staff at a parish, is this a necessary source of family income? Yes \(\subseteq \) No \(\subseteq \)

Spiritual Autobiography. Present a five-page, single-spaced, typewritten Spiritual

Autobiography in essay strictly adhering to the format below. The essay is evaluated for your sense of professionalism, language skill, ability to follow directions, clarity of thought, and logic, as well as your disposition and capacity to reflect on your family relationships, life experiences, successes, failures and spiritual life. Make a separate Bold-Face Title for each subject heading. Provide information below in a story form with an emphasis on how your life experiences have effected your spiritual development.

Outline of Autobiographical Essay

Family of Origin

Place of Birth, Number of Siblings, step-siblings, and or half-sibling - Your Birth Order Parents Married in Church? How many years married?

Father's Religion - Occupation, Mother's Religion - Occupation

If Father is deceased - Cause of death, applicant's age at time of father's death and effect this had on your spiritual life.

If Mother is deceased – Cause of death, applicant's age at time of mother's death and effect this had on your spiritual life.

If Parents are/were Divorced - Cause, applicant's age at time of divorce and effect this had on your spiritual life.

Describe *quality* of relationships in family of origin with father, mother, and siblings **and** *effects this has had on your spiritual life.*

Marriage

If married - Age at time of marriage, length of engagement, cohabitation before marriage - *explain reasons and moral readiness for marriage*. Identify your *qualities* as a husband and a *challenge* you and your wife have faced. What moral or spiritual values helped you or guided your decisions? What did learn about yourself from the challenge?

If Civil marriage(s), divorce(s), and annulment(s), convalidation: provide name(s) of spouses, dates of events, and explain causes for the failure of the relationship(s). *How have these events affected your spiritual life?*

Children

Describe your qualities as a father and relationship with each child.

What are your *qualities* as spiritual leader of your family?

Health

Describe *physical well-being - any significant sicknesses, chronic conditions* (e.g. diabetes, migraines, etc.) or *surgeries - Addiction and Recovery Experiences*

Education

Describe *educational experiences, achievements, difficulties* and *challenges* you may have faced in elementary - middle school - high school - college - graduate work - or theological studies.

Successes and Failures in Life

Describe *achievements, failures,* or *disappointments* in education, athletics, business, employment, military, or use of talents and how this has affected your spiritual development.

Victim of Crime: Describe effect it has had on your spiritual life.

Accidents or tragedies: Describe effect it has had on your spiritual life.

Spiritual Development

Describe the *quality* and *quantity of* catechesis you received in Sunday school, CCD, or parochial school, RCIA.

Describe any *conversion experiences* in ACTS retreats, marriage or engaged encounters, Cursillo, Eucharistic adoration, or scripture study.

Describe a spiritual or moral challenge you have faced in life.

Describe any *community service* (eg: scout leader, civic organization, etc.) or *parish ministry experiences* (eg: parish council, lector, Eucharistic minister, choir, ACTS teaming, visitor to the sick, prison ministry, RCIA, or scripture study programs, etc).

On a <u>separate sheet of paper</u> write a <u>Personal Faith Statement</u>. Briefly describe your faith as a Catholic, its strengths and its weaknesses. And, explain your reasons for desiring to be a permanent deacon. This Personal Faith Statement is not a recounting of things you've done as a result of your faith journey – that is more for your Spiritual Autobiography. Refer to the Nicene Creed as you reflect on how to write this Personal Faith Statement. Be sure to sign your Personal Faith Statement.

REFERENCES:

Please list the names of <u>three persons</u> who have <u>known you for 3 years or more</u>. <u>One should be a priest and the other two should be deacons in good standing who know you well and can vouch for your character.</u>

1.

Name	Address						
	Street & #	City	State		Zip	Phone #	
Name		Address					
	Stree	t & #	City	State	Zip	Phone #	
Name		Address					
	Stree	t & #	City	State	Zip	Phone #	
	Name	Name Street & #	Name Address Street & #	Name Address Street & # City State City Address Address	Name Address Street & # City State Name Address Address	Name Address Street & # City State Zip Street & # City State Zip Name Address	

Important Note: The application must be signed by the applicant and his wife, if married, in the presence of a notary public.

I certify that I will have reached my 35th birthday (as a minimum age) at the time my application is filed, realizing my acceptance will be based on the family situation, including the ages of my children. Likewise I verify that I am not exceeding the maximum admission age of 59 years at the time my application is filed. I further certify that I have been a fully initiated, practicing Catholic in good standing for at least five (5) years, and I am in good health. If married, I certify that I have been in a stable marriage recognized by the Catholic Church for at least five (5) years. I agree that if accepted as a candidate for the permanent diaconate formation program, I will attend all weekend classes and retreats as well as participate in monthly regional group meetings. I have no business or family obligations that prevent me from making this commitment. Furthermore, I agree to take the battery of psychological testing approved by the Archdiocese of San Antonio, which with all other required documents, will determine approval for admission to the formation program.

Date:	Signature
	Applicant
understand that I am strongly encoura and will be required to join him in par the first year of the formation progran during the entire formation period.	or the permanent diaconate formation program without reservation. I ged to participate with my husband in all the activities of the program ticipating in the weekend classes during the pre-candidacy period and an and for the annual retreat and monthly regional group meetings
Date:	Signature: Wife
	Wife
Notary Public Signature	Seal
THIS POR	TION TO BE COMPLETED BY PASTOR
to select candidates for the Diaconal M knowledge, he is both suitable for ord (English, Spanish, etc.) Should he be	for the discernment process Ministry and Formation Process and certify that, to the best of my ained ministry and capable of completing the necessary studies in selected and persevere to ordination, I would readily envision him one of the Church's ordained ministers.
Date:	Pastor's Signature:
Affix Parish Seal	

THE ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO



CRIMINAL BACKGROUND SEARCH AUTHORIZATION & RELEASE FORM

**Please print as neatly as possible and fill out both sides. Illegible forms will be returned.

First		Middle	Last
Other last names used	in the past five years: _		
Current address:	Street	City	State Zip
Vork phone #:		Home phone #:	•
E-Mail Address:			
Date of birth:		Gender: Male	Female
)river's license #:		State	
		State	
Name of Parish, School	l, or Agency:		
Name of Parish, School	l, or Agency:		
Tame of Parish, School Tame of Volunteer Pos Vill this position requi	l, or Agency: sition or Job Title with I re you to work or volun		
Jame of Parish, School	l, or Agency: nition or Job Title with I re you to work or volun ——	Parish, School or Agency:	

You must answer the following:
Have you <u>ever</u> been convicted of, arrested for, charged with, placed on probation for, for which you were granted deferred adjudication and/or given any pretrial diversion for <u>any</u> violation of the law? (You do not need to disclose minor traffic violations.)YesN
If you answered "YES", please attach a separate piece of paper giving full details of the event. Please read the following paragraph carefully and sign below to indicate that you understand this document:
I hereby authorize the Archdiocese of San Antonio, and its agent(s), to request and receive any and all background information about me, including without limitation, my criminal history, information from Texas Department of Family and Protective Service and my driving record.
I understand that background information received from reporting agencies, may include arrests, convictions, plea bargains, deferred adjudications, delinquent conduct committed while a juvenile, expungement and investigations.
I further release the Archdiocese of San Antonio and its agents, employees, personal or representatives from any and all claims and liability arising out of the request for this information.
I certify that I can be trusted with the supervision, guidance, education and/or care of minors and/or vulnerable adults and that I will abide by the policies and procedures of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, of which I have been fully informed.
The statements made by me on this form are true, correct, accurate and complete and are made in good faith.
I understand that any false statements made on this form may result in the denial of the application, termination of employment, suspension of volunteer service, and/or other disciplinary action.
Signature:Date:

A CONFIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

(Please check the answer which applies to you; If you are uncertain, please place a "?" between "Yes" and "No"

1.	Have you ever of addiction?	been hospitalized for treatment of a mental/emotional illness or because of some kind				
	or addiction:	Yes	No □			
2.	Have you ever	r been treated t	for diagnosed mental or emotional illness?			
		Yes □	No 🗆			
3.		ch or anyone ac "schismatic"?	eting on its behalf ever formally declared you to be an "apostate", a			
		Yes □	No □			
4.	-	r been married	without being dispensed from Holy Orders or Vows in a Religious			
	Order?	Yes □	No 🗆			
5.	is your marriage recognized by the Church (accepted by the Church as a se)?					
		Yes	No 🗆			
6.	Has your spou	ise been marrie	ed before?			
		Yes	No 🗆			
7.	information or current marria	n the diocese/page as recogniz	e than once? Yes \(\sigma\) No \(\sigma\) (If "Yes", please provide, below, the parish and time frame of establishment of your freedom to enter your sed by the Catholic Church. Also, include copies of all marriage/tation for applicant and/or wife, as applicable).			
			n a Religious Order? Yes □ No □ killed anybody? Yes □ No □ (If "Yes", explain briefly.)			

10. Have you ever perform Yes □		n directly involved in an	abortion?
	onally mutilated your □ No □	body or anybody else's	body, including vasectomy?
12. Have you ever attempted Yes [
13. Have you ever perform allowed to perform?	ned, without permissi Yes □ No □	-	only an ordained minister is
14. Do you have any form Examples: Alcohol		Gambling ☐ Other	r
15. Do you have a problem	n concerning inappro	priate adult materials (po	ornographic)?
Yes □	□ No □		
Name			
Name(Please pr	int)		
Signature Required:		Date:_	/
Telephone numbers:			
Home	Cell	Work	
E-mail(Please print			
(Please print	clearly of type)		

Thank you for your honesty in completing this **confidential** questionnaire!

	mentation must arrive at The Office of Diaconal Ministry an Antonio, Texas 78228 by February 28, 2019 in order to s of 2024.		
Attach Personal Photo Here			
Not over 2 ¼ X 2 ¾ Head and Shoulders Only	Attach Family Photo Here		
FOR DIACONATE OFFICE USE ONLY			
CHECK LIST FOR REVIEWING OFFICE	AL:		
Completed Application Pastor's Letter	of Recommendation Proof of Citizenship		
Copy of Diploma/Degree(s) Academic Tra	anscripts for all institutions attended		
New Baptismal Record with annotations for: First Communion Confirmation Marriage			
Documentation of former marriage(s) as required Medical Report or Doctor Statement			
Formal Signature of Pastor & Parish Seal Spiritual Autobiography			
Photo of aspirant (2" X 2" head and shoulder) One family photo Support Letter from wife			
	One family photo Support Letter from whe		
Personal Faith Statement Additional Lette	r of Recommendation #1 (Priest or Deacon)		
Personal Faith Statement Additional Lette Additional Letter of Recommendation #2 (Prie	r of Recommendation #1 (Priest or Deacon)		
Additional Letter of Recommendation #2 (Prie	r of Recommendation #1 (Priest or Deacon)		
Additional Letter of Recommendation #2 (Prie	r of Recommendation #1 (Priest or Deacon) st or Deacon) is one) Proof of Hospitalization Insurance		

Signature

Date

16

Received by