

Checklist

Exploring the Call for Ordination to the Diaconate or Priesthood

Diocese of the Rio Grande

Name _____ Age _____

Home Congregation _____

Year Confirmed/Received/Transferred into DRG _____

A confirmed adult communicant in good standing of the Episcopal Church is eligible to seek ordination as a deacon or priest in the Diocese of the Rio Grande.

- Any communicant under the age of 68 may seek ordination whether as a deacon or as a priest.
- Any communicant seeking ordination as a priest who is under the age of 50 must pursue an accredited graduate degree in theology at an institution of the Bishop’s choosing.

Prior to being approved for entry into the ordination process, individuals who believe they are called to ordination as a Deacon or a Priest must complete extensive discernment within their own congregations. Only after they are recommended by their Congregational Discernment Committee and Supervising Priest may individuals apply for acceptance into the Bishop’s discernment process for Aspirants. If they complete the Bishop’s discernment process and the Bishop then recommends they apply for Postulancy, individuals must have completed certain formation requirements and submitted required paperwork before the Bishop grants admission as a Postulant.

The Commission on Ministry of the Baptized (COMB) begins its work with an individual seeking ordination to the Diaconate or Priesthood once the Bishop officially makes her/him a Postulant. Being officially named a Postulant marks the beginning of the actual ordination “process.”

Exploring the Call to Ordained Ministry

DATE	ACTION REQUIRED
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Congregational Discernment

_____	A Confirmed Adult Communicant meets with Rector/Vicar/Clergy-in-Charge of the congregation (i.e. Supervising Priest) to explore Communicant’s vocational call
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If the Supervising Priest senses a call (See the document *Guidelines for Rector or Priest-in-Charge in Discerning a Call and Forming a Congregational Discernment Committee*), the Supervising Priest does the following:

- (1) Contacts the Bishop's office to inform Bishop and the Canon for Formation that a confirmed adult communicant in good standing in her/his congregation is sensing a call to ordination
- (2) Appoints a Congregational Discernment Committee for the Communicant (See the document *Congregational Discernment Committee/Clearness Discernment Committee*.)
- (3) Notifies the Bishop's office in writing that a Congregational Discernment Committee has been appointed for the Communicant and invites the Canon for Formation to join the initial meeting of the Discernment Committee. The Canon for Formation explains the process to the priest and the committee. (Note: This step is not necessary if the Canon for Formation has made such a visit to the congregation's Discernment Committee in the last three years.)

The formal discernment process begins when the Communicant starts meeting with the Congregational Discernment Committee [**Communicant will meet with committee for a minimum of six months.**]

If the Congregational Discernment Committee supports the Communicant's going forward to Diocesan discernment, the Communicant completes the following paperwork which is sent to the Bishop's office:

- (1) Letter of introduction from Communicant
- (2) Copy of the Congregational Discernment Committee's report signed by all members
- (3) Report of Supervising Priest
- (4) Resume
- (5) Spiritual autobiography
- (6) One passport photograph
- (7) Completed Behavioral Questionnaire [form to be obtained from Bishop's office]
- (8) Six papers written for the Congregational Discernment Committee
- (9) Release of information (form to be obtained from Bishop's office)

Once Communicant has submitted all nine (9) items of paperwork, the Supervising Priest contacts the Bishop's office and asks for a meeting of Communicant and Supervising Priest with the Bishop

Bishop meets with the Communicant and the Supervising Priest

Bishop accepts/declines the Communicant's entrance into the Bishop's Discernment Process for Aspirants to ordained ministry; if accepted, the Communicant is invited to attend the next Bishop's Discernment Retreat

Bishop's Discernment Process for Aspirants

_____ Communicant attends the two (2) Bishop's Discernment Retreats scheduled in January and February

Diocesan Discernment Retreats: Dates Attended _____, _____

_____ Bishop, with the advice of the BACAM, determines whether to consider an Aspirant for Postulancy

_____ If the Bishop decides to consider an Aspirant for Postulancy, the Congregation is required by Canon [III.6.2(a); III.8.2(a)] to submit the following:

A nomination letter signed by at least two-thirds of the Vestry and by the Rector/Vicar/ Priest-in-Charge exercising oversight of the Aspirant; the nomination shall include a letter of support in which the Nominee's congregation commits to (1) pledge to contribute financially to the Nominee's preparation for ordination to the Diaconate or Priesthood, and (2) involve itself in the Nominee's preparation for ordination

_____ If the Nominee agrees with the congregation's nomination, the Nominee writes the Bishop to accept the nomination and provides the following to the Bishop's office [III.6.2(b); III.8.2(b)]: **[18- month "rule" for ordination starts when all of the items listed below are received in the Bishop's office]**

- (1) Full name and date of birth
- (2) Length of time resident in the Diocese of the Rio Grande
- (3) Evidence of baptism and confirmation [copies of originals]
- (4) Whether an application has been made previously for Postulancy or the person has been nominated in any Diocese
- (5) A description of the process of discernment by which the Nominee has been identified for ordination
- (6) Level of education attained and, if any, the degrees earned, and areas of specialization, together with copies of official transcripts

_____ The Candidate also must complete the following before being considered for Postulancy:

- (7) _____ Background check, paid for by the Diocese, using approved forms
- (8) _____ Medical exam by a professional, paid by the Candidate, using approved forms
- (9) _____ Psychological evaluation completed by a professional, paid by the Candidate, using approved forms

_____ Before granting admission as a Postulant, the Bishop shall determine that the Nominee is a Confirmed Adult Communicant in good standing

Upon admission to Postulancy, follow the Checklist for Ordination to the Diaconate or Ordination to the Priesthood.