

Checklist

Ordination to the Priesthood

Diocese of the Rio Grande

Name _____ Age _____

Home Congregation _____

Year Confirmed/Received/Transferred into DRG _____

The Road to Ordination as a Priest

- Individuals who believe they are called to ordination as a Priest must complete extensive discernment within their own congregations. Only after they are recommended by their congregational discernment committee and their Rector/Vicar/Priest-in-charge may individuals apply for acceptance into the Bishop's discernment process for Aspirants. Information about the congregational discernment process and the Bishop's discernment retreat process, called BACAM (Bishop's Advisory Committee on Admission to the Ministry), is located on the diocesan website.
- If the Aspirant successfully completes the BACAM process and the Bishop then recommends that she/he apply for Postulancy, the individual must complete a Postulancy Application, as canonically required [III.8.2 (a) & (b)], before the Bishop makes a final determination on Postulancy.
- Once the Bishop sends the Aspirant/Nominee an official letter designating her/him a Postulant, the Commission on Ministry of the Baptized (COMB) begins its work with the Postulant. ***It is at this point, when made a Postulant, that an individual actually enters "the ordination process."***
- Once an individual becomes a Postulant, he/she must submit an Ember Day letter four times per year during Ember Weeks and must continue submitting letters regularly for the entirety of the process (i.e. from being named a Postulant until ordination to the Priesthood). For details on Ember Day letters, see page 2 of this Checklist.
- Each individual in the ordination process is personally responsible for making sure she/he has completed the appropriate paperwork and met requirements at each stage (Postulant, Candidate, Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate, and Ordination to the Priesthood). No one from either the COMB or the Bishop's Office will routinely notify you of missing paperwork, requirements, or deadlines.

The following checklist applies only to persons who have never been ordained. Consult Section 10 of Title III for information about the reception of clergy already ordained in another Church.

Formal Preparation for Ordination to the Priesthood

DATE ACTION REQUIRED

Postulancy

_____ Bishop's letter of acceptance admitting Aspirant/Nominee to **Postulancy** is recorded in the Register and sent to the **Postulant**, with copies going to the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight of the Postulant's congregation, the Commission on Ministry of the Baptized (COMB), the Commission's Committee on the Priesthood, and the Standing Committee of the DRG [III.8.3(d)]; in addition, copies go to the Canon for Education and Formation, the Dean of the Bishop's School for Ministries, and the Canon to the Ordinary

_____ As required by Canon, individuals in the ordination process (whether as **Postulants, Candidates, or Ordinands to the Transitional Diaconate or the Priesthood**) shall communicate with the Bishop by letter four times a year in Ember Weeks. Each letter reflects on the Postulant's academic experience as well as personal and spiritual development. Information about content of Ember letters is found in the Canon [III.8.3(e)]. In addition, follow these instructions for your letters:

- Bishop Vono prefers to receive Ember Day letters by email: bp.michael@dioceserg.org.
- A copy of each letter must be submitted to the Bishop's Assistant, Mary Jewell, for the official record. Send Ms. Jewell both an email copy and a signed copy via the U.S. Postal Service. Her email is MJewell@dioceserg.org. The Diocesan mailing address is:
The Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande
6400 Coors Blvd NW
Albuquerque, NM 87120
- Ember Day letters give the Bishop an opportunity to respond pastorally to each individual. These letters are intended solely for the Bishop, so please do not send a copy to your COMB Liaison.
- If you wish to speak with the Bishop about anything that requires action rather than a pastoral response, please address those requests to the Bishop in a separate correspondence.
- Ember Day letters are to be thoughtful, formal, and typed letters.

Record of Ember Week Letters

Dates Sent: 1st year: _____, _____, _____, _____

2nd year: _____, _____, _____, _____

3rd year: _____, _____, _____, _____

_____ Once **Postulant** and Chair of COMB receive Bishop's letter granting admittance to Postulancy, **Postulant** will contact Chair to set up an appointment to meet, in

person or electronically, with the COMB's Committee on the Priesthood to review and evaluate the Postulant's proposed program of education and formation. The CP then presents its evaluation and recommendation to the COMB and the Bishop

MDiv For **Postulants** attending residential seminary, the Committee on the Priesthood also monitors the canonically required reports on academic performance and personal qualifications for ordination (including seminary-assigned field work and Clinical Pastoral Education) that are provided at least once a year by the seminary or other formation program [III.8.5(j)]

If the **Postulant** is attending seminary on-line, the CP will monitor any field work assignments made by the seminary, as well as canonically required reports on academic performance and personal qualifications for ordination

BSFM **Postulants** over age 50 who are seeking ordination as bi-vocational priests normally will attend the IONA Initiative in the Bishop's School for Ministries. The Committee on the Priesthood periodically reviews the Postulant's progress.

In consultation with the Bishop, CP may assign **Postulant** to field placement in a congregation(s) other than the Postulant's home congregation

Placements are listed below:

DATES	CONGREGATION	SUPERVISING PRIEST
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

_____ Those studying for the priesthood are required to complete a basic unit of CPE (Clinical Pastoral Education) before they are ordained.

DATES	CPE SITE
_____	_____

_____ The Committee on the Priesthood regularly reports to the COMB on each Postulant's progress and recommends to the COMB when a **Postulant** has made suitable progress to be considered for Candidacy

_____ COMB, with the Bishop's consent, recommends that **Postulant** apply for Candidacy; Chair of COMB or the Postulant's COMB Liaison then communicates with **Postulant** about initiating an application for Candidacy

Candidacy

_____ To apply for Candidacy, the **Postulant** shall:

- (1) Write a letter to Bishop requesting **Candidacy** [III.8.4(a)] which includes the date of admission to Postulancy
- (2) Provide a letter of continuing support by Postulant's home congregation signed by at least two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body and by the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight

Committee on the Priesthood reviews the Postulant's file to make sure that requirements to date have been met and reports to COMB

COMB attests in writing to the continuing formation of the **Postulant**. COMB may or may not ask to meet with the **Postulant** before attesting to her/his formation in preparation for **Candidacy** [III.8.4(b)]

Standing Committee of DRG shall interview the **Postulant** and make a **Candidacy** recommendation to the Bishop [III.8.4(b)]

Bishop's letter of acceptance admitting **Postulant** to **Candidacy** is recorded in the Register and sent to **Candidate** and to other appropriate persons/bodies [III.8.4.(b)]

If the COMB's Committee on the Priesthood requests, the **Candidate** will meet, in person or electronically, with the CP to review the Candidate's progress in education and formation. With the approval of the COMB and the Bishop, the CP may adjust coursework or recommend supplementary study during Postulancy or Candidacy to ensure that the **Candidate** will be well-prepared for General Ordination Exams or Diocesan canonical exams [III.8.5(g,h)] and is fulfilling any areas of emphasis that the Bishop, COMB, and/or CP determine are necessary

MDiv For **Candidates** attending residential seminary, the Committee on the Priesthood will continue to monitor seminary-assigned fieldwork

If the **Candidate** is attending seminary on-line, the CP will continue to monitor evaluations of any field work assignments made by the seminary

BSFM The CP will continue to assign and monitor the field work of those in the IONA Initiative. In consultation with the Bishop, the CP may assign these **Candidates** to field placement in a congregation(s) other than the Candidate's home congregation

Placements are listed below:

DATES	CONGREGATION	SUPERVISING PRIEST
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Committee on the Priesthood will recommend to the COMB and the Bishop that a **Candidate** in an M.Div. program is ready to take General Ordination Exams; CP will

recommend when **Candidates** training in the IONA Initiative are ready to take Diocesan canonical exams

Under the supervision of the Examining Chaplains, **Candidate** will take GOEs or Diocesan canonical exams in order to demonstrate basic competence in seven canonical areas: [III.8.5(g)]

- (1) The Holy Scriptures
- (2) History of the Christian Church
- (3) Christian Theology
- (4) Christian Ethics and Moral Theology
- (5) Christian Worship according to the use of the Book of Common Prayer, the Hymnal, and authorized supplemental texts
- (6) The Practice of Ministry

If the Examining Chaplains request, **Candidate** will meet with them to discuss the results of GOEs/Diocesan canonical exams and, if needed, Chaplains will recommend and supervise additional study for **Candidate** to gain proficiency in an area(s). Examining Chaplains will work with the Committee on the Priesthood to assure that competencies are met.

In preparation for ordination, the **Candidate** is responsible for completing training in each of the following areas and submitting a copy of their certificate of completion for each to the Bishop's office: [III.8.5(h)]

- (1) _____ Prevention of sexual misconduct – to include all modules for Safeguarding available in the on-line certification program available at www.praesidiuminc.com/enroll
- (2) _____ Civil requirements for reporting and pastoral opportunities for responding to evidence of abuse
- (3) _____ Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, particularly Title IV
- (4) _____ Church's teaching on racism

Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate

_____ The Committee on the Priesthood and the Examining Chaplains will prepare a final written assessment and recommendation on ordination and certify to the COMB that the **Candidate** has successfully completed a program of education and formation and is ready for ordination as a **Transitional Deacon** [III.8.6]. At this point either a representative of the COMB or the Bishop's Office will alert the **Candidate** to apply for Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate

At least 18 months from the time of written acceptance of nomination by the Nominee as provided in III.8.2(b), and upon attainment of at least 24 years of age, and the completion by the COMB of the above steps, the **Candidate** shall

- _____ (1) Write a letter to the Bishop requesting ordination as a Deacon under Canon 8 [III.8.6(c)(1)]
- _____ (2) Provide a letter of support from the Candidate's home congregation, signed and dated by at least two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body and the Member of the Clergy exercising oversight [III.8.6(c)(2)]

_____ Within 36 months prior to ordination as a **Transitional Deacon**, the **Candidate** must complete the following [III.8.5(k)]:

- (1) _____ Background check, using approved forms
- (2) _____ Medical exam by a professional, using approved forms
- (3) _____ Psychological evaluation/or update of original evaluation completed by a professional designated by the Bishop, using approved forms

_____ The COMB shall certify the **Candidate** as formed for ordination to the Transitional Diaconate and provide this certificate to the Bishop's office. The COMB may or may not choose to meet with the **Candidate** before certification [III.8.6(c)(5)]

_____ Bishop then shall provide the following information to the Standing Committee [III.8.6(c)]:

- (1) _____ Candidate's letter requesting ordination as a Transitional Deacon
- (2) _____ Letter of support from Candidate's Vestry and supervising Clergy person
- (3) _____ Written evidence of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy
- (4) _____ Certificate from seminary, the Iona Initiative, or other training entity showing the Candidate's scholastic record in the subjects required by the Canons and giving an evaluation with recommendation as to ordination
- (5) _____ Certificate from COMB recommending ordination to the Transitional Diaconate

_____ Consent of Standing Committee [III.8.6(d)]. The Standing Committee has a policy of interviewing the **Candidate** in person prior to certifying by a testimonial to the Bishop its recommendation for ordination as a **Transitional Deacon**

Once the Standing Committee's testimonial is presented to the Bishop, and there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds, the Bishop may ordain the **Candidate** to the transitional diaconate [III.8.6(e)]. All Deacons, whether vocational or transitional, can expect to be ordained in a single joint service to take place in the summer

At the time of ordination, the **Candidate** shall subscribe publicly and make, in the presence of the Bishop, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution [III.8.6(e)]:

I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Episcopal Church.

Bishop will appoint or approve the **Transitional Deacon** to serve in a Parochial Cure to fulfill III.8.7(e)

Ordination to the Priesthood

_____ In October, the Committee on the Priesthood, after consultation with the Bishop, will communicate with **Transitional Deacons** ordained in the summer to remind them to apply for ordination to the Priesthood. If a **Transitional Deacon** has been assigned additional work to reach competency in any of the seven canonical areas, the CP makes sure he/she is making progress on that assigned work before recommending that the **Transitional Deacon** apply for ordination. **Transitional Deacons** who are deemed ready to apply will then contact Ms. Mary Jewell to set a tentative ordination date and proceed to complete their application for ordination

A **Transitional Deacon** may be ordained as a **Priest** [III.8.7(a)]:

- (1) After at least six months since ordination, but normally after one year as a Transitional Deacon, and eighteen months from the time of acceptance of nomination by the Aspirant/Nominee as provided in III.8.2(b)
- (2) Upon attainment of at least twenty-four years of age
- (3) If the medical evaluation, psychological evaluation, and background check have taken place or been updated within thirty-six months prior to ordination as a Priest

To apply for ordination to the Priesthood, the **Transitional Deacon** shall

- _____
- (1) Write a letter to the Bishop requesting ordination as a Priest under Canon 8 [III.8.7(b)(1)]
 - (2) Provide a letter of support from the Ordinand's home congregation, signed and dated by at least two-thirds of the Vestry or comparable body and the Member of the Clergy exercising oversight [III.8.3(b)(2)]

_____ COMB may or may not meet with the **Transitional Deacon** at this point. After the Committee on the Priesthood has reviewed the Deacon's file and recommends ordination to the Priesthood, the COMB makes a final determination about ordination. If the COMB agrees, it attests to the **Transitional Deacon's** successful completion of the following four required areas and recommends the **Deacon** for ordination to the **Priesthood**:

- (1) _____ Program of formation designed during Postulancy under Canon III.8.5
- (2) _____ Proficiency in the required areas of study
- (3) _____ Successful completion of service in a Parochial Cure
- (4) _____ Successful completion of additional educational or formational training recommended by the Committee on the Priesthood or the Examining Chaplains to be completed prior to ordination as a **Priest**

_____ Bishop shall obtain in writing and provide the following information to the Standing Committee [III.8.7(b)]:

- (1) _____ An application from the **Deacon** requesting ordination as a **Priest**, including the Deacon's dates of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy and ordination as a Transitional Deacon
- (2) _____ A letter of support from the Deacon's home congregation, signed by at least two-thirds of the Vestry and the Member of the Clergy or other leader exercising oversight
- (3) _____ Evidence of admission to Postulancy and Candidacy, including dates of admission, and ordination to the Diaconate
- (4) _____ A certificate from the seminary or other program of preparation, written at the completion of the program of preparation, showing the Deacon's scholastic record in

the subjects required by the Canons, and giving an evaluation with recommendation as to the Deacon's other personal qualifications for ordination, together with a recommendation regarding ordination to the Priesthood

- (5) _____ A statement from the COMB attesting to the Transitional Deacon's successful completion of the four required areas listed in the previous entry

_____ Consent of the Standing Committee certifying that the canonical requirements for ordination to the **Priesthood** have been met and that there is no sufficient objection on medical, psychological, moral, or spiritual grounds, and that they recommend ordination, by a testimonial addressed to the Bishop. The Standing Committee has a policy of interviewing the **Transitional Deacon** in person prior to certifying by a testimonial to the Bishop its recommendation for ordination [III.8.7(c)]

_____ Bishop, after receiving the Standing Committee's testimonial recommending ordination, may ordain the **Transitional Deacon** to the **Priesthood** [III.8.7(d)]

_____ At the time of ordination the **Transitional Deacon** shall subscribe publicly and make, in the presence of the Bishop, the declaration required in Article VIII of the Constitution [III.8.7(c)]:

I do believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and to contain all things necessary to salvation; and I do solemnly engage to conform to the Doctrine, Discipline, and Worship of the Episcopal Church.

After Ordination to the Priesthood

_____ The newly ordained **Priest**, whether employed or not, shall be assigned a mentor Priest by the Bishop, in consultation with COMB. The mentor and new **Priest** shall meet regularly for at least a year to provide guidance, information, and a sustained dialogue about priestly ministry [III.9.2]

_____ Bishop and COMB shall require and provide for the continuing education of **Priests** and keep a record of such education [III.9.1]