

Catholic Diocese of Brownsville Permanent Diaconate Formation Program

Permanent Diaconate Formation Office
Fr. Manuel Alfredo Razo Canales, S.T.D.

Director

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Phone: (956) 787-8571

Application Packet

**PLEASE MAIL COMPLETE FORM TO:
DIOCESE OF BROWNSVILLE
PERMANENT DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM
700 N. VIRGEN DE SAN JUAN BLVD.
SAN JUAN, TX 78589**



Because the majority of those who inquire about the Diaconate are married, they should be directed to pay particular attention to discussing their possible vocation with their wives and families. The initial information and conversations with their pastor and others should assist and encourage these discussions. For a married man, the support and consent of his wife is required. Therefore, both spouses need to make sure that support and consent, even at this early stage of discernment, arise from an informed understanding.¹

An inquiry and eventual application for entrance into diaconal formation constitute not just a personal and family journey; the Church must accompany it. The parish is the primary experience of Church for most inquirers.

It is the responsibility of this community and, in particular, its pastor to invite from among its members those who may be qualified to serve as ordained ministers of the Church. Similarly, those catholic institutions and ecclesial communities that have often carried out the Church's mission of charity and social justice have a unique opportunity to call forth appropriate nominees from among their personnel. An inquiry about the Diaconate and the formation process eventually includes the Diocesan Church.

In the Diocese of Brownsville, the inquirer must be presented to the diocese by his pastor who will submit an application packet; with this fact, the formal process for admission begins.

INQUIERES' BASIC REQUIEREMENTS

- Minimum age of 31. (There is no maximum age limit)
- At least two years of residence in the Diocese of Brownsville.
- If married, the applicant must be in a stable canonical marriage. Single applicants must be willing to commit to celibacy as a lifestyle.
- Applicants must have actively participated in a parish or diocesan ministry for at least two years.
- Applicants should have been involved for at least one year in the Lay Ministry Formation of the San Juan Diego Institute of the Diocese of Brownsville. Other basic ministry formation courses are accepted.
- To hold at least a high school diploma or its equivalent and be able to take college-level courses.
- Applicants may be English or Spanish speakers that can serve in a bilingual community.
- The immigration status of the applicant **will not affect** his acceptance into the program. (The program is open to all applicants regardless of their immigration status.)
- Must be in good health and with enough stamina to engage fully in the formation requirements of the permanent diaconate and to fulfill ministerial commitments once ordained.



FORMAL PROCESS OF APPLICATION

The formal process application consists of three steps:

Step 1. To open an applicant's file:

The Pastor will submit a formal application packet per candidate to the Director of the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program. The application packet must include:

- 1. Recommendation Letter from the Pastor (Pastor's Reference Form).** This letter **should** attest that the man shows evidence of the qualities, attitudes, experience, and spirituality deemed necessary for admission into formation, namely:
 - a. He is actively involved in parish and other community services.
 - b. He is in full communion with the Church. (At least five years should elapse between a convert's or returning Catholic's entry into the Church and his acceptance into formation; care must be given to someone in whom a sudden conversion experience seems to precipitate a diaconal vocation.)
 - c. He is in a stable marriage if married, or in a mature celibate state of life if single.
 - d. If married, he must have the consent of his wife.
 - e. He is appropriately motivated and shows an overall personal balance and moral character.
 - f. He is a frequent participant in adult faith enrichment opportunities (e.g., retreats, days of reflection, spiritual direction, the study of Scripture and Church teachings).
 - g. He is free of canonical impediments or irregularities.

- 2. Documents:**
 - a. A completed application form.
 - b. A Church certificate of Baptism or certificate of reception issued within the preceding six months, with appropriate notations for Confirmation and Marriage (when it applies). If notations are missing on the baptismal certificate, separate certificates for Confirmation and Marriage (when it applies) are required. **Note:** Copy of certificates may be submitted with the Application while the original certificates with notations are located. However, certificates with notations must be submitted before entering the Aspirancy stage.
 - c. Proof of age of 31 years or older at the time of applying, such as copy of Passport, driver's license, state ID. (In accord with canon law, the USCCB has established the minimum age of ordination at thirty-five years.)
 - d. A recent photograph of the nominee, frontal, passport size 2"x 2" (51 x 51 mm.)
 - e. A personal autobiography of the applicant which helps get to know him more intimately.
 - f. A personal statement from the wife of the married applicant indicating her initial consent for his application and entrance into Permanent Diaconate Formation Program
 - g. An official transcript of academic studies. A minimum of a high school diploma or equivalent (e.g. GED) is required.
 - h. A letter of consent for a thorough criminal, cyber, and social media profile background check of the nominee under the auspices of the Diocesan Diaconate Office. (This is included in the Application Form)



- i. If possible, proof of canonical domicile or quasi-domicile in the diocese. (State ID, Drivers' License, utility bill)
- j. When it applies, a written report of the rector of any previous house in which the candidate has spent time in formation.
- k. When it applies, a written report from the Director of any previous diaconal formation program in which the applicant has spent time in formation.

Step 2: Upon completion of Step 1, the Diaconate Formation office will notify the applicant to schedule an interview.

1. Interview for the applicant and his wife (if married). At this interview, the applicant and wife, if married, must submit:
 - a. Individual spiritual autobiographies.
 - b. Doctor's statement of current health status (applicant only)
 - c. Three completed references, one by an employer, a member of the parish staff, and a parishioner, are required.

Step 3: Completion of Application Process and Conditional acceptance into the Aspirancy Path (September – December 2022)

1. A second interview with the Director of Formation will follow the initial interview.
2. The applicant and his wife must meet the requirements of the Charter for Protecting God's Children.
3. Both the applicant and his wife must attend weekly informational meetings and monthly spiritual retreats.
4. The following screening elements will be completed.
 - a. Psychological inventories will be scheduled once the weekly informative meetings begin in September (for the applicant only).
 - b. Staff reviews of Psychological Inventories report.
 - c. Criminal background check.
5. Meeting with Bishop before formal acceptance.



FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS PER ASPIRANT

Once the pastor has submitted the application packet, the following financial requirements will apply:

PARISH CONTRIBUTION

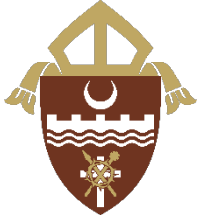
	Aspirant/Candidate	Wife	Total
Basic Tuition (parish contribution)	\$2,500/year		\$ 2,500
Spiritual Direction (paid by participants)	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Psychological inventories (to be determined)	\$ 0	N/A	\$ 0
Total	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 0	\$ 2,500

This contribution covers approximately one-third of the costs. The Diocese subsidizes the remaining two-thirds of the expenses for the program.

The tuition fee includes books, classes, retreats, other evaluations, interviews, special events, graduation, ordination, and seminars.

Aspirants/candidates may incur additional expenses for babysitter fees, travel expenses, etc.

No one will be excluded from the program for financial reasons. Please notify the Director of the Diaconate Formation Program if the Parish's financial situation makes it unable to fulfill these contributions, or if the applicant is unable to fulfill the expenses above mentioned.



Catholic Diocese of Brownsville Permanent Diaconate Formation Program

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT (Payment Form)

Date: _____

This tuition is paid for _____ to attend
(Name of Applicant)
 the **Permanent Diaconate Formation Program**.

Home Address: _____
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Cell Phone: _____ Name of Parish: _____
(City)

Tuition	\$ 2,500
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PAYMENT OPTIONS

Full	\$
Monthly	\$
Quarterly	\$

Approved _____
Director

 Pastor's Signature

Date Received _____



GUIDELINES FOR SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION TO THE PERMANENT DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM (For Pastors)

1. The number of qualified applicants for the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program accepted from the same parish.

It is the goal of the Diocese to have at least two deacons assigned to each parish and agency of the Diocese. Each parish is encouraged to discern with those who are called to enter the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program. Parishes with deacons already ministering are reminded to continue the discernment process for future candidates as their current deacons advance in age or consider relocation.

There will be a limit of three aspirants per parish. In the case of more than three qualified applicants from the same parish, the director of the formation program will consult with the pastor to determine which three applicants will be accepted into the program. On the remaining qualified applicants, in subsequent years further processing will be conducted.

2. Applicants must have demonstrated in the past or be currently involved in all three areas of service to the Word, Liturgy, and Charity/Social Justice.

The Permanent Diaconate Formation Program is designed to provide knowledge and skills to men who have already demonstrated their interest in and attraction to Diaconal type service. In making this assessment, consider the following guidelines:

Service of the Word:

Can this individual provide leadership in retreat programs, teach in Religious Education programs, be part of the Baptism Preparation, Marriage Preparation and RCIA programs?

Service of Liturgy:

Does this individual participate as a lector, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, wake or funeral liturgies, music program, liturgy planning, etc.?

Service of Charity/ Social Justice:

Does this individual participate in a food program, housing project, PADS shelter, outreach in the Parish/ Community/workplace, a Peace and Justice Program, prison or hospital ministry, etc.?



SUMMARY OF THE ROLE OF PASTOR IN THE FORMATION PROGRAM

The pastor is one of the primary partners in the process and makes a significant contribution to the success of the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program in the Diocese. Although deacons are ordained for the Diocese, it is the pastor who is the Diocesan representative to an applicant in the formation process leading to ordination. The demands of ministry require the formation program to prepare candidates who are competent to become deacons and who can stand shoulder to shoulder with their pastor and parish staff to effectively serve the people of God. The pastor is a key element to realizing this objective.

The Pastor's Responsibilities:

DISCERNING: An invitation to an individual to consider whether God is calling him to the vocation of the deacon usually comes through the pastor, even if the applicant initiates the inquiry.

SPONSORING: The pastor must submit a letter endorsing and sponsoring the applicant. No applicant is accepted without a pastor's involvement and support.

SUPPORTING: The pastor provides spiritual and emotional support for the applicant and his wife (if married). The financial support of the parish adds to the Diocesan subsidy.

SUPERVISING: The pastor is the primary supervisor of the applicant during his aspirancy and candidacy internship periods. He may delegate some of the "hands on" supervision to the parochial vicar, but ultimately the pastor is responsible for supervision of the candidate.

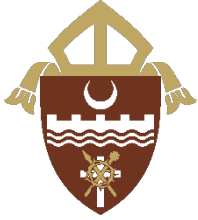
EVALUATING: A formal annual evaluation from the pastor assessing the progress of the candidate from the perspective of the pastor is required. Monthly meeting between candidate and pastor are recommended.

ENDORSING: The Director of Formation stands before the ordinary at ordination and attests, with moral certitude, to the candidate's readiness for ordination. This is only possible when the pastor, as a partner with the formation staff, has seen and experienced the candidate's readiness.

WELCOMING: Following ordination, another expectation of the pastor is to be welcoming. It is important that the deacon be included in the communications and activities of the parish staff in order to fully support the mission of the parish. The deacon should be encouraged to use his faculties fully in service to the people of God in the ministry of Word, Liturgy and Charity.

Note: Approximately ninety percent of candidates are married. Their wives are expected to participate in the discernment aspects of the formation program.

The wives should fully participate in the formation program.



Catholic Diocese of Brownsville

Permanent Diaconate Formation Program

Pastor's Recommendation Letter (Pastor's Reference Form)

DATE: _____

PASTOR'S REFERENCE FOR _____

Applicant's Name

The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States of America stresses that: *"The profile is completed with certain spiritual and evangelical qualities. Among these are a sound faith; good Christian reputation; active involvement in the Church's apostolate; personal integrity, maturity, and holiness; regular participation in the Church's sacramental life; evidence of recognized, ongoing commitment to the Church's life and service; participation in faith enrichment opportunities (e.g., retreats, days of recollection, adult education programming); a stable marriage, if married, or a mature celibate state of life, if single; active membership in a Christian community; capacity for obedience and fraternal communion; and a deep spirituality and prayer life. The presence of these qualities, experienced in kindness and humility, may demonstrate a call to the Order of Deacons."*

PLEASE USE THIS CHECKLIST TO INDICATE WHAT YOU, AS PASTOR, HAVE OBSERVED, ABOUT THIS APPLICANT. THEN PLEASE OFFER A BRIEF ASSESSMENT OF THE APPLICANT IN TERMS OF AREAS OF STRENGTH OR GROWTH AND CONCERNS.

BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS: CHECK AND EXPLAIN ALL THAT APPLY

- Natural inclination of service to the Christian community and to all in need
- Psychological integrity
- Capacity for dialogue, which implies a sense of docility and openness
- Ability to share one's faith yet be tolerant of other points of view of their religion, race, gender, ethnicity, culture, or lifestyle
- Good communication skills
- Sense of responsibility that includes fulfilling of one's word and completing one's work
- Self-directed and collaborative accountability
- Balanced and prudent judgment
- Generosity in service
- Ability to lead, motivate, facilitate, and animate others into appropriate action and service

SPIRITUAL AND EVANGELICAL QUALITIES: CHECK AND EXPLAIN ALL THAT APPLY

- Sound faith
- Good Christian reputation
- Personal integrity, maturity, and holiness
- Regular participation in the Church's sacramental life



Have you reviewed your applicant's ministerial experience (per his Application Form) of Charity/ Social Justice, Word and Liturgy with him?

- Yes No

Have you observed or do you have personal knowledge of his experience in each of the areas of ministry? (Prior experience in all three areas is required for admission to the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program.)

- Yes No Please comment: _____

How long have you known the applicant? _____

Is the applicant in full communion with the Church. (At least five years should elapse between a convert's or returning Catholic's entry into the Church and his acceptance into formation.)

- Yes No Please comment: _____

Is the applicant actively involved in parish ministry and other community services?

- Yes No Please comment: _____

In your opinion, is the applicant known and respected by the community?

- Yes No Please comment: _____

Is the applicant in a stable canonical marriage if married; or in a mature celibate state of life if single?

- Yes No Please comment: _____



Do you know if the applicant, if married, has his wife's support to enter the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program?

Yes No Please comment: _____

Do you know if his application to the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program has the support of your Pastoral Staff?

Yes No Please comment: _____

What are the specific ministerial needs in the community that you feel the applicant can respond to, if he becomes a deacon?

Please explain: _____

Does the applicant faithfully live the teachings of the Catholic Church and is in compliance with Diocesan criteria for formation?

Yes No Please comment: _____

Is the applicant free of canonical impediments or irregularities which require a dispensation?

Yes No Please comment: _____

Do you recommend this applicant's acceptance into the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program?

Yes No Please comment: _____

If this applicant is accepted, I understand that the parish will be responsible for assisting with annual tuition payments for the applicant and, if married, an additional assessment for his wife. The Diocese will continue to subsidize the majority of the cost of the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program.

Has this applicant registered with the Protecting God's Children-Virtus training program?

Yes No

Has the applicant's wife completed the same program?

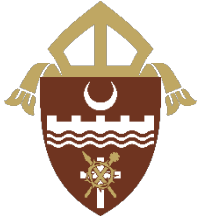
Yes No

If the applicant and wife (if applicable) **HAVE NOT** completed the Protecting God's Children-Virtus training program, I understand that he/they must complete it by the start of the *Permanent Diaconate Formation Program*.

Pastor

Date

Parish



Catholic Diocese of Brownsville Permanent Diaconate Formation Program

APPLICANT'S APPLICATION FORM

Date: _____

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name _____
LAST (TITLE) FIRST MIDDLE

Preferred First Name _____

Current Status Single Married Widow Divorced
DATE: (MM/DD/YY) DATE: (MM/DD/YY)

Wife's Name _____
LAST FIRST MIDDLE

Wife's Preferred First Name _____

Address _____
STREET CITY STATE ZIP CODE

E-mail (Personal) _____ Tel. (Cell) _____

E-mail (Wk.) _____ Tel. (Wk.) _____

Do you reside within the Diocese of Brownsville? YES NO

If no, please explain: _____

Age: _____ Date of Birth: _____ City of Birth: _____
(MM/DD/YYYY)

Baptism: _____
DATE / CHURCH / CITY (Include copy of certificate dated within six months of application date.)

Confirmation: _____
DATE / CHURCH / CITY

Marriage: _____
DATE / CHURCH / CITY



Any prior marriages for either spouse? Yes No
 (If yes, attach a separate sheet with details and include Protocol Number (s), if annulled.)

Note: Copy of certificates may be submitted with the Application while the original certificates with notations are located. However, certificates with notations must be submitted before entering the Aspirancy stage.

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Number of years as a practicing Catholic: _____

Your parish name: _____

_____ ADDRESS CITY STATE ZIP CODE

Number of years in Parish: _____

Pastor's name: _____

Sponsoring Parish/ Agency/Institution if other than Home Parish: _____

Name of Sponsor if other than Pastor: _____

Other Parishes/communities in which you have been involved since high school:

FAITH LIFE:

How often do you attend Mass? _____

How often do you receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation? _____

Do you have a regular confessor? Yes No

Do you have a spiritual director? Yes No

What spiritual activity or prayer form is most rewarding for you? _____

Have you ever been away from the Church for a period of time? Yes No

If so, how long? When did you return? _____

Have you ever belonged to a church or religious body other than the Catholic Church? Yes No

If so, what denomination? _____



Date and entry into Catholic Church _____

Brought into Church through RCIA? Yes No If yes, in what year? _____

Indicate the usual religious practices in your home: _____

List the ways you have been involved in your church community (e.g. Mass server, Choir, Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Youth Minister, etc.):

Have you ever applied for the diaconate for this or any other diocese? Yes No

If another Diocese, which one? _____

Were you accepted into the program? Yes No

If no, explain _____

Have you ever been accepted as a candidate for any other diocese, religious community, or secular institute(s)? Yes No

If yes, please list diocese(s), religious community or communities, and secular institute(s).

Name of the Diocese, community, etc.

Dates

Level at time of leaving

Did you leave of your own accord or were you asked to leave? _____

Why? _____

While sponsored by another diocese or religious community, were you installed in the ministry of lector (reader), minister of acolyte or receive candidacy? Yes No

If yes, please list: _____

Have you ever applied to and not been accepted as a candidate by any other diocese or religious community? Yes No If yes, please list diocese(s) and/or religious community or communities:

CHILDREN

NAME	AGE	SCHOOL / OCCUPATION
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
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How will your children who live with you accept the time commitment you and your wife will be giving to the formation program? _____



READINESS FOR PARTICIPATION IN FORMATION

Do you understand that ordination to the Diaconate is a life-long commitment in service to the Church?

Yes No

Only the married applicant completes this section:

Have you and your wife discussed your desire to become a Deacon? Yes No

Do you agree to your wife’s participation in the Diaconate Program? Yes No

Do you have any reservations regarding your wife’s participation? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Do you think you and your wife can prioritize the time needed to complete the formation program?

Yes No

please explain:

Wives are required to fully participate in the Program. Is there anything to prevent your wife’s participation?

Yes No If Yes, please explain:

(Note: Wives are encouraged to fully participate in the five-year formation program and required to attend the annual weekend retreat and other special events.)

Applicants who are single, divorced, or widowed please complete the following question:

From The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons: *“The unmarried participant must grow in clear and realistic understanding of the value of celibate chastity and its connection to diaconal ministry. To be lived fruitfully, the value of celibacy must be internalized.”* Directory 154

Do you understand this requirement? Yes No

If No, explain



Are you (or your spouse, if married) now involved or expect to be involved in any legal or court action?
 Yes No If yes, please describe.

Do you (or your spouse, if married) have a history of any situations or relationships that could adversely affect your ministry as a Deacon or bring scandal to the Church?
 Yes No If yes, please describe.

PHYSICAL HEALTH BACKGROUND

Do you have a personal physician? Yes No If yes:

Physician's Name: _____

ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
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Date of your last physical examination: _____

How many days of work did you miss last year due to illness? _____

Do you smoke or chew tobacco? Yes No If yes, how much? _____

Do you drink alcoholic beverages? Yes No
 If yes, what do you generally drink? _____

How do you classify your drinking? None Light Moderate Heavy

Do you take prescription drugs? Yes No If yes, please list.

Do you use other drugs? Yes No
 If yes, explain: _____

Have you ever been chemically dependent? Yes No

If yes, please explain: _____

Have you ever been in a treatment program for abuse of any kind? Yes No

If yes, list where and when: _____

If there is any history of mental illness in your immediate family (parents, siblings, children), please give details:

If there is any history of substance abuse in your immediate family, please provide details:

Have you had any kind of counseling? Yes No

If yes, please give details and diagnosis: _____

Do you exercise? Yes No

If yes, how and how often? _____

Do you currently have medical (health) insurance? Yes No

If yes, please provide:

Name of Company: _____

Type of Coverage: _____

Who is financially responsible for the premium today? _____

How long will this be available to you? _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Highest grade completed: _____

Diploma/Degree(s) awarded: _____

If college or university degree, what was your major? _____

Vocational education or job training: _____

Continuing Education/ Certificate(s): _____

In addition to attendance and active class participation, the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program requires extensive reading and written reflection papers. Is this a concern for you?

Yes No If yes, please explain: _____

Language preference: English Spanish

Are you fluent in English? YES NO

Speak None Little Moderate Proficient

Read None Little Moderate Proficient

Write None Little Moderate Proficient

Understand None Little Moderate Proficient

Are you fluent in Spanish? YES NO

Speak None Little Moderate Proficient

Read None Little Moderate Proficient

Write None Little Moderate Proficient

Understand None Little Moderate Proficient

Other foreign languages (specify language, years of study, current ability): _____



For non-native speakers of English, how many years of English have you studied?

For non-native speakers of Spanish, how many years of Spanish have you studied?

List: Talents, Hobbies and Special Interests: _____

Special Achievements: _____

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL STATUS

Do you have a guaranteed income? Yes No

A candidate's acceptance into the diaconal program is not dependent upon the answers of these two questions:

Are you a citizen of the United States? Yes No

If no, of what country are you a citizen? _____

Are you a permanent resident of the U.S.? Yes No

Have you ever been arrested? Yes No

If so, what were the charges? _____

Place / date of arrest: _____

City

County

State

Date

Age at time of arrest: _____

Disposition: _____

EMPLOYMENT: CURRENT

Profession / Occupation _____

No. of years. _____

Employed

Self Employed

Retired *If retired, date* _____

Name of Company _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip Code _____

The Diocese’s expectation is that you are able to adequately support and provide health, retirement and other benefits for yourself and your family. Are you able to do this? Yes No

If no, please explain: _____

EMPLOYMENT: PRIOR HISTORY

Name of Employer	City	Dates (From / To) (MM/YY)	Nature of Work

MILITARY SERVICE HISTORY

BRANCH	DATES (FROM / TO)	HIGHEST RANK	SPECIALIZED TRAINING

Type of Discharge Received _____ Date _____

Retired Military Yes No

**REQUIRED INFORMATION:****CANONICAL STATUS**

The following are impediments to ordination which require a dispensation.

Please check where applicable:

Severe mental illness (have you ever committed yourself to or been committed to a psychiatric facility?)

Yes No

Apostasy, heresy or schism (i.e. have you ever publicly abandoned the Catholic Church; have you publicly advocated any views contrary to the teaching of the Catholic Church; have you ever joined another religious body by a formal act?)

Yes No

Is there any existing marriage bond (i.e. former marriage that is not annulled)?

Yes No

Have you made private or public religious vows?

Yes No

Have you been involved in the taking of another human life; have you helped someone procure an abortion, performed an abortion, or positively cooperated in obtaining an abortion for another person?

Yes No

Have you ever attempted suicide, self-mutilation, or mutilation of others?

Yes No

Have you ever impersonated a deacon, priest, or bishop?

Yes No

Have you ever been excommunicated?

Yes No



INFORMATION REQUESTED BY THE BISHOP’S COMMITTEE ON THE DIACONATE FOR STATISTICAL REPORT:

Ethnicity: Native American Hispanic / Latino African - American
 Caucasian Other

Participation in previous formation: *please complete if applicable*

A. Religious Institute Seminary Minor Orders
 If you checked any of the above, a letter of reference from your provincial / rector is required.

B. Diocesan Lay Ministry Formation Program

 Year of completion _____

 Diocese _____

CONSENT

I AGREE TO PARTICIPATE IN PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING, A MARITAL INVENTORY (IF APPLICABLE), VIRTUS TRAINING (INCLUDES A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK), AND AN INVESTIGATION OF ANY CANONICAL IMPEDIMENTS. I RELEASE THE RESULTS TO THE DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM STAFF, MY PASTOR, AND ANY OTHERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS.

Signature of Applicant

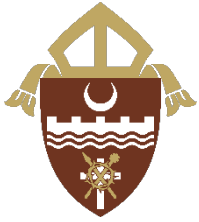
Date

Note: This application will not be processed without Pastor’s review and signature below.

Signature of Sponsoring Pastor

Date

(Note: The Pastor must review the application and wife’s form (if married), including all required certificates, to ensure that there are no personal, pastoral, or canonical issues that would preclude the applicant’s acceptance into formation for Holy Orders.)



Catholic Diocese of Brownsville Permanent Diaconate Formation Program

APPLICANT'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY GUIDE

Applicants are required to write an autobiography as part of the admissions process. This guide is meant primarily to guide you. It is not intended to be filled in like a questionnaire. Composition-style writing can be initiated by using the guide questions. Your autobiography should reflect on your development, your family, and your intentions for admission to The Permanent Diaconate Formation Program. Before you begin writing, it is important and helpful for you to reflect on the following guide questions. It should not be longer than ten pages or shorter than four pages. You decide how this will be divided among the following sections.

Part I, Family: In the first section of your autobiography, focus on your immediate family and any extended family members who are significant to you. Name who these family members are; give a short description of your relationship to each person; explain what they are currently doing. Describe some significant family events. Please be as specific and detailed as you find necessary.

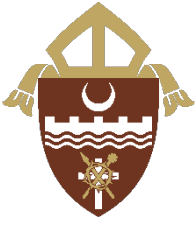
Part II, Schooling: You should focus on your academic experience in the second section of your autobiography. Describe your school experience throughout your life; whether or not any of your siblings attend the same school; what you liked and disliked about your school experience; how did your family interact with your school experience and / or extracurricular activity; and what kind of student you are. Please be as specific and detailed as you find necessary.

Part III, You as a person: You should focus on your development as a person in the third portion of your autobiography. Explain what was significant about your childhood and growing up. In what ways would others describe your character and personality? How would you do the same? Explain some of your significant relationships (include whomever you wish). What impact have they had on you? Describe yourself as a person, avoiding a laundry list of adjectives describing yourself and expressing instead your understanding of who you know yourself to be.

Part IV, Vocational discernment: Please describe how you chose to apply to the Diaconal Formation in the fourth part of your autobiography. What has your experience been with Church, what has your family experience been with Church? How did you become convinced that you should be considered for the Permanent Diaconate? To this point, who has influenced and supported you? What makes you believe you might be called to the Permanent Diaconate?

Part V, Other: Lastly, if you have any other insights into yourself to share, please do so. In this section, you only need to write if there's something you haven't yet recorded but would like to.

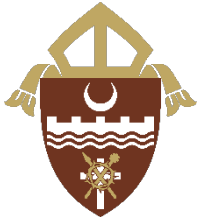
In your autobiography, please include your name at the top.



Catholic Diocese of Brownsville Permanent Diaconate Formation Program

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

NAME: _____



Catholic Diocese of Brownsville Permanent Diaconate Formation Program Wife's Form

(To be submitted with Husband's Application)

DATE _____

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY

GENERAL INFORMATION

Name: _____
Last First Middle

Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

E-mail (Personal) _____ Tel. (Cell) _____

E-mail (Wk.) _____ Tel. (Wk.) _____

Reside within the Diocese of Brownsville? Yes No

If no, please explain: _____

Age: _____ Birthdate: _____ City of birth _____
MM/DD/YYYY

Religious affiliation: _____

If Catholic, number of years practicing Catholic: _____

Number of years in parish: _____ Pastor's name: _____

PLEASE INDICATE THE AREA(S) OF SERVICE IN YOUR PARISH/COMMUNITY:
(Please describe or explain)

1. CHARITY/SOCIAL JUSTICE: (service to the sick, hungry, mourning, poor, alienated, marginalized, etc.) _____
2. WORD: Evangelization/ Catechesis (RCIA, Religious Education, etc.) or Sacramental Preparation Program(s): _____



3. LITURGY:

- Lector Year mandated _____
- Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Year mandated _____
- Other Liturgical Ministries (*Please explain*)

Describe additional areas of Church or civic service:

WORK

Profession/occupation: _____ Number of years: _____

Are you working outside the home? Yes (full-time part-time) No

Name of Company: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

READINESS FOR PARTICIPATION IN FORMATION

Do you understand that ordination to the Diaconate is a life-long commitment in service to the Church?
 Yes No

Have you and your husband discussed his desire to become a Deacon? Yes No

Do you agree to your husband's participation in the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program?
 Yes No

Do you have any reservations regarding your husband's participation in the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Do you think you and your husband can prioritize the time needed to complete the formation program?

Yes No

If no, please explain: _____

MEDICAL HISTORY

Describe any physical disability or chronic illness that may prevent you from full participation in the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program:

Have you experienced or been treated for any mental or emotional difficulty or any alcohol or chemical dependency? Yes No

If Yes, Please explain: _____

EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

Highest grade completed _____ Diploma/Degree(s) awarded _____

If college or university degree, what was your major? _____

Vocational Education or Job Training:

Continuing Education/ Certificate(s):

In addition to attendance and active class participation, the Diaconate Formation Program requires extensive reading and written reflection papers. Is this a concern for you? Yes No

If Yes, please explain:

Are you fluent in English? Yes No

Are you fluent in Spanish? Yes No



Other language(s) skills, please list:

List talents, hobbies and special interests:

Special Achievements:

How will your children who live with you accept the time commitment you and your husband will be giving to the formation program?

Wives are required to participate in some events during the formation program. Is there anything to prevent your participation? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

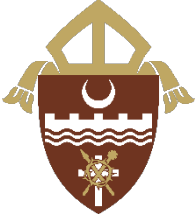
(Note: Wives are encouraged to fully participate in the five-year formation program and required to attend the annual weekend retreat and other special events. Please discuss any concerns about the wife’s involvement in the program at the Diaconate Formation Staff interview.)

WIFE’S CONSENT LETTER

Use the next sheet to type or write a letter commenting on your husband’s application to the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program.

Please comment in your letter on your hopes and concerns regarding your husband’s participation in the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program. Conclude your remarks with your consent and signature.

The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons states: “*In deciding to pursue a possible diaconal vocation, a married man must comply with the wishes of his wife, in a spirit of mutual commitment and love. A wife is an equal partner in the Sacrament of Matrimony and is an individual person with her own gifts, talents, and call from God. A man’s diaconal formation can be a unique and challenging situation and opportunity for his wife. She should be involved in the program in appropriate ways—remembering, however, that it is the husband who is responding to a call to the diaconate. The Church has determined that a married man cannot be considered for the diaconate without the consent of his wife.*” Directory,148



Catholic Diocese of Brownsville Permanent Diaconate Formation Program

Wife's Letter of Consent

If accepted, I consent to my husband's participation in the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program.

Signature of Wife

Date