

*You have been told, O man, what is good, and what the Lord required of you:
Only to do the right and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God.*

MICAH 6:8

DIACONAL FORMATION

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DIACONAL FORMATION

I. INTRODUCTION

The ministry of deacon requires that a person be prayerful and grounded in a sense of vocation, pastorally sensitive and astute, and able both to articulate the Church's teaching and to lead people in the celebration of sacraments and rites. To help a candidate achieve these three major goals, the formation program of the Archdiocese consists of the following four components:

Human Formation

The human dimension of the Deacon Formation Program provides the foundation for the other three dimensions of formation: spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral. The human dimension of the Deacon Formation Program prepares the candidate to become "a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their meeting with Jesus Christ" (*BNFPD*, 66; *PDV*, 43).

Spiritual Formation

Through spiritual formation, the candidate learns to integrate the responsibilities of his life with one another and with the intellectual and pastoral components of the program, while discerning and deepening his sense of vocation.

Pastoral Formation

The pastoral component consists of placement, supervision, and evaluation of the candidate in a ministry of the Archdiocese with the goal of effectively developing a candidate's pastoral skills.

Intellectual Formation

The intellectual component supports the pastoral and the spiritual components of the formation program through study and reflection. Candidates are introduced systematically to the Church's tradition that they need to understand in order to serve as deacons, who represent the Church in a public way.

II. PERSONNEL OF THE PROGRAM

The following personnel are responsible for the components of the Deacon Formation program. (A more complete description of their responsibilities is found in Appendix A.)

The Archbishop

The Archbishop is ultimately responsible for the discernment and formation of aspirants and candidates, as well as for the pastoral care of deacons and their spouses.

The Vicar for Clergy

The Vicar for Clergy presides over the Evaluation Committee and reviews the evaluations with the Archbishop.

Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation

The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation (otherwise known as the Director of Formation, *ND*) oversees all components of the formation program and reports to the Vicar for Clergy.

Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacons Candidates, and Vocations

The Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations (otherwise known as the Vocation Director, *ND*) collaborates with and serves as a resource for the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation to ensure the management of a discernment and formation process for candidates for the permanent diaconate.

Coordinator of Deacon Candidate Formation

The Coordinator of Deacon Candidate Formation (otherwise known as the Coordinator of Pastoral Field Education, *ND*) provides workshops to train pastoral supervisors, assigns candidates to approved pastoral assignments with supervision in accord with the policies of the formation program and with the kind of service that a candidate expects to undertake as deacon.

Pastors and Pastoral Leaders

Pastors and pastoral leaders are “involved in the presentation, selection and assessment of aspirants and candidates” (*ND*, 53). During the formation process the pastor or pastoral leader, in collaboration with the entire formation team, has a unique role in assisting, counseling and assessing the candidate (*ND*, 226).

Pastoral Supervisors

The pastoral supervisor is the on-site assistant to the Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation.

Spiritual Directors

The role of the spiritual director—“who must always be a priest” (*BNFPD*, 23)—is critical for fostering the deacon candidate’s diaconal identity and serves a confidential and integrating function in the life of the candidate.

Faculty

The faculty of the deacon formation program, approved by the Archbishop and hired by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation provides instruction and evaluation for the candidate’s intellectual formation.

Mentors

The mentor, appointed by the Archbishop, offers advice and support both to the candidate and to the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation.

Preaching Boards

Preaching Boards, approved by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation, evaluate each candidate's ability to preach.

Deacon Formation Advisory Board

The Deacon Formation Advisory Board advises the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation about all policies relating to the program, including standards and policies for admission and evaluation, curriculum, and promotion of the program.

Admissions Committee

The admissions committee reviews applications to the program at regular intervals throughout the year, interviews prospects throughout the Archdiocese, and recommends prospects for admission to the program.

Evaluation Committee

The Evaluation Committee meets twice yearly or at the request of the Vicar for Clergy to evaluate the files of the candidates and to recommend candidates for advancement in the program and, eventually, for ordination to the diaconate.

III. SELECTION OF PERMANENT DEACONS

Requirements of the Applicants: Process of Discernment

DF 1. Before an applicant can be considered for the Deacon Formation Program for the Archdiocese of Seattle, he must have completed an appropriate period of discernment.

The duration of this discernment depends on the maturity, depth of participation and understanding of the Church, and readiness for beginning the Deacon Formation Program.

Fundamental Requirements of Applicants

DF 2. Applicants to be considered for admission must be baptized and confirmed Roman Catholics, registered and actively participating in a parish in the Archdiocese of Seattle. They must be free of all irregularities and impediments to ordination. They must have been active, responsible Catholics for at least five years prior to application, must meet the fundamental requirements, and possess the personal qualities and attributes described below.

2.a. Fundamental Requirements:

- *Age:* Applicants must be at least 35 years of age and no more than 65 at the time of ordination, unless exempted by the Archbishop.
- *Health:* They must be in good physical health.
- *Marital Status:* Married or single men are eligible. If married, they must be validly married by the Church for a number of years. The Archbishop determines

individual cases. They must also understand the commitment to celibacy if single, or if they are married, the commitment to celibacy if their spouse dies.

- *Stable family:* They must show evidence of a stable marriage and family life.
- *Economic stability:* Whether employed or retired, they must be economically stable and self-sufficient.
- *Education:* They must have a high school diploma or its equivalent and be fluent enough in English to be able to participate successfully in the program. It is also desirable that those whose first language is English be able to speak a second language, especially one that will be useful in their pastoral setting.
- *Formation:* They must be willing and able to complete successfully the Archdiocesan Deacon Formation program, and they must establish and maintain an active relationship with an approved spiritual director.
- *Continuing formation:* They must commit themselves to continuing their formation as a deacon.
- *Practicing Catholic:* They must be a practicing Catholic in their parish or faith community for at least five years, having received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.
- *Ministerial involvement:* They must already model the deacon's role through some ministerial involvement in the life of the faith community.
- *Involvement of spouse:* The spouse of a married candidate must be fully supportive of her husband's candidacy and be willing to participate in the program.
- *Recommendations:* Applicants must have the recommendation of the pastor of the parish where they are faithful members, their employer (if employed), and of a staff person or a volunteer member of the parish or faith community who is familiar with their current ministry. If the candidate comes from a parish in which a deacon already serves, the deacon's recommendation is required. Such recommendations will acknowledge a history of involvement in their parish or faith community, especially in a way that shows ministerial commitment and skill. If an applicant has attended a seminary, a reference from the Seminary rector is required.

- 2.b. Persons seeking to minister in the Archdiocese of Seattle must exhibit the following personal qualities and attributes:
- They are knowledgeable about Roman Catholic teachings and practices, including the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and have shown a commitment to continuing faith formation.
 - They understand and accept the Church's teaching around sexuality.
 - They express their spirituality as an integral part of themselves and nurture their relationship with God through regular prayer.
 - They speak and act in ways congruent with the Church's faith and its moral and social teachings.
 - They respect all individuals and demonstrate sensitivity to the rich ethnic, racial, gender and cultural diversity of parishioners; they celebrate and integrate the individual uniqueness of all persons.
 - They maintain respect for the dignity, worth and potential for growth of individuals and communities and for alternative points of view.
 - They take responsibility for themselves, make decisions, and deal with the consequences.
 - They set goals, articulate their values, and make decisions in light of their values and without undue influence from others. At the same time, they can follow goals set by those responsible for the common good and act according to established procedures.
 - They identify their personal strengths and weaknesses, remain open to feedback from others and are able to change behaviors, attitudes, and needs.
 - They have demonstrated involvement in the parish's apostolic ministry, especially to the poor and marginalized.

Admission to the Program

DF 3. Those who meet the fundamental requirements described above and who possess the personal qualities and attributes noted within those fundamental requirements are eligible to enter the admissions process.

DF 4. Depending on his cultural, language, or learning needs, the candidate may be required to complete prerequisites designated by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation as a condition of acceptance into the diaconate program. These prerequisites might include courses in English as a Second Language (ESL), foundational courses in scripture or theology, mentoring in study skills, and the like. The Archdiocese of Seattle will underwrite the costs of completing these prerequisites and a place will be reserved for this person in the next class of deacon candidates.

Admissions Process

DF 5. The following admissions process will be used for applicants for the deacon formation program, who will be required to produce the documents described below. As in all aspects of the deacon formation program, procedures for admission will respect the cultural and language needs of applicants and candidates.

- 5.a. A person who feels called to diaconate enters into dialogue with his pastor, who may encourage him to send for information to the Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations. Alternately, a person may be approached by his pastor, or appropriate parish/faith community leader and encouraged to apply.
- 5.b. The applicant is interviewed by the Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations or by persons designated by the Archbishop. (See Appendix B for “Initial Interview of Applicants” form.) If it is determined that no canonical impediments exist and that the applicant should be considered for the inquiry phase, the person receives an application packet by applying to the Office of the Vicar for Clergy.
- 5.c. When necessary, a translator will be present to facilitate the interview. If it seems that the applicant’s best responses will be made in his native language or if he will be recommended to the diaconate program only after completing pre-requisites designated by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation, a copy of the application will be provided in the person’s native language.

Submission of application and accompanying documents

- 5.d. The person submits the application and all required documents by the established deadline. The person ensures that the recommendations of his pastor and of all others arrive by the same deadline. The receipt of the application is acknowledged in writing.

The following documents are required for application:

- Completed application with a consent form regarding psychological consultation and the confidentiality of consultative reports.
- A current statement of general health from a physician;
- Certificate of Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage (if married), issued within the past six months;
- A recent Photograph of the applicant and, if married, of his wife;
- Letters of reference from the following people:
 - Pastor or pastoral leader of the parish where the applicant is registered;
 - A staff person or a volunteer member of the applicant's parish who is familiar with the applicant's current ministry;
 - Deacon assigned to the applicant's parish (if there is a deacon assigned to the parish);
 - A person who has worked with the applicant in a church or community setting;
 - A person who is not related to the candidate and can provide a good character reference;
 - The applicant's employer.
- An official transcript of past or present academic studies;
- A written report of the rector of any previous house in which the applicant has spent time in formation, including explicit reference to the evaluation and votes he received;
- A vocational autobiography;
- The Commitment Statement signed by the applicant and the applicant's spouse (if married);

- The Spouse's Application (if married) with a personal, handwritten statement indicating her initial consent for his application and entrance into aspirant formation.

Notification and Interview

- 5.e If the applicant is an acceptable candidate for the diaconate, he is notified and scheduled for an interview along with his spouse. The interview is conducted by a team of at least two people who are appointed and trained for this purpose by the Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations. They submit the summaries of their interviews and recommendations to the Admissions Committee. During the interview, the goal is to elicit more developed responses to the application and to ascertain if the applicant meets the basic standards for readiness for admission into the Aspirant Path as outlined in the National Directory.
- 5.f. As part of the application process, those charged with admission must—with appropriate care for confidentiality and manifestation of conscience—explore for the presence of canonical impediments to ordination and obtain written indication of their absence. If canonical dispensations are required, these must be obtained before admission to aspirant formation.
- 5.g. Those not selected for an interview are discontinued as applicants and notified by mail.

Recommendation to the Archbishop for a Decision

- 5.h. Each committee member must vote on each applicant. The vote and rationale for that vote are to be recorded and kept in the applicant's file. The committee should nominate to the Archbishop only those applicants whom they have judged to possess the necessary qualities for entrance and successful completion of the aspirant path. Upon reviewing the recommendation, vote, and rationale of the committee, the Archbishop decides whether to admit the applicant into the aspirant path.

Notification

- 5.i. Those not accepted into the Aspirancy Program are notified by mail.

Retention of Records

DF 6. The applications of those not admitted to the program are retained for at least three years. After three years an appraisal will be conducted to determine the value of the records and their future disposition.

Aspirancy (Inquiry) Period

DF 7. If selected by the Archbishop, the applicant, along with his spouse, enters into the Aspirancy Period of the Deacon Formation Program.

- 7.a. Those accepted into the Aspirant Path are invited to a series of Inquiry Weekends to be introduced to the requirements of the diaconate and of the Deacon Formation Program. At the conclusion of their Inquiry, a team of at least two interviewers delegated by the Admissions Committee interviews the inquirer and spouse. The purpose of this second interview is to ensure that the candidate and spouse clearly understand the obligations and challenges as well as the opportunities and consolations of the program and of diaconal ministry. It is a time to probe for second thoughts or other signs that a call to diaconate may not be present.
- 7.b. The aspirancy (inquiry) period, lasting one year, is a time for both the prospective candidate and the Archdiocese to discern the person's call to diaconate and to discern the capability and readiness of an aspirant to be nominated to the Archbishop for acceptance as a candidate for diaconal ordination.
- 7.c. The aspirancy year must provide an appropriate initiation into diaconal spirituality; supervised pastoral experiences, especially among the poor and marginalized; and an adequate assessment of the aspirant's potential to be promoted to candidate formation, and ultimately to ordination. The aspirant path also must enable the formation personnel to create an environment in which a wife of a married aspirant can be appropriately prepared to give her consent to his continuation, and more essentially, to ascertain her compatibility with her husband's diaconal vocation and eventual ministry.
- 7.d. During this period of discernment, the aspirant is to be introduced to the study of theology and liturgy, to a deeper

knowledge of the spirituality and ministry of the deacon, and to a more attentive discernment of his call. This period is also a time to form an aspirant community with its own cycle of meetings and prayer. Finally, this period is to ensure the aspirant's regular participation in spiritual direction, to introduce him to the pastoral ministries of the diocesan Church, and to assist his family in their support of his formation. (See Appendix C for course description of the aspirancy period.)

- DF 8. During the aspirancy period psychological assessments are given to each Aspirant and spouse and the results are reviewed with the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation and the Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations.**
- DF 9. According to archdiocesan professional ethics policy, all potential candidates for the diaconate must undergo and successfully complete a criminal background check conducted by the Archdiocese of Seattle.**
- DF 10. The conclusion of the aspirant path of formation is determined through a formal assessment conducted by the committee.**

The aspirant path is concluded when the aspirant with the express permission of those responsible for his formation and with the consent of his wife (if married) makes a written petition to the Archbishop for admission to candidacy. The committee reviews all evaluations and takes an individual vote on each aspirant. The vote and rationale is recorded and kept in the aspirant's file.

Candidacy

- DF 11. With the recommendation of the Admissions Committee, the inquirer receives an invitation from the Archbishop to become a candidate in the Deacon Formation Program.**

The period of candidacy is a time of discernment; admission to candidacy and even completion of the program do not guarantee that a candidate will be called to the diaconate.

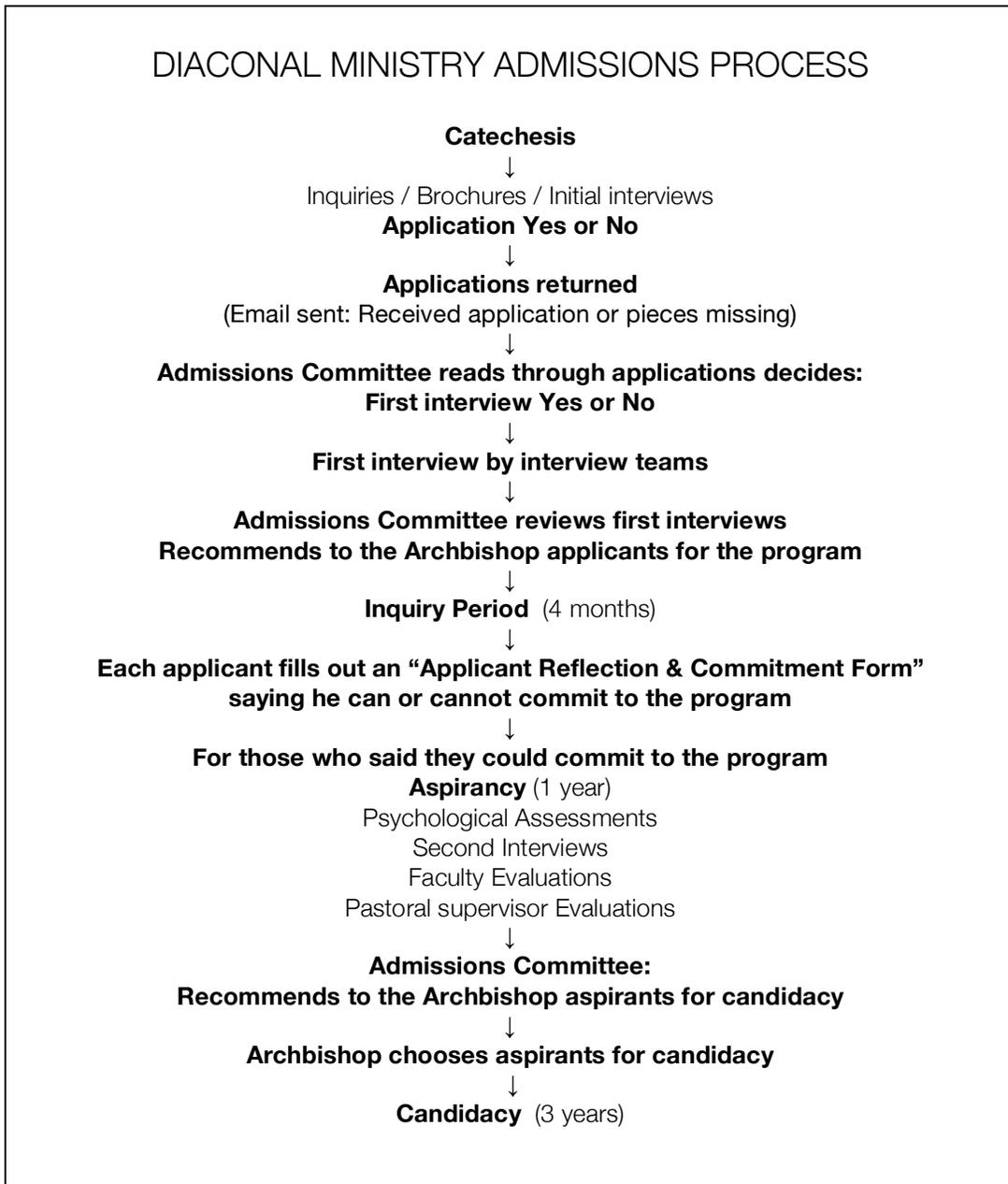
- DF 12. Those not called to candidacy will be notified in person by the Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations.**

Costs of the Program

DF 13. All costs of the Deacon Formation Program are borne by the Archdiocese except for the cost of textbooks and incidental expenses such as those connected with travel. No one will be excluded from the program because of financial necessity.

Scholarships are available for those who apply to the Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations.

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IV. THE FORMATION OF THE DEACON

Because of his ordination, the deacon is a public person, both in the Church and on behalf of the Church in the wider community. As a minister of the Church, the rights and duties of the deacon are stipulated in canon law. The deacon is incardinated into the Archdiocese as a member of the clergy and trusted with both knowing the Church's teaching and being faithful to it.

The ministry of a deacon requires that a person be prayerful and grounded in a sense of vocation, pastorally sensitive and astute, and able both to articulate the Church's teaching and to lead people in the celebration of sacraments and rites. To help a candidate achieve these major goals, the deacon formation program contains the following four components: Human Formation, Spiritual Formation, Pastoral Formation, and Intellectual Formation.

Human Formation

Four aspects of human maturity that must be considered in formation programs are highlighted in *BNFPD*. These include:

- Formation in the human virtues;
- The capacity to relate to others;
- Affective maturity (including psychosexual maturity and health) and;
- Training in freedom, which “includes the education of the moral conscience.”

Regional Support Groups

Candidates and their spouses should join a regional support group, organized with help from a mentor couple who are authorized by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation. These groups meet regularly between intellectual formation weekends at a place relatively close to the candidate's home. Participation is expected because it will provide several candidates and spouses at a time with valuable assistance personally, intellectually, and pastorally. Besides providing the human comfort that comes from sharing hopes and burdens, the support groups can serve as a reality check on candidates and spouses, keeping them in touch with the thinking of the Church and with what the Church is expecting of them as public people. The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation provides a suggested format for meetings, developed by the Deacon Formation Advisory Board.

Spiritual Formation

As envisioned by the NCCB's 1984 *Guidelines* (90) and the *BNFPD* (77), the component of spiritual formation integrates the intellectual and pastoral components through the discernment and deepening of a candidate's sense of vocation. It includes spiritual direction, the community and assistance of regional support groups, and times for retreat and reflection both on the intellectual formation weekends and on stipulated occasions throughout the year.

The spirituality of the deacon is intrinsically related to his commitments. He is first of all married or single and must develop ways of loving God and neighbor through those commitments. If married, he must learn how to strengthen the sacramental love between himself and his spouse and to build up the family through love. Practically speaking, the priorities for the deacon are first to his spouse and children, second to his place of employment, and third to his ministerial duties. It is of utmost importance that a candidate learns how to meet these responsibilities in a way that honors them all and so that through them he grows in faith, hope and love in union with Christ and the Church.

Spiritual Direction

The role of the spiritual director is crucial for helping a candidate to integrate not only these commitments with one another but also the components of the formation program with one another and with the candidate's other responsibilities. The role of spiritual director requires an ability to hear deep into another's heart, the ability to discern the drift of the heart's desire, and the wisdom of knowing when to speak and when to let be.

By January of the first year of candidacy, each candidate is expected to have chosen a spiritual director who has been approved for that purpose by the Archbishop and with whom he meets regularly. This relationship is completely confidential and does not enter into the formal evaluation of candidates. The candidate signifies on his annual self-evaluation that he is maintaining this relationship, and the spiritual director verifies this with his signature. The Assistant to the Vicar for Deacon Candidate Formation is available to assist candidates and spouses to find a spiritual director.

Sources of Spiritual Support

As a deacon, the candidate's commitments will be to the word of God, to the liturgy and sacraments, and to works of charity and justice.

Accordingly, the deacon's spirituality will be deepened and strengthened if he avails himself of the following sources of support:

- The Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist
“As with all other Christians, the deacon's spiritual life, founded on his baptism should be centered in the Paschal Mystery of Christ ... His activity should be enlivened and strengthened by regular participation in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and the sacrament of reconciliation.” (1984 *Guidelines*, 91)
- The Liturgy of the Hours
As the official prayer of the Church, the Liturgy of the Hours, which consists of psalms and readings from scripture, is an ideal way of meditating on the word of God and drawing strength from it each day. As public ministers of the Church, deacons are obliged to pray for the universal Church. They should know the nature and structure of the Liturgy of the Hours and be able to lead these prayers in their community. “Permanent deacons are required to include as part of their daily prayer those parts of the Liturgy of the Hours known as Morning and Evening Prayer” (*ND*, 90).
- Retreats
Each year there is a Lenten retreat preceding the installation of ministries and ordination, and a summer retreat scheduled to occur near the feast of St. Lawrence (August 10). The days of retreat are an opportunity to synthesize and to integrate the themes of the previous year's program in light of one's discernment of vocation and deepening of commitment to it. Attendance is required for deacons and spouses unless attendance by the spouse will cause undue hardship on the family. The program will try to accommodate families, especially during the summer retreat.

Orientation to the Program

The orientation for each formation year begins at noon on a Saturday about two weeks before the first intellectual formation weekend and extends to Sunday at 1:00 P.M. It includes an orientation to the year's program, the developing of such skills as team building, journaling, reading critically, writing and note taking, and problem-solving.

Rite of Admission to Candidacy

Prior to admission to candidacy those admitted to the program in September submit a formal request for admission to candidacy by October 31. A formal rite of admission to candidacy is celebrated at a location chosen by the Archbishop, followed by a reception.

Periodic Meetings with the Archbishop

Candidates and their spouses join those who are already permanent deacons and special guests for a yearly gathering hosted by the Archbishop. This is an informal, festive occasion: a time for the Archbishop to meet those who are or who will be his collaborators in the ministry of service.

Installations and Ordination to Diaconate

As required by *CIC*, c. 1035, the ministries of lector and acolyte are to be conferred and exercised for a suitable period of time before ordination to the diaconate. In the Archdiocese of Seattle, installations are celebrated on or close to the first intellectual formation weekend of years two and three. The ministry of lector is exercised for two years before ordination; the ministry of acolyte, for one year. Ordination to diaconate takes place when the candidates are personally prepared and approved for installation or ordination, usually in November. The liturgies of installation and ordination are joyful occasions for deepening the candidate's sense of vocation and celebrating his commitment in the company of family and friends.

Pastoral Formation

Although the entire program is focused on the pastoral dimension, the specifically pastoral component consists of placement, supervision, and evaluation of the candidate in a ministry of the Archdiocese with the goal of effectively developing a candidate's pastoral skills. Within the pastoral placement, candidates should strive to develop fresh, creative responses to the gospel message especially with regard to the requirements of justice and charity and to the needs of the diverse ethnic communities of the Archdiocese (1984 *Guidelines*, 84).

Placement

Since candidates for the diaconate are expected to have been active in ministry and service prior to applying for the permanent diaconate, the goal of placement in a pastoral setting is to help the candidate and the

Archbishop to discern a candidate's diaconal vocation and to strengthen the candidate's awareness and practice of pastoral skills. As a deacon, the candidate's three-fold ministry will include service of word, the liturgy, and works of charity. Over the course of the aspirancy and candidacy paths, a candidate should have experience in all three areas of ministry with special emphasis given to the work of charity and justice. Because the Archbishop has responsibility for the needs of the entire archdiocese when he assigns deacons, the deacon candidate is evaluated on his skill and acumen for such ministries as hospital chaplaincy, prison chaplaincy, ministry within the multi cultural communities, and pastoral coordinator for those parishes without a resident pastor.

By January of the first year of the program, each candidate should have signed a ministry agreement with a supervisor who has been approved by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation. Usually, the supervisor is knowledgeable about the ministry that the candidate expects to undertake as deacon. The candidate should also sign a ministry agreement with a pastor or pastoral coordinator approved by the Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation, indicating that the candidate will be receiving experience and supervision that will prepare him for liturgical and parochial ministry. The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation is available to assist candidates to find a placement upon request. The candidate should forward a copy of the ministry agreement to the Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation for inclusion in his file.

The pastoral placement is not an internship but a "field experience," which gives the candidate an opportunity to assess his interest and his strengths and weaknesses for service. If a candidate is employed by the Church, he may be asked to do his pastoral placement outside his place of employment. Great care needs to be taken if his pastoral supervisor is also his employer. Accordingly, and because of the need to balance his other commitments, a candidate should be expected to serve no more than four hours a week in a pastoral placement. Deacons who will be serving in hospitals, prisons, or other institutions regulated by the State of Washington are advised that special requirements may be needed before undertaking a ministry in that context.

Supervision

After clarifying the goals of his pastoral placement with his supervisor and signing the ministry agreement, the candidate should meet regularly with his supervisor to discuss his experience, to reflect on it in light of his theological training, and to receive encouragement and guidance. The pastor will be strongly encouraged to arrange for feedback and even shared supervision by the people and staff of the parish that will be included in the annual evaluation. The Coordinator for Deacon Candidate

Formation is available to assist the candidate if there is any difficulty in meeting this requirement. At some point between February and April of each year, the Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation will meet on site with both the candidate and supervisor to discuss the candidate's progress in light of the goals of the placement and of the deacon formation program.

Evaluation

In May of each year the supervisor completes the evaluation form required by the program and discusses his or her evaluation with the candidate. The evaluation is sent to the Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation by June 1 to be included in the candidate's file and to become part of the total evaluation for the year.

Service to Multi-Cultural Communities

The Archdiocese is blessed with many vibrant ethnic communities, most of whom speak a language other than English. All of them preserve customs and practices that distinguish the ethnic culture and keep it alive. For that reason, candidates for the diaconate who are assigned to communities where a culture not their own is present as a distinct group should demonstrate through the pastoral placement how they can serve that ethnic community. In some cases this may mean learning the language of the ethnic community, at least well enough to celebrate the sacraments or to refer members of that community to social services. In all cases it will require learning the customs of the culture and how these may be promoted within the parish.

Ministerial Responsibilities Workshop

As required by Archdiocesan policy, candidates will be required to attend a workshop on ministerial responsibilities within six months of their pastoral placement unless they have already fulfilled this requirement in the course of previous service.

Service as Lector and Acolyte

In addition to the opportunities provided on formation weekends for exercising the ministries of lector and acolyte and receiving evaluation, candidates are encouraged to offer their service in these ministries within the parish setting for further experience and evaluation.

Service as Catechist

Although not all deacons will serve explicitly as catechists, the office of deacon is ordained for the proclaiming of the word as well as for the ministry of service. Deacons should be familiar at least with current catechetical theory and practice in order to offer leadership within the parish on that issue.

Intellectual Formation

The intellectual formation component should integrate and support the pastoral and spiritual components of the formation program through study and reflection. This component is important because “[r]eligious indifference, obscuring of values, loss of ethical convergence, and cultural pluralism demand that those involved in the ordained ministry have an intellectual formation which is complete and serious” (*BNFPD*, 79). Intellectual Formation sessions are scheduled on one weekend a month, exclusive of July and August. Tapes and readings are assigned between meetings. The Synthesis weekend starts at noon on Friday and ends on either Saturday evening or Sunday at noon.

Characteristics of the Curriculum

“[A]n increasingly educated society demands that deacons be knowledgeable and reliable witnesses of the faith and spokesmen for the Church’s teaching. The theological program, therefore, should be designed to communicate such a knowledge of the faith and church traditions that they will be able to carry out this vital ministry.” (1984 *Guidelines*, 78) It is especially important for personal and pastoral reasons that candidates learn how to relate personal experience to the wisdom and language of the Catholic tradition.

Since the intellectual formation curriculum is only the beginning of a sound theological formation, candidates should learn to develop habits which are part of ongoing learning, such as seeing, judging, and acting—qualities that are especially important for the ministry of deacon—and to develop competencies of reading broadly and critically, writing, and speaking. By developing these habits and competencies, candidates are better prepared to serve as deacons, able to represent the church credibly and effectively.

Upon entering the deacon formation program, candidates commit themselves to continuing formation after ordination. The ongoing formation program is designed to supplement the three-year Intellectual Formation curriculum.

To ensure quality in keeping with these standards and goals, the curriculum for the Archdiocese of Seattle is designed to include the following qualities:

- *Comprehensive:* As outlined in ND 124, the course of study introduces the candidate to the essentials of Christian doctrine and practice including the core areas of theology faithful to the Magisterium of the Church and based on Scripture and tradition, the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and the *General Directory for Catechesis*. The program covers the following areas of study:
 - *Scripture:* The core studies include the major themes and content of the Old and New Testaments. The study of the Christian Scriptures should include their stages of formation and their place at the heart of Scripture. Attention should be given to the biblical themes of justice and peace that root and foster Catholic Social Teaching.
 - *Dogmatic theology:* The core studies include fundamental theology, God as trinity, Christology, creation and the nature of sin, redemption, grace and the human person, ecclesiology (both the Latin and Eastern Catholic Churches), ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, sacraments (especially the Sacrament of Holy Orders and the theology and the relationship of the diaconate to the episcopate, the presbyterate, and the laity), eschatology, Mariology, missiology, and Catholic evangelization.
 - *Moral theology:* The core studies include fundamental moral theology, medical-moral ethics, sexuality, and social-ministerial ethics. There should be substantial presentation of the social teaching of the Church.
 - *Historical studies:* The candidate is introduced to the history of the Church through the ages with an emphasis on patristics. The candidate becomes familiar with the multicultural origins of the Church in the United States.
 - *Canon Law:* The core studies include a general introduction to Canon Law and those canons specific to the exercise of the diaconate, in particular, marriage legislation, as well as the obligations and rights of clerics.

- *Spirituality*: The core studies include an introduction to spirituality, to spiritual direction, and to a selection of classic spiritual writers.
 - *Liturgy*: The core studies include an introduction to liturgy and to the historical, spiritual, and juridical aspects of liturgy. Practica for the ministry of liturgy include specific training in the functions of the deacon during the Eucharist, Baptism, RCIA, marriage, the Funeral Rites, and other liturgical ministries of the diaconate.
 - *Homiletics*: Deacons have courses specifically aimed at preparing and delivering homilies.
- *Pastoral*: The course of studies focuses all components on the pastoral dimension, including the liturgical role of deacon (1984 *Guidelines*, 75 and 82) through practica on preaching and the celebration of sacraments. “Practica” are in-class opportunities to practice skills and to reflect on performance with the help of tapes for review and feedback. Practica complement the experience and supervision of the candidate’s pastoral placement. To ensure adaptation to cultures, practica are conducted, whenever feasible, in the languages of the cultural communities which the candidate will be serving.
 - *Integrated*: The curriculum integrates the components of each year through the theme of each year, the scheduling of courses in relation to one another and over several weekends, and a year-end synthesis. The guiding assumption is that an integrated curriculum provides the best opportunity for reinforcing related themes and methods. For example, in the first year, which emphasizes the human person as one who hears and responds to the word of God, a presentation on Christian Anthropology will allude to the book of Genesis and build on it, while a presentation on Genesis will anticipate and suggest applications for Christian Anthropology. In the second year, similar integration occurs around the theme of the Church as mystery and sacrament, while in the third year the integration occurs around the theme of the Church as herald and servant.
 - Methodologically appropriate: Pedagogy conforms to adult models of education (1984 *Guidelines*, 77), which recognize the following:
 - that the primary responsibility for learning is the learner’s;
 - that faculty respect a candidate’s previous and

contemporary experiences in life and ministry as learning experiences;

- that time in class should allow for a variety of learning styles, including discussion and debate, not just lecture; and
 - that active and continued learning are encouraged (1984 *Guidelines*, 80) by assigning writing for each major unit, by providing bibliographies for further reading in each syllabus, and by including practica on almost every weekend.
- *Culturally adapted*: The curriculum respects how the Catholic faith is expressed or may be expressed in different cultural contexts (1984 *Guidelines*, 76) in the following ways:
 - by including presenters of the curriculum from different cultures;
 - by including reflection in class on how concepts and practice apply in cultural contexts different from the presenter's context;
 - by exploring the spiritualities of different peoples within the courses on spirituality;
 - by creating and using tapes and guided lessons on the webpage in different languages;
 - by conducting practica in the language of the candidate, whenever feasible; and
 - by conducting prayer services and liturgies in the languages of several cultures.
 - *Technologically supported*: The formation program uses the resources of technology to assist education at a distance, especially in the following ways:
 - E-mail trees for professors and the cohort;
 - CD's and tapes for use at home or on the road;
 - tapes of preaching for review;
 - extensive resources of the archdiocesan library—books and tapes in several languages—which are available to candidates through the mail.
 - The candidate is evaluated in the following ways:
 - through an attendance policy;
 - through methods of assessment and evaluations of performance for all courses;

- through a published standard of evaluation;
- through certification by a preaching board
- through a comprehensive examination at the end of each year;
- through a holistic yearly review of the candidate by the Evaluation Committee, which considers the evaluations of the faculty, the mentor, the pastoral supervisor, and the preaching board.

During the last weekend of each formation year, the faculty is evaluated for effective teaching, and the success of the program in assisting the formation of candidates is evaluated by the candidates themselves.

- *Certified:* The Office of Catholic Faith Formation certifies as catechists of the Archdiocese those candidates who are ordained deacons and those spouses who complete the following requirements of the intellectual component of the program:
 - all courses in Scripture, systematics, and Church history;
 - Liturgy 102 and 202
 - Pastoral 205 (Principles of Effective Catechesis)
- The School of Theology and Ministry at Seattle University approves three graduate credits per year to deacon candidates and their spouses who apply and successfully complete the Deacon Formation Program. A total of nine credits, three for each year, are possible. These credits will be issued with the following conditions:
 - Those seeking credit have an accredited bachelor's degree.
 - Their status at Seattle University will be that of non-matriculated students.
 - Those planning to take the Deacon Formation Program for credit have an additional requirement of a ten-page paper each academic year to be used as an integration instrument for the program.
 - Credits earned will count toward the fifty-four credits for the Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies degree. The nine credits will count towards the six elective credits and one other three-credit course to be determined by the STM Dean. (These nine deacon program credits could also be counted towards the MATS or M. Div. degree as well).

Additional information can be found at:
<http://www.seattleu.edu/theomin/maps.asp>.

- Application for credit for a particular year of the Deacon Formation Program must be made by March 1 of the school year in which the studies occur. Credit will not be given retroactively for previous years.
- Granting of these credits does not mean the deacon candidates are thereby admitted to the MAPS program. Those wishing to pursue the MAPS degree and count their nine deacon credits need to seek admission to the program through the regular channels.
- The cost for credits will be twenty-five percent of the regular tuition rate. Because the deacon candidates are not admitted to a degree program, financial aid from the university is not available.

Maintaining an Email Account

DF 14. Candidates are expected to maintain and consult an e-mail account.

- 14.a. Candidates who do not have a computer should negotiate for access to their parish's computer and Internet. In cases of hardship, the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation is available to assist the candidates with regard to obtaining access and meeting the expenses associated with this requirement.
- 14.b. The Archdiocese maintains a web page on which the deacon formation program posts information of importance to candidates. Besides documents in several languages such as the Bible and the key documents of Vatican II, the web page contains syllabi and study questions for the courses in each year. These documents can be found on the archdiocesan Website: www.seattlearch.org. As with access to e-mail, candidates may need to negotiate with their parish or faith community for use of a computer. The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation is available to assist candidates with making these arrangements.

Attendance

DF 15. Candidates are required to attend all intellectual formation weekends and scheduled days of retreat and reflection. A candidate will be required to withdraw from the diaconate program because of absences.

Evaluating Intellectual Formation Work

DF 16. Candidates must complete all intellectual formation requirements of the year and receive at least a “satisfactory” evaluation for each course.

- 16.a. The curriculum for each year is presented to candidates at the orientation. Candidates must complete all Intellectual Formation requirements of the year and receive at least a “satisfactory” evaluation for each course. Evaluations are communicated no later than two weeks after the time assigned for the course in the curriculum.
- 16.b. To evaluate a candidate’s demonstrated comprehension of a course, faculty attach one of the following descriptors and a brief explanatory comment to the evaluation form provided by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation:
- *Outstanding:* The candidate not only excels the expected level of proficiency for the course but has shown unusual initiative at researching and synthesizing the material.
 - *Very Good:* The candidate has exceeded the expected level of proficiency for the course.
 - *Good:* The candidate’s responses show more than satisfactory comprehension and mastery of the principle concepts of the course.
 - *Satisfactory:* The candidate shows sufficient comprehension of the principal concepts of the course.
 - *Unsatisfactory:* The candidate shows insufficient comprehension of the material.
 - *Conditional:* The candidate is being given extended time to complete or redo an assignment.

- *Pass/No Pass* (awarded only for practica): The candidate has completed the requirements of the practica either satisfactorily or not.
- 16.c. Continuation in the program requires mastery of the material in the curriculum. Therefore, an evaluation of “unsatisfactory” in any course will jeopardize a candidate’s continuation in the program. Candidates who receive an “unsatisfactory” evaluation may be given another opportunity to demonstrate their mastery of the material only by approval of the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation in consultation with the faculty.
- 16.d. A “conditional” evaluation indicates that the candidate’s work is either unsatisfactory or incomplete because of special circumstances, usually cases of hardship. The instructor specifies on the evaluation form the work that must be completed before the “conditional” is removed. All “conditional” evaluations must be converted to another appropriate evaluation by July 15 of each formation year.
- 16.e. Practica and all courses whose numbers end in “0” receive either a “Pass” or “No Pass” evaluation. Candidates must receive a “Pass” on all practica in order to complete the diaconate formation program.
- 16.f. Faculty forward their evaluations to the candidates through the office of the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation, who makes a copy for the candidates’ files. A transcript of each candidate’s standing for the Intellectual Formation component of the program is made available to the candidate by August 1 of each year.

Annual Synthesis

- 16.g. Candidates are examined orally and in writing at the conclusion of each year on a comprehensive synthesis of the intellectual formation curriculum for that year. This process emphasizes the connections among the courses studied for the year and is distinct from the evaluation required of each course separately. With oversight by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation, faculty administer the process and evaluate the responses of the candidates.

The Curriculum

- 16.h. The outline and description of courses provide an overview of the themes for each year and the courses that are inter-related to one another and to the theme of each year (see Appendices D and E). The courses in the intellectual formation curriculum are numbered according to the following system:
- The first digit indicates the year in which the course is scheduled.
 - The second digit indicates where the course falls in a sequence with other courses in the same category and how it relates to a similar course in another year.
 - The third digit indicates how the course is to be evaluated. Those numbered “0” are practica, for which no paper is required and which are evaluated “Pass/No Pass”; those numbered “2” are evaluated by some means other than a paper, such as a short essay or oral responses, or journal entries; those numbered “5” indicate that a five-page paper or its equivalent is required.

For example, “Scripture 145” is a course offered in the first year in the gospels with the requirement for evaluative purposes of at least a five-page paper or its equivalent. “Pastoral 310” is a course offered in the third year in homiletics to be evaluated with a “Pass/No Pass.”

V. OTHER FORMATION POLICIES

Expectations of the Spouse

“The wives and children of married candidates and the communities to which they belong should also be involved in appropriate ways.”
(*BNFPD*, 56) Moreover, the involvement of the spouse of a candidate is integral to the program and to the success of the deacon's ministry. Therefore, it is expected that spouses will be involved in the following ways:

- Spouses are interviewed with the candidate during the inquiry period and aspirant path.
- In accordance with *BNFPD* 37 and the provisions of canon law, a handwritten consent of spouses to their

husband's application and petition for candidacy is required.

- Spouses attend all retreats and days of reflection unless doing so would cause undue hardship to the family.
- Spouses are welcome but not obliged to attend all intellectual formation weekends. If the spouse attends and completes the intellectual formation requirements as stipulated in the Intellectual Formation section, she will be certified as a catechist of the Archdiocese. Like the candidate, the spouse is eligible for academic credit.
- Spouses of ordained deacons may be asked to serve on the Deacon Formation Advisory Board, the Admissions Committee, and the Evaluation Committee.
- Spouses belong to regional support groups, organized with assistance from mentor couples, to discuss common interests and concerns.
- Spouses may avail themselves of the resources for spiritual direction provided by the Archdiocese. It would be prudent, however, if they were to choose a Spiritual Director different from their husbands'.

Adaptation to Ethnic and Cultural Communities

The Archdiocese of Seattle celebrates the diversity which is present in many communities throughout the Church in Western Washington, and it calls for all Church leaders to recognize this diversity and to encourage all to use their gifts in the service of God's people. By virtue of his ordination, the deacon has a special responsibility to encourage service to the Church through word and example. A deacon, above all, should have the capacity and sensitivity to understand and relate to the unique expressions of cultural identity represented in the parish and ministries connected to any assignment. It is a priority for the Archdiocese that deacons develop bilingual and bicultural capabilities.

Evaluation of the Candidate

(For a description of the documents required for the evaluation process, please see Appendix F.)

DF 17. In late June of each year, the Evaluation Committee will review each candidate's file in order to recommend to the Archbishop whether the candidate be continued in the program and, in the third year, whether he be ordained as a deacon.

DF 18. For good reason and with the advice of the Preaching Board, the Archbishop may withhold faculties to preach.

DF 19. The elements of the annual evaluation require the following documents (see Appendix F):

- Yearly Self-Evaluation;
- Evaluation by the candidate's mentor;
- Evaluation by Pastor;
- Evaluation by Pastoral Supervisors (if not pastor) ;
- Record of intellectual formation and attendance, including candidate's performance on a comprehensive examination;
- Evaluation by the Intellectual Formation Faculty; and
- Evaluation by the Preaching Board (years two and three).

DF 20. The Evaluation Committee makes one of the following recommendations to the Archbishop through the Vicar for Clergy and also the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation:

- 20.a Continuance in the program and installation into the ministry of Lector or Acolyte, or, at the end of the third year, ordination to diaconate, with or without faculties to preach;
- 20.b Continuance in the program with specified areas in need of improvement;
- 20.c Discontinuance with cause: The recommendation for acceptance into candidacy as well as the recommendation for ordination includes the written vote of each member as well as the rationale for that vote. This is to be filed in the candidate's permanent formation record.

DF 21. After the decisions of the committee have been reviewed and approved by the Archbishop, the Assistant to the Vicar for Deacon Candidate Formation communicates the Archbishop's decision to each candidate in a face-to-face meeting and in writing by August 1.

Leave from Formation

- DF 22. Candidates who must leave the program for good reason and in good standing but who wish to resume preparation for the diaconate must write the Archbishop requesting permission to separate from the program and to formally reapply for the next deacon formation class.**

Evaluation of the Faculty and Program

- DF 23. During the Synthesis weekend, candidates will be asked to evaluate the faculty and the program, using forms provided by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation. The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation will summarize the evaluations of the candidates and discuss them with the Archbishop and with appropriate personnel of the program.**

Installation as Lector and Acolyte

- DF 24. If they have received a positive recommendation from the evaluation board of the Deacon Formation Program, candidates are installed as Lectors at the beginning of their second year and as Acolytes at the beginning of their third year.**

“[B]efore anyone may be promoted to the diaconate, whether permanent or transitory, he must have received the ministries of Lector and Acolyte, and have exercised them for an appropriate time.” (*CIC*, c. 1035) Candidates must petition the bishop for admission to those ministries in writing. After a short retreat, installation is conferred on or close to the first intellectual formation weekend of years two (lector) and three (acolyte) (*BNFPD*, 58).

Recommendation to Ordination

- DF 25. At the conclusion of the third year of the formation program, the Vicar for Clergy with the Assistant to the Vicar for Deacon Candidate Formation will recommend for ordination to the diaconate those candidates whose documents are complete and who receive a positive recommendation from the Evaluation Committee. The Archbishop will consider the recommendation of the Preaching Board when granting faculties to preach.**

Ordination Procedure

DF 26. The candidate must petition the Archbishop in writing to receive the order of deacon (CIC, c. 1036). Ordination to the diaconate is conferred usually in November.

26.a. According to Church law and the NCCB 1984 *Guidelines*, 104, the following documents will be required:

- A declaration that the course of studies has been completed;
- Baptismal, confirmation, and, for married candidates, marriage certificates;
- A declaration that the ministries of Lector and Acolyte have been received and exercised, that interstices have been observed, and that a profession of faith has been made and signed;
- The Oath of Fidelity and a handwritten declaration by the candidate of his free and lifelong commitment to the ecclesiastical ministry, and of his petition to receive the order of deacon;
- A written statement of consent from the wife of a married candidate. An unmarried candidate must make a declaration regarding the obligation of celibacy.

26.b. Ordination is conferred after the following events have occurred:

- Completion of a Ministry Agreement for the first assignment;
- Completion of a three-day retreat;
- Completion of the required pre-ordination weekends, which focus on the spirituality of the deacon, the celebration of rites, and matters pertaining to the pastoral ministry of the deacon;
- Call to Orders from the Archbishop.

Continuing Formation

Clergy are accountable for the gift of ministry which they have received from God through the Church and which they exercise for the sake of the people. The post-ordination path should provide the deacon with ample opportunities to continue to develop and integrate the dimensions of

formation into his life and ministry (*DMLPD*, 69). “In this way, the quality of his life and ministry will be ensured, avoiding the risk of ministerial burnout. In certain cases of difficulty, such as discouragement or a change in ministry, post ordination formation can entail a process of renewal and revitalization.” (*ND*, 241)

During the first year of ordination, the Archdiocese has a mandatory program of continuing formation overseen by the Assistant to the Vicar for Continuing Formation, advised by the Continuing Formation of Clergy Advisory Board. During this year there will be three weekends focusing on the three ministries of the deacon: word, liturgy and charity. The program provides opportunities for orientation, formation and education for deacons and their spouses during the first year of ministry after ordination.

After the first year of ministry, deacons under the age of sixty-five and assigned by the Archdiocese of Seattle are expected to complete at least forty-five documented hours of continuing formation in the course of three years. Deacons are entitled to a stipend of \$500.00 each year for continuing formation provided by the place of assignment.

APPENDIX A: THE DIACONATE

(The comments in this section are freely adapted from *The Permanent Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Boston*, 1981.)

I. THE VOCATION OF DEACON: ORDAINED FOR SERVICE

Receive the Word of God! Believe what you read, preach what you believe, practice what you preach.

The above prayer, addressed to all deacons at the time of their ordination, describes the ministry of deacons well. In communion with the bishop, deacons are ordained for a distinct ministry, which is indicated by their name. John L. McKenzie, SJ, in *Dictionary of the Bible*, 1965, states that diakonos primarily means one who serves at table. The New Testament uses the term in a metaphorical sense applied to the apostles as ministers or servants of the new covenant (2 Cor 3:6), ministers of God (2 Cor 6:4), and servants of justice (2 Cor 11:15). Deacon appears as a distinct office in Phl. 1:1. According to ancient tradition repeated at the Vatican Council; they are ordained for service (LG, 29). They function in all three areas of the Church's life: in the preaching and teaching of the Word, in the celebration of the sacraments, and in the Church's active service of justice and love. The USCCB'S 2004 National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States (ND) describes this threefold function of the deacon: "In preaching the word, he is involved in every kind of missionary outreach. In sanctifying God's People through the liturgy, he infuses and elevates people with new meaning and with a Christian worldview. In bringing Christ's reign into every stratum of society, the deacon develops a Christian conscience among all people of good will, motivating their service and commitment to the sanctity of human life" (ND, 39).

To say, as the ancient tradition does, that deacons are ordained for service presupposes that the whole church, united through baptism to Christ—as the body is to its head—continues the three-fold service of Jesus in the world: the service of prophet (word); priest (sacrament); and king (servant/leader on behalf of God's kingdom of justice and love). The whole church is a servant or diaconal church, each member fulfilling in different ways the teaching of Jesus who said, "The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Mk 10:45)

The ordained ministries of bishop, priest, and deacon serve the members of the church by making public and effectively present through the sacrament of orders necessary elements of the church's life: the whole church is united to Christ around the bishop; offering the sacrifice of praise with the priest; and serving others in their need like the deacon. The ministries of bishop, priest, and deacon

are thus ordained to serve the common life and mission of all, each in a distinct way. The mission of the Apostles, which the Lord Jesus continues to entrust to the pastors of his people is true service, significantly referred to in the Sacred Scriptures as ‘*diakonia*,’ namely, service or ministry (LG, 24). This *diakonia* “is exercised on different levels by those who from antiquity have been called bishops, priests and deacons.” (LG, 28)

II. COMPONENTS OF DIACONAL FORMATION

The ministry of deacon requires that a person be prayerful and grounded in a sense of vocation, pastorally sensitive and astute, and able both to articulate the Church’s teaching and to lead people in the celebration of sacraments and rites. To help a candidate achieve these three major goals, the formation program of the Archdiocese consists of the following four components:

Human Formation

The human dimension of the Deacon Formation Program provides the foundation for the other three dimensions of formation (spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral). The formation program assists candidates to be in touch with their own humanity as well as the human struggles present in the contemporary world. As ministers of charity, Deacons have a particular responsibility to know the struggles of the poor and the most vulnerable people among us so they can try to improve their condition. “Deacons should have the courage to speak out for the weak and defend their rights.” (ND, 107) This human dimension of the formation process takes place in the context of the candidate’s own relationships with his spouse and children. The human dimension of the Deacon Formation Program is key in preparing a well-integrated man so that he becomes “a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their meeting with Jesus Christ.” (BNFPD, 66, PDV, 43)

Spiritual Formation

Through spiritual formation, the candidate learns to integrate the responsibilities of his life with one another and with the intellectual and pastoral components of the program, all the while discerning and deepening his sense of vocation. Through spiritual direction, through the community and assistance of regional support groups, through the assistance of a mentor, and through times for retreat and reflection throughout the year, the candidate and his spouse receive the assistance they need to attain a holistic commitment to ministry.

Pastoral Formation

Although the entire program is focused on the pastoral dimension, the specifically pastoral component consists of placement, supervision, and evaluation of the candidate in a ministry of the Archdiocese with the goal of effectively developing a candidate's pastoral skills. Within the pastoral placement, candidates should strive to develop fresh, creative responses to the gospel message especially with regard to the requirements of justice and charity to the needs of the diverse ethnic communities of the Archdiocese.

Intellectual Formation

The intellectual component supports the pastoral and the spiritual components of the formation program through study and reflection. In the course of one year of aspirancy, three years of candidacy and one year of structured post ordination formation, candidates are introduced systematically to the Church's tradition that they need to understand in order to serve as deacons, who represent the Church in a public way. Meeting on one weekend a month from September to June, candidates take courses in the scriptures, theology, liturgy, Church history, canon law, and pastoral practice. Each course is evaluated and a synthesis is completed each year.

III. PERSONNEL OF THE PROGRAM

The Archbishop

The Archbishop is the one ultimately responsible for the discernment and formation of aspirants and candidates, as well as the pastoral care of deacons and their spouses. Each year, the Archbishop reviews the evaluations of the candidates and makes the final decision regarding continuance in the program. Although the Archbishop may exercise his responsibility through the formation team, "he will commit himself, as far as possible, to knowing personally those who are preparing for the diaconate" (*BNFPD*, 19).

The Vicar for Clergy

The Vicar for Clergy is the Archbishop's delegate responsible for all matters dealing with clergy. He presides over the Evaluation Committee, which is chaired by the Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation and reviews the evaluations with the Archbishop. He attends formation weekends when available and strives to know the candidates as far as possible.

Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation

The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation corresponds to the Director of Formation in the National Directory. The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation, assisted by the advisory board, the Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations (corresponds to Vocation Director in the National Directory), and the Coordinator of Deacon Candidate Formation (corresponds to Coordinator of Pastoral Field Education in the National Directory), oversees the components of the formation program: on behalf of the archbishop, he hires and directs the faculty, confirms the choice of a candidate's mentor and spiritual director, communicates recommendations and decisions of the evaluation committee to the candidates and to the Archbishop, and promotes the program throughout the Archdiocese. The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation reports to the Vicar for Clergy.

Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations

The Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations (who corresponds to Vocation Director in the National Directory) is a full time Associate Director in the Office of the Vicar for Clergy responsible for collaborating with and serving as a resource for the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation to ensure the management of a discernment and formation process for candidates for the permanent diaconate. The Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations also collaborates with the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation in the planning, budgeting and implementation of liturgies for candidacy and ordination.

Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation

The Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation, who corresponds to Coordinator of Pastoral Field Education in the National Directory, provides workshops to train pastoral supervisors, assigns candidates to approved pastoral assignments with supervision in accord with the policies of the formation program and with the kind of service that a candidate expects to undertake as deacon. The coordinator visits each pastoral placement on site in February of each year to ensure that expectations of both the candidates and the supervisor are being met, ensures that supervisors' evaluations are completed and available as part of the yearly evaluation process and serves as staff to the evaluation committee. The Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation reports to the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation.

Pastors and Pastoral Leaders

Pastors are an important part of the formation of deacons. They are the ones with direct knowledge and experience of potential aspirants as well as an understanding of the needs of the parish or faith community. Pastors are “involved in the presentation, selection and assessment of aspirants and candidates” (*ND*, 53). Acceptance into both the aspirant period of formation and candidacy require a favorable letter of recommendation from the pastor. During the formation process the pastor, in collaboration with the entire formation team, has a unique role in assisting, counseling and assessing the candidate (*ND*, 226).

Pastoral Supervisors

The pastoral supervisor is the on-site assistant to the Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation. The supervisor introduces a candidate to activities appropriate for the ministry which the candidate will undertake as deacon, helps the candidate assess and develop skills necessary to be an effective minister, assists with the integration of the intellectual and spiritual formation with the pastoral, and advises the candidate about his progress. The supervisor provides a written evaluation of the candidate's performance by June 1 of each year to the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation, having discussed the same with the candidate. In some cases, a non-priest may be asked to serve as supervisor, especially if no priest is available. If there are not sufficient numbers of priests who have the necessary supervisory skills (see *ND*, 275) and the time necessary for working with the candidate and participating in the formation process, a skilled deacon or other professional minister of the church may assume this function. “Good supervision guarantees that the pastoral field experience remains systematically educative and formational” (*ND*, 275).

Spiritual Directors

Since the deacon is an icon of Christ the Servant, deacons must “Let the same mind be in (them) that was in Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:5). This attitude includes “simplicity of heart, self-giving and disinterest for self, humble and helpful love for the brothers and sisters, especially the poorest, the suffering and the most needy, the choice of a lifestyle of sharing and poverty” (*BNFPD*, 72). The role of the spiritual director is critical for fostering this identity in Christ. The spiritual director serves a confidential and integrating function in the life of the candidate. The spiritual director, who must always be a priest (*BNFPD*, 23), helps a candidate to listen carefully to the movement of the spirit in his life, to discern the signs of a call to service as deacon, and to support a candidate's spiritual growth (see *ND*, 117, also *BNFPD*, 23). Because of the confidential nature of this relationship, the spiritual director is never consulted concerning the evaluation of a candidate. Only the fact of this relationship is public knowledge. The candidate chooses a spiritual director from a list approved by the Archbishop and reports it on the annual self-evaluation.

Faculty

The faculty of the deacon formation program, approved by the Archbishop and hired by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation, is competent in the areas of their expertise as certified by an advanced degree. They are also known for excellence in teaching, for the habit of thinking with the church, for being active witnesses of the faith, and for skill in adapting intellectual content to pastoral need, especially as this is experienced in different cultural contexts.

Mentors

As described in the *BNFPD*, the mentor is designated by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation from among the deacons or priests of proven experience and appointed by the Archbishop to be “the direct companion of each aspirant and of each candidate...According to circumstances, the mentor will be responsible for only one person or for a small group” (*BNFPD*, 22; also *ND*, 280). The mentor's primary role is to assist in assessing the potential and qualifications of those in formation (*ND*, 280). This person, unlike the spiritual director, functions in the public forum, offering advice and support both to the candidate and to the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation, helping to plan events, and participating in the evaluation of a candidate's suitability for ministry. Like the spiritual director, the mentor helps the candidate and spouse to integrate the components of the program and to show how they relate to the total development and vocational commitments of the candidate. Deacons and spouses of deacons may also serve in this role, thus providing valuable experience as a couple to a candidate and his spouse.

By June 1 of each year, the mentor should have discussed the candidate's yearly self-evaluation with him and should have added his or her evaluative comments. The candidate must send the evaluation to the Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation by June 10.

Preaching Boards

The candidate must demonstrate the ability and skill to prepare a proper exegesis and contemporary application of a biblical text and apply the biblical text with the tradition and teaching of the Church to issues confronting the community today. In preaching he must be able to express himself clearly and easily in a manner appropriate to the occasion with special attention to the social dimension of the Gospel message. Guided by criteria and policies set by the Deacon Formation Advisory Board, Preaching Boards, approved by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation, evaluate each candidate's ability to preach. Candidates must receive a satisfactory evaluation to be recommended for ordination. Members of the preaching boards may also serve as members of other committees in the program. Because of the need to evaluate speakers of several languages and cultures, a separate Preaching Board will be composed whenever feasible for each of those candidates who will be preaching in a language other than English.

Deacon Formation Advisory Board

The Deacon Formation Advisory Board meets approximately once a quarter or more often as needed to advise the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation about all policies relating to the program, including standards and policies for admission and evaluation, curriculum, and promotion of the program. The membership of the Board should include the following ex officio: the Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations; Chief of Staff, Office of the Vicar for Clergy; the Associate Director for Priests and Deacons; and the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation (chair). The following members serve for four years: two deacons; two spouses of deacons (not of those serving on the Board); a woman religious; one pastor. Several members of the Board should be members of the multicultural communities of the Archdiocese. The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation submits the recommendations of the board to the Archbishop for approval. Members of this board should not be members of the Evaluation Committee but may serve on other committees.

Admissions Committee

Guided by the criteria set by the Deacon Formation Advisory Board, the admissions committee, appointed by the Archbishop for a two year term, reviews applications to the program at regular intervals throughout the

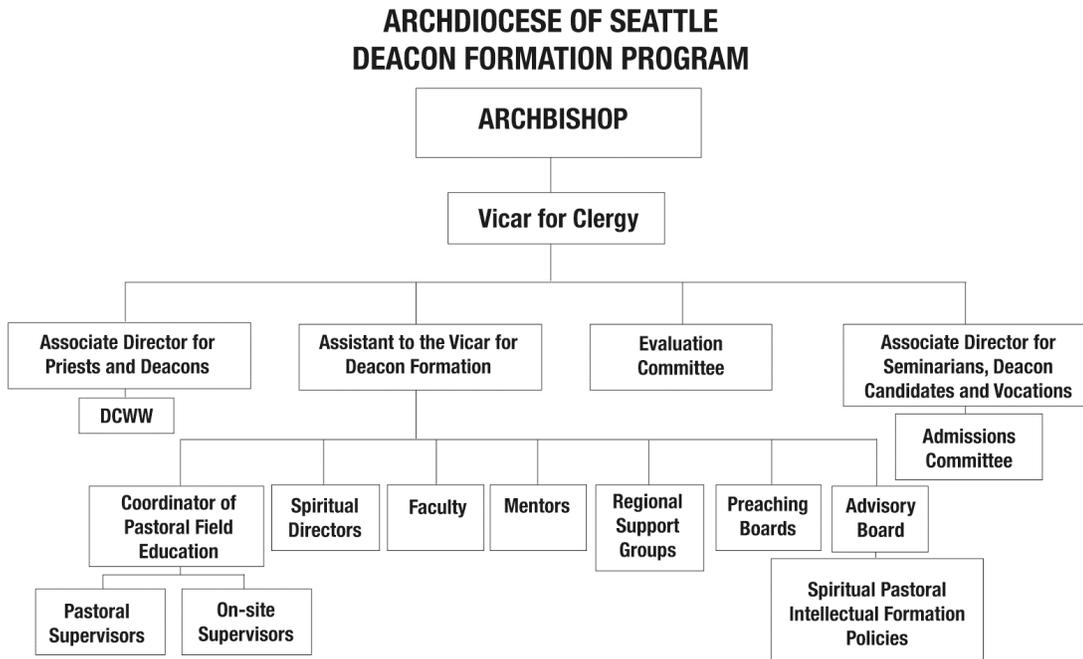
year, interviews prospects in locations convenient for them throughout the Archdiocese, and recommends prospects for admission to the program. The membership of the Admissions Committee should consist of the following: two pastors with experience of supervising deacons, one of whom at least has experience with and credibility for representing the multicultural needs of the Archdiocese; two deacons, selected because of their active and successful ministry; two spouses of deacons (not of those on the committee); and two representatives of the Vicar for Clergy's Office. The Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations should chair this committee. As chair of the committee, the Associate Director for Seminarians, Deacon Candidates, and Vocations forwards the recommendations to the Archbishop through the Vicar for Clergy. Members of this committee should not be members of the Evaluation Committee but may serve on other committees.

Evaluation Committee

The Evaluation Committee, appointed by the Archbishop for a four year term, meets twice yearly or at the request of the Vicar for Clergy: at least in Fall, to become familiar with the components of the Formation Program for that year, and in late June to evaluate the files of the candidates. The membership of the Evaluation Committee should consist of the following: The Vicar for Clergy (Chair); two pastors talented in supervision; a member of the faculty; two deacons; two spouses of deacons (not of those on the committee); a person skilled in methods of evaluation, with particular expertise in evaluating differences among cultures, and one representative of the Vicar for Clergy's Office. The Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation serves as staff to the Evaluation Committee. The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation serves as an *ex officio*, non-voting member on the Evaluation Committee (ND, 281). During the year, members of the evaluation committee meet at least once with each candidate and spouse (if the candidate is married) in the candidate's home or at some other location convenient to the candidate to ascertain how he is responding to the program and, if he is married, how his spouse is responding to it. The evaluations of the candidates are forwarded simultaneously to the Archbishop through the Vicar for Clergy and to the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation. Members of this committee should not be members of the Admissions Committee.

During the Aspirant path, each aspirant will be interviewed by the committee to appraise his readiness for nomination into the candidate path of formation. The committee will also meet with the wife of a married aspirant to ascertain her level of consent and support for her husband's promotion into candidate formation. Finally, the committee will review all pertinent data on the aspirant. The vote of each member and the rationale for the vote is to be recorded. This declaration, accompanied by the individual vote and rationale of each member of the committee, is prepared for the Archbishop, who selects those to be

admitted to candidate formation. “A copy of both the declaration and the Archbishop’s letter to the aspirant regarding his acceptance into candidacy is placed in the petitioner’s personal file” (ND, 200).



IV. HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE DIACONATE

Over time, the specific duties of bishop, priest, and deacon have changed according to pastoral need and changing circumstances, while each ministry in different ways has served as a sacramental sign of Christ the prophet, priest, and servant leader who gave himself through love for the church which is his body. However, because the diaconate has only recently been restored in the western church after a hiatus of approximately 1,500 years, it has been difficult for people and clergy to understand the role of the deacon in the life of the church.

Ordination constitutes the deacon as “a sacred minister and member of the Hierarchy” (DMLPD, 1) with a distinct identity and integrity in the Church that marks him as neither a lay person or a priest; “rather the deacon is a cleric who is ordained to *diakonia*, namely service to God’s People in communion with the bishop and his body of priests” (ND, 29).

Although the functions of the diaconal ministry have varied over time, the constant hallmark of deacon has been his character as one ordained “not unto the priesthood, but unto the ministry” (LG, 29). The deacon’s relationship to the church is that of one who exemplifies and seeks to foster the church’s mission as servant. To recover the identity of the deacon as an ordained minister, who is significant for the life of the church, it is helpful to remember how deacons were

esteemed and how they have functioned in earlier centuries of the church's history.

Early Period

In the “golden age” of the diaconate—from Ignatius of Antioch (c. 110 A.D.) to the Council of Nicea (c. 325 A.D.)—and even into the middle ages, deacons served in many capacities: as leaders in small rural communities, as envoys of bishops, and as administrators of temporal goods. Rome would venerate the deacon St. Lawrence (d. 258 A.D.). The Syrian church would honor Saint Ephrem (d. 373 A.D.), the deacon scholar, writer, and preacher. England would esteem Alcuin (d. 804 A.D.), the deacon educator and theologian. Assisi would give the church St. Francis (d. 1226 A.D.), the deacon identified with poverty and simplicity of life. Saint Ignatius of Antioch summed up the deference to be given to the deacon when he wrote: “Reverence the deacons as you would the command of God.”

However, in the early fourth century, the “golden age” came to an end amid several tensions, including the prominence given to the presbyterate, the separation of religion and the liturgy from secular life, and the resentment of excessive diaconal power, as in the holding of extensive property. Finally in 343 A.D. at the Council of Sardica, the difficulties that the diaconate occasioned were resolved in the Church's official pronouncement that this order would henceforth become a transitional step toward priesthood. Thus, except in rare cases, the permanent diaconate was suppressed.

Modern Period

Essentially, the diaconate continued in this fashion for sixteen centuries. Prior to Vatican II (1962-1965) various developments led to the beginning of its restoration. The majority of the Fathers of the Council were survivors of two world wars that claimed tens of millions of victims. Armed conflicts continued in Korea, Vietnam, South Africa and Northern Ireland. The conflict between the United States, the Soviet Union and Cuba nearly precipitated a nuclear holocaust. Global economic disparity and racism were on the rise. Church and civilian leaders in various Asian countries and regions of the Soviet Bloc were being imprisoned and tortured. Catholics fought Catholics; Christians fought against Christians. In calling the Second Vatican Council, Blessed John XXIII stated “What is needed at the present time is a new enthusiasm, a new joy and serenity of mind. ... What is needed, and what everyone imbued with a truly Christian, Catholic and apostolic spirit craves for today, is that our Catholic faith shall be more widely known, more deeply understood, and more penetrating in its effects on men's [*sic*] moral lives.”

A conciliar theme that clearly emerges was that Christ came to serve and not be served. The Church, the People of God, is identified first with Christ's service. Service—*diakonia*—especially to those who are poor or afflicted in any way is the mandate received from the Lord (Ted Kraus, "Diaconate: A Legacy of Vatican II"). In the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, the Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, and the Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches, the Second Vatican Council reestablished to diaconate "as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy" (*LG*, 29; *AGD*, 15-16; *OE*, 17). On the feast of St. Ephrem, the Deacon, June 18, 1967, Pope Paul VI, in accord with the will of the Second Vatican Council, restored the order of deacon as a permanent ministry in the church, and in his document, "Ad Pascendum," establishing norms for the permanent diaconate, highlighted the deacon as "a driving force for the Church's service or *diakonia* towards the local Christian communities, and as a sign or sacrament of the Lord Christ himself, who 'came not to be served but to serve.'"

On May 2, 1968, the bishops of the United States petitioned the Holy See for permission to restore the diaconate in this country, offering the following reasons for their request:

- to enrich and strengthen the many and various diaconal ministries at work in this country with the sacramental grace of the diaconate;
- to enlist a new group of devout and competent men in the active ministry of the church;
- to aid in extending needed liturgical and charitable services to the faithful in both large urban and small rural communities;
- to provide an official and sacramental presence of the Church in many areas of secular life, as well as in communities within large cities and sparsely settled regions where few or no priests are available;
- to provide an impetus and source for creative adaptation of diaconal ministries to the rapidly changing needs of our society.

In 1998 the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy issued a joint statement entitled *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons (BNFPD)* and the *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*. This Vatican intervention, the first since Pope Paul VI issued *Ad Pascendum* in 1967, stated that the growth of the permanent diaconate now gives rise to the need for a greater unity of direction, clarification of concepts, practical encouragements and more clearly defined pastoral objectives. In June of 2003, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops approved the *National Directory for the Formation, Life and Ministry of Permanent*

Deacons in the United States (ND). This document promulgated on December 26, 2004, the Feast of St. Stephen, Deacon and Martyr, provides for the unity, earnestness and completeness in the formation of permanent Deacons.

The Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Seattle

The request of the American bishops was granted in August 1968. Accordingly, Archbishop Thomas J. Connolly, Archbishop of Seattle, called forth the first deacon class in 1972. In 1989, Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen suspended further ordinations until the issue of the role of women in the church was better clarified.

In 1995 Archbishop Thomas J. Murphy, responding to the request of the Archdiocesan Pastoral Council, authorized a study of the need for diaconal ministry. The study pointed to a dramatic shift in the pastoral landscape, including a dramatic increase in the overall Catholic population and emerging needs of the multicultural communities, and concluded that the people of God deserved the full complement of ordained ministries, especially the multicultural communities of the Archdiocese for whom the need of ordained leadership is more acute. Archbishop Murphy died before he was able to implement the recommendations of the study.

In June 1998, Archbishop Alexander J. Brunett announced that he endorsed the findings of the study and called forth a new deacon class in September, 1999. Archbishop Brunett authorized and approved the drafting of a Pastoral Plan, which proposed that a new deacon class, called forth during the summer of 1999 be ready to begin formation in September 2000. On September 13, 2003, Archbishop Brunett ordained twenty-six men to the diaconate at St. James Cathedral. By 2004 there were ninety-eight permanent Deacons serving in the Archdiocese of Seattle.

Based on the increased need for the pastoral ministry of the deacon, Archbishop Brunett called for a new class of deacons in the spring of 2003, to begin the inquiry period in March 2004.

V. THE PERSON OF THE DEACON IN RELATION TO OTHERS IN THE CHURCH

With reflection on the ancient history of the Church, on the documents of the Second Vatican Council, and on the experience of the diaconate in the Church for the past thirty-six years, especially in the United States, a better understanding has been emerging about the deacon's ordained role and about the scope of his service.

The Deacon

The call to diaconate flows from the baptismal call, a call that is ultimately from God but is discerned by the church and ultimately by the bishop. Because of his ordination, the deacon signifies that Christ the servant is present in the Church, active in the service of all the faithful. Through his service of word, sacrament and works of charity, the deacon signifies the intrinsic link between the altar and the giving of alms, the bread of the Eucharist and the bread of charity, the church's work (liturgy) in worship and in the world. The diaconate is a bridge-building ministry, bringing the church to the world and the needs of the world to the attention and concern of the church. In this way, "the deacon's ministry of service is linked with the missionary dimension of the Church: the missionary efforts of the deacon will embrace the ministry of the word, the liturgy, and works of charity which, in their turn, are carried into daily life. Mission includes witness to Christ in a secular profession or occupation" (*DMLPD*, 27).

The deacon who is married has a unique opportunity to serve as a bridge-builder to society. The married deacon, together with his spouse, is called to be an icon of marriage in a society that does not always value or understand its true nature and the commitment it requires. The married deacon and his spouse should be the best example of marriage and family life the Church offers to the world (Archbishop Alex Brunett, address to the deacon community, June 26, 2005). Through his participation in the sacraments of marriage and orders, the deacon lives out the challenge which is incumbent on all people in some way: to integrate and to balance the claims of private and public responsibilities. In his case, the deacon must balance the claims of both his spouse and family and of the church on his time, talent, and financial resources. "By facing in a spirit of faith the challenges of married life and the demands of daily living, they strengthen the family life not only of the Church community but of the whole society" (*ND*, 67). Because of the demands and the rewards that are unique to their office, deacons should seek, with their spouses, to associate with one another through communities that meet for the purpose of support, challenge, and consolation.

The celibate deacon is called to a radical discipleship for the sake of the kingdom on earth and as an eschatological sign of the kingdom of heaven (*LG*, 42). Whether chosen as a way of life prior to ordination or called to it upon the death of a spouse, celibacy should not be considered just a legal norm but rather as a value whereby the celibate deacon takes on the likeness of Jesus Christ as a full and joyful availability in his heart for pastoral ministry (*PDV*, 50).

The Laity

All members of the church are conformed to Christ by their baptism and share the mission that was his in the world and that he has given to the church. All of the baptized, each in different ways, witness to the good news and seek to transform the world by means of it. Within the family, in the place of work, in the spheres of economics and politics, in institutions such as hospitals, prisons, and universities, the baptized people of God serve the needs of others.

Through the works of mercy, spiritual and corporal, through word and deed, they teach, console, heal, counsel, administer, and in many ways help to make more actual in our time the words of Jesus to his Father, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Through his ordination, the deacon highlights the identity of the laity as a people who serve the coming kingdom of God. His service is distinct because of its sacramental character and because of the deacon’s collaborative relationship with the bishop, but the deacon’s service does not replace the ministry of the laity; instead, it participates in that service and animates it. The Diaconal ministry is to inspire, motivate, and call forth service in all members of the Church. As Pope John Paul II has said, the deacon’s ministry is “the Church’s service sacramentalized” (*ADUS*, 2). Among the many good works and apostolic work of the laity, the deacon has a special role to promote communion and link together the individual and diverse segments of the community of believers (*ND*, 57).

The Priest

Just as the deacon does not replace the ministry of the laity but seeks to serve and animate it, the deacon does not replace the priest but serves as a collaborator with him under the direction of the bishop. Although the functions of priest and deacon have varied over time, their offices were always considered distinct from one another.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* clarifies the distinction between priest and deacon in the following way: “Catholic doctrine, expressed in the liturgy, the Magisterium, and the constant practice of the Church, recognizes that there are two degrees of ministerial participation in the priesthood of Christ: the episcopacy and the presbyterate. The diaconate is intended to help and serve them. For this reason the term “*sacerdos*” in current usage denotes bishops and priests but not deacons. Yet Catholic doctrine teaches that the degrees of priestly participation (episcopate and presbyterate) and the degree of service (diaconate) are all three conferred by a sacramental act called ‘ordination,’ that is, by the sacrament of Holy Orders” (*CCC*, 1554).

As delegated by the bishop, priests preside over the Eucharist of a parish or faith community, celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation, and anoint the sick. Deacons are appointed by the bishop for specific functions, some of which are sacramental, some of which are works of charity and justice. Working collaboratively with the presbyterate and with a mandate from the bishop, deacons help to build up the unity of the whole church, as envisioned by the Second Vatican Council: ...strengthened by sacramental grace, [deacons] are dedicated to the people of God in communion with the bishop and his presbyterate in the service of the liturgy, of the word and of charity (*LG*, 29).

The Bishop

Very early in the history of the diaconate, deacons were known as “the bishop’s ear, mouth, heart, and soul” (*Didascalia Apostolorum* II, 44, 4). The deacon was especially important to the bishop as one who mediated the needs of the people to him and who brought the word of God, the sacrament, and the charitable assistance of the church to the people on his behalf. The special bond between bishop and deacon is made clear at the time of ordination, when the bishop alone, and not the presbyterate, lays hands on the deacon, setting him aside for his office.

The bishop appoints the deacon to a specific assignment by means of an official letter of appointment. The principal criteria for the assignment are the pastoral needs of the diocesan Church, the personal qualifications of the deacon, and the deacon’s family and occupational responsibilities. The term of appointment is renewed every three years. It is through their relationship to the bishop that both deacon and priest are able to recognize their distinct and separate but related functions in service to the church. Through the bishop, unity and the bond of peace are preserved for the sake of love. In turn, this communion of the many working together for the sake of the one body is an effective sign—a sacrament—of the unity and peace that God offers to the world.

VI. SERVICE OF THE DEACON TODAY

To say that the deacon is ordained for service is to look to the needs of the Church and its members for the proper role of the diaconate. From the beginning, service has been the hallmark of diaconal ministry. Ancient descriptions of the deacon’s task included a very broad range of specific ministries of service in which deacons are involved, but that service always included word, sacrament, and works of charity. At the present time, deacons serve the church in the following ways:

Ministry of Word

Deacons are ordained to proclaim the Gospel and preach the Word of God (*DMLPD*, 24). The first way they do this is through the life they lead. By being students of the scriptures and letting the Word permeate his own life, the deacon can then bring that Word to others. Living the Word through service to others, the deacon should become a living sacrament of that Word for them. At the Eucharistic liturgy, the deacon proclaims the Gospel. Together with priests, they have faculties to preach in accord with the conditions established by canon law (*CIC*, c. 764). The deacon also participates in the ministry of the Word through offering catechetical instruction, sacramental preparation, evangelizing and by devoting attention to the problems of our times. In this way, The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ (*GS*, 1).

Ministry of Liturgy

In the ministry of the Liturgy, especially of the Eucharist, the deacon testifies to the presence of the servant Jesus among us. “For the Church gathered at worship, moreover, the ministry of the deacon is a visible, grace-filled sign of the integral connection between sharing at the Lord’s Eucharistic table and serving the many hungers felt so keenly by all God’s children” (*ND*, 33). The deacon does not preside but serves and assists the bishop and/or priest. As stated in the 1971 *Guidelines* of the American bishops, “Even ... where there are enough priests for Sunday Masses, the deacon should function at the Eucharist because it is appropriate that one who communicates God’s word, and serves God’s people also ministers at the altar (19).”

“During the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy, the deacon participates in specific penitential rites as designated in the *Roman Missal*. He properly proclaims the Gospel. He may preach the homily in accord with the provisions of Canon Law. He voices the needs of the people in the General Intercessions, needs with which he should have a particular and personal familiarity from the circumstances of his ministry of charity. The deacon assists the presider and other ministers in accepting the offerings of the people—symbolic of his traditional role in receiving and distributing the resources of the community among those in need—and he helps to prepare the gifts for sacrifice. During the celebration he helps the faithful participate more fully, consciously, and actively in the Eucharistic sacrifice, may extend the invitation of peace, and serves as an ordinary minister of Communion. Deacons have a special responsibility for the distribution of the cup. Finally, he dismisses the community at the end of the eucharistic liturgy” (*ND*, 35).

The other liturgical functions of the deacon develop from the diaconal role in the Eucharist. The deacon may be the minister of the sacrament of Baptism, officiate at the sacrament of Matrimony, and lead the faithful in burial services and other prayers of the Church. The deacon may bring communion to the sick and the infirm. Through the deacon the people of God are to be united more closely to their bishop, priests, and local church.

Ministry of Charity

The ministry of charity and justice is at the very heart of the diaconate. “The deacon’s service in the Church’s ministry of word and liturgy would be severely deficient if his exemplary witness and assistance in the Church’s ministry of charity and justice did not accompany it” (*ND*, 36). Through ordination the bishop publicly recognizes and affirms the gifts and charism that are already present and expressed in the life of the candidate. The vocation is both a call and a response of faith to serve God’s people through the healing ministry of charity and service. As the 1971 *Guidelines* state, “Loving and serving individuals and the community of persons in Christ is the deacon’s most characteristic ministry; like the Lord, he washes the feet of others. For many people, the deacon’s chief witness will be in person-to-person encounters. For the aged, the sick in the hospitals and homes, prisoners, the poor and the rejected—for all of these a deacon can be the one who cares, who brings good news from the heart of the Christian community. In all of this exchange it is to be hoped that he will neither appear nor feel different from lay Christians. Rather, as one who has come to value the Christian life profoundly, his service will inspire and support their work of charity (23).” For, in addition to the service he offers as an individual, the deacon has a particular concern for the vitality and genuineness of the exercise of *diakonia* in the life of the believing community (*ND*, 38).

APPENDIX B: INITIAL INTERVIEW OF APPLICANTS FOR THE
PERMANENT DIACONATE

A. INFORMATION BY PHONE:

DATE AND TIME OF SCHEDULED APPOINTMENT: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____

EMAIL: _____

AGE (32 or over; 62 or under): _____

PARISH/CITY: _____

Years as a Catholic: _____

High School diploma or equivalent: YES _____ NO _____

WILL NEED AN INTERPRETER:
NO ___ YES ___ LANGUAGE _____

B. INTERVIEW

NOTE: The goals of the interview are to explain the program; screen those who do not qualify; guide applicants toward making a strong application.

Verify the information above.

Depending on the applicant's age, indicate that only in rare circumstances will those over 65 by the time of ordination be admitted. Discourage the application.

Comment:

Has the candidate been a faithful, practicing Catholic for five years or over? If not, do not give an application but encourage application at a later time.

Comment:

Has the applicant ever left the church or been ordained in another church? If so, do not give an application and explain that these actions are impediments under Canon law.

Comment:

Can the applicant and his references show evidence of ministerial involvement in the Church? If not, do not give an application but encourage the applicant to build his resume and to apply again.

Comment:

Will the applicant's pastor provide a strong, unqualified recommendation? If not, do not give an application and discourage the applicant from applying.

Comment:

Will the applicant be able to show evidence of study of the faith, growth in faith, and a regular life of prayer? If not, discourage the application. If so, encourage the applicant to articulate this in the essay.

Comment:

Will the applicant be able to articulate a clear sense of vocation to the diaconate? If not, discourage the application. If so, encourage the applicant to develop this in the essay.

Comment:

Is the applicant validly married? Is the marriage stable? Has the applicant been married for a number of years? Has either the applicant or his spouse been previously married? Indicate that a stable marriage is a strong indicator for acceptance. A series of marriages, even if annulled, will likely weaken the application.

Comment:

Explain the requirements of the spouse's involvement: wholehearted support of the applicant's vocation to the diaconate; completion of her own application and testing; attendance at retreats and regional support groups; optional attendance at weekends and workshops. Is the spouse willing to keep these commitments? If the applicant is not sure, advise him that the spouse's wholehearted consent and participation in the program will be required and that if she has questions to contact the interviewer.

Comment:

Explain the church's requirement of life-long celibacy if the candidate is single or if the spouse dies (exceptions to this are not routine). Can the applicant commit to this discipline? If not, do not give an application but encourage further reflection.

Comment:

The Church regards certain actions as impediments to ordination; therefore, we need to ask the following:

Have you ever procured an abortion?

Have you ever attempted suicide?

Have you ever simulated an act of orders (that is, pretended to be a priest or deacon)?

If the answer is "yes" to any of these questions, do not give an application.

Comment:

17. Referring the applicant to the informational brochure, explain some minimal requirements of the program: attendance on once-a-month weekends and workshops at other times; approximately four hours of pastoral training each week; willingness to maintain a relationship with a spiritual director and to attend regional support groups. Can the applicant commit to these requirements? If not, do not give an application but suggest that the person may be ready at another time

Comment:

18. Inform the candidate that the deacon's work is largely non-compensatory. Is he financially able to assume a deacon's duties under those circumstances? If not, do not give an application.

Comment:

19. Is the applicant multilingual or in others ways conversant with the cultures of communities other than his own? If so, encourage him to emphasize this on the application.

Comment:

Interviewer's Notations:

1. The applicant has ____ or has not ____ been given an application.
2. Any concerns from the interview that may affect the application:

Signature of Interviewer: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C: COURSE DESCRIPTION FOR THE PERIOD OF ASPIRANCY

SCRIPTURE

S 002: Introduction to the Bible

Principles of interpretation, with close reading of selected passages. This course includes the topics of inspiration, inerrancy, and a Catholic response to fundamentalism

S 022: The Psalms

An introduction to the poetry, the structures, and themes of the psalms, the use of the psalms in liturgy, and the application of the psalms to contemporary life.

SYSTEMATICS

SYS015: The Drama of the Christian Story: The Nicene Creed

With the Nicene creed as touchstone, the study of how doctrine articulates experience and reflects debate; the development of doctrine, especially shifts in religious language and thought patterns; early cultural influences on Christianity; the role of philosophy in theology. Course includes and analysis of the structure of the creedal statements reflected in the structure of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

SYS052: Principles of Spiritual Discernment

Principles for discerning the movement of the Holy Spirit, especially in moments of consolation and desolation.

SYS062: Spirituality and Stages of Faith

The spirituality implicit in the baptismal call, especially conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ, with implications for the diaconal vocation.

LITURGY

L002: Principles of Prayer

Exploring the nature and style of praying. Differences between devotions and public and private prayer. The structure and purpose of the Liturgy of the Hours. Tools for deepening one's prayer, and dealing with resistance to prayer.

PASTORAL PRACTICE

P010: Practicum in Listening and Counseling

Practice in skills for effective listening and counseling.

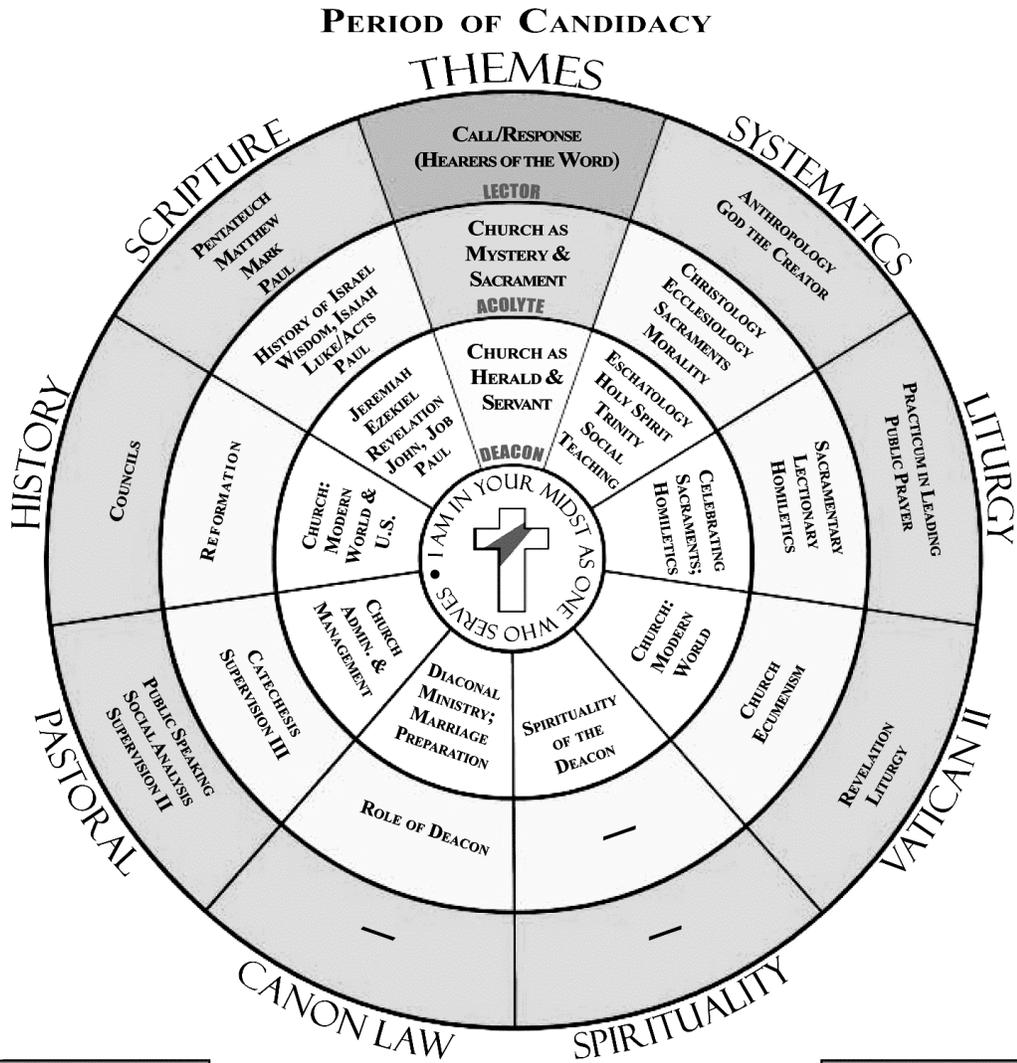
P012: Pastoral Care

This course explores what makes for effective ministry by an awareness of the human situation in circumstances such as illness, aging, addiction, imprisonment, mental illness and poverty. What are the multi cultural issues coloring these situations? What are the biblical themes and theology that form a Catholic approach to ministry? Course includes field trips to experience the diaconal Church at work in hospitals, prisons and with the poor.

P040: Supervised Ministry I

Utilizing verbatims, significant incident reports, in the context of small group and individual supervision, this course prepares students for pastoral ministry, through training in listening and communication skills, conflict management, leadership, group dynamics, time management, and theological reflection.

APPENDIX D: CURRICULUM FOR INTELLECTUAL FORMATION



PASTORAL	PERIOD OF ASPIRANCY		SPIRITUAL
PASTORAL CARE	SCRIPTURE	SYSTEMATICS	PRAYER
SUPERVISED MINISTRY I	INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE	NICENE CREED	DISCERNMENT
LISTENING SKILLS	PSALMS		STAGES OF FAITH

APPENDIX E: INTELLECTUAL FORMATION COURSE DESCRIPTION

I. SCRIPTURE

ASPIRANCY

S 002: Introduction to the Bible

Principles of interpretation, with close reading of selected passages. This course includes the topics of inspiration, inerrancy, and a Catholic response to fundamentalism

S 022: The Psalms

An introduction to the poetry, the structures, and themes of the psalms, the use of the psalms in liturgy, and the application of the psalms to contemporary life.

CANDIDACY YEAR ONE

S115: Pentateuch: Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy

An introduction to biblical anthropology and a study of several themes, including promise, election, covenant, and response.

S145: The Gospels of Mark and Matthew

A study of the themes, the outlines, and the literary forms of the gospels of Mark and Matthew, including apocalyptic, parable, and miracle; comparisons between Mark and Matthew; and the implications of the presentations of Jesus for Christian anthropology

S155: The Letters of Paul: Galatians and Romans

An overview of Paul's life and missionary activity and the principal themes of his preaching and writing, with emphasis on the anthropology and soteriology of Galatians and Romans including the themes of sin and grace, life in the spirit, and Christian freedom.

CANDIDACY YEAR TWO

S215: The History of Israel: The Books of Judges, 1-2 Samuel, and 1-2 Kings

A study of the institutions of king, priest, and prophet as these develop in early Israel.

S222: The Book of Wisdom

A study of the book of Wisdom, with a focus on the figure of wisdom as adapted by Christianity to Jesus, the Spirit, and Mary.

S230: The Minor Prophets

Introduction to the vocation and message of the prophets, especially their emphasis on the call to justice and covenant loyalty. Among the prophets considered are Micah, Amos, Joel, and Hosea.

S232: The Prophet Isaiah

The call of Isaiah (Isaiah 6), and the oracles of Isaiah with emphasis on those concerning covenant justice, the messiah, and the suffering servant.

S245: The Gospel of Luke and Acts

A study of the themes, the outline, and the literary forms of Luke's gospel, with implications for Christology, ecclesiology, and moral teaching. The Acts of the Apostles as a theology of church life and of the missionary activities of Peter and Paul.

S252: The Letters of Paul: Ephesians and Colossians; the Pastoral Epistles

A study of the deuterio-Pauline epistles and the epistles to Timothy and Titus, with an emphasis on how they develop the theme of the mystery of the church and reflect the development of church order.

S262: The Letter to the Hebrews

A study of how the institutions of Israel have influenced the understanding of Jesus, especially his role as priest.

CANDIDACY YEAR THREE

S322: The Book of Job

Reflection on how the book of Job addresses the mysteries of evil and human suffering.

S335: Apocalyptic Writings: The Books of Third Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation

A study of the themes of the later prophets and the characteristics of apocalyptic writing.

S345: The Gospel of John

A study of the themes of John's gospel, with special emphasis on the pericopes for Lent (A cycle), the role of the paraclete, and the service of Jesus, the good shepherd, the grain of wheat, and the foot washer.

S355: The Letters of Paul: 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Corinthians, Philippians, and Philemon

A study of the themes of Paul's early epistles, including the influence of apocalyptic thinking on Paul's moral teaching.

II. SYSTEMATICS

ASPIRANCY

SYS015: The Drama of the Christian Story: The Nicene Creed

With the Nicene creed as touchstone, the study of how doctrine articulates experience and reflects debate; the development of doctrine, especially shifts in religious language and thought patterns; early cultural influences on Christianity; the role of philosophy in theology. Course includes and analysis of the structure of the creedal statements reflected in the structure of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

SYS052: Principles of Spiritual Discernment

Principles for discerning the movement of the Holy Spirit, especially in moments of consolation and desolation.

SYS062: Spirituality and Stages of Faith

The spirituality implicit in the baptismal call, especially conformity to the death and resurrection of Christ, with implications for the diaconal vocation.

CANDIDACY YEAR ONE

SYS105: Theological Anthropology

The human as embodied and self-transcendent; the openness of the human to God: grace and revelation as formative of our relationship to God; sin as the breakdown of this relationship.

SYS122: God, Creator and Redeemer

Images and symbols: the nature of God language; how our language for God is rooted in history and culture; two key experiences of God: liberating and ordering.

SYS172: The Documents of Vatican II; Part 1

Study and discussion of the documents that pertain to revelation and liturgy: *Dei Verbum* and *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.

CANDIDACY YEAR TWO

SYS225: Christology

Classical and contemporary models for understanding the mystery of Jesus: his incarnation, his ministry, and the salvation he won through his death and resurrection.

SYS235: Ecclesiology

A theology of the church and its mission; a presentation and evaluation of several models of the church: as sacrament, herald, servant, and institution; and as people of God, body of Christ, and temple of the Holy Spirit.

SYS245: Theology of Sacraments

The sacraments as acts of Christ, acts of worship, and effective signs of grace.

SYS265: Moral Decision Making

The vision of life in Christ; sources of moral norms; principles of moral decision making; methods of discernment.

SYS272: Documents of Vatican II: Part 2

Study and discussion of the documents which pertain to the church and ecumenism, especially "Lumen Gentium" and "Unitatis Redintegratio."

CANDIDACY YEAR THREE

SYS322: The Holy Spirit

The role of the Holy Spirit as giver of life, especially through the prophetic word and the sacramental life of the church.

SYS345: The Trinity

How the experience of God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit reveals both the inner life of God and the origin, model, and goal of human life.

SYS352: The Spirituality of the Deacon

The spirituality of the deacon, as presented in documents such as the *Ratio Fundamentalis* (#71-78) and adapted to cultural circumstances.

SYS362: Marriage and the Family

The vision of Christian marriage and family life, and principles of moral decision making that apply in the context of Christian marriage.

SYS365: Social Teaching of the Catholic Church

Recent social teachings of the church, with emphasis on how these teachings are grounded in social analysis, a biblical view of justice and the dignity of the human person, and philosophical, moral principles.

SYS372: Documents of Vatican II: Part 3

Study and discussion of the documents which pertain to the church in the modern world, especially *Gaudium et Spes* and *Dignitatis Humanae*.

SYS302: Eschatology

The theology of history, with specific reference to hope for ultimate fulfillment of God's covenant promise. Included are the themes of death, judgment, heaven, hell, and general resurrection.

III. HISTORY

CANDIDACY YEAR ONE

H105: Christian History: From the Beginning to the Gregorian Reform

The first 1,000 years of Christianity, with emphasis on the early councils; the development of key theological ideas, church order, and organization.

CANDIDACY YEAR TWO

H205: Christian History: From the Middle Ages to Trent

A study of the emergence of medieval Christianity including the role of the Petrine Office, and the Catholic and Protestant reformations.

CANDIDACY YEAR THREE

H302: Christian History: From Trent to the Postmodern Period

The effect on Christianity of the scientific revolution and the enlightenment in Europe; the evangelization of the Americas, Asia, and Africa; the French Revolution and the collapse of modernity; the relationship of Christianity to contemporary culture.

H315: The Catholic Church in the United States

An overview of the Catholic church in the United States, with special emphasis on the church's response to issues of immigration, American culture, and social justice.

IV. LITURGY

ASPIRANCY

L002: Principles of Prayer

Exploring the nature and style of praying. Differences between devotions and public and private prayer. The structure and purpose of the Liturgy of the Hours. Tools for deepening one's prayer, and dealing with resistance to prayer.

CANDIDACY YEAR ONE

L120: Practicum in Leading Public Prayer

Principles and practice of public speaking, singing, and gesture applied to liturgical celebration. Analysis of taped practice sessions will be required.

CANDIDACY YEAR TWO

L202: Principles of Celebrating Sacraments

The structure of the sacramentary and principles for presiding at public worship.

L212: Homiletics

Rhetorical principles pertinent to the development of the Sunday homily; the organization of the lectionary.

L220: Practicum: Homiletics I

Emphasis on the Sunday homily. Analysis of taped sessions and of practice between sessions will be required.

CANDIDACY YEAR THREE

L302: Liturgical Service of the Deacon

A study of the rites for baptism, Sunday celebration in the absence of a priest, marriage, funerals, and special blessings.

L320: Practicum: Homiletics II

Practicum on homilies for special occasions: marriages and funerals. Analysis of taped sessions and of practice between sessions will be required.

L330: Practicum in the Rites for Baptism, Marriage, and Funerals.

Practice in the celebration of the sacraments of baptism and marriage. Analysis of taped sessions will be required.

IV. PASTORAL PRACTICE

ASPIRANCY

P010: Practicum in Listening and Counseling

Practice in skills for effective listening and counseling.

P012: Pastoral Care

This course explores what makes for effective ministry by an awareness of the human situation in circumstances such as illness, aging, addiction, imprisonment, mental illness and poverty. What are the multi cultural issues coloring these situations? What are the biblical themes and theology that form a Catholic approach to ministry? Course includes field trips to experience the diaconal Church at work in hospitals, prisons and with the poor.

P040: Supervised Ministry I

Utilizing verbatims, significant incident reports, in the context of small group and individual supervision, this course prepares students for pastoral ministry, through training in listening and communication skills, conflict management, leadership, group dynamics, time management, and theological reflection.

CANDIDACY YEAR ONE

P110: Practicum in Public Speaking

Practice in the articulation, pronunciation, and projection needed for public proclamation of readings and prayer. Taped recordings will be used for review and analysis.

P125: Social Analysis

Methods of uncovering and analyzing economic, social, and political practices, with special emphasis on the United States and the Northwest.

P150: Supervised Ministry II

This course deepens the students ability for critical reflection on ministerial practice. Verbatims, significant incident reports, theological reflection, and social analysis, facilitated in small group and individual supervision, are used to enhance and refine ministerial skills.

CANDIDACY YEAR TWO

P205: Principles of Effective Catechesis

Components of a strong catechetical program; knowing how adults learn; models of effective curricula.

P250: Supervised Ministry III

This course deepens the students ability for critical reflection on ministerial practice. Verbatims, significant incident reports, theological reflection, and social analysis, facilitated in small group and individual supervision, are used to enhance and refine ministerial skills.

CANDIDACY YEAR THREE

P300: Maintaining Sacramental Records

An introduction to the kinds of sacramental records encountered in a deacon's ministry.

P310: Practicum in Counseling: Special Situations

The principles of effective counseling, including the need for referral, apply to special circumstances such as marriage preparation, conflict resolution, and grieving.

P320: Organizational Structure of the Archdiocese

An explanation of the organization and services of the chancery office of the Archdiocese.

V. CANON LAW

CANDIDACY YEAR TWO

C202: The Deacon as Minister in the Church: Ecclesiology, Rights and Responsibilities

Principles of interpreting canon law, with emphasis on the nature and mission of the church and on the rights and duties of deacons as public representatives of the church.

CANDIDACY YEAR THREE

C302: The Ecclesial Ministry of Deacon: Teaching, Sanctifying and Servant/Leadership

Canon law affecting the ministry of deacons, especially with regard to the ministries of service and justice, teaching, and sanctification.

C322: The Sanctifying Office: Baptism, Marriage and Funerals

An overview of canon law applying to baptism, marriage, and funerals.

APPENDIX F: EVALUATION DOCUMENTS

Yearly Self-Evaluation

By June 1st of each year, candidates complete a self-evaluation, reporting on their success in achieving the goals of the program, including their personal appropriation of these goals and an account of how they are integrating their life and ministry into each of the three components of the formation program, offering a holistic assessment of their progress and areas for improvement. The evaluation is discussed with the candidate's mentor, who adds his or her own evaluative comments. The candidate sends the evaluation directly to the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation by June 10.

Evaluation by Mentor

The mentor will discuss the candidate's goals for achieving and integrating the components of the formation program at the start of each year and will comment in writing directly on the candidate's self evaluation form concerning his progress.

Evaluation by Pastor

The pastors or pastoral leaders evaluate the candidate in terms of their integration of theology with pastoral practice. One required instrument for this is the Theological Reflection the candidates discuss with them. Pastors also note if the candidates are attaining the Basic Standards of Readiness for ordained ministry. They review how the candidate relates to other staff members, volunteers and the parish and/or faith community in general.

Evaluation by Pastoral Supervisors (if not pastor)

The Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation provides each supervisor with the evaluation form required by the program. Each candidate is responsible for ensuring that a copy of his pastoral supervisor's evaluation, which he shall have discussed with the supervisor, is in his file by June 1st. If necessary, the Coordinator for Deacon Candidate Formation will assist candidates in procuring the evaluation.

Evaluation by the Intellectual Formation Faculty

The intellectual formation faculty evaluates the candidate in three ways:

1. At the completion of each unit that they teach, faculty evaluates each candidate's intellectual formation work according to the policy stated under the section “Intellectual Formation” (5.8).
2. At the conclusion of the formation year, the faculty meet as a group with the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation and assess the performance of each candidate and of the entire class. As a result of this process, faculty may suggest to the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation improvements to the curriculum and the program; they also make one of the following recommendations for each candidate:
 - continuance in the program and installation into the ministry of lector or acolyte, or, at the end of the third year, ordination to diaconate, if they have successfully completed all of the requirements of the program;
 - continuance in the program with specified areas in need of improvement;
 - discontinuance with cause.
3. At the Synthesis Weekend at the conclusion of each formation year, candidates are examined orally and in writing on a comprehensive synthesis of the intellectual formation curriculum, as required by the (*BNFPD*, 82). With oversight by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation, faculty administer the examination and evaluate the responses of the candidates.

Evaluation by the Preaching Board

Candidates will preach a five to ten minute homily on the last intellectual formation weekend of their second and third years before a preaching board composed of lay people and clergy appointed by the Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation. The homily will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Sound content based on solid exegesis of the biblical text and fidelity to Catholic teaching;
- Skillful adaptation to the needs of the assembly;
- Effective development, organization, and delivery according to sound rhetorical principles.

The Assistant to the Vicar for Clergy for Deacon Candidate Formation will communicate the evaluation of the preaching board with each candidate in the annual letter of evaluation, sent by August 1, so that areas noted for improvement can be addressed.