

## **Norms for Admission to the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program Catholic Diocese of Charlotte**

*All of these Norms must be met by each man seeking to apply.*

1. Be a Roman Catholic in good standing for at least five (5) years at time of application.
2. Be willing to attest to the *Profession of Faith* as detailed at the end of this document.
3. Be willing to take the *Oath of Fidelity* as detailed at the end of this document.
4. Must be able to acknowledge freedom from all canonical impediments (Code of Canon Law 1041. See list at end of this document).
5. Married men must be in a stable marriage for at least five (5) years at time of application.
6. Married men must acknowledge that they must remain celibate should they become widowed after ordination to the Diaconate.
7. Unmarried men must acknowledge that they are obliged to observe the law of celibacy and such applicants must acknowledge a full understanding of this requirement.
8. Demonstrating a faithful service in a parish and/or in the diocese, and, is well integrated and accepted within their parish.
9. Be able to provide a strong, personal recommendation letter from the Pastor of his parish and a Permanent Deacon in the Diocese. If a member of current parish less than five years, a letter of recommendation must also be obtained from the Pastor of his previous parish.
10. Possess a willingness to bring to maturity a lively ecclesial conscience and willingness to being formed in ministry for a spiritual life characterized by obedience and fraternal communion
11. If you are invited to go forward in the process, you must, along with your wife, commit to full participation in the Aspirancy phase through regular attendance, participation, and cooperation with all activities.
12. If you are invited to go forward in the process, you must, along with your wife, commit to opening your life to Formation for approximately 3 – 4 years. This includes attending sessions approximately two Saturdays a month throughout Formation and completing all assignments as directed throughout the period of Formation. If married, your wife is expected to attend all sessions for at least the first year, then as directed for the remainder of Formation. This commitment also includes prioritizing Formation over other ministries as directed by the Formation Team.
13. Must provide recently issued Baptismal Certificate with all notations and all sacramental certificates as required. In addition, if applicable, you must provide any documentation regarding any prior marriages, and, annulment proceedings and decisions.
14. Be at least 32 years of age and not older than 63 at time of seeking application.
15. Demonstrating maturity, stability, and overall psychological and physical health.
16. Free of any substance dependency.
17. Have completed first year of Diocese of Charlotte Lay Ministry Program, and, Diocese of Charlotte Catechist Certification Program Phase 1 (CAT101).
18. Able to provide the material resources to care for themselves and their families and capable of running their own homes.
19. Have internet access and sufficient skills to meet course expectations for on-line courses and communications.
20. Demonstrate the ability to successfully complete the academic courses that are necessary for the formation process.
21. Provide proof of US citizenship or permanent residency, and, a resident of the Diocese of Charlotte for at least five (5) years at time of application.

22. Must be in compliance with all requirements for volunteers in the Diocese of Charlotte (e.g., Protecting God's Children, Virtus, and background check).
23. For those recently widowed, at least three years should elapse prior to their acceptance into a permanent diaconate formation program.

### **Wives are to consent and support their Husband's Diaconal Formation**

1. Consent to, and support, their husband's application to Diaconal Formation.
2. If husband is accepted to Aspirancy and Formation, agrees to support his participation in each program.
3. Exhibit honesty and a spirit of cooperation with the Formation Team.
4. Agree to participate in psychological evaluation of her husband during Aspirancy.
5. Agree to attend interviews with Formation Team members as invited.
6. Agree to attend all of the sessions during the Aspirancy period and during Formation, unless given the option not to attend.
7. Demonstrate maturity, stability, and overall psychological and physical health.
8. In addition to stability of family life, married candidates cannot be admitted unless their wives not only consent but also have the Christian moral character and attributes which will neither hinder their husbands' ministry nor be out of keeping with it.

### List of Canonical Impediments

Canonical prohibitions which can lead to denial of admission to Aspirancy, Candidacy and Ordination include:

1. One who suffers from any form of insanity or any other psychological infirmity and judged unfit to fulfill the ministry properly (e.g., schizophrenia, dissociative disorders);
2. One who has committed the offense of apostasy, heresy or schism (e.g., abandoned faith, joined another "church");
3. One who is ordained or in perpetual vows as a member of a religious order;
4. One who has married outside of the church or is in an invalid marriage;
5. One who has committed voluntary homicide (i.e., murder);
6. One who has actually procured or cooperated in an abortion (e.g., somehow supported such as paying for);
7. One who has *attempted* suicide;
8. One who has gravely and maliciously mutilated himself or another (includes sterilization);
9. One who has carried out an act which is reserved to an ordained minister (e.g., heard confessions);
10. One who is involved in any activity that would be unbecoming to the clerical state or that would bring scandal to the Church (e.g., freemasons, involved with anything contrary to the faith).

**Note:** Any impediments are to be reported by those seeking admission to the diaconal formation program. In turn all Catholics are required to report any impediments of those seeking admission to formation or ordination. Reference Canon Laws 1040 - 1049 for more detailed explanations. Canon Law 1041 is basis for prohibitions listed above.

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

*(Canon 833)*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, with firm faith believe and profess everything that is contained in the symbol of faith: namely,

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages. God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

With firm faith, I believe as well everything contained in God's word, written or handed down in tradition and proposed by the Church—whether in solemn judgment or in the ordinary and universal magisterium—as divinely revealed and calling for faith.

I also firmly accept and hold each and every thing that is proposed definitively by that same Church with regard to teaching concerning faith or morals.

What is more, I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings which either the Roman pontiff or the college of bishops enunciate when they exercise the authentic magisterium, even if they proclaim those teachings in an act that is not definitive.

**OATH OF FIDELITY**  
*(Canon 833, nos. 5-8)*

I, \_\_\_\_\_, in being promoted to the Order of the Diaconate, promise that I shall always preserve communion with the Catholic Church whether in the words I speak or in the way I act.

With great care and fidelity, I shall carry out the responsibilities by which I am bound in relation both to the universal Church and to the particular church in which I am called to exercise my service according to the requirements of the law.

In carrying out my charge, which is committed to me in the name of the Church, I shall preserve the deposit of faith in its entirety, hand it on faithfully and make it shine forth. As a result, whatsoever teachings are contrary, I shall shun.

I shall follow and foster the common discipline of the whole Church and shall look after the observance of all ecclesiastical laws, especially those which are contained in the Code of Canon Law.

With Christian obedience, I shall associate myself with what is expressed by the holy shepherds as authentic doctors and teachers of the faith or established by them as the Church's rulers. And I shall faithfully assist diocesan bishops so that apostolic activity, to be exercised by the mandate and in the name of the Church, is carried out in the communion of the same Church.

May God help me in this way and the holy Gospels of God which I touch with my hands.