



Steps Toward Becoming a Postulant for Ordination to the Priesthood (A Summary)

N.B. National canons and diocesan guidelines give the Bishop oversight of the ordination process. What follows is a description of our customary practice. Nominees should bear in mind that the various steps may be modified on occasion at the Bishop's discretion.

1. **Nominee becomes involved member of a parish in the Episcopal Diocese of New York**
The nominee is an active member (an adult confirmed communicant) of a parish for a minimum of one year (or longer if required by the priest). During this time the nominee comes to know the parish and becomes known by parishioners and the clergy.
2. **Nominee discusses discernment with the priest**
The nominee and priest discuss the possibility of beginning parish discernment.
3. **Parish Discernment Committee is formed**
If the priest and nominee decide to initiate parish discernment, the nominee meets for some months with a group of laity appointed by the priest to serve as a discernment committee. Together they explore whether or not the nominee has shown the gifts and talents needed for priesthood in The Church.
4. **Priest writes sponsoring letter to the Bishop**
The priest writes to the Bishop sponsoring the nominee for postulancy. For an outline of the categories this letter should contain see the website or contact the Office of Ministry. Included with the letter is a description of the parish discernment by which the nominee has been identified for recommendation to the Bishop for ordination.
5. **Priest & Vestry submit canonical form indicating parish support**
If the priest and vestry decide to sponsor the nominee, they sign a Parish Recommendation attesting to this sponsorship and pledging support. The Parish Recommendation form will be sent to the priest after the Bishop has received the sponsoring letter.
6. **Nominee completes application and essays**
Materials are sent directly to the nominee after the priest's sponsoring letter has been received by the Bishop.
7. **Nominee completes: (1) physical evaluation; (2) psychological evaluation; (3) psychiatric evaluation; and (4) background check**
Please refer to the sheet "About the Physical and Psychological Evaluations."
8. **Bishop reviews the nominee's file**
The Bishop reviews the file and decides if the nominee should proceed to the preliminary interview stage of Diocesan discernment.
9. **Nominee completes three preliminary interviews**
If the Bishop decides to continue the discernment with the Diocese, the nominee is invited to schedule separate preliminary interviews with three members of the Commission on Ministry. Following each interview, the interviewer recommends to the Bishop that the nominee continue or not continue with diocesan discernment.
10. **Bishop reviews the nominee's file**
Following this review, the Bishop decides if the nominee should proceed by attending a discernment conference.
11. **Nominee attends a Discernment Conference**
At the Bishop's request, the nominee is invited to attend a discernment conference. These conferences are normally scheduled twice a year. Conference interviewers decide either to recommend or not to recommend the nominee to the Bishop for postulancy.
12. **Bishop reviews the file and recommendations and meets with the nominee to discuss the possibility of postulancy**
The Bishop meets with the nominee and makes a decision about appointing the nominee to postulancy.
13. **The new postulant begins formation at the Bishop's direction at a seminary approved by the Bishop.**
Nominees for the priesthood are strongly advised not to begin theological study before they are granted postulancy because the choice of a seminary to attend must be approved by the Bishop.

N.B. Formation in the Diocese is a full three years regardless to one's academic achievements at the time of postulancy.