

**The Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin
Office of the Bishop and The Commission on Ministry
Procedure Towards Acceptance into and Progression Within the Process Toward the Priesthood**

Please note that this document is not intended to present a “box ticking” exercise, but rather a roadmap for discernment and process. Along the way, while there are tasks to be completed, discernment that reflects growth, self-awareness, and spiritual maturity is critical.

Part One

An individual who believes she/he is being called to explore the possibility of entering into a formation process toward the priesthood is to complete the following over the course of a minimum of 6-12 months.

Please Note: It is not necessarily the case that all tasks have to be completed in the order listed. Whenever you have a question, please feel free to contact Chair of the Commission on Ministry, Director of School for Deacons, or the shepherd assigned to you by the Commission on Ministry. **Note:** COM = “Commission on Ministry”

MOST IMPORTANT: WHEN SUBMITTING DOCUMENTATION AS INDICATED WITHIN THE EXPECTATIONS BELOW, PLEASE BE SURE TO SUBMIT TWO COPIES: ONE TO COM CHAIR AND ONE TO THE CANON TO THE ORDINARY, .

Task	Notes	For Help	Date Completed
Meet with church cleric		Church Cleric	
Attend Diocesan Day of Discernment (scheduled and announced by COM)		Ask cleric or COM Chair	
Send letter of interest to Bishop as an aspirant to becoming part of the Priesthood Formation process.	Mail to Bishop; send copy to Canon to the Ordinary and to the COM chair	Ask Canon to the Ordinary	
Preliminary interview with bishop and/or canon	This is a prerequisite and should occur prior to taking any of the steps listed beyond this item	Call the diocesan administrator at diocesan offices in	

		Fresno to make an appointment.	
Compose spiritual autobiography See "Writing your Spiritual Autobiography"	This needs to be accomplished prior to meeting with the Church Discernment Committee	Use attached guidelines as a suggestion; contact your shepherd (if already assigned). Send copy to COM chair and to Canon to Ordinary	
Attend a "Meet and Greet" with COM		COM will contact you	
COM assigns you a shepherd with the committee.		COM will inform you	
Complete "Context for Ministry" Project See "Context for Ministry Instructions"	Project needs to be approved by Canon to the Ordinary and COM chair.	Contact church cleric, COM chair or Canon to the Ordinary. Send verification of completion to COM chair and to Canon to Ordinary	
Form Church Discernment Committee See "Church Discernment Committee Guidelines & Questions"		Done in conjunction with local cleric.	
Obtain recommendation from Church Discernment Committee; send a copy to the Chair of COM and Canon to the Ordinary	This should be set up with the help of your church cleric	Church cleric; send copy to COM chair and to Canon to Ordinary	
Submit Application for Holy Orders – Form I (one) to Chair of COM and Canon to the Ordinary	This is a lengthy application with multiple sections. Allow plenty of time for completion.	Church cleric; Shepherd; Canon to the Ordinary	

Request church cleric to send in Form 2 Endorsement of Applicant for Holy Orders to Chair of COM and Canon to the Ordinary			
Pursuant to a minimum of the canonically required six months, the bishop will make a decision regarding granting status as an applicant/aspirant, including the “go ahead” to matriculate in an Episcopal Seminary or some other diocesan approved program outside the diocese.			
Submit application for postulancy, Form 3A, to Chairperson of COM, and copy to Canon to the Ordinary	This form is a request for an interview with COM		
Attend interview with COM	Recommendation will be made by COM to the bishop.	COM will provide you all details and assist you through this part of the process.	
Meet with bishop and Chairperson of COM	This may be scheduled by COM on the same day as the aforementioned interview. At this meeting the bishop will indicate his/her decision regarding postulancy.		
Bishop sends written notification of status.	The Office of the Bishop will send a letter informing applicant of his/her decision as stated in the aforementioned meeting.		

Part Two

Progression from Postulancy to Candidacy

This progression requires a minimum of 2.5 years, and satisfactory completion of all designated items.

Please note that the bishop and/or Canon and/or the Commission on Ministry may request to meet with someone who has begun this process at any time.

Task	Notes	For Help	Date Completed
Apply to Episcopal Seminary and register for courses	Approval of Episcopal Seminary must be given by Diocesan Bishop	Canon to the Ordinary	
Middler Evaluation sent by advisor/dean to Diocesan Bishop	All evaluations and transcripts are to be sent to the Diocesan Bishop	Canon to the Ordinary	
Schedule psychological evaluation. There is a form available through the Episcopal Pension Fund related to this evaluation. However, this form is optional.	Contact Canon to arrange an appointment with the approved psychologist. The evaluation should be timed because its validity is for three years from the time it is dated. Those in the process should plan in such a way as to not (hopefully) have to repeat it. This report is sent directly to the bishop for confidential review.	Canon to the Ordinary	
Submit results of a recent medical examination –	This is reviewed only by the bishop. It also is valid for three years, so the same as indicated above for the psychological applies here.	Canon to the Ordinary	

Complete Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)	Evaluation sent to Diocesan Bishop	Work with local seminary to determine application process and placement	
Submit “Ember Day Letters” to bishop four times annually. See “Ember Day Letter Instructions” for guidance	Bishop will forward letters to Canon for filing in postulant’s folder.	Shepherd	
Complete “Safeguarding God’s Children,” and “Safeguarding God’s People,” On-line or In person. Submit form 4 to Chair of COM and Canon to the Ordinary	If the postulant has not already accomplished this, it must be completed before the end of postulancy. Please note: It is valid for three years, and must be renewed thereafter.	Contact the rep in your parish, your clergy or the Canon to the Ordinary’s office. You will be registered for this program and given a password to access it.	
Complete Healing Racism Training. Submit form 5 to Chair of COM and Canon to the Ordinary	May be completed during candidacy. In some locations it is still referenced as “Anti-racism Training.”	Contact Canon to the Ordinary for options.	
Field Education placement	Evaluation sent to Diocesan Bishop	Work with local seminary to	

		determine placement	
Meet with COM at least once during postulancy, as requested by COM.		Chair of COM will contact the postulant.	
Work with spiritual director and submit Form 6 to Canon to the Ordinary and Chair of COM prior to applying for candidacy.		Spiritual Director	
Have sponsoring congregation submit Form 7A "Endorsement of Application for Candidacy" to Chair of COM and Canon to the Ordinary			
Submit application for meeting with COM and Standing Committee –Form 8A			

Part Three

Progression from Candidacy to Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate

This progression requires a minimum of six months and usually occurs during the final semester of seminary. Satisfactory completion of all designated items is required.

Please note that the bishop and/or Canon and/or the Commission on Ministry may request to meet with someone who has begun this process at any time.

Task	Notes	For Help	Date Completed
Successful completion of General Ordination Exams (GOEs) in the spring of the final year of seminary	Results sent to Diocesan Bishop	Canon to the Ordinary	
Complete Latino Ministry training during postulancy or candidacy	The Diocese will provide opportunities within the framework of need sometime during this process.	Director, School for Deacons, Canon to the Ordinary	
Submit final transcript from Episcopal Seminary	Transcript to Diocesan Bishop	Canon to the Ordinary, Seminary Dean	
Submit for the second time evidence of participation in an ongoing spiritual formation program. Form 6	Send to Canon to the Ordinary with copy to Chair of COM.		
Document attesting to successful completion of field placement to be submitted by			

pastor of the church to which candidate was assigned by the bishop.			
Ember Day Letters continue to be sent to the bishop.	Bishop will provide these to Canon for filing in the individual's official folder.		
Endorsement by Sponsoring Parish to the Transitional Diaconate, form 10A			
Submit application for ordination to the transitional diaconate, form 9A	Send to Canon to Ordinary and COM chair.		

Part 4: Progression from Transitional Diaconate to Priesthood

This progression requires a minimum of six months and the Office of the Bishop will work with your transitional congregation. Satisfactory completion of all designated items is required.

Please note that the bishop and/or Canon and/or the Commission on Ministry may request to meet with someone who has begun this process at any time.

Task	Notes	For Help	Date Completed
Complete Latino Ministry training if not already done so	The Diocese will provide opportunities within the framework of need sometime during this process.	Canon to the Ordinary	
Submit application for ordination to the priesthood; form 9B	Send to Canon to Ordinary and COM chair.		
Clergy and Vestry/BC of transitional congregation submit			

endorsement for ordination, form 10B			
Bishop and Canon meet with candidate to set ordination date and talk about ministry placement.		Priest and Senior Warden from your transitional congregation. Send to chair of COM and to Canon to the Ordinary.	
Office of the Bishop submits written declaration of bishop's decision regarding ordination.		Send to chair of COM, copy to Canon	