

**THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF
CALIFORNIA**



Guidelines for Those Seeking Holy Orders

A Publication of the Commission on Ministry

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INTRODUCTION

The People of God, infused with the Holy Spirit and assisted by resources and training provided by the Bishop and Commission on Ministry, seek persons whose demonstrated qualities of Christian commitment and potential for leadership and vision mark them as prospects for ordained leadership in the Church. Such persons must be confirmed adult communicants in good standing. (TEC Canons III.3.1).

Before reading these guidelines that are specific to the discernment and pursuit of ordained ministry, it is important to read and carefully consider “**Discerning Your Call to Ministry: Lay, Religious and Ordained Ministry in the Church**”, a publication of the Commission on Ministry of the Diocese of California, which can be found on the Diocesan Website and provides the context and framework in which discernment for ministry, lay or ordained, is undertaken.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

- All forms for the ordination process may be found online at **www.diocal.org/resources/discernment**.
- All forms and other required documents must be submitted electronically (PDF or MSWord) to the Vocations Office at **vocfile@diocal.org**. If, for any reason, it is impossible to submit a document electronically, the person in the process must notify the Vocations Office of that and how the document will be submitted.
- Ember Letters must be submitted electronically to the Bishop at **bishopember@diocal.org**.
- The person in the process must keep a copy of all forms and documents sent to the Vocations Office and ensure that all requirements are met.
- All documents must be clearly labeled: name, date and ID number of the document (ie: P1).
- The electronic file is the official file. Any paper copies of documents will be kept during the process in a back up file.
- The person in the process is responsible for submitting any changes in personal or legal information to the Vocations Office and to the liaison electronically on an **F17**.
- The person in the process is responsible for making sure that the Vestry or Bishop's Committee work has been scheduled in timely manner so that documents can be completed and submitted to the Vocations Office by stated deadlines.
- The person in the process is responsible for initiating the process of submitting all required documents and applying for the next step.
- Applications and documents submitted under these guidelines are valid for three years. If an individual is inactive or leaves the process for three years or more, new applications and/or documentation is required.

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INITIAL DISCERNMENT

An Inquirer discerning a call to holy orders must:

1. First, read and consider “Discerning your Call to Ministry: Lay, Religious and Ordained Ministry in the Church”, a publication of the Commission on Ministry, available on the Diocesan Website.
2. Be an active member of a local congregation for a minimum of three years prior to nomination by that congregation.
3. Participate in Day of Discernment offered by the Diocese of California. A schedule for Day of Discernment can be obtained from the Vocations Office.
4. If not already in spiritual direction, begin regular (usually monthly) meetings with a personal spiritual director. Spiritual directors should be licensed/certified individuals with whom the Inquirer does not already have another therapeutic or pastoral relationship.
5. Complete the Time of Discernment Self Study offered by the Diocese of California and available through the Vocations Office.
6. Meet initially and regularly with the appropriate clergy person (Rector/Vicar or Priest in Charge) of the congregation in which the Inquirer is a member for advice and guidance about the perceived call to holy orders.
7. Under the advice, direction and approval of the clergy person, begin work with a Local Discernment Committee (LDC).
8. “Diocese of California Guidelines and Resources for Local Discernment Committees” is available on the website and is an excellent foundation document for starting and running LDCs. The Vocations Office is available to provide assistance in setting up and providing training or materials for the LDC.
9. Meet at least monthly with the LDC for a minimum of six months to explore collaboratively the nature of the call and determine whether or not that call appropriately includes ordination to holy orders.
10. At this stage, the Inquirer **may** choose to engage in a supervised ministry experience.

APPLICATION FOR NOMINATION

Nomination takes place entirely at the local level (i.e. home congregation and Local Discernment Committee) and does not require approval of the Bishop or diocesan Commission on Ministry (COM). The Nomination process formally introduces the Inquirer at the diocesan level and notifies the Diocese of an individual's desire to pursue holy orders.

NOTE: Under TEC Canons, there must be a minimum of 18 months between the date the nomination form is signed by the Inquirer and the date that individual may be ordained.

1. **Shared understanding:** The LDC, the Clergy in Charge and the Inquirer must come to a shared understanding about whether or not to nominate the Inquirer for ordination.

2. **Nomination Package:** If all are in agreement that the Inquirer should be nominated, the Inquirer, with appropriate assistance from the LDC, will prepare the Nomination Package.
 - _____ ***N1 Application for Nomination for Holy Orders***
 - _____ ***N1A Baptismal Certificate***
 - _____ ***N1B Confirmation Certificate***
 - _____ ***N1C Reception Certificate***
 - _____ ***N1D Description of Discernment Process***
 - _____ ***N1E Explanation of previous application for Holy Orders***
 - _____ ***N1F DOD/TOD Certificate***
 - _____ ***N2 Autobiography of Nominee***

3. **LDC Report:** The LDC will prepare and submit a written report to the Vestry or Bishop's Committee.
 - _____ ***N3 Report Regarding Nomination from the LDC***

4. **Congregational Endorsement:** The Vestry/Bishop's Committee will consider the recommendation of the LDC and, if in agreement, endorse the nomination of the Inquirer.
 - _____ ***N4 Congregational Endorsement of Nomination for Holy Orders***

5. **Responsibility:** The Inquirer is responsible for assuring that all documents described above are submitted to the Vocations Office electronically in a timely manner.

6. **Nomination file:** The Vocations Office will confirm electronically that the documents have been received and will open a nomination file.

DURING NOMINATION

1. **LDC Meetings:** The Nominee will continue to meet regularly with the LDC, the clergy person and the spiritual director in on-going discernment of his/her call.
2. **Postulancy Package:** The Nominee and the LDC will begin preparation of the postulancy package.
3. **Supervised Ministry:** The Nominee **may** engage in a supervised ministry.
4. **Liaison:** The COM will appoint a liaison to begin working with and providing support for the Nominee.
5. **Length of Nomination Phase:** The Nomination Phase continues until the Nominee has been informed by the Bishop that postulancy has or has not been granted.
6. **No Guarantee of Holy Orders:** Nomination is a preliminary step in discerning a possible call to holy orders does not guarantee ordination.

APPLICATION FOR POSTULANCY

Before proceeding with an application for postulancy, the LDC, clergy person in charge and the Nominee must come to a shared understanding about whether or not the congregation will endorse the application of the Nominee for Postulancy.

The annual deadline for submitting completed applications for postulancy as described below is established by the COM and posted on Diocal.org. Failure to meet the application deadline, without a waiver in advance from the Vocations Office, will result in a one year delay in application.

1. **Postulancy Package:** If all are in agreement, the Nominee completes and submits the following:
_____ ***P1 Application for Postulancy***
_____ ***P1A Work History***
_____ ***P1B Statement of Reasons for Seeking Holy Orders***
_____ ***P1C Digital Photograph attached as a jpeg***
_____ ***P2 Educational Plan***
_____ ***P3 Personal Financial Statement***

2. **Transcripts:** The Nominee makes arrangements for transcripts of higher education to be sent directly to the Vocations Office as an electronic attachment if possible or via mail if not.
_____ ***P4 Transcripts***

3. **Confidentiality Form:** The Nominee submits a Confidentiality Form to the Vocations Office.
_____ ***F13 Confidentiality Form***

4. **Recommendations:** The Nominee makes arrangements for letters of Recommendation for Postulancy to be sent to the Vocations Office.
_____ ***P5 – Recommendations of three lay people and one clergy person***

5. **LDC Report:** The LDC will give a written evaluation of the Nominee with recommendation to the Vestry or Bishop's Committee with a copy to the Clergy in Charge, the Nominee and electronically to the Vocations Office
_____ ***P6 Local Discernment Committee Evaluation***

6. **Clergy Recommendation:** The clergy with oversight completes and submits:
_____ ***P7***

7. **Congregational Endorsement:** Based on the evaluation and recommendation of the LDC, and other relevant information it may have, the Vestry or Bishop's Committee must decide whether or not to endorse the application of the Nominee for Postulancy and, if approved, will submit electronically to the Vocations Office:
_____ ***P8 Congregational Endorsement of Application for Postulancy and Attestation***

8. **Responsibility:** Ultimately it is the responsibility of the Nominee to assure that P1 through P8 are submitted to the Vocations Office in entirety by the annual deadline set by the COM. Postulancy applications submitted after this date will result in a year's delay in attending the Vocations Conference.
9. **Vocations Office:** The Vocations Office will confirm electronically that P1 through P8 of the postulancy application package has been received and will communicate electronically with the Nominee about procedures and timelines for the other requirements that must be completed before a final decision can be made about inviting the Nominee to Vocations Conference.
10. **Behavioral Screening:** The Nominee must complete the Behavioral Screening Questionnaire (BSQ) and submit it electronically to the Vocations Office. The BSQ will be kept in the individual's confidential file.

_____ ***F1 The Behavioral Screening Questionnaire***

11. **Psychological Evaluation:** The Vocations Office will electronically notify the provider who has been appointed by the Commission on Ministry (COM) to perform psychological evaluations for the Diocese. The Nominee will be copied on that communication. It is then the responsibility of the Nominee to contact the professional and make arrangements for the evaluation. The full report of the psychological examination will be kept in the individual's confidential file.
NOTE: The individual congregation is responsible for paying for the psychological evaluation. The diocese will pay the provider and bill the congregation for reimbursement.

_____ ***F2 Psychological Evaluation***

12. **Budget and Financial Aid Request:** Nominees should complete and submit the annual financial aid request to the Vocations Office by April 15 of each year. Nominees should also contact individual seminaries and schools about financial aid applications.

_____ ***F3 Budget and Financial Aid Request***

13. **Background Check:** The Vocations Office will electronically notify Oxford Documents to perform a background check and cc the Nominee. The Nominee must promptly provide information requested by Oxford Documents. The reports from Oxford Documents will be kept in the individual's confidential file.

_____ ***F4 Oxford Documents Background Check***

14. **COM Interview:** A member of the COM will contact the Nominee to schedule an initial interview. The COM member who meets with the Nominee will fill out and submit Form P9 to the Vocations Office. The COM may request additional information, as needed.

_____ ***P9 Interview with Member of the Commission on Ministry for Postulancy.***

15. **Interview with the Bishop:** The Nominee must contact the Bishop's office to schedule an interview with the Bishop. The Bishop will evaluate the suitability and qualifications of the applicant to seek Holy Orders and will send Form P10 to the Vocations Office.

_____ ***P10 Interview with the Bishop.***

16. **Invitation to Vocations Conference:** Once all the required documents have been received and the Nominee is approved by the Bishop, the Vocations Officer will invite the Nominee to attend the Vocations Conference.

_____ ***P11 Invitation to Vocations Conference.***

17. **Vocations Conference Evaluation:** At the Vocations Conference, the Nominee will be interviewed by members of the COM to further discern the Nominee's call to holy orders. After the conference, the COM will submit its evaluation and recommendation to the Bishop for consideration along with the other information in the Nominee's file.

_____ ***P12 Vocations Conference Recommendation.***

18. **Bishop's Decision Regarding Postulancy:** The Bishop, after receiving the findings and recommendations of the COM, will decide whether or not to approve the Nominee for postulancy. The Nominee will be notified electronically in a timely manner by the Bishop or the Vocations Officer stating whether or not Postulancy has been granted. If Postulancy is not granted, the Bishop may, at the Bishop's sole discretion, invite the Nominee to reapply in one, two or three years. If more than three years elapse before a Nominee reapplies for postulancy, all nomination and postulancy steps must be redone.

_____ ***P13 Bishop's Decision Regarding Postulancy***

19. **Approval of Educational Plan:** Postulants must obtain the Bishop's approval of the seminary or other school which they hope to attend as described in the P2: Educational Plan.

_____ ***P2 Approval of Educational Plan***

DURING POSTULANCY

TEC Canons state that the Postulancy is a time of vocational testing, discernment and the initiation of formal training. Postulants commit themselves to a course of discernment around a particular order of ministry, Deacon or Priest, since both the requirements and the preparation for these orders are different.

However, during this process the Church (through the Bishop, the Commission on Ministry and the postulant's congregation), guides and evaluates the Postulant, in order to continue to help discern the appropriate order of ministry for that person: the laity, the diaconate or the priesthood.

One must remain a Postulant long enough to complete the requirements described in this document. Adequate time must pass to provide both the school and the COM with sufficient data to determine the Postulant's suitability for Candidacy. Further, sufficient time must be afforded the Postulant to thoroughly test and become committed to a specific vocational goal, either the Diaconate or the Priesthood.

The Canons of the Episcopal Church do not specify a minimum or maximum time for the Postulancy. For most people the length of postulancy is 6-18 months.

1. **Liaison Communication:** The Postulant will communicate with the COM liaison regularly, at least monthly via email and/or face to face meeting, and, particularly, before each time they meet with the COM.

2. **Mid Postulancy Interview:** If Postulancy is extended beyond a year, the COM liaison will consult with the Postulant to arrange for an annual check-in interview with the COM to report on their progress.

3. **Ember Letters:** The canons require that Postulants will report, in writing, to the Bishop four times a year reflecting on spiritual and personal development as well as academic experience and any major life changes.
 - The Postulant may choose to share the Ember letter with the COM liaison, but this is entirely voluntary.
 - Ember letters are due by Saturday of each Ember week. (The time of Ember weeks can be found at Diocal.org or in the Book of Common Prayer.)
 - Ember letters must be submitted electronically to the Bishop at bishopember@diocal.org.
 - The Bishop reads, but does not necessarily reply, to Ember letters. The Vocations Office does not receive copies of the Ember letters, but must be notified electronically by the Postulant when the letters are sent.
 - A record of the Ember Letters sent will be maintained by the Vocations Office.

_____ ***F11 Ember Letter Log***

4. **Financial Aid Request:** See page 11, #12.
5. **LDC Meetings:** The Postulant will continue meeting with the LDC on a regular basis that is agreed upon by the Postulant and the LDC.
6. **Spiritual Direction:** The Postulant must continue regular monthly meetings with the Spiritual Director.
7. **Spiritual Formation Groups:** Postulants for the Vocational Diaconate must participate in Spiritual Formation Groups through the School for Deacons. Postulants for the Vocational Diaconate receiving their education in a school other than the School for Deacons must make provision for participation in a School for Deacons Spiritual Formation Group.
8. **Clinical Pastoral Education:** Postulants should arrange their pastoral training as early as possible during their postulancy. Once a Clinical Pastoral Education site or its equivalent has been identified, the Postulant must notify the Vocations Office electronically of the dates and location of the experience in order to receive approval from the Bishop for the pastoral training plan.

Postulants preparing for the Priesthood are required to complete 300 hours of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE).

Postulants or the Vocational Diaconate are required to complete 120 hours of CPE or some other form of approved pastoral training.

_____ ***F5 Request for Approval of the CPE Site***

9. **Field Education Placement:** Two years of field education are required. Field education guidelines are set by the particular seminary or school. Field education may not take place in the Postulant's sponsoring congregation. The Postulant (candidate) must obtain approval from the Bishop for the Field Education Site and assignment.

_____ ***F6A Request for Approval for the 1st Field Education Site***

_____ ***F6B Request for Approval for the 2nd Field Education Site***

10. **Intern Year Alternative:** One intern year may be substituted for the two-year field education requirement. If an Intern Year is to be undertaken according to the practice of the seminary, the Postulant will notify the Vocations Office of its dates and location, as well as a description of the design and framework of the internship.

_____ ***F7 Request for Approval of the Intern Year Site (if taken)***

11. **Multicultural Sensitivity & Canonically-Mandated Trainings:** The Postulant should begin working on the language and diversity exposure requirements for ordination which must be completed by the end of candidacy in order to apply for ordination to the diaconate. The

Episcopal Church Canons require anti-racism and sexual misconduct prevention trainings prior to ordination. Individuals do not have to wait until Candidacy to take these trainings.

12. **Portfolio:** The Postulant should begin assembling the portfolio that will be submitted as part of the application for ordination to the diaconate . The portfolio is a collection of materials a student has created and which provides evidence of knowledge, skills or attitudes appropriate to someone seeking ordination. The portfolio documents and validates, in a structured way, a person’s formation toward ministry competencies for the Bishop and the COM. Portfolios provide comprehensive documentation of what the students have been doing to prepare for ordination during their time of academic training and allow the students an opportunity to dialogue with and reflect upon the training and formation experience. Documents required for the portfolio are described in this manual under “Application for Ordination to the Diaconate.”

13. **No Guarantee of Holy Orders:** Postulancy is a period in which the individual and the Church are involved in mutual discernment of a vocation to Holy Orders. Postulancy does not automatically guarantee Candidacy for Holy Orders. Those moving into Candidacy must have clearly demonstrated gifts for ministry and the Church must have a clearly defined need for the skills and gifts offered by those seeking Orders.

APPLICATION FOR CANDIDACY

Before applying for Candidacy, the Postulant should be in discernment with the LDC, the clergy with oversight, the Spiritual Director, and the Liaison as to whether or not there has been sufficient formation to apply for Candidacy.

1. **Eligibility for Application:** Postulants may apply for candidacy after receiving the support of the LDC and the clergy with oversight, as well as completing:
 - Two years of required theological study (or its equivalent)
 - One year of field education or part of the intern year.
 - Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)

2. **Application Letter:** The Postulant will submit a letter of application addressed to the Bishop (with a copy to the Vocations Office), describing areas of academic and spiritual growth during Postulancy and outlining goals for growth during the remainder of theological education. The letter must also include the Postulant's intended vocational goal (Deacon or Priest) and dates of Nomination and admission to Postulancy.
_____ ***C1 Letter of Application for Candidacy.***

3. **Middler Seminary Evaluation:** The Postulant will assure the seminary, School for Deacons (or other school) which the Postulant has attended provides an evaluation showing the scholastic record and faculty evaluation of the Postulant's progress and suitability for Holy Orders (TEC Canons III.8.5j).
_____ ***C2 Middler Seminary Evaluation.***

4. **CPE Final Report:** The Postulant must demonstrate successful completion of CPE or its approved equivalent. The evidence for this usually takes the form of a report by the Postulant's supervisor at the Pastoral Education site.
_____ ***C3 Final Report of the CPE Supervisor***

5. **Field Education Final Report:** The Postulant is responsible for assuring that the final report of the Field Education Supervisor is submitted to the Vocations Office.
_____ ***C4 Field Education Supervisor Final Report – 1st Site.***

6. **OR Intern Year Interim Report:** If an interim year is taken rather than two years of field education, the Postulant need not complete the year before applying for candidacy. However, a progress report from the supervising clergy will be required at the time of application for candidacy.
_____ ***C5 Intern Year Interim Report***

7. **Congregational Endorsement:** The Vestry or Bishop's Committee of the Postulant's sponsoring congregation will sign and submit the Congregational Endorsement of Application for Candidacy (TEC Canons III 6:4a & 8.4a) to the Vocations Office.

_____ ***C6 Congregational Endorsement and Attestation.***

8. **Scheduling COM Interview:** The Postulant will contact the Vocations Office to schedule a Candidacy interview with the COM.

9. **COM Interview:** The Commission on Ministry will interview the Postulant for candidacy. Based on the interview, the CPE report, the field education report, other documentation submitted to the file and the congregational endorsement, the COM will make a recommendation regarding candidacy to the Standing Committee and the Bishop. (TEC Canons III.6.4b & 8.4b)

_____ ***C7 COM Recommendation for Candidacy***

10. **Scheduling the Standing Committee Interview:** The Vocations Office will notify the Standing Committee of the COM recommendation for candidacy and will work with the Standing Committee Liaison to the COM to schedule an interview for the Postulant with the Standing Committee.

11. **Standing Committee Interview:** The Standing Committee will interview the Postulant for candidacy. Based on the interview and a review of the documentation in the Postulant's file, the Standing Committee will testify to the Bishop regarding candidacy.

_____ ***C8 Testimonial of Standing Committee for Admittance to Candidacy***

12. **Bishop's Decision:** After receiving the recommendation of the COM and the testimonial of the Standing Committee, the Bishop will grant or deny Candidacy. The Vocations Office will notify the postulant electronically in a timely manner of the Bishop's decision.

_____ ***C9 Bishop's Decision Regarding Candidacy***

DURING CANDIDACY

TEC canons state that Candidacy is a time of continuing education and formation in preparation for ordination. It is a period of self-evaluation, as well as an opportunity for the Church to test the person's vocation. It is also a time when Candidates can gain greater clarity about their vocational goal, its demands and its opportunities. The Commission on Ministry will seek to assist Candidates in selecting individualized ways to prepare for ministry. The Candidate must complete the following:

- required theological education,
- second year of field education (or their intern year)
- compilation and submission of the portfolio.

If seeking ordination to the priesthood, the Candidate must also take the General Ordination Examination (GOE)

1. **Ember Letters:** The Candidate will continue sending electronic Ember Letters to the Bishop.
2. **Local Discernment Committee:** The Candidate will continue meeting with the LDCs.
3. **Spiritual Director:** The Candidate will continue monthly meetings with the Spiritual Directors.
4. **Spiritual Formation Group for Candidates for the Vocational Diaconate:** Candidates for the Vocational Diaconate will participate in Spiritual Formation Groups through the School for Deacons. Candidates receiving their education in a school other than the School for Deacons must make provision for participation in a School for Deacons Spiritual Formation Group.
5. **Supervised Ministry:** Candidates who have completed field education and/or graduated must be engaged actively in ministry in a congregation, institution, diocesan program or in an Area Ministry as attested to by the person in charge in a written report
 F8 Request for Approval of a Supervised Ministry Site
6. **Multicultural Sensitivity Language Requirement:** Candidates must be able to demonstrate good-to-excellent fluency in English and be able to perform certain liturgical functions in one other language spoken in the geographic region of the Diocese of California.
 - English-speaking candidates must have at least two semesters of study of another language or the equivalent in an intensive and/or immersion learning situation.
 - Candidates for the vocational diaconate must be able to say the Lord's Prayer and be able to do an emergency baptism in English and one other language.

- Candidates for the priesthood must be able to say the Lord’s Prayer, a blessing, the absolution and the Eucharistic words of institution, and do an emergency baptism in English and one other language.
- Candidates must familiarize themselves with the Multicultural Sensitivity Materials of the Diocese of California available online

7. Ethnic Diversity Requirement

- Candidates must arrange at least two visits to an Episcopal congregation in the Diocese of California which have a different ethnic identity than the candidate or the congregation from which the candidate comes. (Alternatively, the candidate may visit two different congregations once.)
- The candidate must submit a written reflection on the experience. The Multicultural Sensitivity Materials of the Diocese of California includes some suggestions for reflection. These materials are available from the Vocations Office.
- All candidates must participate in a cultural immersion experience and write a reflection on that experience.

8. Antiracism training requirement: The Candidate must submit signed documentation of successful participation in an approved antiracism training to the Vocation’s Office.

9. Sexual Misconduct training requirement: The Candidate must:

- read and become familiar with the diocesan document “Called to Right Relationship”, which can be found on the Diocesan web site.
- complete the required trainings on prevention of sexual misconduct and civil requirements for reporting and pastoral opportunities for responding to evidence of abuse that are mandated and certified for clergy by The Episcopal Church.

10. Constitution & Canons of the Episcopal Church requirement: The Candidate must read and become familiar with the Constitution and Canons of the Episcopal Church, particularly Title IV, the Disciplinary Canons.

11. Liaison Communication: The Candidate must:

- maintain regular contact with the liaison, particularly when it is time to schedule a meeting with the COM.
- continue to communicate with the COM through the liaison, with an eye toward timely completion of requirements.

12. Relationship with sponsoring congregation: The Candidate must communicate regularly with the clergy and LDC of the sponsoring congregation though the meetings may not be as regular as during nomination and postulancy.

13. Financial Aid Request: See page 11, #12.

14. Scheduling the General Ordination Examination (GOE) for priesthood: The General Board of Examining Chaplains administers the General Ordination Examination (GOE) in January of each year. Individuals (postulants or candidates) intending to take the GOE must notify the Vocations Office by the 15th of October preceding the date of the examinations.

_____ *F9 Letter of Intent to take the General Ordination Exam (GOE)*

- The Vocations Office will make arrangements for the GOE.
- The Diocese will pay the fee for the GOE for postulants or candidates in the process sponsored by the Diocese of California.
- The postulant or candidate will be examined and must show proficiency in the following subject matters prior to ordination (TEC Canon III.8.5g):
 - The Holy Scriptures
 - Church History
 - Christian Theology
 - Christian Ethics and Moral Theology
 - Studies in Contemporary Society
 - Liturgics
 - Theory and Practice of Ministry

15. GOE Results: Successful completion of the General Ordination Exam or an alternative authorized by the Bishop is required before ordination. GOE results will be kept in the candidate's file. **NOTE: Candidates should keep hard or electronic copies of their GOE results.**

_____ *F10 GOE Results*

- Those Candidates who do not receive satisfactory evaluations in all areas by the National Board of Examining Chaplains will be referred by the Bishop to the Diocesan Board of Examining Chaplains who will evaluate the GOE results in the light of the Candidate's Portfolio.
- If, in the judgment of the Examining Chaplains, competence has not been demonstrated in certain of the canonical areas, this requirement may be fulfilled by the satisfactory completion of further study or writing which the Examining Chaplains may prescribe in consultation with the Bishop.

- The results of any supplemental work must be reported to the COM.

_____ *F16 Evaluation of Supplemental Work requested by the DBOEC*

16. **Mid Candidacy Interview:** The Commission on Ministry may schedule a mid-candidacy interview after approximately six months.
17. **Exploring placement options:** Candidates should begin the process of securing a diaconal placement. The Archdeacons, School for Deacons, Transitions Office, LDC, and other clergy can all be helpful in discerning and seeking appropriate placements.
18. **No Guarantee of Holy Orders:** Candidacy remains a time for critical evaluation and discernment and does not guarantee ordination.

APPLICATION FOR ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

A person may be ordained to the Diaconate after a minimum of 18 months from the written acceptance of Nomination and upon attainment of at least twenty-four years of age. (TEC Canons III.6.6a). The steps in the application process are:

1. **Letter of Application:** The Candidate must write a brief letter of application addressed to the Bishop indicating birth date, dates of nomination, admission to postulancy and candidacy and requesting ordination to the Vocational Diaconate. This letter will be submitted by the Vocations Office to the COM and the Standing Committee (TEC Canons III.6.6a & 6b)
 D1 Letter of Application for Ordination to the Diaconate

2. **Demonstration of Formation and Competence:** The Candidate must demonstrate formation and competence as defined in Canon III of TEC Canons. Competence and formation are determined from academic records, field education, CPE, other supervised ministry experiences, interviews with the COM, and the portfolio.

3. **Portfolio Submission:** The Candidate must submit a portfolio demonstrating academic preparation and formation for ordination to the Diaconate to the COM.
 - The portfolio must be submitted to the Vocations Office no later than 45 days before the Candidate is scheduled to meet with the COM for ordination to the diaconate.
 - The portfolio must be submitted in digital format as PDF or MSWord files.
 - The Candidate is encouraged to include materials, other than those required, which reflect creative and/or innovative work done as part of the educational process, field education, CPE or other ministry experience.
 - The portfolio will be evaluated by the Diocesan Board of Examining Chaplains under the direction of the COM and the Candidate may be interviewed by the Board.

4. **Portfolio Content** Note: Some items listed here are submitted as P, C , D or F forms. The Vocations Office will cross file those documents in the portfolio.
 - All transcripts documenting theological education and other relevant vocational education Evaluation from the Seminary or School for Deacons or other training program
 X1 (also the P4, C2, D7)
 - Final letter of evaluation from the Clinical Pastoral Education supervisor
 X2 (also the C3)

- Final letters of evaluation from Field Education supervisors for the two required years of Field Education or the Final letter of evaluation from the Intern Year.
_____ **X3 (Also the C4, D5 or D6)**
 - GOE results for individuals seeking ordination to the priesthood.
_____ **X4 (also the F10)**
 - The Candidate's own evaluation of academic and ministry strengths and areas requiring further growth
_____ **X5**
 - At least one sermon
_____ **X6**
 - At least one two page theological reflection paper
_____ **X7**
 - A two-page reflection on the congregational field education experience
_____ **X8**
 - A two-page reflection on the social agency field education experience
_____ **X9**
 - A two-page reflection on the spiritual challenges faced during the time of Postulancy and Candidacy
_____ **X10**
 - Multicultural sensitivity reflection papers
_____ **X11**
 - One or two other documents or other materials of the Candidate's choice that reflect some aspect of training or ministry, or the candidate's identity, not reflected in the other materials (these may be in the form of recordings, poetry, music, art, photographs, etc.).
_____ **X12A**
_____ **X12B**
 - Signature Form for mandated trainings
_____ **X13 D2 Signature Form for**
Multicultural Sensitivity and Trainings Mandated by Episcopal Church Canons.
5. **Portfolio Evaluation:** The Vocations Office will forward the Portfolio to the Diocesan Board of Examining Chaplains which will evaluate the contents and report back to the COM.
_____ **F15 Portfolio Evaluation by the DBOEC**
_____ **F16 Evaluation of Supplemental work requested by the DBOEC**
6. **Medical Examination:** The Diocese requires a medical examination within 36 months of ordination (TEC Canons III.6.5j). The medical examination is to be performed by a physician of the nominee's choice, at the nominee's expense. The examining physician will complete and submit Form ME.
_____ **F12 Medical Examination.**
7. **Second Psychological Evaluation:** If ordination to the diaconate does not take place within 36 months of the first psychological evaluation (TEC Canons III.8:5k), the candidate must have

a second psychological evaluation in the form of an interview with the Psychologist. The Vocations Office will notify the Candidate if this is necessary and work with the Candidate to make appropriate arrangements for it to be completed.

_____ ***F2A Second Psychological Evaluation***

8. **Second Background Check:** If ordination to the diaconate does not take place within 36 months of the first background check, the Candidate must have a second background check.(TEC Canons III.6.5j) The Vocations Office will notify the Candidate if this is necessary and work with the Candidate to make appropriate arrangements for it to be completed.

_____ ***F4A Second Oxford Documents Background Check***

9. **Mandated trainings:** Documentation that mandated trainings have been completed.

_____ ***D2 Signature form for Mandated Trainings***

10. **Multicultural Sensitivity:** Documentation that Multicultural experiences have been completed.

_____ ***D3 Signature form for Multicultural Sensitivity***

11. **Endorsement by sponsoring congregation:** The sponsoring congregation must furnish evidence of its official endorsement of the Candidate (TEC Canons III 6.6b).

_____ ***D4 Congregational Endorsement for Ordination to the Diaconate.***

12. **Field Education:** The second year of Field Education must be completed before approval for ordination to the Diaconate.

_____ ***D5 Second Field Education Year Final Report***

13. **Intern Year:** If an Intern Year was undertaken, the final report must be submitted before approval for ordination to the Diaconate.

_____ ***D6 Intern Year Final Report***

14. **Completion of Academic Training:** Documentation of completion of required academic training must be received before approval for ordination to the Diaconate.

_____ ***D7 Certificate or Degree***

15. **Supervised Ministry:** If a supervised ministry (other than Field Education or the Intern Year) was undertaken during candidacy, the report of the supervisor must be received before approval for ordination to the Diaconate.

_____ ***D8 Supervised Ministry Final Report***

16. **Scheduling COM Interview:** The Candidate will contact the Vocations Office to schedule an ordination interview with the COM.

17. **COM Interview:** The Commission on Ministry will interview the Candidate for ordination. Based on the interview, all other documentation submitted to the file and the congregational endorsement, the COM will make a recommendation regarding ordination to the Standing Committee and the Bishop.

_____ ***D9 COM Recommendation for Ordination to the Vocational Diaconate***

18. **Scheduling the Standing Committee File Review:** The Vocations Office will notify the Standing Committee of the COM recommendation for ordination and will work with the Standing Committee Liaison to the COM to schedule a file review for the Candidate with the Standing Committee.

19. **Standing Committee File Review:** The Standing Committee will review the file of the Candidate to assure that all requirements for ordination have been met. The Standing Committee will make a recommendation to the Bishop regarding ordination.

_____ ***D10 Standing Committee Testimonial for Ordination to the Diaconate***

20. **Bishop's Decision:** After receiving the recommendation of the COM and the testimonial of the Standing Committee, the Bishop will grant or deny ordination to the diaconate. The Vocations Office will notify the postulant electronically in a timely manner of the Bishop's decision.

_____ ***D11 Bishop's Decision Regarding Ordination to the Diaconate***

21. **Seeking a Placement:** Once the Bishop has granted approval for ordination, the Candidate must immediately contact the Transitions Office and the Archdeacon to begin the process of securing a diaconal placement. As soon as a placement has been tentatively secured, the Candidate must inform the Bishop, in writing, of the proposed placement and copy the Vocations Office with that letter.

_____ ***D12 Letter to the Bishop regarding Diaconal Placement***

22. **Approval of placement:** The Bishop must approve the placement or other plan of the Candidate before ordination.

_____ ***D13 Bishop's Approval of Diaconal Placement***

23. **Ordinands Retreat:** The Candidate must attend the Ordinands Retreat to be eligible for ordination.

24. **Ordination:** The Candidate will be ordained at the next regularly scheduled Ordinations following approval for ordination by the Bishop.

FOLLOWING ORDINATION TO THE DIACONATE

- 1. Fresh Start Group:** Fresh Start, a group for all newly ordained people, meets several times a year. The coordinator of this program will be in touch with the Deacon regarding participation.
- 2. Clergy Benefits:** If eligible, the Deacon will receive information to enroll in the Diocesan Clergy Benefits Plan.
- 3. Transitions Office:** It is the responsibility of every member of the clergy to keep the Transitions Office informed regarding personal and professional information.
- 4. Annual Report to the Bishop**

DURING THE TRANSITIONAL DIACONATE

1. **Ember Letters:** The Transitional Deacon will continue to submit Ember Letters.
2. **Liaison Communication:** The Transitional Deacon will continue to communicate with the COM through their assigned liaisons and maintain relations with the clergy of their sponsoring congregation.
3. **Spiritual Director:** The Transitional Deacon will continue monthly meetings with their Spiritual Director.
4. **Fresh Start:** Fresh Start, a group for all newly ordained people, meets several times a year. The coordinator of this program will be in touch with all transitional deacons regarding participation.
5. **Diaconal Placement:** The Transitional Deacon will serve as a deacon in a congregational or other setting approved by the Bishop. The Deacon and the Supervising Clergy will have a written plan and agreement for the ministry the Deacon will be doing during this time.
 F14 Plan and agreement for Diaconal Ministry
6. **Exploring placement options:** The Transitional Deacon must actively explore options for placement as a priest during the transitional diaconate.

APPLICATION FOR ORDINATION TO THE PRIESTHOOD

Candidates for ordination to the Priesthood in the Diocese of California must serve at least six months in the Transitional Diaconate (TEC Canons III.8.7a). The steps for Transitional Deacons seeking ordination to the Priesthood are:

- 1. Letter of Application:** The Transitional Deacon will send a letter of application to the Bishop requesting ordination to the Priesthood and including the Transitional Deacon's dates of nomination, admission to Postulancy and Candidacy and ordination as a Transitional Deacon, and date of birth.
 Pr1 Letter of Application for Priesthood
- 2. Congregational Endorsement:** The Transitional Deacon must provide the endorsement of the clergy person in charge and the Vestry or Bishop's Committee where the Transitional Deacon serves on Form Pr1 (TEC Canons III.8.7b)
 Pr2 Congregational Endorsement for Ordination to the Priesthood.
- 3. Comprehensive Evaluation by Supervisor:** The clergy for whom the Transitional Deacon is working must submit a comprehensive evaluation of the Transitional Deacon's ministry.
 Pr3 Diaconal Supervisor Evaluation
- 4. COM Interview:** The Transitional Deacon must contact the Vocations Office to schedule an interview for ordination to the Priesthood
- 5. Commission on Ministry Interview:** The Transitional Deacon will meet with the COM in order to obtain its recommendation of his or her application to the Priesthood.
 Pr4 COM Recommendation for Ordination to the Priesthood.
- 6. Scheduling the Standing Committee File Review:** The Vocations Office will notify the Standing Committee of the COM recommendation for ordination to the Priesthood and will work with the Standing Committee Liaison to the COM to schedule a file review regarding the Transitional Deacon with the Standing Committee.
- 7. Standing Committee File Review:** The Standing Committee will review the file of the Transitional Deacon to assure that all requirements for ordination to the Priesthood have been met. The Standing Committee will make a recommendation to the Bishop regarding ordination to the Priesthood.
 Pr5 Standing Committee Testimonial for ordination to the Priesthood

8. **Bishop's Decision:** After receiving the recommendation of the COM and the certification from the Standing Committee, the Bishop will decide on ordination to the Priesthood. The Vocations Office will notify the Candidate electronically in a timely manner of the decision of the Bishop and the date of ordination to the Priesthood.

_____ ***Pr6 Bishop's Decision Regarding Ordination to the Priesthood***

9. **Seeking a Placement:** Once the Bishop has granted approval for ordination, the Deacon must immediately contact the Transitions Office to begin the process of actively seeking a placement as a priest. As soon as a placement has been tentatively secured, the Deacon must inform the Bishop, in writing, of the proposed placement and copy the Vocations Office with that letter.

_____ ***Pr7 Letter to the Bishop Requesting Approval of Placement***

10. **Approval of placement:** The Bishop must approve the placement or other plan of the Candidate before ordination.

_____ ***Pr8 Bishop's Approval of Placement***

11. **Ordinands Retreat:** The Transitional Deacon must attend the Ordinands Retreat to be eligible for ordination to the Priesthood.

12. **Ordination:** The Transitional Deacon will be ordained at the next regularly scheduled Ordination following approval for ordination to the Priesthood by the Bishop.