

## **BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO THE DIACONAL FORMATION PROGRAM – DIOCESE OF CHEYENNE**

Class of 2021

1. The minimum age for a single man to be ordained to the permanent diaconate is twenty-five (25) years old, and thirty-five (35) years for married men. Maximum age to enter the Diaconal Formation Program is fifty-five (55) years (age 60 at ordination), unless the Bishop allows an exception.
2. A man cannot be prohibited by canon law from receiving Holy Orders by any perpetual or simple impediment not validly dispensed (canon 1041 & 1042); and must be suitable for the diaconate (canon 1029).
3. Five years should elapse between a convert or returning Catholic's entry into the Church and his acceptance into formation. *Care must be given to someone in whom a sudden conversion experience seems to precipitate a diaconal vocation.*
4. A man must have the support and recommendation of his pastor to enter the diaconal formation program.
5. If a man is married, the couple must be in a marriage that is considered valid by the Catholic Church. This is documented by official marriage certificate issued by the parish where the marriage occurred. If the husband or wife had a prior marriage, either a death certificate or copies of any definitive sentence(s) and any confirming decree(s), or a release to obtain said documents, issued in relation to annulment proceedings are required to substantiate that they are in a valid marriage. If the man is single, but has been married before, then either a death certificate or copies of any definitive sentence(s) and any confirming decree(s), or a release to obtain said documents, issued in relation to annulment proceedings are required to substantiate that he is free to enter into a valid marriage. *Care should be extended to those who are recently widowed or divorced.* The single applicant must have lived in a celibate state for at least five years.

6. The married applicant must demonstrate evidence of a stable marriage for a minimum of five years and have the enthusiastic support of his wife. This requirement may be substantiated through letters of recommendation by persons who have known the applicant and his for several years and via interviews conducted during the application process. His wife must be Catholic or planning to come into full communion with the Catholic Church by September, 2017.
7. The applicant should be in good health. He should have a physical examination within six months of the application date, and a report from the examining physician may be required during the application process. This report should state that the applicant is capable of sustaining the rigors of a strenuous academic formation program while maintaining his current work status.
8. Permanent deacons must be economically stable and self-sufficient. It is expected that the ministry of diaconate will be part time for most deacons, so that each must have a source of income for support of self and family, including providing for their retirement needs. Deacons are not paid for their ministry, but some expenses may be reimbursed.
9. Graduation from high school or the equivalent is required.
10. Applicants are expected to complete the necessary studies required during the five years of the aspirancy and formation period. Due to the intensity of the formation, active ministry within the parish may need to be reduced during the formation period.
11. The applicant should have a sound knowledge and understanding of the service role of the deacon, and demonstrated a track record of service in his parish and community.
12. Each applicant should exemplify a spiritual and prayer life prior to entering formation and training.

13. The willingness of the applicant to make a strong commitment of time and talent for study during the formation period should be evident. If married, the spouse's understanding and agreement to this commitment must also be evident.
  
14. The National Directory calls for an understanding of the fundamentals of Catholic teaching. Familiarity with the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, both Universal and U.S., as well as a brief overview of the Bible with awareness of appropriate resources is required.
  
15. The man and his wife (if he is married) must be cleared to minister to youth and at-risk adults within the Diocese. This involves a criminal background check and completion of the "Safe Environments Training (SET)" workshop.