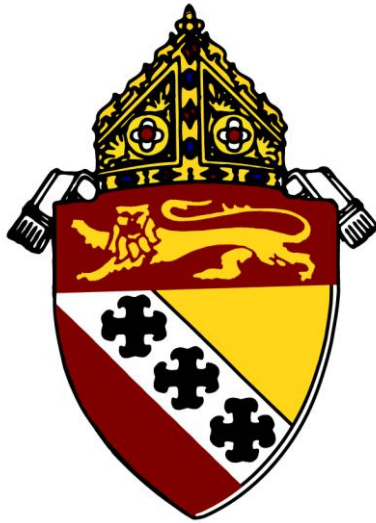


Guidelines for Seminarians



Diocese of Charleston
South Carolina

The Most Reverend Robert E. Guglielmone
Bishop of Charleston

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I. Mission Statement for Priestly Formation

1. The Diocese of Charleston is rooted in the Gospel of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and the rich traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. The intention of the Diocese is to impart that spirit to those preparing for priestly service in the Church and in particular the Church of Charleston.
2. The Diocese of Charleston endeavors to form its seminarians according to the wealth of the Church's liturgical prayer, theology, hospitality, charity and community.
3. The Diocese of Charleston is committed to address the whole person in regard to a seminarian's priestly vocation. To this resolve, a seminarian's training will include spiritual formation, personal growth and development, sound theology and pastoral preparation.

II. Purposes for Seminarian Guidelines

1. To assist prospective **candidates** in the discernment process.
2. To direct and guide **seminarians** on their journey of personal development, maturation and in their formation for priesthood.

III. Qualities of Priesthood Applicants

1. A practicing Catholic for three years with a good understanding of the Catholic faith
2. A strong commitment to prayer and the devotions of the Church
3. Faithful attendance at Mass
4. Good health
5. Ability to successfully complete required academic courses
6. A sincere desire to serve the Church and Jesus Christ
7. A sincere love of God and the Church
8. An openness and respect for the gifts of all the faithful
9. A willingness to collaborate with others for the purpose of building up the Church and the Kingdom of God
10. A willingness to be at the service of others
11. A willingness to seek out and receive spiritual direction

12. A general understanding of the Catholic priesthood
13. A commitment to the process of discerning a priestly vocation
14. A respect for and a commitment to the traditions of the Church regarding priesthood
15. A willingness to submit to the authority of the Bishop
16. Active in a parish
17. Four years chaste lifestyle before entry into seminary
18. A willingness to live a chaste and celibate life

IV. Application Procedures

Your pastor's role is important in this process.

1. Schedule an appointment with your pastor.
2. Schedule an interview with the Vicar for Vocations.
3. Submit a completed application packet to the Office of Vocations.

The application requires the following information:

- ~ Personal Background
- ~ Family Background
- ~ Religious Background
- ~ Educational Background
- ~ Employment History
- ~ Health Information
- ~ Personal Resume
- ~ Canonical Documents
- ~ Letters of Recommendations, including a letter from the applicant's pastor
- ~ Essay on "What the Priesthood Means to Me"
- ~ A letter from the applicant's parents / guardians offering their permission and support in pursuing his vocation to the priesthood. (required only if the applicant is under the age of 21 years)

Application packet includes the Diocese of Charleston Application, Physical Examination Form, Confidential Release Form and Guidelines for Seminarians Booklet.

In addition, the application process also requires the following:

- ~ Physical Examination
 - ~ Psychological Evaluation
 - ~ Criminal Background Check
 - ~ On-going interviews with the Vicar for Vocations
 - ~ Interview with the members of the Screening Committee and the Bishop
4. Following the above mentioned procedures, the Bishop will inform the Vicar for Vocations of his decision who will inform the candidate.

V. The Goal of Priestly Formation

The goal of priestly formation is to offer seminarians the opportunity to pursue a comprehensive theological education and program of priestly formation at the seminary. Each seminary grounds itself in *The Program of Priestly Formation* (the the United States Bishop's guidelines for seminary formation), and offers the Master of Divinity and Master of Arts degrees.

VI. The Objectives of Priestly Formation

1. To facilitate, enrich and direct the seminarian's priestly vocation
2. To encourage the seminarian to pursue personal awareness and discovery of himself through continued spiritual growth, development and reflection
3. To give the seminarian, through seminary training, the necessary academic, pastoral, and professional foundations for effective ministry in the Church
4. To assist the seminarian in getting to know the clergy, the people of God and the Churches in the Diocese; to this end he will be given the opportunity to work in a parish during each summer (subject to availability.) Assignments are made for those in pre-theology and theology studies. College seminarians are not normally given a summer assignment
5. To provide a forum in which the seminarian will have the opportunity to get to know fellow seminarians and the Diocesan clergy. Seminarians are offered the opportunities to serve for Masses and Diocesan events; additional opportunities may be offered during the seminarian's vacations

VII. Formation

A. Overview

1. A seminarian's program for priestly formation is designed to facilitate, enrich, strengthen and direct the seminarian's development of his priestly vocation.
2. The seminary supports the seminarian through his journey in an attempt to enable the man to come to a greater awareness of himself.
3. The formation program strives to bring the seminarian to a clear understanding of his vocational commitment and supports the seminarian in his resolve.
4. All formation is from the *Program of Priestly Formation, Presbyterorum Ordinis* and *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.

B. Personal Formation

The formation program will enable seminarians to:

1. Work toward a higher level of spiritual, emotional and psychological maturity;
2. Grow in the discovery of the reality of one's self through an appreciation of personal strengths and weaknesses;
3. Accept constructive criticism as a means of coming to a fuller knowledge of one's self;
4. Acquire a calm, healthy and balanced life;
5. Keep an open mind and heart with regard to attitudes, ideas and perceptions of others.

C. Spiritual Formation

1. Spiritual formation is an ongoing process. A solid grounding begins in the formative years as one prepares for priestly service. Each seminarian should work toward acquiring a solid spiritual life.
2. The seminarian should make every effort to put faith in Christ and His Gospel at the center of his life.
3. The seminarian is expected to enter fully into the spiritual formation program at the seminary.

4. It is the responsibility of each seminarian to grow in his own personal holiness. Thus a seminarian should strive to:
 - a) attend daily Mass and receive the Eucharist, which is the source of spiritual strength;
 - b) avail himself to the Sacrament of Penance, which is the source of personal healing and forgiveness;
 - c) regularly attend spiritual direction;
 - d) develop a love, understanding, appreciation and devotion for Sacred Scripture;
 - e) pray, most especially The Liturgy of the Hours;
 - f) spend time in spiritual reading;
 - g) pray and share his spiritual life with others;
 - h) nurture a devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.
5. Through this effort the seminarian should come to know the inherent goodness of God and creation and be a model of this goodness to those whom his life touches.
6. As the seminarian grows in his faith life, he must always identify himself with Jesus in whom there is the fullness of life. In this way the seminarian fulfills his priestly ministry in the Christian manner in which Jesus served.

D. Academic Formation

1. The seminarian will follow the prescribed course of study at the seminary to which he is assigned both at college and theology levels. His efforts will lead toward receiving an academic degree.
2. A pre-theology program has been created by seminaries for seminarians who have an undergraduate degree (B.A. or B.S.) but do not have the philosophical and religious background required by the *Program of Priestly Formation* for entrance into a school of theology.
3. The Master of Divinity program prepares the seminarian with sufficient academic background for parish ministry. This is a professional degree. The areas of study are: pastoral studies, history, scripture and theology.

4. The Master of Arts program prepares the seminarian to receive an academic degree in theology. This program is designed to give the seminarian the foundation for concrete and abstract processing as well as advanced study in the area of theology. With the consultation of the Bishop and Vicar for Vocations, the seminarian may pursue this degree along with the Master of Divinity degree.
5. A solid academic formation program is essential to pastoral ministry. The studies which the seminarian will undertake cannot be divorced from his spiritual formation – they are complementary to one another, thus forming the whole person.
6. A seminarian studying for the Diocese of Charleston will be required to study Spanish and Hispanic culture. This will include course work at the seminary and may include a summer immersion experience.

E. Pastoral Formation

1. Pastoral formation is essential to a seminarian's development. If he is to involve himself in effective pastoral care of those entrusted to him, he must be well grounded in the skills of pastoral ministry.
2. In the seminary, the seminarian will have a variety of parish and institutional assignments in which his pastoral skills will develop. While in training, the seminarian will work closely with a supervisor in the ministry assignment so as to gain greater competency in his ministerial skills.
3. During the summer months, the seminarian will have the opportunity to work in a parish in the Diocese of Charleston (subject to availability.) This pastoral ministry summer program will assist the seminarian in continuing to develop his skills in pastoral ministry. The seminarian and the pastor he is assigned to will work together in a combined effort toward the seminarian's growth and formation for the ministerial priesthood.
4. Some seminaries require participation in a summer Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) program at a hospital, or other CPE accredited institution. This normally takes place after the second year of theology studies.
5. The summer after a seminarian's second year is usually dedicated to Spanish language and cultural studies. This is a 10 week immersion course in a Spanish speaking country, decided upon by the Bishop of Charleston and the Vicar for Vocations.

VIII. Celibacy

Celibacy is a requirement of seminarians, deacons, and priests. Celibacy is a lifestyle in which those responding to the call from God live as Jesus lived. Refer to Qualities of Priesthood Applicants – Section III, page 1.

IX. Obedience

A seminarian is expected to adopt an attitude of obedience to his seminary rector and the Bishop of Charleston. In this way he will be prepared to make a commitment to obedience at his ordination.

X. Prayer

The spirituality of the seminarian will deepen as he lives out his commitment to daily prayer. Prayer is the essential foundation upon which a vocation is built and sustained. The seminarian's prayer will be centered in the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours.

XI. Clerical Attire

The seminarian will follow the directives of his respective seminary in regard to clerical attire while on campus at his school.

While functioning pastorally, the seminarian will dress appropriately, keeping in mind that he is a professional representing the Church. Seminarians in major seminary may wear clerical attire with permission from the pastor of the parish to which they are assigned. The proper attire at Diocesan events for seminarians (unless ordained a deacon) is a black jacket and slacks, white shirt and black tie (unless otherwise indicated).

Clerical attire for a deacon is a black suit, a black clerical shirt and collar.

While serving in liturgical celebrations, the seminarian will wear a cassock and surplice. Deacons wear an alb, stole and dalmatic. The cassock may not be worn by the non-ordained apart from liturgical celebrations (e.g. outside of Mass).

XII. Seminary Programs

A. College

A candidate who has been accepted by the Diocese, but has not yet completed an undergraduate course of studies, will be sent to a college seminary to study for a Bachelor's Degree and to fulfill the requirements to enter a school of theology.

B. Pre-Theology

A candidate who has a college degree but is lacking 32 hours in philosophy and 12 hours in theology will participate in a two year pre-theology program to fulfill the requirements to enter a school of theology.

C. Theology

A candidate who has satisfied the requirements for entering a school of theology will pursue a course of studies that leads to a graduate level degree: Master of Divinity or Master of Arts. If the candidate studies at a Pontifical University, he will obtain the Bachelor of Sacred Theology, and may have the opportunity for continuing studies to obtain a Licentiate in an advanced field.

XIII. Financial Policy

During the application process, the candidate will be asked to complete a financial disclosure statement, listing all assets, debts and plan for repaying those debts. Copies of income tax records for two years must accompany the form. The Diocese does not make personal loans.

Financial benefits provided to seminarians.

A. Tuition (including Room and Board)

Tuition is paid in full by the Diocese for Pre-Theology and Theology seminarians. If the seminarian withdraws, or is asked to leave **BEFORE** ordination, **then the monies paid by the Diocese shall become the responsibility of the seminarian.** He is **asked** to repay the amount within three years of departure. College students are asked to take a student loan. Once ordained a priest, the Diocese will pay 50% of all student loans up to \$40,000. The Diocese does not assume student loans for studies prior to acceptance as a seminarian.

B. Textbook Allowance

Seminarians will receive a **MAXIMUM** of \$500.00 per academic **year** (2 semesters) for textbooks. Charges over \$500.00 will be paid by the seminarian. There will be no money refunded to the seminarian if the book cost is less than \$500.00. Original personal receipts (credit card, cancelled checks, ...) or campus bookstore invoices must be submitted to the Office of Vocations within **ONE MONTH** of purchase. Receipts submitted after one month will not be honored.

C. Travel Allowance

Seminarians will receive a **MAXIMUM of \$600.00** per academic year (\$300.00/semester) for travel reimbursement. This is normally used for Christmas and Easter travel. **ORIGINAL RECEIPTS MUST** be submitted for reimbursement. If mileage is being submitted for reimbursement, the rate per mile is in accord with the current Diocesan policy, and is calculated as mileage from the seminary to the seminarian's home address, or host parish. Itemized amounts with dates and original receipts must be submitted within **ONE MONTH** of purchase. Reimbursement for travel above the allotted amount per semester **MUST BE REQUESTED IN ADVANCE** from the Vicar for Vocations. Failure to do so in advance means failure to be reimbursed. Requests will be considered dependent on need or emergency.

Foreign born seminarians and those studying in Rome receive **ONE** round trip international airline flight (up to \$1,200.00) per academic year.

CONDOLENCE TRAVEL is to be paid by the seminarian or his family.

D. Stipend

U.S. college and theology seminarians will receive a monthly stipend of \$150.00 from September through May. U.S. Transitional Deacons will receive \$250.00 monthly from September through May. Seminarians studying in Rome will receive \$300.00 (Euros) monthly from October through June.

E. Summer Stipend

Normally, seminarians in First Theology and above have the opportunity for a summer 10 week assignment (subject to availability.) A stipend is paid by the parish in the amount of \$150.00/week. Room and board is provided by the parish. Gas reimbursement is paid by the parish per agreement with the pastor. A car is **not** provided.

F. Medical Insurance

All seminarians must be insurable. Seminarians may be covered by the American College Student Association. This coverage will be paid by the Diocese. A deductible of \$100.00 is paid by the seminarian. For those covered under their parents, the coverage shall be paid by the parents. (Check with the Office of Vocations before cancelling this coverage.) Payment of pre-existing coverage will be decided by the Vicar for Vocations in consultation with the Diocesan Office of Finance.

G. Psychological Counseling

Seminarians requesting psychological counseling will be referred to the Diocesan psychologist. This expense will be paid by the Diocese. Other choices are to be discussed with the Vicar for Vocations prior to scheduling an appointment. Failure to do so will place the responsibility of debt on the seminarian.

Counseling during the academic year is to be discussed with the Vicar for Vocations and the appropriate seminary staff.

H. Summer Foreign Language Studies

This is paid by the Diocese. Travel, room, board and summer stipend is included. Appointments are made by the Vicar for Vocations.

Financial Benefits NOT provided:

A. Dental Insurance

Personal dental insurance and dental bills are to be paid by the seminarian. Emergencies are to be discussed with the Vicar for Vocations.

B. Automobile and Automobile Allowance

These are not provided by the Diocese.

C. Automobile Insurance

This is not provided by the Diocese.

D. Clerical Attire and Liturgical Garments

These are not provided by the Diocese.

E. Retreats

Private retreats are paid by the seminarian.

XIV. Additional Benefits

A. Diocesan Directory

Each seminarian receives a copy yearly.

B. The Caritas

This is a monthly news publication that is offered through the Diocesan website. You will be responsible for checking the website (www.catholic-doc.org) for information provided in the Caritas. Caritas will be uploaded on the 15th of each month. Your login is *Deacon*.

C. The Catholic Miscellany

The weekly Diocesan newspaper will be sent to each seminarian during the school year.

D. Bishop's Christmas Mass and Luncheon

This is an opportunity to gather with fellow seminarians. It is held at the Cathedral. The date is announced in September. Attendance is recommended, but optional. You must RSVP by December 1st to the Office of Vocations or the Vicar for Vocations.

E. Opportunity to Serve for Masses and Diocesan Events

These dates are published in September. Seminarians are offered the opportunity to serve. Presence at these events is recommended and expected, especially at Masses of Ordination and Chrism. Excused absences are requested from the Vicar for Vocations. Assistance with housing (e.g. a rectory) may be requested through the Office of Vocations.

XV. Personal Health Care

Good health care is important to the development of the whole person. Therefore, each seminarian is to take proper care of his body, personal appearance, hygiene, nutrition, diet and weight. The seminarian is to inform the Vicar for Vocations of any serious illness, admission to the hospital or permanent use of medication. Documentation may be required.

XVI. Reception of Ministries of Reader and Acolyte

Seminarians must petition the Bishop in writing in order to receive the ministries of reader and acolyte. The seminarian will receive these ministries in his seminary at the time the school decides. All petitions must be sent to the Bishop with a recommendation from the rector and seminary formation board.

XVII. Conferral of Candidacy

Seminarians must petition the Bishop, in writing, in order to receive candidacy. The petition must be sent to the Bishop with a recommendation from the rector and seminary formation board.

Seminarians studying in Rome receive candidacy in the Diocese of Charleston. All other seminarians traditionally receive candidacy in their respective seminaries, unless otherwise specified.

XVIII. Diaconate and Priesthood Ordinations

Following completion of all necessary academic studies and pastoral formation requirements, a seminarian may petition the Bishop, in writing, for ordination to the transitional diaconate and ordination to the priesthood. Each of the petitions must be sent to the Bishop along with a letter from the rector of the seminary and seminary formation board. A seminarian is not guaranteed ordination. To be ordained, a seminarian must be called by the Bishop to the orders of diaconate and presbyter. The Bishop will decide the time and place of both ordinations.

XIX. Leave of Absence

A leave of absence is a period of time that the seminarian may take away from seminary formation to review his call to the priesthood. This may be decided as a possibility during the seminarian's formation by himself or the Diocese. The Bishop of Charleston may request that a seminarian take a leave of absence to review his call and readiness for priesthood. During this time away from the seminary and the Diocese, frequent, honest, and open communications are a must for all persons involved in the seminarian's formation. Prior to the leave of absence, the seminarian is to consult with his spiritual director and seminary rector. Then he is to make contact with the Vicar for Vocations, who will inform the Bishop. A student must request a leave of absence in writing to the Bishop and send a copy to the Vicar for Vocations for the student's file. The request can be approved only by the Bishop. It should be for a specified length of time. To extend the leave of absence beyond the specified length of time requires written permission by the Bishop.

XX. Disaffiliation

Should a seminarian decide not to continue his preparation for the priesthood, he is to:

1. explain his intentions to the Bishop and the Vicar for Vocations;
2. state his decision formally in writing to the Bishop and send a copy to the Vicar for Vocations for the seminarian's file.

After these two procedures have been completed, the Vicar for Vocations will inform the seminarian's seminary of the decision. The Bishop, while meeting with the seminarian, will speak about the use of any ministries he may have received. The Diocese may also suggest that a seminarian not continue his preparation for the priesthood.

XXI. Seminarian Directory

The Seminarian Directory will be published each year. The directory is a valuable tool to help the seminarian know who is studying for the Diocese. Also included are addresses so that seminarians may make contact with one another. The Seminarian Directory is included in the Diocesan Directory and is sometimes made available to Parish Vocations Committees.

XXII. History of the Diocese of Charleston

A. Birth of the Church of Charleston

Prior to the establishment of the Diocese of Charleston and the arrival of Bishop England, the Catholic Church in the Carolinas and Georgia was under the jurisdiction of Archbishop John Carroll of the Archdiocese of Baltimore. Because it was difficult to administer the territory from such a distance, Archbishop Carroll petitioned the Holy See to erect a separate Diocese for the area.

The Diocese of Charleston was established by Pope Pius VII on July 11, 1820. Its first bishop was Bishop John England, who was born in Cork, Ireland. At the time of his appointment to the Diocese of Charleston, he was parish priest at Brandon, a town about sixteen miles from Cork. He was consecrated bishop in St. Finbar's Cathedral in Cork on September 21, 1820, and arrived in Charleston on December 30, 1820.

When Bishop England came to Charleston, James Monroe was President of the United States, Thomas Bennett was Governor of South Carolina and Elias Horrey was Mayor of the City of Charleston. The new Diocese of 142,000 square miles was spread over three states – North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. There were two churches – one in Charleston and one in Augusta – and only six priests were available to serve the handful of scattered Catholics.

B. Birth of the Faith

It is believed that Masses were celebrated in the area near Parris Island in Beaufort County by Spanish priests, perhaps as early as 1526, but no records exist to verify this. We are told by a genealogist that Catholics came into various sections of South Carolina before 1750. There is an undocumented tradition that in the Upstate there was a French priest who once a year made a trip on horseback from Canada to New Orleans in the fall and returned in the spring. He would stop along the way to say Mass in the Catholic homes.

Bishop England writes that “sometime around the year 1786, a vessel bound to South America put into port of Charleston. There was a priest on board; as well as can be recollected, he was an Italian. The few Catholics in the city, who now began to be acquainted with each other...invited him to celebrate Mass, which he did in the house of an Irish Catholic, for a congregation of about twelve persons.” This might be marked as the introduction of the Catholic religion to the present Diocese of Charleston.

C. St. Mary's Church

St. Mary's Church on Hasell Street in Charleston was the first Catholic Church in the Carolinas and Georgia, an area now comprising five Dioceses. It was permanently established on August 24, 1789, by the Reverend Thomas Keating. It was incorporated by an act of legislature of South Carolina in 1791. The Church was well established when the Diocese was created by a Papal Brief of July 12, 1820 and when the first Bishop of Charleston, The Rt. Reverend John England, D.D., arrived on December 30, 1820.

D. The Diocese Today

Four other Dioceses have since been made from the original territory included in the Diocese of Charleston. The Diocese of Savannah was carved in 1850, and in 1956 that Diocese was split into two parts with the creation of the Diocese of Atlanta. North Carolina was made into a Vicariate Apostolic in 1868 and some fifty-six years later became the Diocese of Raleigh. In 1972 the Diocese of Raleigh was divided into two by the creation of the Diocese of Charlotte. In 1858 the Diocese of Charleston assumed jurisdiction over The Bahamas, but this was relinquished in 1885.

Today, the Diocese of Charleston comprises the entire state of South Carolina with Charleston as the See City. Its present Bishop is the Most Reverend Robert E. Guglielmono, who is the thirteenth bishop to preside over the Diocese. He was appointed by Pope Benedict XVI on January 24, 2009, and was ordained and installed on March 25, 2009.

From its beginnings in 1820 until the present, the Diocese has developed slowly but surely under the devoted leadership of its bishops: John England (1820-1842); Ignatius A. Reynolds (1844-1855); Patrick N. Lynch (1858-1882); Henry P. Northrop (1883-1916); William T. Russell (1917-1927); Emmet M. Walsh (1927-1949); John J. Russell (1950-1958); Paul J. Hallinan (1958-1962); Francis F. Reh (1962-1964); Ernest L. Unterkoefer (1964-1990); David B. Thompson (1990-1999); Robert J. Baker (1999-2007); and Robert E. Guglielmono, its present Bishop.

The Diocese of Charleston numbers approximately 157,450 Catholics, 93 Diocesan priests (53 active in the Diocese; 3 active outside Diocese; 1 in foreign missions), 44 religious order priests, 55 permanent deacons, 26 religious brothers, 134 religious sisters, 91 parishes, 25 missions and 1 pastoral center (statistics up to date as of February, 2006).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE

I have received and read the Guidelines for Seminarians.

Signature

Print Name

Date

Return this page to:

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