



## Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland, Maine

### Qualifications for Deacon Candidates

1. Given the role of the deacon both in liturgical and catechetical settings, as well as in the community, preference will be given to those persons who have a college education, are capable of graduate-level studies, and are able to undertake part-time ministry.
2. A candidate must be a baptized and confirmed Catholic male between the ages of 30 and 55 at the time of his admission into the formation program. Minimum age for ordination is 35.
3. A candidate's status may be that of a single or married person:
  - If single, he must have a stable, settled life with a history of healthy, chaste relationships and he should understand the implications of the charism of celibacy. In addition, he must be able to give time for study and service without detriment to those who may be entrusted to his care.
  - If married, he must be married for a period of at **least 5 years** in the Catholic Church and living in a valid, stable, and chaste relationship. He must also espouse a healthy family life. Since marriage is his primary vocation, a candidate must have the expressed consent and support of his wife, who will participate actively in the formation program. In addition, he must be able to give time for study and service without detriment to the care required of young children in the family. Lastly, a candidate must understand that if widowed, he cannot marry again and therefore remain celibate.
4. A candidate must be in good health with no debilitating conditions and be a person of proven maturity and balance. He must also be recognized among his peers as a person having a genuine desire to serve the needs of others. Likewise, a candidate must be generous with his time and energy, as well as flexible to meet the needs of others.
5. A candidate must be a person of faith, who professes what the Church teaches and participates fully in the Church's sacramental life. He must also be a prayerful person who is willing to make personal sacrifices to be a sacramental sign of Christ's self-giving love. Further, a candidate must manifest Gospel values in his lifestyle, being a man of integrity in family life, in business and work, and in all his relationships with others.
6. A candidate must be parish oriented. Therefore, he should have a history of service-oriented involvement in a parish and have demonstrated the ability to work collaboratively with the pastor and other parish leaders. Similarly, a candidate must have the demeanor to work with others, including women, whether one-on-one, collaboratively, and in team settings. In the case of a convert, he must have practiced his Catholic faith for at **least 5 years** prior to applying.
7. A candidate must be capable of learning how to preside at public prayer, in addition to being capable of public speaking.
8. A candidate must be willing to make a life-long commitment to serve the Church and to promise obedience to the Bishop.

Inquiries are to be made to: Deacon Peter J. Bernier, Director of the Diaconate, who may be reached by email ([peter.bernier@portlanddiocese.org](mailto:peter.bernier@portlanddiocese.org)) or by phone: 207-773-6471 ext.7845.