



Deacon Formation Overview and Timeline

Formation is a five-year program

NOTE: Applications for the next class will open in October/November 2026 with the next class beginning in Fall 2027.

Diaconal Formation is a process of spiritual, human, intellectual and pastoral growth spanning a period of five years. Below are the primary areas of growth.

Spiritual – Fostering the spirituality appropriate to a deacon. Emphasis is placed on conforming the man into the image of Christ the Servant through growth in personal and liturgical prayer. Personal private prayer in the form of a Holy Hour, Eucharistic Adoration, contemplation, Lectio Divina, and the rosary are complemented by liturgical prayer through daily participation in Mass, reception of Holy Communion and the Liturgy of the Hours.

Human – Fostering aspects of integral human growth that enable the potential deacon to be a bridge between Christ and the world. Emphasis is placed on helping the man to recognize his personal strengths and gifts, which should be nurtured and enhanced while also helping him become aware of his own limitations and weaknesses so that he may learn to overcome and transform them. Focus is placed on strengthening the married candidate's marriage and **fully involving his wife in formation**. Unmarried candidates are encouraged to develop a healthy and integral lifestyle of intentional celibacy.

Intellectual – Fostering the intellectual growth necessary to enable him to represent the church as an ordained minister of the Gospel. A full range of formal instruction is given in philosophy, systematic and pastoral theology, Scripture, church history, sacraments and liturgy, homiletics and canon law.

Pastoral – Fostering the ability to function competently as a minister in diocesan and parish pastoral settings. The candidate receives instruction about ministry to the poor, the sick, the homeless, and the incarcerated. The candidate also receives instruction in parish ministry including catechesis, baptism and marriage preparation and service at the altar. Particular emphasis is placed on the role of the deacon at Mass, leading communion services and officiating baptisms, marriages and funeral rites.



Formation Timeline

The Diocese of Pueblo will begin diaconal formation classes every five (5) years with each class comprising 5 years of formation.

The current class will be ordained in August 2027. Applications for the next class will be accepted November 2026-January 2027 and the next class will begin in Fall 2027

Below is the basic timeline:

Inquiry/Application Period - A period in which the potential deacon investigates the call to ministry. During this period, Inquiry/Information sessions for potential candidates and their wives will be held to give information to interested men and their wives about the requirements, the plan of formation, the life of a deacon, discerning the call, and provide resources for further reading and understanding. This is also the period in which selected aspirants **and their wives** will undergo psychological testing and a couple's assessment. This information will be reviewed by the Formator Board and Deacon Formation Advisory Committee to determine if admission to the program is appropriate.

Aspirancy - Following formal admission by the bishop, the first two years of formation are called the Aspirancy Period (also called in Vatican documents the Propaedeutic Period). During Aspirancy the focus of the formation classes and exercises is on introducing the aspirants to the nature of the diaconate and beginning the process of spiritual and human formation through prayer, spiritual direction and reflection on the individual's gifts and personality traits. Some formal academic training is also presented during the Aspirancy years.

Candidacy - At the end of the second year of Aspirancy, each aspirant makes a formal request to the bishop to become a candidate for diaconal formation. With the recommendation of the formation staff and the Formator Board, the bishop formally accepts the aspirant as a candidate for the diaconate. The Candidacy period comprises approximately 3 years of rigorous academic, spiritual and pastoral formation for the candidates. After the first year of Candidacy, the candidates are formally instituted by the bishop as lectors. After the second year of Candidacy, the candidates are formally instituted by the bishop as acolytes. Candidacy continues for a third-year culminating in a review by the bishop and preparation for ordination. The Candidates will formally petition the bishop in writing for ordination.

Ordination - Shortly after the completion of the fifth year of formation (the third year of Candidacy) the candidates are ordained by the bishop.