



ARCHDIOCESE
OF PORTLAND
IN OREGON

The “Permanent” Diaconate (Who *are* these guys?)

Deacon Brian Diehm

Director, Office of the Diaconate



The Boilerplate Description

- First of three degrees of ordination:
deacon, priest, bishop
 - Hence, deacons are clergy, not laity
 - Participate in the apostolic succession to their appropriate degree
- Have faculties to perform some sacraments:
 - Baptism
 - Matrimony
 - Funerals (though that's not a sacrament)



History

- Acts 6:1-6: Distribution to Hellenist widows
- ~130 AD: Ignatius of Antioch:
diakonos, presbyteros, episcopos
- Into the middle ages:
“deacons as eyes and ears of the bishop”
- By the Council of Trent (1545-63), diaconate simply “a step” to priestly ordination
- Second Vatican Council:
Order revived as a permanent charism



One Order of Deacon

- No difference between (transitional) deacon preparing for the priesthood and (permanent) deacon “out in the field”
- *Only* difference is in the ordination rite: permanent deacon takes no vow of celibacy
- ***All*** deacons report to the Bishop, ***all*** are ordained for the entire diocese



Layered Charisms

- All bishops are first priests
- All priests are first deacons
- Priests continue their diaconal charism into their priesthood
- Bishops continue their diaconal and priestly charisms into their episcopacy



THE Diaconal Charism

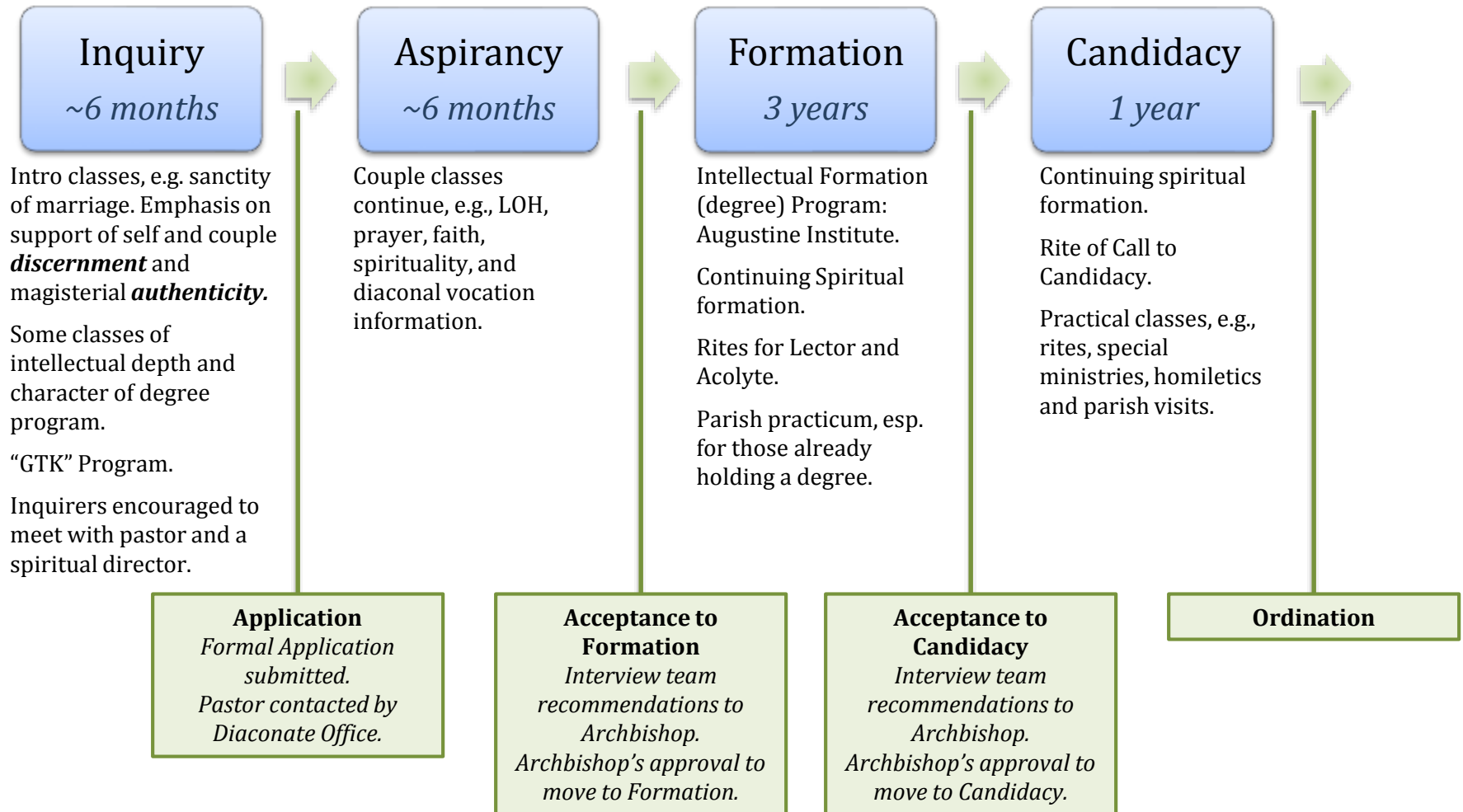
Service!

Three primary forms:

- Church's Ministry of the **Word**:
Deacon as Evangelizer and Teacher
- Church's Ministry of **Liturgy**:
Deacon as Sanctifier
- Church's Ministry of **Charity and Justice**:
Deacon as Witness and Guide



The Formation Process





Discernment

- The man (and wife!) discern a call to orders
- The Church discerns the man's (couple's) call as well
- Discernment encompasses the entire person, but concentrates in four dimensions:
 - Human
 - Spiritual
 - Intellectual
 - Pastoral



When it Works Well

- When the deacon understands that the charism of deacon is in ***Service***
- When the deacon remembers his diaconate is anchored in ***who he is called to be***, not in what he does
- When the deacon honors the charism of ***sacrifice*** unique to the priest
- When the deacon understands the charism of the deacon as anchored in, but larger than, the Parish
- When the deacon remembers that his work in service is what makes legitimate his service at the altar
- When the priest remembers that he is ***first*** a Deacon
- When both deacon and priest understand that in serving the bishop, they together serve all the Church and all the World



Contact Information

Deacon Brian Diehm

- Pastoral Center
2838 E Burnside St
Portland OR 97214
- 503 233-8337
- bdiehm@archdpdx.org