# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Section I: Introduction**

- Mission Statement ........................................ 4
- History .................................................. 5
- Welcome from the Rector ................................. 7

**Section II. Fulfilling the Mission** .............................. 8

**Section III. Admission** ........................................ 9

**Section IV: Areas of Formation for the Priesthood** .......... 11

I. Human Formation ............................................. 15
- Preparation for Celibacy .................................. 15
- Preparation for Simplicity of Life ....................... 16
- Preparation for Obedience ............................... 16
- Counseling Services ...................................... 17
- Norms and Policies ....................................... 17

II. Spiritual Formation .......................................... 18
- Public Prayer of the Church .............................. 19
- Personal Prayer and Devotions ......................... 19
- Lifestyle Conducive to Spiritual Growth and Ministry 20
- Spiritual Direction ....................................... 20
- Liturgical Formation ..................................... 21
- Norms and Policies ....................................... 22

III. Intellectual Formation .................................... 24
- College .................................................. 24
- Pre-Theology ............................................ 25
- Graduate Theology ...................................... 25
- Language Studies ........................................ 25
- Learning Goals .......................................... 26
- Academic Dishonesty or Plagiarism ..................... 26
- Internet Research ........................................ 26
- Grades and Transcripts .................................. 26
- Academic Probation ...................................... 27
- Student Visas ............................................ 27
- Norms and Policies ....................................... 27
## IV. Pastoral Formation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning Spanish for Pastoral Ministry</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking U.S. American English</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understanding Culture</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norms and Policies</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Evaluating Seminarians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Criteria for Evaluation</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Human Formation</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Spiritual Formation</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Intellectual Formation</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. Pastoral Formation</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Seminary Evaluation Report</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F. Petitions, Profession and Oath</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assumption Seminary

Mission

Assumption Seminary is a bilingual and multicultural community of priestly formation. This seminary exists for the personal, spiritual, theological and ministerial preparation of diocesan seminarians for the Roman Catholic Church.

Assumption Seminary’s goal is to enable Christ-centered men to grow and develop as collaborative and culturally sensitive pastoral leaders committed to the Gospel.

“Go out to the whole world; proclaim the Good News to all creation.”

Mark 16:15

Vision

Forming outstanding priests as servant leaders in the image of Christ the Good Shepherd for an evangelizing Church.
History

“As a bishop I am constantly reminded of the words of the gospel, ‘the harvest is great but the laborers are few.’ Our beloved Assumption Seminary continues to stand as the promise of a bright future for our Archdiocese and the many other dioceses touched by her mission to form priests and leaders for today’s Church. This was certainly in the heart of Bishop John Shaw, the fourth Bishop of San Antonio, who on October 2, 1915 dedicated St. John’s Seminary on Dwyer Street in San Antonio just a few blocks from San Fernando Cathedral. From that small contingent of faculty and seminarians, over the course of 100 years, St. John’s / Assumption Seminary has prepared over 800 Christ-centered men for service to the Church and to God’s people. Its mission has continued…”

Archbishop Gustavo Garcia Siller, M.Sp.S.

From the forward by Archbishop Gustavo Garcia Siller, MSpS. Shepherds in the Image of Christ: the centennial history of St. John’s / Assumption Seminary by Mary Diane Langford: Bloomington, IN, iUniverse. 2014, xi.

A couple of years after founding St. John’s Seminary on Dwyer Street it moved to the site of the Garden Academy in Highland Park under Archbishop Arthur J. Drossaerts, San Antonio’s fifth Catholic Bishop. Then in 1920 the Archdiocese constructed a more permanent and impressive home between Mitchell and Felisa Streets next to Mission Concepción. In the ensuing years as St. John’s Seminary grew, hundreds of young men came and received a Catholic seminary education. Many were eventually trained for priestly ministry. After World War II, Archbishop Robert E. Lucey, the Archdiocese’s sixth leader, recognized that more and more dioceses were sending their seminarians to San Antonio, and the buildings at St. John’s became inadequate for the senior level students. The Presbyterian-affiliated school, Trinity University of San Antonio, was located on a property at Woodlawn Avenue. Trinity had merged with Westmoreland College, the two year women’s Methodist school which was the previous owner of the Woodlawn site. With plans to relocate to a large location in north San Antonio, Trinity sold the old campus to the Archdiocese. Assumption Seminary on Woodlawn opened in September of 1952. In the late 1960’s changing dynamics in preparatory and college seminaries across the country and declining enrollment affected St. John’s Seminary causing it to be closed by Archbishop Francis J. Furey. Under Archbishop Patrick F. Flores, Archbishop Jose H. Gomez and Archbishop Gustavo Garcia Siller, M.Sp.S., Assumption Seminary maintained and developed the seminary on Woodlawn while pioneering pastoral programs, increasing training for Hispanic ministry and serving seminarians from this Archdiocese and many dioceses in Texas and United States. Today, Assumption Seminary has a partnership with Oblate School of Theology, the Mexican American Catholic College and the University of Incarnate Word to provide the most in education for its seminarians, especially with ministerial skills for a multicultural environment.

St. John’s / Assumption Seminary is grateful for the years of support from the faithful people of San Antonio, various religious communities and the encouragement from participating
dioceses. It owes much thanks to the century of service contributed by the Missionary Sisters of St. Joseph, the Hermanas Josefinas. Fleeing religious persecution in Mexico, the Josefinas came to San Antonio and immediately became a part of Bishop Shaw’s vision for developing a seminary. Through example, prayer and labor the Josefinas participated in the seminary mission for 100 years. From 1941 to 1967, the Vincentian Fathers operated St. John’s / Assumption Seminary providing leadership and instruction to the future priests using their expertise in seminary work since their founding as a congregation in 1625. Since 1967, Assumption Seminary benefited from the rich input of a variety of priests, religious and lay persons in order to form its men for today’s ministry. Among them, the Sulpician Fathers, another society with expertise in priestly formation since their founding in the 17th century and their establishment of the first U.S. Seminary in Baltimore in 1791. In 1987, the first and only pope to visit Texas, St. John Paul II came to San Antonio conducting one of his audiences on the site of the seminary. The history, development and collaboration that produced the story of St. John’s / Assumption Seminary are the grace which the Archdiocese of San Antonio uses to move forward into a new century of mission.
Welcome from the Rector

Welcome to Assumption Seminary. You have generously responded to the call to consider a vocation to the priesthood and have begun a process of discernment with your vocation director which will now continue at Assumption. The role of Assumption Seminary’s faculty and staff is to assist you in recognizing both the authenticity of your call and the reality of your particular gifts for priestly service. The process of personal and spiritual growth for priestly ministry is the primary goal of the seminary, but it requires your generous cooperation. You are a “necessary and irreplaceable agent” of your formation.¹

As you begin this year, I ask you to be as open as possible to the process of priestly formation. The seminary community, gathered for helping men to prepare for the priesthood, reflects a unity of faith and love as each member opens himself to the grace of the Holy Spirit. In this communal setting, you will deepen your awareness of the ideals of the priesthood (as well as the inevitable challenges) through prayer, theological learning, pastoral experiences, the celebration of the sacraments, reflection upon God’s word, and interaction with your fellow seminarians as well as with lay ministers. You will be asked to meet on a regular basis with a spiritual director and formation advisor, who will guide you in this process.

I encourage you to read this handbook carefully and bring any questions or concerns to the formation advisor assigned to you. You have many brothers here who will be able to assist you, too. May God bless us during this sacred time together as you follow the Lord.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,

Very Rev. Jeff Pehl
Rector

---

Section II: Fulfilling the Mission

The gospel of Jesus Christ demands, and the people of God deserve, men who are well prepared for the priesthood. Moreover, the gifts which God has given to each and every human being are meant to be brought to fullness and fruition.

Assumption Seminary’s responsibility is to assist the seminarian in recognizing both the authenticity of his call and the reality of his particular gifts for priestly service. The process of personal, spiritual, and professional growth for priestly ministry is the primary goal of Assumption Seminary.

Formation at Assumption Seminary is based on the integration of a seminarian’s ongoing human, spiritual and intellectual growth, and the development of pastoral skills. Furthermore, overall growth and integration at Assumption also includes development of multicultural awareness and linguistic skills. These dimensions are fostered through life together as a priestly formation community, prayer, liturgical celebration and spiritual direction, as well as studies and involvement in an apostolate.

Human formation is fostered through each seminarian’s ongoing, open dialogue with a formation advisor and spiritual director. Progress in growth and integration requires cooperation with God’s grace, openness to personal growth and discovery, and a commitment on the part of the individual seminarian to learning. A spirit of cooperation and collaboration will assist the seminarian in putting into practice what he has learned through experience and reflection.

The formation faculty as a whole, and the seminarian’s formation advisor and spiritual director, stand ready to assist him in that process of reflection and learning.

Assumption Seminary welcomes people from different cultural backgrounds among seminarians, staff and faculty. All consciously work to foster cultural awareness so that future priests formed at Assumption may be able to minister effectively in a multicultural church. Progress in this area requires openness to differences in other cultures and a willingness to re-examine one’s own.

At Assumption, hospitality is a key to community life. All live in a dynamic relationship not only within the seminary community itself but also with the Mexican American Catholic College (MACC), the University of the Incarnate Word (UIW), the Oblate School of Theology (OST), and other Catholic universities and institutions in San Antonio. This relationship also encompasses the various communities of men and women religious.

All at Assumption Seminary seek to foster a spirit of openness and collaboration with them and to welcome visitors and those who seek to know Christ more fully into the life of the community.
Section III: Admission

“The purpose of the admissions process is to determine whether candidates have the requisite qualities to begin the process of formation and preparation for priestly ordination and ministry.”

Assumption Seminary requires that an applicant have the official sponsorship of a diocese, its Ordinary and Vocation Director in order to begin the admissions process.

Each applicant must provide the following documents as part of the admission packet:

- A completed application form
- Autobiography
- Sacramental records
- A review of the psychological and medical assessments
- Transcripts and academic tests
- Criminal background checks
- Letters of recommendation

Note: At times, an applicant may be required to provide additional information to the academic institution where they will be enrolled. Acceptance as a seminarian at Assumption Seminary presupposes that the applicant has been accepted at the appropriate academic institution.

Upon receipt of the application documents, the Seminary will review the materials to determine whether or not to extend the invitation to the applicant to come for an interview.

Every applicant will participate in a formal interview conducted by members of the seminary formation faculty who constitute the admissions committee. This interview will involve “an open and frank discussion of the life experiences that applicants brings to the seminary,” as “their level of insight or self-knowledge and their willingness to address important human issues, such as their interpersonal abilities, evidence of sound peer relationships, their manner of dealing with authority, and their psychosexual development can be important gauges of their readiness to enter a seminary program.” The applicant should give evidence of an ability to live the charism of celibacy and should also be transparent regarding difficulties in this area. The interview also provides the applicant with the opportunity to pose questions about the expectations and requirements of the seminary formation program.

Upon completion of the interview, the admissions committee convenes to discuss the applicant and to make a recommendation to the Rector. The admissions committee may recommend acceptance, conditional acceptance, non-acceptance at this time, or non-acceptance. The Rector

---

2 PPF, no. 34
3 Ibid., no. 54
4 PPF, no. 54.
makes the determination whether to accept the applicant, as well as the conditions for his acceptance.

On occasion, an applicant may be interviewed before all of the required documents have been collected. In such a case, should the Rector decide to accept the applicant, the Seminary issues a letter of conditional acceptance. The applicant and the diocese bear the responsibility of ensuring that all required documents are given to the chair of the admissions committee in a timely manner.

In certain circumstances, an applicant may be accepted with the condition of addressing areas of difficulty through counseling or other means in the course of the seminary program. Long-term therapeutic work, when indicated, will need to be addressed before acceptance into the seminary formation program.

Once the applicant has been accepted, the application process is complete.
Formation as the Church understands it is not equivalent to a secular sense of schooling, or even less, job training. 

Formation is first and foremost cooperation with the grace of God.

(PPF, no. 68)

Section IV. Areas of Formation to the Priesthood

Making ready a place for the Lord to dwell in us and transform us we call formation. Formation impacts upon and integrates the human, spiritual, intellectual, pastoral and multicultural dimensions of each seminarian.

Formation for the priesthood is a process undertaken not only for the growth of oneself but for the good of the Church in which the seminarian will eventually serve.

The goal [of priestly formation] is the development not just of a well-rounded person, a prayerful person, or an experienced pastoral practitioner, but rather one who understands his spiritual development within the context of his call to service in the Church, his human development within the greater context of his call to advance the mission of the Church, his intellectual development as the appropriation of the Church’s teaching and tradition, and his pastoral formation as participation in the active ministry of the Church.

Formation is not primarily the training process for “getting ordained,” but the process by which each man grows in the ability to better serve his local church and the universal Church.

Integration

Integration, from the Latin word integras, means to be whole and undivided. It is the process whereby all areas of formation “form a dynamic whole…which involves the intellectual knowledge of the principles behind each area…as well as awareness of one’s experience in them.”

It is a process that brings unity or wholeness in body, mind and spirit. Integration is a process, a human activity enabled by grace, that by definition needs time to reach its fullest expression.

---

5 United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Program of Priestly Formation 5th ed. (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2006), no. 68. All references to the PPF. refer to paragraph numbers. The same is true of Pastores dabo vobis (PDV) cited below.
6 Ibid., no. 71.
The seminarian is both the locus and the agent of the process of integration, “a necessary and irreplaceable agent in his own formation. All formation…is ultimately a self-formation. No one can replace us in the responsible freedom that we have as individual persons.”

As is stated in Pastores dabo vobis, “The ministry of the priest is entirely on behalf of the Church; it aims at promoting the exercise of the common priesthood of the entire People of God; it is ordered not only to the particular Church but also to the universal Church.”

Therefore, at Assumption Seminary, the goal is to integrate the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral dimensions of formation in a multicultural context. In this way, Assumption provides a unique opportunity for men who experience a call to the priesthood to integrate the multicultural reality that is rapidly transforming the face of the Church in the United States. For this reason, a person’s growth in awareness, openness and acceptance of other cultures is part of his formation, as defined by the Program of Priestly Formation. Therefore, multiculturalism is a theme that weaves through all four areas of the formation process.

The formation community at Assumption Seminary is a microcosm of the multicultural reality in the U.S. church. Proclaiming one church of many faces representing the many peoples of God, we embrace this rich diversity, which is a challenge for seminarians and faculty alike. Seminarians are invited to reflect seriously on their lives and the culture that formed and influenced them, as well as cultures that formed and influenced others around them.

More specifically, multiculturalism entails (1) “enabling Christ-centered men to grow and develop into collaboratively and culturally sensitive pastoral leaders committed to Jesus Christ and his Gospel, to carry his message to the ends of the earth; and nurturing a bilingual and multicultural community of priestly formation.” In order to foster the well-being of each seminarian, the formation process takes place in two main areas—the external and the internal forums. Although these two areas of formation may in some cases cover the same issues and material, their focus is different. The external forum is outwardly directed and accountable to the Christian community as represented by the formation faculty. The internal forum is confidential, and any issues shared may not be revealed by the seminarian’s spiritual director.

Priestly formation groups are an integral part of the process of formation of seminarians at Assumption Seminary. Meeting in small groups according to the level or stage of seminary the seminarians focus on topics such as human growth, the beauty of discipleship, dimensions of servant leadership and the call to Holy Orders.

---

8 PDV, no. 69.
9 PDV, no. 16.
11 PPF, no. 134-35.
External Forum

In the external forum, the seminarian is shaped by the entire situation in which he is immersed in the seminary. He receives formation through instruction, opportunities for personal reflection, community life and feedback, and his dedication to the tasks of seminary life, especially in dialogue with his formation advisor. His formation advisor assists his growth by offering feedback about his general demeanor, relational capacities and styles, his maturity and “capacity to assume the role of a public person and leader in the community,” and his “appropriation of human virtues.”

The formation advisor operates in the external forum and reports on his progress to the formation faculty at the seminary, making sure that all content and observable behavior are available to the formation faculty. In turn, they report a seminarian’s progress to his respective bishop and/or vocation director.

Internal Forum

The focus of the internal forum is to discover the action of God in the life of the seminarian. This is done by focusing on the memories, hopes, thoughts and challenges of the seminarian. The accent is on the inner life of the person. A cornerstone of the internal forum relationship is regularly scheduled meetings with one’s spiritual director. “[S]piritual direction is not an optional possibility but a seminary requirement.” The seminarian should recognize “that seminary spiritual direction is concerned not only with the personal spiritual growth of seminarians but also with their preparation for service in the Church as priests.” Any disclosures made by a seminarian in the internal forum are strictly confidential.

Both the internal and external forums may touch upon issues that arise in the human, spiritual, intellectual, pastoral and multicultural dimensions of the life of each person in the seminary community.

Stages of Preparation for Ministry

In addition to attaining human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral formation goals, a seminarian’s movement through the seminary experience is marked by being called to assume the responsibilities of different stages of ministry.

Seminarians are installed in the formal ministries of reader and acolyte according to the norms of the Church at appropriate stages of their formation process. Those formally installed in these ministries will be called to exercise them in the celebration of the seminary’s liturgies.

Seminarians who have received the ministries of reader and acolyte and who have been admitted to candidacy may be recommended by the formation faculty to be called to Sacrament of Holy Orders, first as a Deacon, then as a Presbyter (priest) when they have fully completed their designated studies.

---

12 Ibid., no. 80.
13 Ibid., no. 132.
14 Ibid.
Norms and Policies

- A wide range of conferences, experiences and community activities make up the program at Assumption Seminary and serve as essential aspects of the program of priestly formation.

- The Office of the Rector will inform, at the appropriate time, the seminarians who have been called to the installed ministries, clerical candidacy, and Holy Orders.
Every seminary must have a program of human formation . . . which seeks to prepare men to be bridges for, not obstacles to, the spread of the Gospel...[The candidate should become] a man of communion, that is, someone who makes a gift of himself and is able to receive the gift of others . (PPF, no. 83)

I. HUMAN FORMATION

Human formation is the process that prepares candidates for the priesthood to be apt instruments of Christ’s grace, so that the human personality of the priest becomes “a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their meeting with Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the human race.” The goals of human formation are to help a candidate become:

- A free person
- A person of solid moral character
- A prudent and discerning person
- A person of communion
- A good communicator
- A person who is happy and whole in body, mind and spirit
- A person of affective maturity
- A person who respects, cares for, and has vigilance over his body
- A person who relates well with others, free of overt prejudice and willing to work with people of diverse cultural backgrounds
- A good steward of material possessions
- A person who can take on the role of a public person.

Human formation in the seminary focuses on three primary areas: formation for celibate chastity, simplicity of life and the response of obedience to authority.

Preparation for Celibacy

Celibacy relates to both human and spiritual formation.

Preparation for celibacy is one of the primary aims of the human formation program of any seminary....Sexuality finds its authentic meaning in relation to mature love. Seminarians should understand and manifest a mature love as preparation for a celibate life. Signs of

---

16 PPF, no. 75-6.
17 Ibid., no. 76.
18 PPF, no. 90. See PDV, no. 44.
affective maturity in the candidate are prudence, vigilance over body and spirit, compassion and care for others, ability to express and acknowledge emotions, and the capacity to esteem and respect interpersonal relationship between men and women. Therefore true friendship is an education in affective maturity.\textsuperscript{19}

A celibate lifestyle entails an ongoing process of formation that includes an understanding of the physiological and psychological dimensions of sexuality. It is a process that constitutes an authentic ideal of sexual maturity and chastity. It is an understanding of the necessary skills for living chastely and the theological meaning celibate chastity has in relation to the priesthood. Celibacy entails the capacity to develop genuine friendships, a spirituality needed to cope with the experience of loneliness, and the capacity to evaluate critically media and culture.

**Preparation for Simplicity of Life**

Simplicity of life is rooted in detachment and manifested in generosity in the use of time, treasure and talent. “Human formation should cultivate a spirit of generosity, encouraging the seminarian to become a man for others and to curb expectations of entitlement. Manifestations of undue materialism and consumerism in the seminarian’s behavior should be confronted and corrected.”\textsuperscript{20} The fullness of simplicity of life is participation in the stewardship of God’s creation.\textsuperscript{21}

**Preparation for Obedience**

Obedience is a trait that begins with cooperation in seminary life. The *Program of Priestly Formation (PPF)* outlines the importance of obedience in this way:

The exercise of authority and the response of obedience are works of grace, goodwill and human effort that play a part in the life of every priest. Seminarians should appreciate and integrate the necessary role that authority and organization play in achieving and maintaining any community’s goals and purposes, as well as recognize the spiritual dimension of authority and obedience to the Catholic Church. Certainly, the pursuit of truth is the aim of all Christians. In that process, seminarians must manifest in heart and mind adherence to the Word of God and the Magisterium.\textsuperscript{22}

Seminarians will be given opportunities to exercise freedom and responsibility during their seminary training but must understand that this is within the context of accountability for their actions.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., no. 92.

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., no. 97.

\textsuperscript{21} Genesis 1: 28-31 (NAB).

\textsuperscript{22} PPF, no. 100.
Counseling Services

Personal growth and adjustment sometimes require the help and support of qualified professionals. Psychological counseling can be made available for seminarians in need. Each seminarian will work with his spiritual director or formation advisor and the Rector in the process of receiving counseling support.

Norms and Policies

The seminary schedules one “celibate life” workshop and one “human growth” workshop per calendar year. The celibate life workshop focuses on a theology of celibacy and living a celibate life. The human growth workshop explores topics such as psychological and physical health and well-being.

Human formation and the other areas of formation are facilitated by regular meetings with a formation advisor who will help the seminarian articulate learning and formation goals for the year. The formation advisor’s responsibility is to report each candidate’s progress to the faculty of Assumption Seminary.
Human formation leads to, and finds its completion in, spiritual formation. . . . The basic principle of spiritual formation is to live in unceasing union with God the Father through his Son, Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. This is the foundational call to discipleship and conversion of heart. (PPF, no. 106-7)

II. SPIRITUAL FORMATION

Spiritual life is in itself an educational process. Human beings are created to be open to transcendence, to the absolute, to God. Spiritual formation “is the work of the Holy Spirit and engages a person in his totality. It introduces him to a deeper communion with Jesus Christ, the good shepherd, and leads to the total submission of one’s life to the Spirit...Spiritual formation has its roots in the experience of the cross, which in deep communion leads to the totality of the paschal mystery.”

Pastores dabo vobis and Optatam totius define the basic principle of spiritual formation: “to live in intimate and unceasing union with God” just as Jesus invited his apostles to live with him before sending them out to others.

The PPF specifies further that an intimate union with God is far more than a personal or individual relationship with the Lord; it must be as well a communion with the Church. Such a relationship for both priests and seminarians must be focused in the “mystery of the Triune God and lived out in practical ways in the mystery of the ecclesial communion.” “The spirituality cultivated in the seminary is specifically priestly,” preparing the seminarians to become priests who will be transformed in the “self-sacrificial path of Jesus.”

---

23 PDV, no. 45.
24 PPF, no. 107. See PDV, no. 45.
25 Ibid., no. 108.
26 Ibid., no. 109.
27 Ibid.
Public Prayer of the Church

The life of the seminarian must focus primarily on a regular practice of two sacraments, the daily celebration of the Holy Eucharist and the frequent celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Likewise, the seminarian is to be faithful to the Liturgy of the Hours, the ongoing prayer of the Church. At Assumption Seminary, the Eucharist and the Office are regularly celebrated in both English and Spanish.

"Spiritual formation is first and foremost a participation in public worship of the Church that is itself a participation in the heavenly liturgy offered by Christ, our great high priest.”28 The Eucharist is both a formative and transforming leaven to prepare men in becoming pastors, gatherers of the faithful in the power of the redeeming love of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. “As source and summit of the Christian life, the daily celebration of the Eucharist is an ‘essential moment of the day.’”29

“The frequent celebration of the Sacrament of Penance is also aided by the practice of a daily examination of conscience (CIC, 276§2,5°).”30 The Sacrament of Reconciliation fosters the mature recognition of sin, continuous conversion of heart, growth of the virtues and conformity to the mind of Christ.

The official prayer of the Church, the Liturgy of the Hours, focuses on the liturgy of the day. Prayed at intervals throughout the day, it is the expression of the unceasing prayer to the Father that Christ asks of His Church. Through the Liturgy of the Hours, seminarians learn to pray with the Church and for the Church. This prayer prepares the seminarians for their lifelong ministry as priests who pray on behalf of the whole Church. “It also cultivates a mind and heart attuned to the whole Body of Christ, its needs, its sufferings, its graces and its hopes.”31

Personal Prayer and Devotions

With the help of the spiritual directors the seminarian is taught and encouraged to develop personal habits of prayer, including contemplation, meditation, adoration and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. St. John Paul II called priests to be “contemplatives in action.” “Priests should give themselves to the contemplation of the Word of God and daily take the opportunity to examine the events of life in the light of the Gospel, so that having become faithful and attentive hearers of the word they may become true ministers of the word.”32 Seminarians will also be instructed on how to nurture their prayer life with the Scriptures and the practice of Lectio Divina. They are also encouraged to practice, either on their own or in groups, other forms of devotional prayer “imbued with the spirit of the liturgy,”33 such as, the rosary, the stations of the cross, and novenas.

---

28 PPF, no. 110.
29 Ibid.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid. See PDV, no. 48.
32 St. John Paul II, “Priests Must be Devoted to Prayer” (General Audience Address, June 2, 1993).
33 Second Vatican Council, Sacrosanctum concilium (1963), no. 17
Life Style Conducive to Spiritual Growth and Ministry

With the assistance of their spiritual director, seminarians are encouraged to develop attitudes of:

- Apostolic dedication
- Asceticism and penance
- Simplicity of lifestyle
- Obedience
- Healthy and appropriate ways of living a celibate life
- Spirit-inspired service in the community
- Solidarity with those most in need
- Appreciation of “holy solitude in communion with God”

Spiritual Direction

Spiritual direction is a necessary means for arriving at the “interiorization and integration needed for growth in sanctity, virtue, and readiness for Holy Orders.”

Areas of concern for spiritual direction:

- “Seminarians should confide their personal history, personal relationships, prayer experiences, the cultivation of virtues, their temptations and other significant topics to their spiritual director.”
- “The spiritual director should foster an integration of spiritual formation, human formation, and character development consistent with priestly formation.”
- The spiritual director must especially train the seminarians in the art of discernment so that they may be more apt to discern the will of God regarding their personal calling, either for the priesthood or other ministries in the Church from a spiritual perspective.
- The seminarian must come to recognize the difference between his simple human desires and the expression of God’s will revealed to him in his prayer life.
- “Care should be taken to ensure that issues of human formation that properly belong to the external forum are not limited to the spiritual direction relationship for their resolution.”

“Disclosures that a seminarian makes in the course of spiritual direction belong to the internal forum. Consequently, the spiritual director is held to the strictest confidentiality concerning information received in spiritual direction. . . . The only possible exception to this standard of confidentiality would be the case of grave, immediate, or mortal danger involving the directee or another person.”

---

34 PPF, no. 110.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid., no. 128.
37 Ibid., no. 129.
38 Ibid., no. 131.
39 Ibid., no. 134.
Liturgical Formation

Liturgical formation consists primarily in participation in the Sacred Liturgy. This worship is a public act and, as such, must be exterior. To be true and genuine, however, the supreme element of our worship must be interior, as we unite ourselves to Christ praying “through Him, with Him, and in Him.”

Seminarians shall be given liturgical formation in their spiritual life. For this they will need proper direction, so that they may be able to understand the sacred rites and take part in them wholeheartedly; and they will also need personally to celebrate the sacred mysteries, as well as popular devotions which are imbued with the spirit of the liturgy. In addition, they must learn how to observe the liturgical laws, so that life in seminaries may be thoroughly influenced by the spirit of the liturgy.40

Sacred music is a “necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.”41 Church music incarnates the human spirit and points that spirit and the cosmos to the Divine. When this occurs, church music is “living out a necessary dimension of Christian faith and in so doing, [it is] retaining a necessary dimension of what it means to be a human being.”42

---

40 Sacrosanctum Concilium, no.17.
41 Sacrosanctum Concilium, no.112.
Norms and Policies

- “Seminarians must be instructed to incorporate progressively all of the hours of the Liturgy of the Hours, beginning with Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer and then the Office of Readings, and finally, the Daytime Hour and Night Prayer. This entire cycle should be a regular practice of each seminarian at least a year prior to his diaconate ordination.”

- “[S]eminarians are to learn how prayer is to be lived out in service of others, particularly the poor, the sick, sinners, unbelievers, and the strangers, but extended to all in the outreach of charity and mercy, and in the quest for justice.”

- Each seminarian is to choose from a list of spiritual directors approved by the Rector and appointed by the Archbishop the spiritual director with whom he feels comfortable to share the most delicate and sensitive aspects of his spiritual journey. “Those priests who do spiritual direction for seminarians must understand and support the full formation program. They also need to be integrated into the priestly community of the seminary.”

- “Seminarians should meet regularly, no less than once a month, with a priest spiritual director.” It is the practice at Assumption Seminary that seminarians meet with their spiritual director every two or three weeks. Should the need arise, seminarians may request additional appointments with their spiritual director.

- “Each seminarian is encouraged to have a regular confessor, who ideally is also his spiritual director, with whom he can be completely honest, fully manifesting his conscience, and from whom he can receive ongoing guidance. This is not meant to limit the penitent’s liberty, since he is always free to approach other confessors, whether in the seminary or outside it.”

- In keeping with the instructions of the PPF, Assumption Seminary provides regularly scheduled opportunities for private confession during the week, along with the availability of other priests to serve as confessors on a regular basis. In conversation with their spiritual directors, seminarians should develop a habit of frequent confession that supports their spiritual development.

- All seminarians are required to participate in the appropriate five-day canonical retreat provided by the spiritual formation faculty each year. Seminarians are also expected to participate in days of prayer that the seminary sets aside as opportunities for nourishment for the spiritual life.

---

43 PPF, no. 119.
44 Ibid., no. 110.
45 Ibid., no. 130.
46 Ibid., no. 127.
47 Ibid., no. 120.
• Liturgical formation outside of the daily liturgies includes workshops and courses in liturgy, sacred music and art. These also contribute to the seminarian’s overall formation.

• By following the degrees of solemnity of weekdays, memorials, feasts and solemnities as well as the liturgical seasons of the year, the seminarians will be able to “experience the liturgy in the seminary [as] an example for them on which their future pastoral ministry will be based.”

---

There is a reciprocal relationship between spiritual and intellectual formation. 

The intellectual life nourishes the spiritual life, but the spiritual also opens vistas of understanding. . . . Intellectual formation is integral to what it means to be human.  

(PPF, no. 136)

III. INTELLECTUAL FORMATION

Intellectual formation for the priesthood focuses on acquiring more knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, His church, and the mission of His church in the world. It is a pursuit that begins in the seminary but continues throughout the life of a priest. The goal of seminary formation is to give candidates to the priesthood the skill to continue learning throughout their lives. The pursuit of knowledge of Christ is part of a priest’s service to the Christian community. “[T]his knowledge is not simply for personal possession but is destined to be shared in a community of faith . . . . ‘for the salvation of their brothers and sisters.’ Intellectual formation has an apostolic and missionary purpose and finality.”

Seminarians at Assumption Seminary usually participate in the following academic programs:

College

The goal of intellectual formation at the college level is for seminarians to “pursue the liberal arts, through which they acquire a sense of the great human questions contained in the arts and sciences. They synthesize and organize their study of the liberal arts through the study of philosophy, which also serves as a preparation for the study of theology.”

“It is essential that seminarians develop an understanding of the relation between faith and reason, and the relationship and interaction between philosophy and theology.”

In addition, seminarians should cultivate “a reflective awareness of the fundamental relationship that exists between the human spirit and truth, that truth which is revealed to us fully in Jesus Christ.”

College students at Assumption Seminary attend the Mexican American Catholic College (MACC) to fulfill the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops (USCCB) requirements for undergraduate philosophy. Students pursue a philosophy major while enrolled in the Collaborative Bachelor of Arts in Pastoral Ministry Degree Program with Mexican American Catholic College and the University of the Incarnate Word. The program specifically addresses the liberal arts and the intellectual dimension of ministry formation through a four-year curriculum. A central goal of the B.A. curriculum is that students achieve competence in both English and Spanish by the time of graduation.

49 PPF, no. 137.
50 Ibid., no. 146.
51 Ibid., no. 153.
52 PDV, no. 52.
Pre-Theology

Pre-theology is a transitional program for seminarians who are returning to studies or whose previous academic background is not in philosophy or theology. The main objective for pre-theology students is to meet the undergraduate philosophy and theology requirements set forth in the Program of Priestly Formation. For pastoral purposes, pre-theology students not familiar with Spanish are required to take 6 hours of Spanish. Those students proficient in Spanish, are required to take 6 hours of other pastoral studies. Furthermore, some pre-theology students may need either to complete their bachelor’s degree through the University of Incarnate Word or to fulfill other prerequisites for graduate-level theology at Oblate School of Theology.

Graduate Theology

All theology students study at Oblate School of Theology and are expected to complete the Master of Divinity Program (MDiv) or the Sacred Theological Baccalaureate (STB) unless they have been approved for another program. The study of theology, which “offers a complete and unified vision of the truths of faith,” is “rigorous both academically and pastorally,” is in “complete and faithful communion with the Magisterium,” and is “an initiation into a lifelong study of the truths of faith.”

Language Studies

The objective of language studies at Assumption is to help each seminarian become bilingual, at least at an intermediate level, and culturally immersed so he is able to minister in both English and Spanish, and in culturally diverse contexts. “The study of the Spanish language and Hispanic cultures as well as other pastorally appropriate languages and cultures is recommended. In some cases, an English Language Program may form an important part of the program.”

All students are assessed in language proficiency in both English and Spanish. Collegians whose first language is not English will enter a program with MACC or the University of Incarnate Word (UIW) to help them focus on skills and knowledge in order to pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) exam as a prerequisite to enter graduate studies.

Most theologians and pre-theologians who are from a non-English speaking background are required to take the TOEFL and to achieve the score required by the educational institution they are attending. These students will be enrolled in appropriate language programs which will help them advance into graduate studies in theology. They will be enrolled by skill level; this is ascertained by language skills testing from a local language institute or program. The pre-theology student’s skill level may allow him to take graduate level classes in English and/or Spanish, approved by his advisor, as he progresses toward fulfillment of the TOEFL requirement.

---

53 PPF, no. 163.
54 Ibid., no. 182.
Learning Goals

Each seminarian is encouraged to articulate academic learning goals that he should discuss with the director of studies and his formation advisor.

Academic Dishonesty or Plagiarism

Assumption Seminary fully supports the policies on academic dishonesty or plagiarism established and enforced by Oblate School of Theology, MACC, UIW, and other academic institutions. Seminarians are responsible for reading their school’s policy and adhering to it. This includes learning how to use the appropriate style for referencing sources (Turabian, Modern Language Association [MLA], Chicago Manual of Style) required by their educational institutions when giving oral or written presentations. **Plagiarism and academic dishonesty of any kind is a serious offense and may result in dismissal from an academic program and therefore dismissal from the seminary.**

Internet Research

The internet is a useful tool for research and maintaining contact with people. However, like every tool it must be used appropriately. When doing research, seminarians must keep in mind that all websites are not of equal quality. Each site should be evaluated to determine its credibility and applicability for research. Furthermore, when a seminarian copies material from a website, he has an obligation to use the appropriate citation style (Turabian or other manuals of writing) required by his educational institution.

Grades and Transcripts

Each seminarian is responsible for making sure that the Rector of Assumption Seminary, as well as his diocesan director of seminarians or vocation director, receives a copy of his cumulative transcript every semester. In order to do this, seminarians will use the following procedures:

- **Oblate School of Theology.** Seminarians must sign a release form stating whether their diocesan director of seminarians or their vocation director as well as the Rector of Assumption Seminary are to receive a copy of their cumulative transcript.

- **Mexican American Catholic College.** Seminarians must sign a release form stating whether their diocesan director of seminarians or their vocation director as well as the Rector of Assumption Seminary are to receive a copy of their cumulative transcript. The form will be signed during the admissions process.

- **University of the Incarnate Word.** Seminarians must also sign a release form stating whether their diocesan director of seminarians or their vocation director as well as the
Rector of Assumption Seminary are to receive a copy of the cumulative transcript. The form will be signed during the admissions process.

- **Other institutions.** Seminarians enrolled in a language program must request a written evaluation or report of their progress from their instructor(s). The report must be on the institution’s letterhead and signed by the instructor(s)/supervisor. Certificates of completion may take the place of an evaluation and must be in their original form.

**Academic Probation**

Seminarians who are placed on academic probation by the institutions they are attending must fulfill respective academic requirements of their institutions, including minimum TOEFL scores and minimum GPA (grade point average). Seminarians on academic probation must schedule regular appointments with the director of studies at Assumption Seminary. Every seminarian must fulfill the academic requirements established in the *Program of Priestly Formation*.55

**Student Visas**

Student visas are often granted based on a seminarian’s full-time enrollment at an educational institution. Seminarians are required to provide copies of their visa and passport, or any other proof of the date when the visa is up for renewal, to the Rector’s office. Each student is responsible for investigating the ways in which travel abroad could affect their enrollment and visa status.

**Norms and Policies**

- All new seminarians will be tested on their academic skills. Academic assistance is always available to seminarians, either at Assumption Seminary or at the academic institution where they are enrolled.

- Other areas in which they can also attain help to benefit their overall formation include writing, research or analytical skills; improving time management skills; an individualized education program for language studies; mapping out academic assignments, along with deadlines or any other processes that will help the seminarians receive the greatest possible benefit from their intellectual training. In addition, a seminarian could decide to include activities that will help him integrate his intellectual training with other areas of formation.

- Writing is both an intellectual and a spiritual discipline. The ability to produce clear and well-reasoned written assignments is essential for the service a priest provides to the

---

55 PPF, nos. 136-64.
Christian community. Developing this skill requires constant practice and the humility to receive constructive criticism.

- Assumption Seminary, through the Director of Studies, provides the necessary resources to coordinate the assessment of the seminarian’s writing skills and for assisting seminarians who may need academic enrichment skills. Each seminarian is encouraged to take full advantage of this opportunity. These services must not be used on an “emergency” basis (i.e. 24 hours before a major paper is due) but should be scheduled throughout the academic year. Furthermore, the role of the resource person is not to write the seminarian’s papers, but to help him learn and apply the skill.

- Seminarians who “map out” their learning goals in advance, that is, their work and deadlines for assignments at the beginning of each semester, are in a better position to use this service more fully.

- A seminarian desiring another program through Oblate School of Theology must put his request in writing to the Rector after first having discussed this possibility with his formation advisor and vocation director or director of seminarians from his diocese. Any change in program from the Master of Divinity requires the consent of the academic advisor at Oblate School of Theology, the Director of Studies at Assumption Seminary, and the bishop or vocation director or director of seminarians of the seminarian’s home diocese.

- All seminarians must meet with the Director of Studies at Assumption Seminary before registering for a program. If they consider dropping or adding courses after registering, students must consult the Director of Studies before filling out the paper work at their school.

- All seminarians must maintain passing grades in their academic courses.

- Seminarians are subject to the academic policies of whichever institution they are attending.

- Seminarians at Oblate School of Theology are not allowed to register for more than 15 credit hours per semester without the written permission of the Assumption Director of Studies and their academic advisor at OST.

- Assumption Seminary encourages seminarians to enroll in clinical pastoral education (CPE) during the summer recess. CPE is ordinarily best immediately after the second year of theology.
• Seminarians are encouraged to follow the academic “path” or sequence of courses charted by their respective institutions. Failure to do so could jeopardize graduation and ordination later on in their formation program.

• Seminarians may attend summer school with the permission of Assumption Seminary’s Director of Studies and their vocation director. Ordinarily, theologians and pre-theologians use summers for language studies, becoming more acquainted with the reality of their home diocese or for completing a formation assignment given by the home diocese or Assumption Seminary.

• All seminarians will have a language assessment in one’s target language of Spanish or English on a yearly basis to determine what type of language help is needed to become bilingual on an intermediate level.

• When the seminarian’s level is determined, Assumption Seminary will offer help in language development through MACC and UIW for collegians and pre-theologians, and other programs and resources for theologians.

• Assumption Seminary will communicate the seminarian’s language level and need for development to the respective dioceses urging them to utilize summer and pastoral year opportunities for Spanish and English advancement.

• Assumption Seminary faculty will offer personal feedback and assistance to each seminarian as they conduct ministries of leading prayer, proclamation of Scripture, and preaching in their target language.
The whole formation imparted to candidates for the priesthood aims at preparing them to enter in communion with the charity of Christ the Good Shepherd. Hence their formation in its different aspects must have a fundamentally pastoral character.

(PDV, no. 57)

IV. PASTORAL FORMATION

Pastoral formation integrates the other areas of formation and channels them towards service in the Christian community. “‘The whole training of the students should have as an objective to make them true shepherds of souls after the example of our Lord Jesus Christ, teacher, priest and shepherd.’ To be a true ‘shepherd of souls’ means standing with and for Christ in the community, the Christ who teaches and sanctifies and guides or leads the community.”

Essential elements in pastoral formation include proclamation of God’s Word, evangelization, cultural sensitivity, and appreciation of religious pluralism.

Pastoral formation provides “sustained contact with those who are privileged in God’s eyes—the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and the suffering.” Seminarians “learn to cultivate a preferential option for the poor. They also need to become aware of the social contexts and structures that can breed injustice as well as ways of promoting more just contexts and structures.”

Assumption Seminary collaborates with Oblate School of Theology in the process of pastoral formation for theologians. This is accomplished primarily through OST’s program, Theological Field Education (TFE), in which each seminarian is assigned a pastoral placement and given tools for self-reflection, leadership, and administration. TFE is an adult model of education in which the responsibility for learning is placed primarily on the student in collaboration with the OST’s director of field education and the ministry’s field supervisor. Students are expected to administer their own learning experiences and to grow in awareness that administration is part of ministering to others. It is the responsibility of the student not only to know, but to perform the various administrative and pastoral formation responsibilities that are vital to the TFE experience.

56 PPF, no. 238.
57 Ibid., no. 239.
58 Ibid.
59 Ibid.
60 Oblate School of Theology, Theological Field Education Student and Supervisor Handbook, (San Antonio, TX: Oblate School of Theology, 2000).
The director and administrator in the office of pastoral formation at Assumption Seminary works in conjunction with the director of field education at OST in order to facilitate this process. Seminarians are encouraged to consult the *Theological Field Education Student and Supervisor Handbook* for more information.

All seminarians are expected to demonstrate respect and attention to boundaries when they encounter people in their ministry. Personal qualities to be cultivated include “a sense of responsibility for initiating and completing tasks, a spirit of collaboration with others, an ability to facilitate resolution of conflicts, a flexibility of spirit that is able to make adjustments for new and unexpected circumstances, and availability to those who serve and those who are served.”

**Learning Spanish for Pastoral Ministry**

A seminarian’s commitment to learn a new language reflects “a missionary spirit, zeal for evangelization…and an openness to serve all people, as well as… the ability to work in a multicultural setting with people of different ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds.”

Because of the growing number of Hispanics in the U.S. church today, ministry in the US church today requires a commitment to achieve proficiency in the Spanish language. As part of the New Evangelization the US bishops have acknowledged, in their document *Encuentro and Mission*, the need to incorporate Hispanic ministry, culture, and language into programs in offices of evangelization, religious education, and formation, as well as in seminaries. Seminarians must learn Spanish and become familiar with Hispanic culture. Also, [the need to] provide clergy and religious with opportunities to learn Spanish and to gain an understanding of the customs, cultures, and histories of Latin America. This is no longer an option—it is a need.

Improvement in language will sometimes entail language tutoring, and independent practice (web resources, media, books, etc). Seminarians are given the opportunity to practice their language skills when they read, give reflections, or preach in Spanish for Mass or community prayer.

Community events, free time, meals, singing at liturgies, and pastoral ministry settings provide opportunities to practice what they are learning. Lack of confidence in speaking another language can be an obstacle to language learning. Practicing one’s skills in everyday activities helps to build confidence. The bilingual and bicultural atmosphere of the city of San Antonio furnishes another opportunity to practice Spanish when students are off-campus.

---

61 PPF, no. 239.
62 PPF, no. 280.
Speaking U.S. American English

A seminarian whose native language is not English, as well as English speakers from other countries, need to learn the style of English that is generally spoken in this country. This is sometimes referred to as “accent modification”, and it helps to communicate the mysteries of faith in clear and readily comprehensible language. (PPF, 239) Assumption Seminary will enroll students in any available programs or tutoring opportunities that may be of assistance in this area.

Understanding Culture

Hand in hand with learning a new language is engaging the culture that is part of the development of the human person. In the section of the PPF referring to “cultural sensitivity” (236) the U.S. bishops state:

Pastoral formation must flow from and move towards an appreciation of the multifaceted reality of the Church. In the United States, this means a genuine appreciation of the diversity that marks the Catholic Church as well as the diversity that typifies this society generally. Seminarians need exposure to the many cultures and languages that belong to the Catholic Church in the United States. They should know how to welcome migrants and refugees pastorally, liturgically, and culturally. Simultaneously, they should assist newcomers to adapt themselves into the mainstream without each one losing their own identity.

A forum that includes priests, ministers, or seminarians from various cultural backgrounds can be insightful in preparation for their future ministries. This discussion should include topics such as: mindsets and prejudices, popular religious devotions and practices, culturally specific folk traditions or beliefs, a history of the cultural group and its relationship to the Church, family and group structures, views around children and gender roles, etc.

Pastoral formation means more than acquiring skills. It signifies a level of personal development fitting for a priest who acts in the person of Jesus Christ, Head and Shepherd of the Church. Effective public ministry includes the cultivation of a flexibility of spirit that enables the priest to relate to people across a number of different cultures and theological and ecclesial outlooks. Formation must help the seminarian put on both the mind and heart of Christ, the Good Shepherd. 64, 65

---

64 See PPF, no. 239.
65 PDV, no. 58
Norms and Policies

- During their first semester at Assumption Seminary, English language, pre-theology, and college seminarians usually do not participate in supervised ministry. After their first semester, and after having completed a sexual misconduct workshop, seminarians work with the Director of Pastoral Formation to determine a pastoral placement each academic year.

- Seminarians serve in weekly pastoral ministry assignments according to the scale of 3-4 hours for collegians, 3-4 hours for pre-theologians, 4-6 hours for 3rd year theologians and lower, and 5-8 hours for 4th year theologians. The hours refers to ministry on the site and includes travel. Exceptions to the policy are decided by the Director of Pastoral Formation.

- Seminarians arrange for additional voluntary ministry beyond their pastoral assignment through the Office of Pastoral Formation and their formation advisor at Assumption Seminary.

- Certificates for the workshops on sexual misconduct and safe environment must be issued by the Archdiocese of San Antonio and must be renewed according to Archdiocesan regulations.

- Seminarians should strive to speak in their target language in order to maintain and progress in their language development. As part of their priestly formation, seminarians should learn about some of those cultural practices in depth, which may help them to be able to evangelize and minister effectively in the contexts they will encounter in their parishes or dioceses.
EVALUATING SEMINARIANS

Introduction

The annual evaluation of each seminarian is indispensable for Assumption Seminary to fulfill its mission of forming men for the diocesan priesthood in the Roman Catholic Church for ministry to the people of God. The faculty considers this evaluation to be an important service both to the individual seminarian and to his ordinary or superior. It helps the seminarian discern with formation faculty and the Rector his strengths and weaknesses, his attitudes and behaviors, and the personal characteristics which make him suitable for priestly ministry. The seminarian also learns how he may need to change and grow in order to be of better service to the people of God. The evaluation is also a service to the seminarian’s Bishop who receives recommendations from the Rector and the faculty for the growth and suitability of the seminarian and whether or not the seminarian is ready for Holy Orders.

The evaluation process results in a summary of the seminarian’s growth and progress in the areas of human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation along with multicultural integration. It includes recommendations for the seminarian’s future. After review by the formation faculty and the seminarian, the written evaluation is sent to the seminarian’s ordinary (and/or vocation director or director of seminarians) or superior at the end of each academic year.

Criteria for Evaluation

At the beginning of each year the seminarian, in dialogue with his formation advisor, writes appropriate learning goals for himself in light of the criteria expressed below. After the advisor approves the goals, both the seminarian and the formation advisor sign them. The process for evaluation is as follows.

1. The seminarian submits a written self-evaluation according to the format provided in the Handbook.
2. The formation advisor uses the seminarian’s self-evaluation and own observations to compose a Seminary Evaluation using the tool in the Handbook.
3. Faculty members read both the self-evaluation and the draft Seminary Evaluation. The external formation faculty meet to discuss the material, make edits and add comments to the Seminary Evaluation. The Evaluation with its recommendations are voted on by the faculty.
4. The advisor shares the Seminary Evaluation with the Seminarian and he acknowledges he has read it by his signature.
5. The Rector, advisor and designated faculty share the Evaluation with the respective Vocation Director or his designate.
6. The advisor and the seminarian meet with the Vocation Director to discuss the Seminary evaluation together.
7. The Seminary Evaluation is sent to the respective Ordinary at the end of the academic year.

PPF: 272-280.
A. HUMAN FORMATION
1. Exemplifies a solid moral character and manifests growth in the practice of virtues: justice, integrity, humility, prudence, fortitude and temperance.
2. Exhibits the capacity to be a man of communion by relating to others in a positive manner and working collaboratively within the community.
3. Shows evidence of good self-knowledge so that he can honestly accept himself and grow in self-discipline, self-mastery, and emotional self-control.
4. Respects and cares for his physical and mental health.
5. Demonstrates a balanced lifestyle and makes good use of his time.
6. Evidences age-appropriate maturity in his feelings, psychosexual development, and relationships.
7. Displays leadership skills and an ability to work collaboratively.
8. Possesses the capacity to receive and integrate constructive criticism.
9. Lives with evangelical simplicity and is a good steward of resources.
10. Remains united with the Church through mature respect for and cooperation with Church authority.
11. Actively engages and participates in the life of the seminary community.

B. SPIRITUAL FORMATION
1. Commits to a life of prayer and assists others in their spiritual growth.
2. Exhibits an abiding love for the sacramental life of the Church.
3. Receives the Word of God proclaimed and personally assimilates the Word in prayer.
4. Demonstrates appreciation of and commitment to the Liturgy of the Hours.
5. Engages overall in the liturgical and spiritual programs of the seminary.
6. Remains faithful to regular spiritual direction and a habit of spiritual reading.
7. Embraces positively a lifelong commitment to chaste celibacy, obedience, and simplicity of life.
8. Radiates love for Jesus Christ, the Church, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the saints.
9. Displays a spirit of self-giving charity toward others.

C. INTELLECTUAL FORMATION
1. Displays love for truth as discovered by faith and reason.
2. Remains faithful to the Word of God and the Magisterium.
3. Acquires readily knowledge of Catholic doctrine and adheres to it.
4. Shows interest and diligence in seminary studies.
5. Completes successfully seminary academic requirements for his level of formation.
6. Possesses the ability to exercise the ministry of the Word.
7. Studies, learns, and practices the languages that will be utilized in pastoral ministry.

D. PASTORAL FORMATION
1. Exudes a missionary spirit through zeal for evangelization and ecumenical commitment.
2. Displays a spirit of pastoral charity, a commitment to social justice, and an openness to serve all people.
3. Cares for and commits to serving the sick, suffering, and marginalized.
4. Demonstrates appropriate pastoral and administrative skills and competencies for ministry.
5. Possesses ability to exercise pastoral leadership.
6. Carries out pastoral work collaboratively and appreciates the different charisms and vocations within the Church.
7. Appreciates the multifaceted reality of the Church and has the ability to work with people of diverse backgrounds.
8. Desires ardently to bring all people closer to the Lord.  

---

67 PPF, 160-162.
E. SELF EVALUATION

Seminarian: Academic Level:
Age: Field Ministry:
Diocese: Priestly Formation Group:
Bishop: Committee:
Vocation Director: Formation Advisor:
Director of Seminarians: Spiritual Director:

For each of the areas listed below, describe the progress you perceive you have made with respect to the goals you had at the beginning of the year and your experiences throughout this time period. Then describe where you may have discovered you need further improvement.

Human Formation:

Spiritual Formation:

Intellectual Formation:

Pastoral Formation:

Concluding Remarks:

Add any closing remarks and overall statements to conclude your evaluation of your year of formation and how you want to move forward.
**F. SEMINARY EVALUATION REPORT**

**Assumption Seminary EVALUATION** 5-17

**Seminarian:** NAME  
**Diocese:** DIOCESE  
**Formation Level:** LEVEL  
**Formation Advisor:** FACULTY NAME

### INTRODUCTORY INFORMATION

- Score is relative to the formation level of the seminarian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HUMAN FORMATION</th>
<th>1 Below Expect</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3 Meets Expect</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5 Above Expect</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Moral Character</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A Man of Communion</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relates in a positive manner and works collaboratively</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engages in community life</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Awareness of Self</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows evidence of self-mastery through good self-knowledge, self-discipline, and emotional self-control</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-knowledge</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-discipline and time management</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional self-control</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maturity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evidences age-appropriate maturity in his life of feelings and relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open to formation and seeks growth</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective maturity</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to establish and maintain friendships</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintains appropriate boundaries in relationships</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Constructive Criticism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possesses the capacity to give, receive, and integrate constructive criticism with charity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receives and integrates constructive criticism</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance and Participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attends and actively participates in human formation responsibilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Below Expect.</td>
<td>2 Meets Expect</td>
<td>3 Above Expect.</td>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formation Days</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human Growth workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celibate Life workshop</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formation Advising</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Health</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health and Balanced Lifestyle</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Simplicity of Life</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsible stewardship of personal and communal goods</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lives with evangelical simplicity and is a good steward of time and resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detachment and Transparency</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Obedience</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect for authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Remains united with the Church through respect for and cooperation with authority</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows rules and regulations</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Celibacy</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Embraces celibacy as a gift and calling from God</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy psychosexual development</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understands and embraces chastity and celibacy</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPIRITUAL FORMATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramental Life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Exhibits an abiding love for the sacramental life of the Church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liturgy of the Hours</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciation and Commitment to Liturgy of Hours</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates appreciation of and commitment to the Liturgy of the Hours</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prayer Life</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committed to a life of prayer</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to a life of prayer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assimilates the Word of God into his life</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habit of spiritual reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance and Participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participates actively in liturgical celebrations and spiritual formation programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mass</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 Below Expect.</td>
<td>2 Meets Expect</td>
<td>3 Above Expect.</td>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Compline and Benediction</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Days of Prayer</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Retreat</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liturgical Formation Conf.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to Spiritual Director Meetings</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTELLECTUAL FORMATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love for Truth and Knowledge</td>
<td>Displays love for truth as discovered by faith and reason</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith and Reason</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Philosophy and Theology Studies)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intellectual Fidelity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remains faithful to the Word of God, Tradition and Magisterium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of God</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradition and Magisterium</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language Learning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies, learns, and practices the languages that will be utilized in pastoral ministry</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Seminary Studies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shows interest and diligence in seminary studies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class attendance</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest, diligence in studies</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of Scripture and Catholic doctrine</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comments from School</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PASTORAL FORMATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciple and Missionary Spirit</td>
<td>Exemplifies discipleship and a missionary spirit through zeal for evangelization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attends and participates in seminary Priestly Formation Group</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks to grow in discipleship, evangelization, and accompanying others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spirit of Pastoral Charity</strong></td>
<td>Displays a spirit of pastoral charity through an openness to serve all people, including the sick, suffering, and marginalized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open and committed to serve all people</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedication in pastoral assignments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance in pastoral assignments</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ministry of the Word</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Possesses the ability to exercise the ministry of the Word</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to proclaim</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to explain</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ministry Skills and Pastoral Leadership</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Possesses ability to exercise ministry, pastoral leadership, carries out pastoral work collaboratively, and appreciates the different charisms and vocations within the Church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pastoral leadership skills</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liturgical Ministry skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skill in collaborating with others</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appreciates different charisms and vocations</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advancing in stages of ministry formation, incl. Lector, Acolyte...</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multicultural Reality</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appreciates the multifaceted reality of the Church and world. Has the ability to work with people of diverse backgrounds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open and willing to learn about others</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability to relate to others</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OVERALL COMMENTS**
Human, Spiritual, Intellectual and Pastoral Formation

**COMMENDATIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS**
The formation faculty commends the seminarian for his accomplishments…
The formation faculty encourages the seminarian to improve in the area of…
The formation faculty recommends that the seminarian advance to the next year of the program of priestly formation and the ___ year of College-Philosophical/Theological studies/Holy Orders.

**SIGNATURES**

Advisor Signature | Date | Seminarian Signature | Date
G. PETITIONS, PROFESSION AND OATH

Below is a sample of the handwritten petition required for the Ministry of Lector.

Most Rev. ______________________
Bishop of ____________
Mailing address
City, ST Zipcode

Your Excellency,

I, ________________________, a layman of the Diocese of ____________, petition that I may be installed as a Lector. I make this request freely, motivated by no consideration other than the glory of God, the service of the Church, and the salvation of my soul. I am aware of the obligations attached to this ministry.

space for seminarian signature space for date

Witnessed by: Date:

space for rector’s signature space for date

Very Rev. ______________________
Rector, Assumption Seminary
San Antonio, Texas
Below is a sample of the handwritten petition required for the Ministry of Acolyte.

Most Rev. __________________
Bishop of ____________
Mailing address
City, ST Zipcode

Your Excellency,

I, __________________, a layman of the Diocese of ____________, petition that I may be installed as an acolyte. I make this request freely, motivated by no consideration other than the glory of God, the service of the Church, and the salvation of my soul. I am aware of the obligations attached to this ministry.

Witnessed by: ____________________________
Date:

Very Rev. __________________
Rector, Assumption Seminary
San Antonio, Texas
Below is a sample of the handwritten petition required for admission to Candidacy.

Most Rev. __________________________
Bishop of ________________
Mailing address
City, ST Zipcode

Your Excellency,

I, ____________________________, a layman of the Diocese of ________________, petition that I may be admitted as a Candidate for Holy Orders. I make this request freely, motivated by no consideration other than the glory of God, the service of the Church, and the salvation of my soul. I am aware of the obligations attached to the admission and reception of the Rite of Candidacy.

space for seminarian signature  space for date

Witnessed by:  Date:

space for rector’s signature  space for date

Very Rev. __________________________
Rector, Assumption Seminary
San Antonio, Texas
Below is a sample of the handwritten petition required for admission to the Diaconate.

Most Rev. __________________
Bishop of ____________
Mailing address
City, ST Zipcode

Your Excellency,

I, __________________, a candidate for the Diocese of _________________, do hereby petition that I may be advanced to the Order of Deacon. I make this request freely, motivated by no consideration other than the glory of God, the service of the Church, and the salvation of my soul. I am fully aware of the specific obligations attached to the order. I hereby renew my Profession of Faith in what the Holy Roman Catholic Church believes and teaches. Having reviewed the Symbol of Faith, I subscribe to it with open mind and heart. I declare my intentions of remaining permanently in the Diocese of _________________.

space for seminarian signature space for date

Witnessed by: Date:

space for rector’s signature space for date

Very Rev. __________________
Rector, Assumption Seminary
San Antonio, Texas
Below is a sample of the handwritten petition required for admission to the Presbyterate.

Most Rev. __________________________
Bishop of _____________
Mailing address
City, ST Zipcode

Your Excellency,

I, ___________________________, a candidate for the Diocese of _____________, do hereby petition that I may be advanced to the Order of Presbyter. I make this request freely, motivated by no consideration other than the glory of God, the service of the Church, and the salvation of my soul. I am fully aware of the specific obligations attached to the order. I hereby renew my Profession of Faith in what the Holy Roman Catholic Church believes and teaches. Having reviewed the Symbol of Faith, I subscribe to it with open mind and heart. I declare my intentions of remaining permanently in the Diocese of _____________.

space for deacon’s signature                          space for date

Witnessed by:                        Date:

space for rector’s signature                          space for date

Very Rev. __________________________
Rector, Assumption Seminary
San Antonio, Texas
Below is the profession of faith and oath of fidelity required for Holy Orders.

I, ____________________________________________, with firm faith, believe and profess all and everything that is contained in the Symbol of faith: namely:

I believe in one God,
   The Father, the Almighty,
   maker of heaven and earth,
   of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
   the Only Begotten Son of God.
   born of the Father before all ages.
   God from God, Light from Light,
   true God from true God
   begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father;
   through Him all things were made.
   For us men and for our salvation
   he came down from heaven,
   and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
   and became man.
   For our sake He was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
   he suffered death and was buried,
   and rose again on the third day
   in accordance with the Scriptures.
   He ascended into heaven
   and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
   He will come again in glory
   to judge the living and the dead
   and his Kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of Life,
   who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
   who with the Father and the Son, He is adored and glorified,
   who has spoken through the prophets.
I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
   I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins
   and I look for the resurrection of the dead
   and the life of the world to come. Amen.

With firm faith, I also believe everything contained in the Word of God, whether written or handed down in Tradition, which the Church, either by a solemn judgment or by the ordinary and universal Magisterium, sets forth to be believed as divinely revealed.
I also firmly accept and hold each and everything definitively proposed by the Church regarding teaching on faith and morals.

Moreover, I adhere with religious submission of will and intellect to the teachings either the Roman pontiff or the College of Bishops enunciate when they exercise their authentic Magisterium, even if they do not intend to proclaim these teachings by a definitive act.

Signed:______________________ Day:_______, Month:______________, Year:________

In the Presence of

_____________________________ Day:_______, Month:______________, Year:________

Very Rev._____________________
Rector
Assumption Seminary
San Antonio, Texas
This is declaration required for reception of Holy Orders.

I, ________________________________, having presented to the Bishop the petition for the reception of the Order of the Diaconate/Priesthood, now at the approach of sacred ordination and upon serious consideration of the matter in the presence of God, do testify under oath that I am not compelled by any coercion, force or fear to receive this Sacred Order, but that I desire it of my own accord and that I wish to receive it with full and free deliberation, as I know and feel that I am really called by God.

I declare that all the burdens and all the other obligations arising from the same Order are fully known to me, which of my own accord I wish and propose to assume, and which I resolve, with the help of God, to observe most earnestly through the course of my life.

In particular, I declare that I clearly know the full meaning of the law of celibacy and I firmly declare that, with God’s help, I will gladly keep it and completely observe it.

Finally, I promise with sincere faith that, according to the Sacred Canons, I will most obediently observe all that my superiors command me and ecclesiastical discipline requires of me, and that I am prepared to set a good example both in deed and word, and that I may earn my reward from God for the reception of such a great office.

So I promise, vow, and swear; so may God help me and these Holy Gospels of God which I touch with my hand.

Signed: ___________________________ Day:______, Month:______________, Year:________

In the Presence of

______________________________ Day:______, Month:______________, Year:_______

Very Rev. _______________________
Rector
Assumption Seminary
San Antonio, Texas