

# The 9 Keys

## Sample Vocation Process

(From Discernment to Ordination)

### Pre-Seminary Process

#### 1. **Inquiry**: A name comes to the Vocation Director

- Immediate follow-up:
  - Respond as soon as possible to the inquiry and schedule an opportunity to meet to continue the conversation.
  - Create a record in the “Candidate” database
- Begin to pray for him daily

#### 2. **Prospect**: The individual is considered a potential candidate

- Vocation Director learns more about the candidate over coffee, lunch, or an office meeting.
- Vocation Director starts to assess “Does this man show the general skills/disposition?”
- Vocation Director screens for any serious obstacles/impediments.
- Provides resources and information to learn and discern:
  - *To Save a Thousand Souls*
  - *Is Jesus Calling You To Be A Catholic Priest*
  - *Have I Been With You?*
- There is NO PRESSURE at this stage, invitation only.
- Invite to retreats and discernment events.

#### 3. **Candidate**: The individual is starting to show signs of action

- Questions arise both from the individual and the Vocation Director.
- Serious interest, evident lifestyle, learning, willingness to grow.
- Working on any concrete recommendations mentioned by the Vocation Director: daily prayer, monthly confession, spiritual direction, spiritual reading, etc.
- Role shifts to more of guidance and direction, especially with needed areas of healing and overcoming any fears of moving forward.
- An invitation to begin the application process is initiated.

## Seminary Process

1. **The Bishop:** If the Vocation Director/Diocesan Seminarian Review Board recommends the applicant for acceptance, then the Bishop reviews the application material:
  - All application paperwork (or just those elements he desires);
  - Make sure he has the psychological report and any follow-up reports.

The Bishop's office sets up a meeting with the applicant:

- Bishop meets with applicant and **accepts** him;
- Bishop meets with applicant and **does not accept** him.

Vocation Director communicates with the applicant the Bishop's decision and makes sure the results are communicated by letter to those involved.

2. **Seminary placement:** Vocation Director and Bishop discuss a suitable placement for the Seminarian. If necessary, the Director accompanies the seminarian on a visit.
  
3. **Seminarian Gatherings:** The seminarian now formally meets several times a year with his Diocesan Brothers "DB's":
  - Fall Gathering
  - Spring Gathering
  - Ordinations
  - Summer Retreat
  
4. **Seminary:** The seminary program is designed for ongoing:
  - Formation: 4 Pillars of Formation
  - Discernment: Spiritual Direction, Confession, Weekly Apostolates
  - Evaluation: Spring Faculty Evaluation and Summer Evaluations
  
5. **Bishop Review:** The Bishop and Vocation Director review the seminary evaluations in the summer with three options in mind:
  - Approved to continue;
  - Approved with conditions – incorporated in a new formation plan;
  - Dismissed (Vocation Director will meet with the seminarian and communicate the decision; an official letter is sent to the seminarian, the seminary and remains on file)