



## INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRITING AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

As part of the application to the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, you are asked to write an autobiography. The autobiography will be kept confidential and will be read only by those who interview you for admission to the Archdiocese and the seminary you will attend. Please type the autobiography and attach a current photograph of yourself, and e-mail them to [vocations@archdpdx.org](mailto:vocations@archdpdx.org) or send them via regular mail to the Office of Vocations at 2838 East Burnside Street, Portland OR 97214. Make sure that you keep a copy for yourself.

In writing the autobiography, follow the outline below. List each of the eleven categories and type your response below it. Also, please label each category.

### 1. Self

Describe yourself: your physical appearance, personality, health, talents, and gifts, hobbies and interests, as well as your values. Please include how you feel about each.

### 2. Timeline

Write a chronology of where you have been in your lifetime, from birth to present. Include what you were doing at each point and any major or significant events that occurred. Be as specific as possible.

For example:

1958	Born on November 19 in Portland OR
1958-63	Lived at home with my family in Portland, OR
1963-71	Attended elementary school at St. Mary's, Portland, OR
1970	My brother, Michael, was born in April.
1971-75	Moved to Salem, Oregon, and attended La Salle High School.

### 3. Family

Briefly describe your family. What was it like growing up in your family? Describe your relationship with your parents and family members, the role you played within your family, and how your family relationships have changed over the years. Include your parents' attitudes toward education, religion, and priestly ministry. Describe any traumatic incidents, such as experiences of alcoholism or abuse.

### 4. Relationships and Experiences

Describe the experience and people whom you believe were important in your development. What and who helped in making you the person you are today? Within this section please touch on the following:

- Your relationships with significant friends, including your dating experience.

- What has influenced your awareness of your self-worth, your ability to love and to accept love, and the acceptance of your sexuality?

#### 5. Success and Failure

Describe at least one meaningful success in your life as well as one meaningful failure. How did they bring you clarity about how you wish to live? Explain why you see them in this light. The events do not have to be earth-shattering or highly traumatic, but they must reveal something about your own self.

#### 6. Spiritual Life

Share your understanding of, and your relationship to, God and the Church. Reflect on the place of personal and communal prayer in your life, including your pattern and style of personal prayer. How would you describe the essence of your spirituality? What would be most essential to nurture you as a human being and as a priest?

#### 7. Education

Briefly describe your experience as a student and the formal study you have completed. What value does study have in your life? How has study been part of the ongoing development of your vocation? Is there any particular area you would like to continue studying?

#### 8. Priestly Life

What for you is at the heart of priestly life? Why do you wish to answer this vocation? Describe the kind of priest you would like to be.

#### 9. Ministry

Briefly reflect on your experiences of ministry, and especially of leadership in ministry. What has given you the greatest joy? What challenges have you faced? What opportunities have you had to exercise leadership? What have you learned about yourself through your experience of ministry? What forms of ministry do you hope to do as a priest?

#### 10. Community

What have been your experiences of Christian community? What have been the challenges as well as the blessings of being a part of a parish community? What in a parish community attracts you to the life of a diocesan priest?

#### 11. Conclusion

Reflect on why you are answering the vocation to seminary studies. How do you see yourself growing within a community of men who are preparing for the priesthood? How do you see yourself contributing to the community? If there is any other important area you would like to include in your autobiography, please feel free to do so.