

How to Become a Priest, Brother or Sister



Here are the basic steps to becoming a priest or professed member of a religious order. These steps to a religious vocation may vary in different orders or congregations.

To become a diocesan priest:



Discernment → Seminararian → Deacon → Priest

Interested men meet with a vocations or spiritual director to learn more about the priesthood and priestly formation. You then become a candidate for a specific diocese.

After completing a requisite number of courses in philosophy, one begins four years of graduate studies in theology. During their years of formation seminararians also deepen their prayer life, work on becoming a well-rounded person, and minister in parishes.

During your last year of theology and upon the recommendation of your bishop, you are ordained as a transitional deacon and begin ministry such as preaching, catechetical instruction, counseling, and service to the community.

Having successfully completed all of your studies and deepened your spiritual, intellectual, human and pastoral understanding, you promise to be a priest forever and you are ordained by your bishop.

To become a sister or brother:



Affiliate/Postulant → Novice → Temporarily Professed → Sister/Brother

Most candidates start in or after college. You spend a few months to a couple years getting to know the community you want to join.

For one to two years, you continue your studies, deepen your knowledge of the religious order, and prepare for the work that you will do.

In each of the next three or more years, you will take temporary vows, deepening your commitment to God and the religious order.

Having successfully completed your formation, you take final vows, a promise that you will remain a sister, brother, or religious priest forever.

