



St. Mark Seminary, Erie, PA

Summary of Application Procedures for the Diocese of Erie

The following describes the typical application process, which can be amended to fit the unique nature of a given situation.

General Information

The Vocation Director guides the applicant through the entire application process and at the same time acts on behalf of the Church to help in the selection of qualified candidates. It is important to note that application to the seminary does not guarantee acceptance, and that at any time either the diocese or the candidate may terminate the application process.

All parts of the application process are covered by *limited confidentiality*, which means that access to information gathered during the application process is limited to the following agents or employees of the Diocese of Erie: the Diocesan Bishop, the Vocation Director, the Rector and Vice-Rector of St. Mark Seminary, the Faculty of St. Mark Seminary, the psychologist who does the assessment, and the secretary of the Vocation Office.

Outline of the Process

- Part 1. Formal Interview. The applicant contacts the Vocation Director to set up a time and a place where the Formal Interview may take place. It consists of two parts: a written part containing mostly biographical information and family history, and an oral part containing items of a more personal nature dealing with the applicant's own personal history, education, sense of celibacy and sexuality, and sense of vocation and ministry.
- Part 2. Psychological Assessment. Seminary applicants must undergo a psychological assessment, not unlike those used by many industries or businesses in the United States. The Vocation Director instructs the applicant to call the psychologist to set up an appointment to begin the assessment. Usually the assessment is finished in two sessions, the first of which is mostly written, and the second of which is mostly oral. These sessions can be done at the mutual convenience of the applicant and the psychologist. The diocese assumes the cost for this assessment. At the end of the assessment, the applicant will receive oral feedback from the psychologist, while the Vocation Office will later receive a written report which becomes the property of the Diocese of Erie.
- Part 3. Paperwork. This last part of the application process fulfills, among other things, canon law requirements for admission to the seminary. Some of the items in the paperwork include: sacramental documents, legal clearances, HIV test results, academic records, acceptance letter to Gannon University, autobiography, and various letters of recommendation. Some items which require more extensive time, such as admission to Gannon University, are best begun early in the application process.

Conclusion

Upon completion of the application, the entire packet is sent to the bishop, who makes the final determination whether or not to accept a candidate. Once accepted, a candidate is under the direction of the seminary and is no longer under the direction of the Vocation Office.