

Age for Ordination

The *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (“ND”) provides:

“In accord with Canon Law, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops establishes the minimum age for ordination to the permanent diaconate at thirty-five for all candidates, married or celibate. The establishment of a maximum age for ordination is at the discretion of the diocesan bishop, keeping in mind the particular needs and expectations of the diocese regarding diaconal ministry and life” (no. 87).

Since the minimum age for ordination to the permanent diaconate is 35, a candidate for our five-year formation program must be at least 30 years of age when aspirancy begins.

Pursuant to ND 87 and the Code of Canon Law, United States dioceses have adopted various maximum ages for their deacon candidates. The Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas has chosen not to impose a specific maximum age, but will assess older applicants on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the following factors pertaining to age:

- (1) The applicant’s age at the time aspirancy would begin; candidates under the age of 62 are preferred;
- (2) The applicant’s health, specifically as it relates to the ability to complete the formation process and ultimately minister as a deacon;
- (3) Any pre-determined expectation on the applicant’s part as to how long, health permitting, he intends to serve in active ministry;
- (4) Projected cost-benefit ratio taking into consideration the potential years of service based on applicant’s overall fitness for service and the costs to the Archdiocese for the formation of a deacon candidate.