

## Personal Discernment

The very first steps in considering a call to ordination in the Diocese of New Jersey involves a process of personal discernment; the scrutiny by the aspirant of his or her call, qualities, and gifts. Throughout the process, the Commission on Ministry and related committees will be seeking to determine whether the aspirant has the qualities specified below:

*A maturing Christian faith:* reflecting an understanding of Christ's presence, conveying a sense of being called to service, of sharing the Gospel, living in the Spirit, showing love and exhibiting openness to the whole body of Christ's people in ecumenical engagement; and a disciplined pattern of private and common prayer; the ability and willingness to speak in a personal way of his or her experience of God and Jesus Christ.

*Leadership potential:* initiative, vision, willingness to risk, potential to motivate other and to energize struggling churches into dynamic and growing congregations; the ability to sense and deal with the impact of systems and institutions, as well as with interpersonal conflicts.

*Sense of vocation for the ordained ministry:* ability to articulate a call, a beckoning, recognized as from God and what he or she believes he or she has to offer to the Church; ability to articulate past and present personal history of ministry.

*Effective communication:* presence and poise in functioning with people, both one-on-one and with groups; ability to express self simply, clearly, and directly with the capacity to organize thoughts and actions and to establish goals and direction.

*Intellectual competence:* ability to learn, to process information and apply results, intellectual curiosity as an ongoing process in the aspirant's life. Evidence of the ability to grow in a coherent sense of God's work through history and in contemporary events, and the potential for appropriately communicating that knowledge. An aspirant for discernment must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university or the equivalent.

*Humility:* understanding and acceptance of his or her humanity and ultimate dependence on God.

*Awareness of the power of sacrament, word and liturgy:* willingness to become a symbol bearer.

*Loving heart:* capacity and inclination to be close to and care for others, including family, friends, and colleagues.

*A sense of self:* strong sense of self-worth, psychological health, level of emotional maturity.

*Personal integrity:* authenticity, trustworthiness, dependability.

*Sense of the fitness of things:* judgment, boundaries, common sense.

*Loyalty to the institution of the Church:* A healthy respect for the traditions and authority of the Church from a position of challenge as well as from a position of support.

*Commitment to continuing personal, professional, and spiritual growth.*