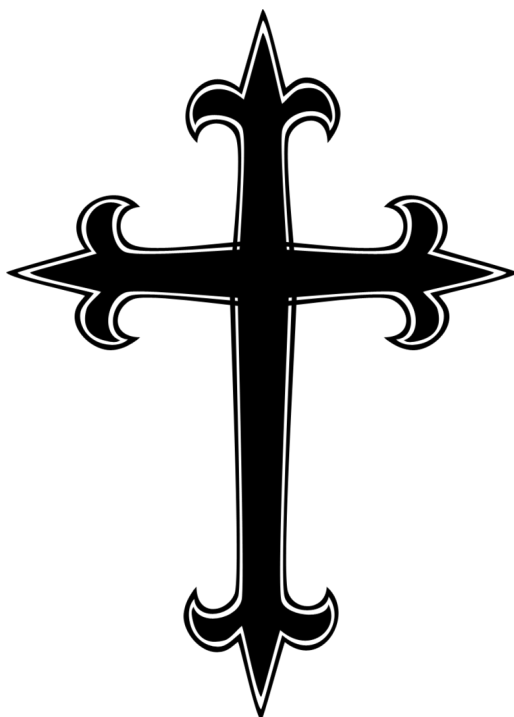


**Diocese of St. Petersburg  
Office of the Permanent Diaconate  
Internship Handbook**



*They must first be tested,  
and then if there is nothing against them  
let them serve as deacons.*

*1 Timothy 3:10*

# **SECTION I INTERNSHIP OVERVIEW**



## Introductory Letter for the Start of Internship

Dear Aspirant,

As you embark through the Diaconate Formation Program, I wanted to provide an overview of the upcoming internship experience—a crucial component of your diaconal formation process.

Your internship isn't just a service project; it's a transformative opportunity designed to evaluate and nurture your growth across the dimensions of formation as outlined in the National Directory: Human, Spiritual, Intellectual, and Pastoral. The internship requires a minimum of 40 hours of immersive engagement - 30 hours in the field and 10 hours of administrative time focused on supervision, instruction and reflective tasks.

What's unique about this internship is its tailored nature. It's not about you selecting an experience, but rather the meticulous selection of an experience for you. Collaboratively chosen with your mentor and the diaconate formation staff, this placement is intended to challenge your existing skills, unearth untapped potential, and prompt deep reflections across various aspects of ministry.

Once the internship is selected, the aspirant will complete two forms. The first is the Internship Approval Form to document the location of the internship experience, the time frames, and agreement of the Deacon Mentor and the Coordinator of Pastoral Field Education. The second is the Learning Agreement that delineates additional details of the internship (e.g., supervisor) but also the specific formation objectives and tasks to be completed by the aspirant. These documents require collaboration and signatures from yourself, your mentor, and the on-site supervisor. Again, it's imperative that the aspirant receive approval and complete these forms before the start of the internship.

It is also important to note that success on internship does not lie in satisfying the required hours of service. Rather, the final evaluation considers how this experience has shaped each of the formation dimensions. Input from your Supervisor and Deacon Mentor as well as your completion of the Reflection Paper will all play integral roles in assessing your growth in formation.

Throughout the Internship Handbook, you'll find comprehensive details on timelines, potential internship selections, discussion points regarding the reflection paper, and more.

This journey concerns your holistic growth, progression as an aspirant with an evolving understanding of ministry. Embrace this internship experience as an opportunity to discover, reflect, and develop across the diverse dimensions of your formation.

Should you have any queries or need further assistance, I'm here to support you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Glenn Smith', is positioned above the typed name.

Deacon Glenn Smith  
Coordinator of Pastoral Field Education

## Introduction

At the culmination of each academic year throughout your formation journey, an essential facet involves a practical field experience encompassing 40 hours. This experience is integral to your formation and discernment, carrying equal weight to other elements within the process. It's crucial to note that this internship diverges significantly from service projects. The purpose is not solely on offering charitable work. Instead, the internship is a means to assess your holistic growth across all dimensions of formation.

The Coordinator of Pastoral Field Education (C.P.F.E.), your designated mentor, and the supervisor at your internship site will guide this process. Internship selection will be done by the C.P.F.E. in close collaboration with your mentor. An Internship Approval Form and Internship Learning Agreement must be signed and submitted before initiating on-site work.

Upon completing the 40 hour experience, an evaluation session with your on-site supervisor takes place. Additionally, you are expected to compose a Final Reflection paper spanning ten to fifteen pages and submit this along with the supervisors evaluation to the C.P.F.E. before the commencement of the fall academic semester. This reflective paper is one of the primary means the formation team will evaluate and assess your internship experience. After considering these papers the mentor will receive feedback for possible inclusion information in PGP, you will receive a written internship assessment.

## Dimensions of Formation

There are two separate but complimentary documents the church has issued concerning the formation of deacons: *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* by the USCCB and *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons* by the Congregation for Catholic Education in Rome. Both documents talk about the three charisms of the deacon: liturgy, word, and charity, and the dimensions of formation.

### ***Human Dimension***

#### *Growth in Self-formation*

A participant comes to formation with a history of interrelationships with other people. Formation for ministry begins with human formation and development. Participants “should therefore cultivate a series of human qualities, not only out of proper and due growth and realization of self but also with a view to the ministry”<sup>i</sup>

### ***Spiritual Dimension: A mature spirituality in imitation of Jesus***

“Human formation leads to and finds its completion in the spiritual dimension of formation, which constitutes the heart and unifying center of every Christian formation. It aims to tend to the development of the new life received in Baptism.”<sup>ii</sup>

### ***Intellectual Dimension***

#### *Knowledge of Faith and Church*

Intellectual formation offers the participant “substantial nourishment” for his life's pastoral, human, and spiritual dimensions. Intellectual formation is a “precious instrument” for effective discernment and ministry.<sup>iii</sup>

### ***Pastoral Dimension***

#### *The Diakonia of word, liturgy, and charity*

An integral formation must relate the human, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions to pastoral practice. “The whole formation imparted to the participants . . . aims at preparing them to enter into communion with the charity of Christ. . . Hence, their formation in different aspects must have a fundamentally pastoral character.”<sup>iv</sup>

## Your Guides in the Process

### **Coordinator of Pastoral Field Education (C.P.F.E.)**

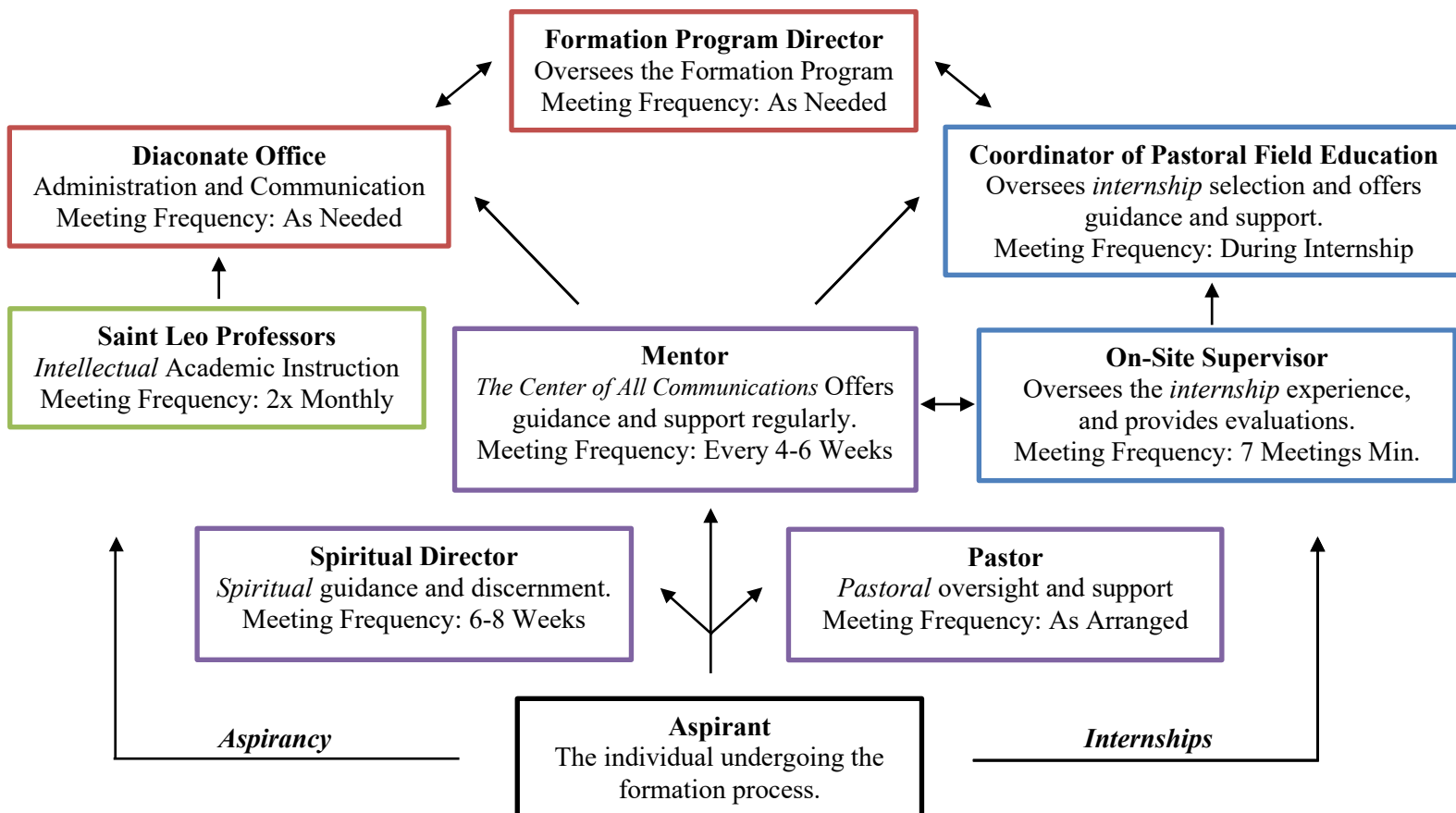
The C.P.F.E. oversees the selection of internships for the aspirants, providing essential forms, schedules, and approval for the proposed internship outlined in the Internship Learning Agreement. The C.P.F.E. offers authoritative guidance and program requirements. The C.P.F.E. evaluates of the aspirant's reflection paper and prepares evaluations for the aspirant of the aspirant for the formation team. In case of significant challenges during the internship, immediate contact with the C.P.F.E. is advised.

### **Your Mentor**

Your mentor plays a crucial role, possessing a deep understanding of your formation journey, strengths, and areas requiring growth. Collaboration with your mentor is essential in aligning your preferences and goals with the internships selected by the C.P.F.E. Notably, the mentor guides the aspirant in navigating the selected internship experience.

### **Your On-Site Supervisor**

The on-site supervisor oversees the practical aspects of the chosen internship and is intimately familiar with the ministry where the aspirant completes their 40 hours. They hold academic training and expertise in this field, and supervisors from the aspirant's parish are discouraged. During the initial phase, the supervisor should spend significant time with the aspirant. Subsequently, if both parties are comfortable, the aspirant may work independently. However, regular meetings for processing experiences are mandatory. The supervisor need not be Catholic, but embracing diverse perspectives is encouraged. In cases where the supervisor doesn't share the same background, considering collaboration with a deacon at the internship and closer engagement with the mentor can enhance understanding of Catholic practices and cultural nuances.



## **Internship Assignment Process**

**Matching Process:** Assignments will be based on aspirants' personality, skills, and developmental needs identified during discernment and evaluations. This should be consistent with the Mentors evaluations and PGP.

**Supervisory Structure:** Each internship will have a designated supervisor responsible for overseeing and evaluating the aspirant's progress. The experience should be processed with the supervisor regarding relevance to diaconal formation. In the case of a non-deacon supervisor this should be done with the mentor.

Your internships are thoughtfully tailored to be more than mere tasks. They are intentional opportunities crafted to foster your development holistically. These experiences are strategically designed to challenge your existing skills and encourage the exploration of new capabilities. They aim to push your boundaries, guiding you through challenges that pave the way for personal and growth in formation.

Moreover, these internships are carefully structured to encourage deep reflection. We recognize the profound significance of introspection within your journey. Each experience prompts you to look inward, enabling you to contemplate how your experiences resonate across these dimensions. They're crafted to evoke insightful reflections, contributing to your comprehensive understanding of ministry and evolving role.

This deliberate approach aims to create an environment that supports your multifaceted growth, addresses specific challenges to enhance your competencies, nurtures your skill set, and prompts reflective insights across all dimensions of your journey towards becoming a deacon.

## **Types of Internships**

Internships will encompass diverse areas of ministry to provide a well-rounded formation experience. These may include but are not limited to:

- **Social Services:** Engaging in community service, working with marginalized groups, and understanding social justice issues.
- **Hospital/Hospice Ministry:** Providing spiritual support and comfort to patients and families in healthcare settings.
- **Prison Ministry:** Engaging with incarcerated individuals and supporting their spiritual needs.

## **Expectations and Responsibilities**

### **Aspirant Expectations:**

- Engage actively and responsibly in assigned tasks.
- Maintain professionalism and confidentiality.
- Seek guidance and support from supervisor and mentor.
- Reflect on experiences and integrate experiences into their formation.

### **Supervisor Responsibilities:**

- Provide guidance, support, and regular feedback to aspirants.
- Assess aspirant's performance using the provided evaluation criteria.
- Encourage reflective practices and assist in integrating theoretical knowledge with practical experiences.

## **Internship Documents**

All documents referenced in this correspondence, including the Internship Learning Agreement, Internship Hours Record, Supervisor and Intern Meeting Form, Examen and Journal guidance, and additional notes associated with the Internship Learning Agreement, can be readily accessed and found within the comprehensive Internship Handbook, Section II.

### **1. Internship Handbook**

Provides comprehensive guidelines and information about the diaconate formation program's internship process. It outlines expectations, requirements, evaluation criteria, and guidance for aspirants undertaking internships.

### **2. Internship Learning Agreement**

A formal agreement document outlining the terms, objectives, and responsibilities of the aspirant and the internship site. It includes learning goals, activities, evaluation criteria, and signatures from the intern, supervisor, mentor and C.P.F.E.

### **3. Internship Learning Agreement – Notes (Details of Relation to Supervisor)**

Additional notes or guidelines associated with the Internship Learning Agreement. These could include clarifications, specific instructions, or other information pertinent to the agreement.

### **4. Internship Hours Record**

A document used to record the number of hours the aspirant spends during the internship. It includes fields for date, hours worked, tasks performed, and supervisor signature.

### **5. Supervisor and Intern Meeting Form**

A form used to document meetings between the intern and their supervisor. It may contain sections to record meeting dates, discussion points, progress assessments, and action plans.

### **6. Examen, Journal, and Reflection Paper**

This document offers guidance for the Examen—a daily spiritual practice—and journaling activities, including prompts and instructions. It also supports crafting the required reflection paper.

### **7. Acknowledgment of Handbook Review**

An acknowledgment form confirming that the aspirant has received, read, reviewed, and understood the contents of the Internship Handbook.

## **Internship Timeline**

### **Pre-Internship Preparation:**

**Before the Academic Year Start:** Review the Internship Handbook for guidelines and expectations.

**Before Internship (Personal Growth Plan):** Meet with Mentor, Formation Director, or C.P.F.E. to clarify the dimensions of formation and preparation for the Examen and journaling.

### **Internship Period:**

- **Internship Start Date:** Begin your assigned internship.
- **Throughout Internship Period:**
  - Engage in the Examen daily and maintain a reflective journal to document experiences and insights.
  - Complete designated internship hours as per program requirements.
  - Regularly meet with the on-site supervisor to discuss experiences and progress.

### **Document Completion and Submission:**

#### **Before Internship Start:**

- Review and sign the Internship Learning Agreement.

INTERNSHIPS CAN NOT BEGIN WITHOUT ALL REQUIRED SIGNATURES

#### **During Internship:**

- Maintain and update the Internship Hours Record with accurate hours.
- Use the Supervisor and Intern Meeting Form to document meetings and discussions.
- Incorporate observations from the Examen into reflective papers and evaluations.

#### **Post-Internship:**

**After Internship Completion:** Finalize reflective paper based on the Examen, journal entries, and observations from the supervisor

**Submit Documentation:** Ensure all required documentation, including reflection papers and completed forms, are submitted by the specified deadline to the C.P.F.E.

### **Submission Deadlines:**

**Before the Fall Semester Start:** Submit the completed reflection paper, Internship Hours Records, Supervisor and Intern Meeting Records, and any other required documentation to the C.P.F.E.

**Timely Responses:** Address any feedback or additional requirements from the C.P.F.E. promptly.



## **Reflection Paper and the Examen**

The reflection paper of between ten and fifteen double-spaced pages will be the primary way the formation team evaluates this essential piece of your formation. The key to your reflection paper is to assess growth or challenges in your dimensions of formation due to your internship. If you don't understand the dimensions, meet with your mentor, the Formation Director, or the C.P.F.E. before beginning your internship. Papers that do not meet these criteria will be returned to you, and a new paper that addresses growth or challenges in the dimensions of formation will be required.

### **A tool that may be helpful follows:**

The Examen is a daily spiritual practice first put forward by St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits. As with all prayer, remind yourself that you are in God's presence, and ask God to help you with your prayer.

### **The Examen consists of five parts:**

- 1) **Gratitude:** Recall anything from the day you are incredibly grateful and give thanks.
- 2) **Review:** Recall the events of the day, from start to finish and in detail, noticing where you felt God's presence and where you accepted or turned away from any invitations to grow in love.
- 3) **Sorrow:** Recall any actions or dispositions you regret
- 4) **Forgiveness:** Ask God's forgiveness. Decide if you need to reconcile with anyone you may have hurt.
- 5) **Grace:** Ask God for the grace you need for the next day and an ability to see God's presence more clearly

When reviewing your day in step two, it may be helpful to ask yourself how you felt at each incident; below are some sample questions.

- Was I scared, bored, excited, sad, comforted, angry, confused, repulsed, etc? **Human Dimension**
- Ask what these moments and feelings tell you about yourself in ministry, the presence of God at that moment, and what conclusions you can discern from those two things. **Spiritual Dimension**
- Did the experience influence your feelings about people you may not have come in contact with before? **Human Dimension**
- Did it influence how you think about your parish, job, and family? **Human Dimension**
- How did what you learned in your academic classes come into play? **Intellectual Dimension**
- Did this experience influence your notion of God and the Church? **Pastoral/Spiritual Dimension]**
- How did this experience foster my growth in allowing people to be better see God and grow in ministry? **Pastoral Dimension**

## **Daily Reflections Journal**

Utilize your journal entries as the primary foundation for your reflection paper. Craft a narrative that integrates these journal reflections, creating a cohesive and insightful piece. However, refrain from including content more suited for discussions with your mentor or spiritual advisor. Your journal should encompass topics worth discussing with your spiritual guide. If it lacks such content, consider reevaluating your approach.

Remember, not every ministry experience aligns with every individual. Struggling or finding an experience challenging doesn't reflect negatively on you as a person or your potential as a deacon. The essence lies in your growth across all dimensions of formation, irrespective of the specific ministry experience. Focus on your overall development rather than perceiving difficulties in a particular ministry as a reflection of your capabilities.

## Summary of Requirements

The requirements for the reflection paper are as follows:

- **Length:** The reflection paper should be between ten and fifteen double-spaced pages.
- **Content Focus:** The primary evaluation criteria for the formation team is an honest assessment of growth or challenges in the dimensions of formation resulting from your internship.
- **Understanding of Dimensions:** Ensure comprehension of the dimensions of formation. Seek guidance from your mentor, Formation Director, or the C.P.F.E. if clarification is needed before starting the internship.
- **Evaluation Criteria:** Papers must address growth or challenges in the dimensions of formation. Failure to meet these criteria will require resubmission of a paper addressing these aspects.
- **Examen Tool Integration:** Utilize the Examen, a daily spiritual practice by St. Ignatius of Loyola, to structure your reflection. The Examen consists of: *Gratitude, Review, Sorrow, Forgiveness, Grace*
- **Reflection Questions:** While reviewing your day in step two of the Examen, consider various questions related to different dimensions:
  - Human Dimension: Reflect on emotions and reactions felt during incidents.
  - Spiritual Dimension: Analyze the presence of God and self-discoveries in ministry moments.
  - Impact on Perception: Assess how experiences influenced views on people, parish, job, family, God, or the Church.
  - Academic Integration: Evaluate the application of academic learning in practical experiences.

### **Additional guidance includes:**

- Utilizing your journal entries as the foundation for the reflection paper.
- Ensuring the paper content is suitable for reflection rather than discussions with mentors or spiritual advisors.
- Acknowledging that challenges in specific ministry experiences don't define your capabilities as a person or future deacon.
- Prioritizing overall growth across all dimensions of formation rather than focusing solely on difficulties in a particular ministry.
- Reflection papers should not be and accounting of daily events, though some of this may be necessary for a limited degree.
- Reflection papers can include some discussion of the personal details of persons served. However, this should not be the entire focus of the paper not how they came to see God in this experience through your efforts, or challenges to this.

**SECTION II**  
**INTERNSHIP**  
**DOCUMENTS**

**Diocese of St. Petersburg  
Diaconate Formation Program  
Internship Learning Agreement**

Name of Intern: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Formation Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information for Internship Supervisor:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information for Internship Site (if different from above):

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

THE INTERNSHIP SUPERVISOR AND THE INTERN AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

A. Dates of Internship

Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

B. Objectives: The intern and the internship supervisor set the following objectives for the summer internship period (adding more as needed).

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

C. Supervision: The intern and intern supervisor agree to meet for formal supervision at regularly scheduled times/locations.

Day of the Week: \_\_\_\_\_

From \_\_\_\_\_ Until \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

D. Specific Tasks The supervisor and intern will be involved in the following specific tasks as part of his internship:

<u>SPECIFIC TASKS</u>	<u>DAY OF THE WEEK</u>	<u>TIME OF DAY</u>
-----------------------	------------------------	--------------------

E. Completion of Learning Agreement: After completing and signing this learning agreement, the intern will send a copy to the Coordinator of Field Education

F. Supervisor Evaluation: To provide the formation team with timely supervisory input, please have your supervisor return the evaluation to the Office of the Diaconate. It should be returned to the office within one week of the completion of the internship. It can be emailed to Anna Maslanka, Administrative Assistant for the Office of the Diaconate, at [amaslanka@dosp.org](mailto:amaslanka@dosp.org) for distribution/signature of the Coordinator of Pastoral Field Education (CPFE). A meeting of the intern and supervisor to discuss the evaluation should precede its submission

G. Additional notations

THIS AGREEMENT IS MADE AND ACCEPTED BY:

Intern: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Formation Advisor (Mentor): \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator of Pastoral Field Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*The intern is responsible for sending a copy of this agreement completed and signed by all parties except the CPFE.*

## Internship Learning Agreement - Notes

Factors that will be considered by the formation team regarding your success in the internship experience:

- 1) Supervisor's evaluation
- 2) Reflection paper

These documents, along with the Supervisor & Intern Meeting Record form, will be forwarded by you to the Coordinator of Pastoral Field Experience (CPFE).

### **Supervisor Evaluation**

*Regular meetings between you and your supervisor are not optional, and a record of the meetings is part of the supervisor evaluation form. The Supervisor & Intern Meeting Record Form should be included with the evaluation and reflection paper.*

Please approach these field experiences as an opportunity for growth. If your supervisor does not spontaneously offer suggestions for change/development - elicit them. Please know these suggestions are not meant to comment on your character or abilities. Instead, the internship experience is crucial to your formation. It can be challenging but is also an opportunity for continued growth and development. You should know that growth and development do not end at the moment of ordination. It is an ongoing process. The internship will be the first opportunity to gain valuable insight with the supervisor's assistance.

Consequently, in your meetings with your supervisor, you should attempt to elicit suggestions or challenges for change. Not obtaining this valuable input would be a lost opportunity in your formation.

Even though the Supervisor evaluations will be forwarded by you, your signature on the supervisor evaluation indicates that you have met with your supervisor and discussed the evaluation before it is sent to the CPFE. Internships are not complete without a supervisor's evaluation.

Diocese of St. Petersburg  
Diaconate Formation Program  
**Internship Hours Record**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ # of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

If necessary, note more meetings below or on the back of the sheet.

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

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Diocese of St. Petersburg  
Diaconate Formation Program  
**Supervisor and Intern Meeting Form**

Meeting 1 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting 2 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting 3 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting 4 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting 5 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting 6 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting 7 Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

**Final Meeting to Discuss Evaluation:** Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor Initials \_\_\_\_\_

If necessary, note more meetings below or on the back of the sheet.

**ADDITIONAL NOTES**

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Diocese of St. Petersburg  
Diaconate Formation Program  
**Examen, Journal, and Reflection Paper**

It is strongly recommended that you keep a journal during your internship to help process the experience with your supervisor and prepare for your final reflection paper. Additionally, you might consider using the Examen in maintaining this journal. Unlike what one might typically think about when considering a journal, the Examen allows for more excellent spiritual reflection on the impact of the internship experience.

The Examen is a daily spiritual practice first put forward by St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Society of Jesus or Jesuits. As with all prayer, remind yourself that you are in God's presence, and ask God to help you with your prayer. The Examen consists of five parts:

1. **Gratitude:** Recall anything from the day you are incredibly grateful and give thanks.
2. **Review:** Recall the events of the day, from start to finish and in detail, noticing where you felt God's presence and where you accepted or turned away from any invitations to grow in love.
3. **Sorrow:** Recall any actions or dispositions you regret
4. **Forgiveness:** Ask God's forgiveness. Decide if you need to reconcile with anyone you may have hurt.
5. **Grace:** Ask God for the grace you need for the next day and an ability to see God's presence more clearly

For your internship, keeping this type of journal in the format of this five-step prayer will be invaluable in personal reflections and the reflection paper. It cannot be emphasized enough that the reflection paper should ***not*** be a diary of entries. Instead, the reflection paper should be a narrative integration of your journal.

The journal will be the building block for your reflection paper. However, the journal should ***not*** be forwarded to the CPFE or Formation Team. If you complete the journal described above, it will likely contain some critical and deeply personal insights. Deep personal reflections (usually in steps 1, 3, 4, & 5) would be best discussed with your spiritual advisor or confessor.

Instead, in developing the reflection paper, you might review your journal entries in step 2; it is helpful to ask yourself how you felt at the time of each incident. Was I scared? Bored? Excited? Sad? Comforted? Angry? Confused? Etc. Ask what these moments and feelings tell you about yourself in ministry, the presence of God at that moment, and what conclusions you can discern from those two things. This is hard work! It is also essential to your formation. Put as much effort into this as you do with your academics!

Lastly, BE HONEST! Not every internship experience is for every person. It does not indicate you are a terrible person or will be a lousy deacon if your experience was for you or if you struggled with it.

### **The Reflection Paper**

Once you have the “building blocks” with the assistance of the Examen and Journal, it will be time for you to write your Reflection Paper. Per the Aspirant & Candidate Internship Handbook, the paper should be between 10 and 15 pages long. Reflection is a primary mechanism the formation team uses to evaluate your internship. However, please remember some key points that have already been mentioned but bear repeating. The Reflection Paper is NOT:

- evaluated based on its length.
- a summary of the events that occurred only.
- deeply personal disclosures better addressed with your mentor or spiritual director.

The Reflection Paper IS:

- an opportunity to see how God has touched you or spoken to you in some individual experiences.
- a narrative of the entire journal with a view to changes in you across the entire experience
- a way of expressing development in the dimension of formation through ministry
- a way of becoming more aware of “shadow areas” (i.e., areas that need to be developed further)

Diocese of St. Petersburg  
Diaconate Formation Program  
**Acknowledgment of Handbook Review**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that I have received, read, and thoroughly reviewed the contents of the Diaconate Formation Program Handbook, including all attached documents, guidelines, and related materials pertaining to the internship.

I confirm my understanding of the guidelines, expectations, and procedures outlined within the handbook, particularly regarding the internship, reflection paper, Examen, journaling activities, and other relevant components.

I am committed to adhering to the principles, protocols, and directives outlined in this handbook throughout my participation in the program.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Acknowledgment Receipt Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Deacon Glenn Smith  
Pastoral Field Coordinator



## End Notes

I USCCB, National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in The United States,

#106 ii Ibid

#110 iii Ibid

#118 iv Ibid

#126 v Ibid

#197