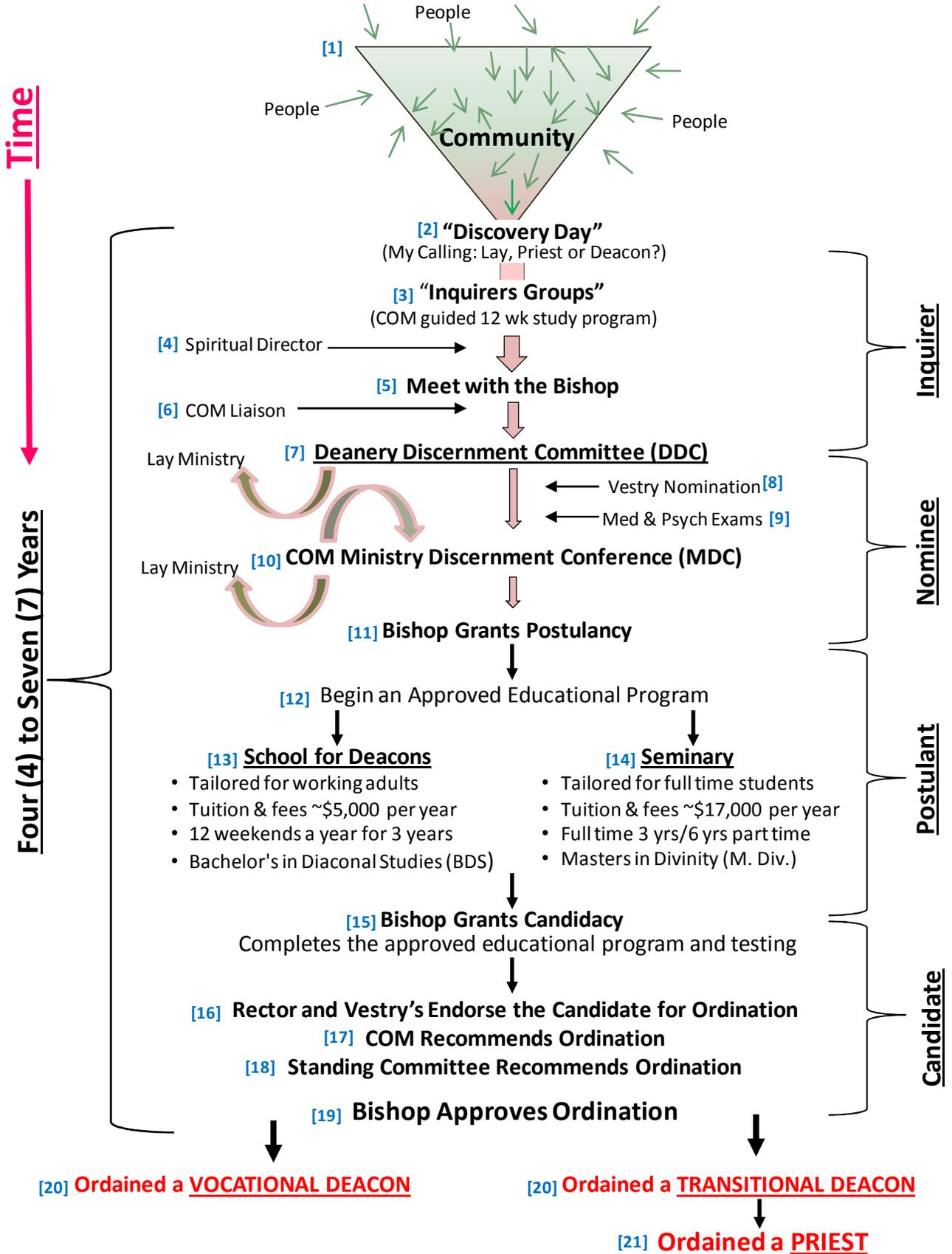


THE PROCESS TO ORDINATION IN EDECRC



A Detailed Explanation of the above FIGURE

The Figure is a vertical time-line, moving from the top of the figure to the bottom, of the process of ordination to Holy Orders in the Episcopal Diocese of El Camino Real.

- [1]** Community is really where it all begins. People move into community, create relationships and share feelings and beliefs. After some period of time, sometimes short, sometimes long, some folks begin to believe they may be called to the ordained ministry. They test this with their family, their church community, with their priest and often with their friends outside of their church community.
- [2]** Some eventually decide to go to “Discovery Day” to learn more about the ministries of The Church and some ideas of how to approach the discernment of God’s call to them either to a specific area of the Laity, to the Priesthood, or the Diaconate.
- [3]** A few decide to move forward with the process of discernment towards Holy Orders and join the 12-week, guided study groups called the “Inquirers Groups.” These groups are designed to make clearer the ministry to which he/she believes they are being called. At this point in the process he/she become what we call an “Inquirer.”
- [4]** If the Inquirer hasn’t already done so, a relationship with a spiritual director must be developed to help with his/her spirituality and discernment.
- [5]** If the Inquirer still believes he/she may be called to Holy Orders, at the request of his/her sponsoring clergy, he/she meets for discussions with the Bishop.
- [6]** If the Bishop concurs, a member of the Diocesan Commission on Ministry (COM) is identified to walk beside the Inquirer on his/her journey and a Deanery Discernment Committee (DDC) is requested.
- [7]** The DDC is a four to six person team of parishioners in the Inquirer’s deanery that work very hard with the Inquirer in mutual discernment of God’s call. At the end of the approximately three month, ten meeting mutual discernment process, the DDC is charged to recommend to the Bishop, the COM and the rector of the sponsoring parish that the Inquirer either continue with his/her process of discernment of Holy Orders or continue serving the God’s church as a member of the laity.
- [8]** If the DDC recommends the Inquirer continue with his/her process of discernment, the Inquirer returns to their sponsoring parish and requests the vestry and rector nominate him/her for postulancy.

- [9]** If nominated, he/she becomes a “Nominee” and schedules and completes both a medical and a psychological exam.
- [10]** When all pertinent paperwork is complete, the Nominee meets with the COM for his/her Ministry Discernment Conference (MDC). This is an in-depth discussion with the Nominee and members of the COM, considering all available sources of information, including the DDC’s report. Immediately following the MDC, the Nominee is prayerfully considered by the COM in the presence of the Bishop and the decision is made by the Bishop to (1) advance the Nominee to postulancy, (2) require additional formation by the Nominee and return for continued consideration at a later date, or (3) continue serving God and The Church as a member of the laity.
- [11]** The Bishop grants postulancy and the Nominee becomes a “Postulant.”
- [12]** The Postulant is now free to work with the Bishop and begin an accepted educational program moving toward Holy Ministry as either a vocational deacon or a priest.
- [13]** The course work usually required for a vocational deacon in the Diocese of ECR involves at the minimum a three-year program at the School for Deacons. This program is tailored for the working adult. At graduation he/she receives a non-accredited degree of Bachelor’s in Diaconal Studies (BDS).
- [14]** The course work usually required for a priest is a three-year full time or six-year part time program resulting in an accredited degree of Masters in Divinity (Min Div).
- [15]** Near the end of the approved educational program, the Bishop may grant Candidacy to the Postulant. At this point, the Postulant becomes a “Candidate.”
- [16]** When the Candidate completes his/her studies, the rector and the vestry of the sponsoring parish endorses the Candidate for Ordination.
- [17]** The COM recommends Ordination to the Bishop.
- [18]** The Diocesan Standing Committee recommends Ordination to the Bishop.
- [19]** The Bishop approves Ordination.
- [20]** The Candidate is then ordained either as a “Vocational Deacon” or as a “Transitional Deacon.”
- [21]** After no less than six months, the Transitional Deacon is ordained as a “Priest.”