

# ST. BEDE ABBEY VOCATION POLICY

## Vocation candidates

1) **Qualifications for entrance:** Those dealing with possible candidates for St. Bede Abbey should be aware of the following requirements for admission to the community:

A) the candidate must be a male Roman Catholic, free from all canonical impediments, and, as a general rule, at least twenty-one years of age, and at a maximum forty-five years of age;

B) he must have physical health sufficient for him to meet regularly the ordinary demands of our community life;

C) he must have that degree of native intelligence which will enable him to grasp the meaning of religious life and to fulfill its daily requirements; as a general rule he must be a high school graduate;

D) he must have that degree of emotional and spiritual maturity which gives grounds for believing that he can meet the demands of monastic formation;

E) specific concerns such as advanced age, divorced status, sexual orientation, testing for AIDS, etc., are treated in a case by case manner.

2) **Process of Introduction to the Community:** As a general rule the following steps precede admission to postulancy:

A) *Preliminary Exploration:* An individual may for a longer or shorter time explore with a member of the St. Bede community or another appropriate person the possibility of a calling to St. Bede Abbey, or may contact the Vocation Director directly. It is the responsibility of the Vocation Director to see that adequate preliminary assessment of the individual's personal history, maturity and motivation is made. According to the circumstances of the case he may then arrange for visits to the abbey at times suitable for both parties.

B) *Period of Candidacy:* The following procedures characterize the period of candidacy:

1) *Acceptance:* After the preliminary exploration, if the individual appears to show sufficient signs of a vocation and continuing interest in St. Bede, the Vocation Director will make a report and recommendation about him to the abbot. The abbot will decide whether the person will be accepted as a candidate for the postulancy.

2) *Visits:* During his candidacy the person will make several visits of a week or more at the abbey to increase his experience of religious life at St. Bede. If the candidacy period is long, e.g., because of schooling, the Vocation Director will set times for visits at the abbey over this period and maintain regular contact with him.

3) *Financial Aid:* If a candidate received financial aid from the abbey for his schooling or for some other need, he is to promise in writing to repay the abbey, if possible, should he not continue to pursue life at St. Bede.

3) **Transition to the postulancy:** Upon recommendation by the Vocation Director, the abbot is to determine if and when a candidate is to make a formal petition for admission to the postulancy. Upon receipt of the petition the abbot will personally interview the candidate at their mutual convenience. The abbot will give no further consideration to the petition until the following list of documents is received:

A) a baptismal certificate issued in the last six months;

B) Confirmation certificate;

C) a copy of your birth certificate;

D) copy of the marriage certificate of the candidate's parents (or of the candidate if he had been married previously);

E) written statement from the candidate's parents or guardians that neither they nor anyone else is dependent on him for financial support (from the oldest child if the parents are deceased and the candidate has children);

F) educational transcripts of high school and college credits and test scores;

G) physical examination using approved reporting form;

- H) a psychological evaluation which is conducted by a licensed psychologist, and a psycho-sexual history which is conducted by either a licensed psychologist or a licensed mental health professional with skills in conducting psycho-sexual histories and in assessing psycho-sexual health preparation for a life of celibate chastity;
- I) Form (letter) signed by the candidate instructing the psychologist to release to the abbot and the formation personnel of St. Bede Abbey a copy of the written report on the psychological assessments described in item "H" above; if the applicant is under 21 years of age, the form (letter) is to be signed by a parent or guardian and notarized;
- J) the written reports on the candidate's psychological assessments;
- K) Completed "Personal Information Form";
- L) a completed background check including every state/county that the candidate has resided in for the last ten years, and a completed national sex offender registry check;
- M) a minimum of three documented personal references (including at least from one family member) and two professional references, for a total of five references.