

Appendix 3: Admission Boards

- 1) Purpose and Rationale
 - a) The involvement of people from outside of the vocation office in the assessment process can vary in intensity and design. In some cases individuals may be utilized to conduct the first steps of screening even before a formal application process is begun. In other instances a board may be convened to review candidate information and render a final decision regarding acceptance.
 - b) Admission Boards or Vocation Committees are used as one of the ways to bring qualified and objective people into the assessment process. The rationale behind Admission Boards might be seen as coming from the old adage 'Two heads are better than one'. In today's climate of litigation, many affirm the necessity of having important decisions reviewed by competent advisors or made through consultation.
 - c) In a similar vein, group consultation or decision-making can ease the burden of vocation personnel who may feel greater confidence in decisions made in this way.
- 2) Membership
 - a) One of the first steps is to determine who is going to serve on the Board. It should reflect the needs and vision of how the board will operate. In many cases the laity, both women and men, local priests and vocation personnel are represented. At least one member of the body should have knowledge of psychological testing and be able to interpret and critique for the group the psychological screening of the applicant. In some cases even the local bishop may want to be included.
- 3) Procedures

There seem to be few if any absolutes. A variety of procedures results from the differences that exist among dioceses and in the membership involved. Generally speaking, admission boards must accomplish the following:

 - a) Receive the gathered information
 - b) Each member evaluates the information, and often seeks greater clarity through interviewing, according to the skills and life experiences he or she brings.
 - c) The members offer their insights, concerns and recommendations.
 - d) These evaluations and recommendations are brought together.
 - e) Those entrusted with decision-making discern and come to a decision.
- 4) Possible Variations:
 - a) Some boards have each member interview and evaluate the candidate separately; others do this as a group.
 - b) Some boards may have the psychologist give his/her report to the board.
 - c) Some boards evaluate the candidate from a holistic perspective. Others may assign each member specific areas or criteria to evaluate. In one diocese, for example, one priest from the board is assigned to do all initial interviews, two

- d) others combine to do a behavioral interview, and another priest administers the Priest Perceiver Instrument.
- e) Variety exists also with regard to the type of information about the candidate that is given to the members (e.g. the autobiography, application form(s), file notes, psychological report or summary, the entire file).
- f) Not all admission boards have the same authority or reach decisions or recommendations in the same manner. Some are advisory in nature and members may even communicate their recommendation individually. Others seek to reach consensus through discussion and prayer. Their decision may determine the recommendation of the vocation director. Still others arrive at a recommendation or decision through voting.
- g) The local bishop has ultimate responsibility for who is accepted by the diocese, though in practice the task may be delegated to others.
- h) For those boards that meet together for the interview and/or discussion of a candidate's application, the number and timing of gatherings is sometimes driven by demand, while others are set at regular intervals through the course of the year.
- i) Some Boards also have an on-going function throughout the formation process reviewing evaluations annually and before the reception of ministries; as well as advising the Vocation Office and bishop as circumstances may warrant.