

Appendix 4:
Ethical Conduct and Professional Responsibility for Vocation Ministers

- 1) Importance of Ethical Conduct and Respect and Reverence for Persons.
 - a) The conduct of persons entrusted with a share in the mission of the Church should reflect the highest standards of ethics and reverence for persons. Care, compassion and respect should mark the interactions between vocation ministers and those seeking to understand and follow God's call.
- 2) Professional Responsibility
 - a) Therefore, the pastoral work of the vocation office should be performed with responsibility and accountability, e.g., in communications, in the setting and execution of policies, and in maintaining due confidentiality. It is important that the office be professional when dealing with individuals in the process of discernment.
 - i) In these areas, especially, the office should clearly define all programs, expectations, and criteria for evaluation and share these with the individual candidates.
 - ii) The office should also be very careful to safeguard the confidentiality of all screening and selection materials that it handles. Sensitive information should only be available to those who need to have it for the proper exercise of their office - specifically those to whom it has been legally provided by the consent form.
 - iii) The office should observe canonical norms governing confidentiality and obtain appropriate legal advice, canonical and civil, on the right of access to its files and the freedom-of-information laws that apply to any files it keeps.
 - iv) Persons who approach this office have a right to expect that they will be treated with respect, honesty, and compassion¹

¹ Cf. "Legal Considerations: Civil Law and Confidentiality Issues" in Psychology, Counseling and the Seminarian, ed. Robert Wister [Washington, D.C.: NCEA, 1993], 195-243.