



# *Pontifical North American College*

00120 Vatican City State

Europe

## **APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS – 2024**

FOR DIRECTORS OF SEMINARIANS/VOCATIONS

The Pontifical North American College accepts applications to its priestly formation program only from individuals who are sponsored by a bishop of the United States, Canada or Australia. Before entering the College for the configuration stage, all applicants are first required to complete the equivalent of the discipleship stage (i.e., a college seminary or pre-theology formation program), which enables them to meet the prerequisites of the Pontifical Roman universities.

All of the information regarding application to the Pontifical North American College is contained in this admissions packet. Please *Download* and *Print* the admissions documents and have the appropriate persons complete the necessary reports and forms. Please collect these materials and send them by private courier service only (UPS, FEDEX, or DHL) to the following address:

Reverend Monsignor Thomas W. Powers  
Rector  
North American College  
Via del Gianicolo, 14  
00165 Roma

### **APPLICATION PORTFOLIO**

The North American College respectfully requests that all application materials (forms, letters of recommendation, seminarian application, medical and psychological reports, etc.) be submitted in one single application portfolio. This assemblage of materials will help to ensure that each seminarian's application can be processed in the quickest possible way. The (arch)diocesan Director of Seminarians/Vocations is asked to assume responsibility for assembling the application portfolio. Please maintain a copy of all materials included in the application portfolio.

### **APPLICATION PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST**

An *Application Portfolio Checklist* form is included with these application instructions. Please use this checklist to ensure that all necessary documents have been accounted for and included in the application portfolio. Please include this completed Application Portfolio Checklist with the application portfolio.

### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR FULFILLMENT OF APPLICATION PORTFOLIO**

Please remind the applicant that he bears the burden of qualification for admission to the seminary. The application portfolio should be completed in a straightforward and honest way, which provides the Rector and Admissions Committee of the North American College the information they need to make an informed decision regarding the suitability of the applicant for admission. Failure to adequately respond to any of the application questions may delay or halt the application process.

## **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

Billing for room and board, university tuition, NAC formation tuition and computer network/Internet fees is sent directly to the seminarian's sponsoring (arch)diocese in the summer preceding the academic year. If the policy of a particular diocese requires a contribution from the seminarian toward his seminary expenses, the diocese should be reimbursed directly by the seminarian. The College cannot be responsible for billing seminarians directly (*see current PNAC Catalog available online for more information*).

## **APPLICATION DEADLINE**

Applications for admission to the Pontifical North American College are due by Tuesday, April 30, 2024. This deadline ensures the proper amount of time for both processing the application and obtaining the necessary documentation for a seminarian's student visa.

## **ITALIAN SCHOOLS AND EARLY ORIENTATION**

The Pontifical North American College strongly recommends that seminarians participate in four weeks of intensive Italian language summer studies. More specific information regarding these studies is available on the PNAC website. Registration for schools in Italy will be made through the College and not by the individual seminarians. Seminarians will still be accepted for the academic year even without participating in the summer language studies.

## **FURTHER ASSISTANCE**

Thank you for your interest in the Pontifical North American College. All information regarding application to the College is contained in this admissions packet. Please contact the Coordinator of Admissions for the College if you have any questions regarding the application process. All communication related to the admissions process, prior to a seminarian's acceptance, is ordinarily to take place between the Pontifical North American College and the Diocesan Director of Seminarians/Vocations.

Please contact the Coordinator of Admissions when you begin the application process for a seminarian. This notification will assist us in our preliminary preparations for the next year and allow us to better assist you through the process itself. Please communicate the following information as part of your initial contact:

- Seminarian's Name
- Seminarian's Email Address
- (Arch)Diocese
- Current Seminary
- Whether or not the seminarian will participate in the summer Italian Language studies
- (Arch)Diocesan contact person



# *Pontifical North American College*

00120 Vatican City State  
Europe

## APPLICATION PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

Provided by the **APPLICANT**:

- Please check each box as the material is received.
- Please explain any missing information in the space provided and state when the material will be sent.
- Please arrange the application portfolio in the following order:

### **X** **APPLICATION PORTFOLIO MATERIAL**

- Application for Admission**
- Applicant Release Form**
- Autobiography** (see accompanying instructions page herein)
- Photograph**: one (1) passport-sized, good quality photo
- Photocopy of Passport Picture Page**
- Letters of Recommendation** (print & give accompanying instruction forms to respective persons):
  - Pastor
  - Rector (One letter from every seminary program attended)
  - Formation Advisor
  - Philosophy or Theology Professor
- Medical History and Physician's Report** (Applicant first completes the medical history section, pages 1-thru-3, and then takes the form to his physician to complete pages 4-thru-6)
- Sacramental Records**:
  - Baptismal Certificate (dated within the last six months)
  - First Holy Communion and Confirmation certificates
  - Documentation for a Transfer of Rite (if applicable)
- Digital College Academic Transcripts** (You may send one current official transcript now, but you must send, or have sent, a digital final transcript to the North American College as soon as it becomes available. If a digital transcript is not available, then you must send three (3) official hard copies.)
- Digital High School Transcript** (If a digital transcript is not available, then three (3) original transcripts are needed with the application.)
- Copy of Military Discharge** (if applicable)
- Release of Information from Previously Attended Formation Programs**
- Authorization for the Release of Protected Health Information**
- Authorization for the Release of Confidential Psychological Information** (the Director of Seminarians/Vocations should be responsible for making arrangements for the psychological assessment and ensure the assessor has a copy of the PNAC "Psychological Evaluation Guidelines" prior to testing)



# Pontifical North American College

00120 Vatican City State  
Europe

## APPLICATION PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

PROVIDED BY THE **DIRECTOR OF SEMINARIANS/VOCATIONS:**

- Please check each box as the material is received.
- Please explain any missing information in the space provided and state when the material will be sent.
- Please arrange the application portfolio in the following order after the seminarian's material:

### **X** **APPLICATION PORTFOLIO MATERIAL**

- Confidential Statement of Suitability**
- Director of Seminarians'/Vocations' Letter of Recommendation** (see instruction page herein)
- Selection of a Pontifical University in Rome**
- Certificate of Admission to Candidacy** (see page herein)
- Testimonials of Institution to Ministries of Reader and Acolyte** (if applicable)
- Certification of Criminal Background Check and Freedom from Allegations of Sexual Misconduct with Minors** (including copy of background check report)
- Copy of most recent Certificate for Safe Environment Training** (*VIRTUS®*, etc.)
- Psychological Evaluation** (To be sealed in an envelope and included with the application portfolio. Please address the sealed envelope to the Rector at the North American College.)

The Pontifical North American College reserves the right both to investigate and verify all information provided by the applicant and to conduct background checks of the applicant.

**Explanation of Missing Information:** (Please give reason and anticipated date when it will be sent)

--



# *Pontifical North American College*

*00120 Vatican City State*

*Europe*

## **CONFIDENTIAL STATEMENT OF SUITABILITY**

(To be signed by Sponsoring Bishop or Director of Seminarians/Vocations)

*CONCERNING*

---

*Applicant's Name*

---

*(Arch)Diocese*

### **BEING PRESENTED FOR ADMISSION TO THE PONTIFICAL NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGE**

This is to state that the person named above is a seminarian in good standing sponsored by this (Arch)Diocese.

To the best of my knowledge in the external forum, I am of the opinion that he is of good character and reputation. I believe that he is qualified to perform ministerial duties in an effective and suitable manner.

More specifically, I am unaware of anything in his background which would render him unsuitable to work with minor children.

Further, I have no knowledge that he has a current, untreated alcohol or substance abuse problem.

Therefore, I present him for admission to the Pontifical North American College, Vatican City State.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

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



# Pontifical North American College

00120 Vatican City State  
Europe

## SELECTION OF A PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY IN ROME

(To be signed by Sponsoring Bishop or Director of Seminarians/Vocations)

### CONCERNING

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Applicant's Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Arch)Diocese*

### BEING PRESENTED FOR ADMISSION TO THE PONTIFICAL NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGE

Seminarians at the Pontifical North American College during their course of studies have the advantage of being able to study theology at the many pontifical universities in Rome. During the First Cycle, which lasts three years and leads to an S.T.B., seminarians may matriculate at the Jesuit-run *Pontifical Gregorian University*; the *Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas* (also known as *The Angelicum*), which is in the Dominican tradition; or the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (*Santa Croce*) which is operated by Opus Dei. For further information on each of these universities simply log onto the North American College's website ([www.pnac.org](http://www.pnac.org)), or the various university websites: Gregorian ([www.unigre.it](http://www.unigre.it)), Angelicum ([www.angelicum.org](http://www.angelicum.org)), Santa Croce ([www.pusc.it](http://www.pusc.it)). In order to help ease the seminarian's transition and begin preparations as soon as possible, we strongly encourage the diocese to work with the seminarian to assign a university prior to his arrival at the North American College.

A seminarian is expected to remain at the same university for the duration of the First Cycle. If someone should wish to transfer, he must petition the formation team through his formation advisor, who will then discern the request in consultation with the seminarian's sponsoring diocese. The selection of a Second Cycle specialization (S.T.L. or *Diploma* during fourth and fifth years) will be requested from the sponsoring diocese during the seminarian's last year in the First Cycle.

### Please indicate the University at which this applicant is authorized to enroll

(You may select more than one option of the applicant is free to choose in consultation with our Coordinator of Intellectual Formation):

- attend the Pontifical Gregorian University
- attend the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (*Angelicum*)
- attend the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross (*Santa Croce*)

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

Title: \_\_\_\_\_



# *Pontifical North American College*

*00120 Vatican City State*

*Europe*

## **CERTIFICATION OF CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK AND FREEDOM FROM ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT WITH MINORS**

(To be signed by Sponsoring Bishop or Director of Seminarians/Vocations)

**CONCERNING**

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Applicant's Name*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*(Arch)Diocese*

This is to certify that the person named above is a seminarian sponsored by this (Arch)Diocese and is, to the best of my knowledge, free of any and all allegations of sexual misconduct with minors.

Please check one of the following:

- Freedom from any and all such allegations has been verified by a criminal background check and/or a child abuse history clearance (*documentation attached*).
- Criminal background check and/or child abuse history clearance is not available in this jurisdiction; freedom from any and all such allegations of sexual misconduct with minors has been alternatively established by other means of investigation (*documentation attached*).

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

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

**NB: Included with this form, copies of the applicant's background check results and certificate for his most recent Safe Environment Training (e.g. VIRTUS®, etc.) are required.**



# *Pontifical North American College*

00120 Vatican City State  
Europe

## **DIRECTOR OF SEMINARIANS/VOCATIONS' LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION**

(This letter of recommendation is to be written by the Director of Seminarians/Vocations or whomever serves as the immediate diocesan Supervisor of the Applicant.)

### **CONCERNING**

---

*Applicant's Name*

---

*(Arch)Diocese*

***In assessing the applicant's preparedness to begin the Configuration Stage of formation, his Director of Seminarians/Vocations is asked to consider some of the following in his letter of recommendation:***

1. Human Formation
  - a. Please speak to the applicant's character, level of maturity and relationship skills.
  - b. How has the applicant demonstrated self-discipline and maintained a healthy, well-balanced lifestyle?
  - c. What growth has the applicant shown during his time in seminary formation so far?
2. Spiritual Formation
  - a. How have you witnessed the applicant's growth in his commitment to his vocation?
  - b. Please speak to the applicant's life of prayer and his willingness to speak about it.
  - c. How would you evaluate the applicant's capacity and preparedness to embrace a life of celibacy?
3. Intellectual Formation
  - a. How would you rate the applicant's intellectual capabilities and his facility with languages?
  - b. Is the applicant committed to actively engaging the intellectual life?
  - c. Is the applicant able to make connections between his studies and pastoral ministry?
4. Pastoral Formation
  - a. How would you assess the applicant's connection to the diocese, its presbyterate and the other seminarians from the diocese?
  - b. Can you speak to the applicant's commitment to evangelization, to works of charity and/or to care for the less fortunate?
  - c. How has the applicant demonstrated growth in pastoral skills?
5. Do you believe the applicant has arrived at the requisite benchmarks for beginning the Configuration Stage of priestly formation?
6. What areas of growth would you like to see in the applicant during his time in formation at the North American College?

***Please include this letter and all other necessary application materials in the seminarian's application portfolio.***





# *Pontifical North American College*

00120 Vatican City State

Europe

## **PSYCHOLOGICAL EVALUATION GUIDELINES**

**Information for Vocation Directors and Evaluating Psychologists**

**(Assessments must have been completed within one year of application.)**

### **I. Evaluation Process and Testing Instruments**

#### **A. Behavioral Observations/Clinical Interview**

1. Mental Status Evaluation.
2. Any pertinent behavioral characteristics or abnormalities that are suggestive of emotional, behavioral, or cognitive challenges.
3. Clinical Interview regarding Family of Origin, psychosocial development, self-perceived strengths and weaknesses, psychosexual development, etc.
  - a. Interview(s) should provide a *thorough history* (i.e., should include key details and elements of family dynamics and childhood experiences that would be sufficient to make hypothesis about early attachment style of candidate).
  - b. Reporting of psychosexual history should include details regarding sexual orientation, sexual behaviors, as well as frequency, duration, and content of sexual fantasies and behaviors.

#### **B. Objective Measures**

1. MMPI-2 preferred, but MMPI-3, PAI or the NEO are acceptable.
2. Sexual Addiction Screening.
  1. Use of the Sexual Addiction Screening Test-Revised (SAST-R) is preferred along with any of the following: Hypersexual Behavior Inventory (HBI-19), Pornography Consumption Inventory (PCI), or the Internet Sexual Screening Test (ISST).
3. Other instruments may be used at the discretion of the evaluating psychologist.

#### **C. Projective Testing**

1. *Rorschach Ink Blot Test* preferred (administered and scored via the *R-PAS* or *Exner Comprehensive* systems).
2. Other techniques such as the *TAT*, *Kinetic Family Drawings*, *Rotter's Incomplete Sentences*, etc., may be added at the discretion of the evaluating psychologist.

#### **D. Intelligence Testing**

1. Report of at least one intelligence test is required. If completed in an earlier evaluation, documentation of the administration, results and interpretation of scores needs to be submitted with application.
2. *WAIS-IV* preferred. Administration of a brief intelligence measure such as the *WASI* is acceptable but considered minimum standard.

### **II. Content Areas of the Psychological Report**

#### **A. Overall Assessment of Level of Psychological Functioning**

1. Identification of presence of any clinical disorders or any sub-clinical issues that are approaching significance or that could become more prominent as stressors in candidate's life increases (as is inherent in demands of seminary schedule and subsequent demands of diocesan life and responsibilities).

2. Level/presence of tendencies or elements of symptoms of depression, anxiety, personality disorders, etc.
  3. Personality traits, predominate needs or drives, strengths and weaknesses of personality, areas of conflict, addictive tendencies, etc.
- B. Assessment of Psychosocial Maturity
1. Assessment of residual conflicts from family of origin and social history.
  2. Any significant aspects of the candidate's social history that may affect his current functioning: family history, early life, school and work history, family and personal health.
    - a. Assess capacity to enter into and maintain intimate relationships that go beyond a superficial level or that of simply shared interests in others.
    - b. Assessment of candidate's ability to approach and address interpersonal conflicts with peers and superiors.
- C. Assessment of Psychosexual Maturity
1. Assessment of psychosexual development and sense of sexual identity.
    - a. Examining psychologist should attempt to make distinction between "deep-seated" and "transitory" same-sex attraction if present.
  2. Identification of degree of attachment to specific behaviors such as pornography and masturbation.
    - a. Details about specific type(s) of pornography, frequency of behaviors, last occurrence, specific content of pornography and fantasies, how it is accessed (paid or free), etc.
    - b. Discuss degree of attachment to behaviors and hypotheses about underlying issues driving attachment to sexual behaviors.
  3. Assessment of affectivity and capacity for intimacy and empathy.
  4. Assessment to live the "charism of celibacy" (i.e., evidence of abstaining from sexual activity for a period of at least two years)
- D. Assessment of Personal Autonomy and Attitude towards Authority Figures
- E. Assessment of Flexibility and Emotional Resilience
1. Consideration of issues of impulsivity, tolerance for frustration, coping patterns and skills.
  2. Capacity for personal insight and growth and level of motivation for growth.
- F. Assessment of Authenticity of Motivations for Priesthood and Any Contraindications to Applicant being suited for Priesthood or International Graduate Studies
- G. Psychologist's Satisfaction that Applicant Responded in all Significant Areas Honestly and Thoroughly
- H. Overall:
1. Addressing the areas of functioning noted in letters A-G of this section will help the evaluating psychologist to address the question as to whether or not the applicant has met the benchmarks for development that each seminarian is expected to have reached by the time they enter the first year of theological studies, or the "configuration stage" of priestly formation. (cf. #192 through #197 in the most recent *Program for Priestly Formation, Sixth Edition (2022)*).

### III. Recommendations of the Final Report

- A. Specific Recommendations for the Applicant's Continued Growth and Development when in Seminary Formation is a vital component of the psychological report.
1. Identification not only of potential clinical disorders (per the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders-Fifth Edition* or the *Psychodynamic Diagnostic Manual-Second Edition*), but also of issues that are at a sub-threshold level which have potential to become more prominent if increased stress is applied or resources not utilized to address issues.
  2. Recommendations sections should provide guidance as to what areas of formation should

be addressed moving forward that may serve as particular challenges for the applicant in accomplishing the benchmarks that applicants will be expected to have achieved prior to being approved for Holy Orders and entering the Synthesis stage of formation according to the *Program for Priestly Formation, Sixth Edition* (cf. #199 of the PPF):

1. The targeted benchmarks to be achieved prior to Holy Orders are that the man can...
  - a. Be described as a man who cares for, respects, and has vigilance over his body
  - b. Exhibits continued growth in addressing any health concerns, and he demonstrates balanced habits of exercise and rest
  - c. Has developed a workable strategy for handling psychological issues in his life.
  - d. As part of his overall health and well-being, he has well-established habits regarding the proper use of technology (meaning that he limits the entertainment uses of technology and demonstrates appropriate accountability with peers and formators regarding his use of technology).
  - e. Through evaluations, apostolic work, and community living, the seminarian demonstrates an awareness of and capacity to manage appropriate boundaries

#### IV. Submitting Results of Evaluation

- A. The full report of the psychological evaluation should be mailed by the psychologist as soon as possible after the evaluation to the following:

Reverend Monsignor Thomas W. Powers, Rector  
Pontifical North American College  
00120 Vatican City State, Europe

Telephone: 011.39.06.6849.33823

Fax: 011.39.06.686.7561

Email: [tpowers@pnac.org](mailto:tpowers@pnac.org)

- B. The psychologist's report will be used in making decisions about admissions AND, upon admission, in guiding the seminarian toward further growth counseling that he might decide to undertake during his graduate seminary studies. In writing your report, please be as thorough as possible. ***Failure to meet the above guidelines may result in a request for another assessment be completed prior to considering the candidate for acceptance.***
- C. Seminarians of the Pontifical North American College come from dioceses throughout the United States. Consequently, we review psychological reports from professionals throughout the United States. In an effort to standardize the method of the psychological reports, please make every attempt to address all the focus issues identified in the above Section II (with special consideration to Recommendations for Further Growth and Development).
- D. We will treat your report with professional confidentiality. Only the Rector, the Director of Counseling Services and the Director of Admissions will have access to the report.
- E. The report will be in the locked care of the Director of Counseling Services.
- F. **Final Note:** Evaluating Psychologists must be familiar with the *Guidelines for the use of Psychology in the Admission and Formation of Candidates for the Priesthood (2008)*, the requirements outlined with the *Program for Priestly Formation-Sixth Edition (2022)*, and paragraphs (188-210) of *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis (The Gift of Priestly Vocation) (2016)*, prior to conducting psychological evaluations for candidates being considered for application to the Pontifical North American College.



# *Pontifical North American College*

*00120 Vatican City State*

*Europe*

## **CERTIFICATE OF ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY**

The Pontifical North American College asks that all seminarians receiving an appointment to the College be received as Candidates for Holy Orders in their home dioceses according to the liturgical rite of *Admission to Candidacy for Ordination as Deacons and Priests* prior to their coming to Rome. There are a number of reasons for this request:

- The nature of the rite itself and the legislation of the Church recommend that a seminarian receive this designation as a Candidate for Holy Orders from his own Bishop or Ordinary (*cf. Code of Canon Law, c. 1034 § 1*). The rite is intended for men who have reached a certain maturity of purpose and are ready to declare publicly their intent to commit themselves to formation for ordained ministry – a phase of formation corresponding to the beginning of their theological studies (*cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, Instruction on Liturgical Formation in Seminaries, 1979, n. 37*).
- The rite of admission is a public acceptance by the Church of the Candidate offering himself and being selected and called to prepare himself to receive Sacred Orders. It properly numbers him among the candidates for ordained ministry (*cf. Paul VI, motu proprio, Ad pascendum, August 1972*). The liturgical celebration of the rite can be effectively used as a prayerful farewell and sending forth of the candidate to pursue his theological studies, giving him a sense of mission and purpose, which is being supported by the assurance of prayers for his success and commitment.
- Furthermore, in order to respect the mandated intervals between Admission to Candidacy and the reception of the ministries of Reader and Acolyte, the rite of Admission to Candidacy should be celebrated as close as possible to the beginning of theological studies. Placing the rite at this requested point gives sufficient encouragement to the seminarian's vocation without attaching a disproportionate significance to it.

**An original certificate stating that the seminarian has been admitted to Candidacy is to be submitted once Candidacy has been received.**