



August 5, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Priests, Deacons, Parish Life Coordinators, Principals

FROM: Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley, Bishop of Ogdensburg

RE: Visiting Priests and Deacons

All visiting priests and deacons wishing to exercise ministry on any occasion in the Diocese of Ogdensburg must have a *Testimonial of Suitability* on file with the office of the Safe Environment of the Diocese of Ogdensburg. The *Testimonial* must be signed by the visiting minister's bishop or religious superior or his delegate. It must also include the seal of the diocese or, if available, religious community or institute.

The *Testimonial of Suitability* must be submitted no later than one week prior to the exercise of ministry by the visiting clergy or religious. The *Testimonial* will be deemed valid for one year from the date of execution but must be renewed thereafter. Accompanying you will find a model that may be adapted and used to provide the testimonial we require.

The letter should always reference the event(s) for which the priest or deacon will be ministering in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. It can be mailed by the office of the proper bishop or religious superior to:

Moderator of the Curia
Diocese of Ogdensburg
PO Box 369
Ogdensburg, NY 13669

Your compliance with this requirement is important to promote the integrity of ministry in the name of Jesus Christ and to foster an environment of safety for the people being served in the Diocese of Ogdensburg. If you have any questions regarding this directive, please contact Elaine Seymour, Charter Compliance Coordinator, at (315) 393-2920 or eseymour@dioogdensburg.org.

cc: Rev. Msgr. Robert L. Lawler, Vicar General
Rev. Msgr. John R. Murphy, Moderator of the Curia
Sister Jennifer Votraw, SSJ, Chancellor
Rev. James W. Seymour, Vicar for Clergy
Sister Ellen Donahue, SA, Safe Environment Coordinator
Elaine G. Seymour, Charter Compliance Coordinator

date

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg
Diocese of Ogdensburg
PO Box 369
Ogdensburg, New York 13669

Dear Bishop LaValley:

It has come to my attention that Reverend _____ has been asked to _____ in your diocese on _____. Father _____ was ordained on _____. He is currently serving as _____.

Father _____ has an excellent reputation with no known problems of a moral nature. Specifically this includes my affirmation that he:

1. has never been suspended or otherwise canonically disciplined.
2. has no criminal record, nor have criminal charges ever been brought against him.
3. has manifested no behavioral problems in the past that would indicate he might not deal with minors in an appropriate manner.
4. has no other particular mental or physical attribute, condition, and/or past situation which would adversely affect his performance or priestly ministry.

Father _____ has completed Safe Environment training and the required background checks have been performed. The Diocese of _____ gives Father _____ the highest recommendation for priestly ministry.

If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop or Religious Superior

date

Most Reverend Terry R. LaValley
Bishop of Ogdensburg
Diocese of Ogdensburg
PO Box 369
Ogdensburg, New York 13669

Dear Bishop LaValley:

It has come to my attention that Deacon _____ has been asked to
_____ in your diocese on _____.
Deacon _____ was ordained on _____. He is currently serving as
_____.
Deacon _____ has an excellent reputation with no known problems of a moral nature.
Specifically this includes my affirmation that he:

1. has never been suspended or otherwise canonically disciplined.
2. has no criminal record, nor have criminal charges ever been brought against him.
3. has manifested no behavioral problems in the past that would indicate he might not deal with minors in an appropriate manner.
4. has no other particular mental or physical attribute, condition, and/or past situation which would adversely affect his performance or priestly ministry.

Deacon _____ has completed Safe Environment training and the required background checks have been performed. The Diocese of _____ gives Deacon _____ a high recommendation for diaconate ministry.

If you need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Bishop or Religious Superior