

Jesuit Vocations Frequently Asked Questions

1. What must I do before I can enter the Society of Jesus?

Becoming a Jesuit is not only a major decision for you but also for the Society. Therefore it is necessary that you enter into a formal discernment process or candidacy programme in order to have the time and resources to help you see where the Lord is directing you. The programme is usually about a year long, but it could be longer if necessary. It entails activities such as regular spiritual direction, days of recollection, retreats and exposure to various Jesuit ministries. Please contact us for more details.

2. Must I remain with the candidacy programme for its entire duration?

There are no strings attached – candidates are free to leave the programme at any time.

3. If I choose not to enter the Society after the candidacy programme, then wouldn't I have wasted a year or more?

No. Your main objective in joining the candidacy programme is to discern God's will for you. If you have indeed been honest with yourself and made a good discernment, then you must also have received greater clarity to what you are seeking. You would also have grown in your relationship with the Lord, and developed a greater awareness and understanding of yourself. Thus, your time would never be wasted.

4. After completing the candidacy programme, I feel that I am called to be a Jesuit. What should I do then?

You may then apply to enter the novitiate programme. The novitiate programme, which is two years long, helps you get acquainted with Jesuit spirituality and identity, and where you would be immersed into the Society's culture, tradition and our way of proceeding. Application deadline is 1 September in the year before the one in which you wish to enter. The vocation director will provide you with more information on the application process.

5. If I get accepted by the Society of Jesus, does it mean that I will eventually become an ordained priest?

Not necessarily. You may become either a priest or a professed brother. You are generally requested to state your intention (either for priesthood or brotherhood) prior to entering the novitiate, although there are those who remain "indifferent" during their noviceship. The formation for each category is different. For those who intend to be ordained ministers, they will continue with priestly studies upon completion of noviceship and after taking their first vows. Those who become Jesuit brothers after first vows will be expected to complete at least two years of theological studies and usually will also be sent for further formation relevant to their future ministries.

6. I heard that Jesuit formation is very long. Is it true?

Considering Jesuits are called to "go anywhere, at anytime, to do almost anything, to serve the Lord and for His greater glory", Jesuit formation is not long at all. We must be trained well enough, not only to handle different situations, but excel in them. Please contact the vocation director for more details on Jesuit formation. The training programme is as follows:

Phase 1: Jesuit Novitiate - 2 years

Phase 2: Philosophy (studies) - 3 to 4 years

Phase 3: Regency (full time work) - 2 years

Phase 4: Theology (studies) - 3 years

Phase 5: Special Studies - 2 to 5 years

Phase 6: Tertianship (final training) - 6 to 8 months