

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING
SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION
- ALTERNATIVE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM-
FOR S.I.M.
Deadline March 15, 2011**

**Please read carefully and thoroughly
before starting your application**

January 5, 2011

Dear friend in Christ,

The Society for the Increase of the Ministry (“SIM”) is in its 154th year of providing financial and pastoral support to Episcopal seminarians all across the United States. Since 1857 we have provided over \$6,000,000 in scholarship aid to nearly 5,000 seminarians. It is our fervent hope that at the end of this application process, we can be helpful to you as you continue your education and training for ordained leadership in ministry in the Episcopal Church.

Until fifteen years ago, only students attending official Episcopal seminaries were eligible for grants from SIM. However, the days when the vast majority of Episcopal seminarians attended seminaries of the Episcopal Church are long gone. In light of this new reality, SIM set aside funds and created an alternative application process for students attending seminaries of other denominations and non-denominational institutions. While it is our intention to provide as much financial support as possible to deserving students in financial need in such educational settings, please understand that the funds are limited.

Please take great care in completing this application form. To be fair to all applicants, submissions lacking requested information, letters of reference, essays or résumés will not be considered. Please understand that the time line for acting on our applications does not provide time for late receipt of material.

To expedite the process, we encourage you to use the attached check list to verify that your submission is complete. Please complete your four-page Application online at our website (www.simministry.org) and print it out for **submission to your Bishop** with other required documents. The application incorporates built-in calculators at appropriate places on pages 2 and 3 to gather more accurate data. If the calculator does not work, you may do the math with a manual calculator, *but please* double check your totals. Do not submit a handwritten application. You cannot submit the Application form electronically.

Basic Criteria

1. Grants are made to
 - a. full-time residential students (three-year ordination track)
 - b. enrolled in a Master of Divinity degree program in
 - c. a fully accredited seminary or school of theology, approved by their bishop
 - d. who are Postulants or Candidates for Holy Orders in
 - e. The Episcopal Church in the United States of America.
2. Applicants must demonstrate financial need.
3. The applicant's bishop or ecclesiastical authority must attest to this need.
4. The minimum grant is \$1,000. Grants generally do not exceed \$4,000.
5. Because of the generosity of certain donors, SIM is able to grant additional scholarship money for outstanding applications from 8 students.
6. A scholarship recipient whose canonical status changes, or who withdraws from seminary, or whose financial circumstances change significantly, or who decides to take an intern year or a leave of absence after a grant has been made, must notify the SIM office promptly, in writing, to determine his/her continuing support.

The Process

1. If you are applying for a grant for the first time, please use **Form D**.
2. Recipients of SIM scholarships must re-apply each year if they hope to receive a second or third SIM grant. For application for a second or third time, please be sure to use **Form E**.
3. Students who have received a SIM grant in the past will be given preference over first time applicants.
4. The Society's grants are made without regard to race, gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, sexual orientation or marital status of the applicant.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

About your APPLICATION FORM/Personal and Financial information. The information you provide on the form is critical data for SIM as we make our scholarship decisions. Beyond the application process, while respecting every student's confidentiality, this data is also used to identify trends and emerging issues facing seminarians and seminaries. This information helps us to be better advocates for you, all seminarians and the enterprise of theological education in the church. We strongly recommend that, in accordance with the provisions of Title III, Canon 8, Sec. 3(a) (3) *you discuss your financial situation, particularly as it may pertain to any debt you may have, with your bishop or the bishop's designee.*

About your ESSAY: The ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing is absolutely essential to the formation of priests. Since it is impractical for SIM to conduct an interview with each postulant, we look to the essay both to demonstrate each applicant's competence in communication and to better understand them as future ordained leaders of the church. The essay should show a command of language (spelling, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure).

As to content of your required essay: If this is your **first** application, select **one** of the following questions: **Please identify which question you are answering.**

1) *Tell us about one incident in your life that has been particularly formative in your spiritual life and preparation for ordained ministry.*

OR

2) *Tell us about a situation in which you were able to provide leadership that helped a group of people accomplish some goal; then relate this to the work of a parish priest.*

If you are a Middler or Senior applying for a **renewal** grant, please select one of the following questions: **Please identify which question you are answering.**

1) *Tell us how your understanding of the Church and the work of ordained ministry has changed based on your academic work and your growing participation in the life of the Church.*

OR

2) *Do you believe that stewardship of your personal resources affects the stewardship of your call to ministry? Please provide examples from your experience where personal financial stewardship either supported or otherwise impacted aspects of your ministry.*

We ask that you make the effort to write something new in response to the above descriptions. Re-cycled sermons, essays prepared as a part of your diocesan discernment processes, CPE verbatims or the like will be inadequate to the task. Neither are we seeking statements about "why I feel called to be a priest," or other issues of vocational discernment. These are the province of rectors, parish discernment committees, commissions on ministry and bishops. Please remember that an essay is **required each time** you make application to SIM.

Please number the pages of your essay and place your name at the top of each page. Please do not exceed 750 words.

About your RESUME: No matter what your age, your résumé will help us understand you, your journey, your talents and experience. Please provide a 1-2 page resume which includes previous education (names of colleges, graduation dates and degree/honors awarded) and employment history (full and part time positions held since college). The

résumé is only required when applying for the first time (**Form D**), not with repeat applications (**Form E**).

About your LETTERS OF REFERENCE: Persons applying to us for the first time --and only the first time -- must attach to our application (**Form D**) two letters of reference, *viz.*, one from the applicant's bishop **OR** one from the applicant's rector; and one from a lay person from one's sponsoring congregation. Each of the two letters should speak to the applicant's (1) financial need, (2) character, (3) church involvement and (4) vocation to the ordained ministry in The Episcopal Church. Please provide reference letters on original paper/letterhead. Fax copies are not adequate and many times not legible. Persons applying for a second grant (**Form E**) are not required to submit further references.

Additionally:

- As our grants are limited to postulants and candidates for Holy Orders in The Episcopal Church, the applicant's Bishop's must provide a letter indicating clearly that the applicant is a Postulant or Candidate for Holy Orders as of the date of application.
- Unless there is a compelling reason (clearly stated), the lay person should be a member of the applicant's congregation.
- The Lay person submitting a letter of recommendation must be a person from outside the seminary community and not a member of the applicant's household, or family.
- Applications lacking one or more of these letters will not be considered.

About the mechanics of making application:

- Please go to our website (www.simministry.org) and click on
 - "**Seminarians**", move cursor down to
 - "**Scholarships**", then move cursor over to
 - "**Forms – Alternative Program**", then click for page listing Instructions, Basic Criteria and Forms.
 - "**Application Form D**" for students applying for the first time or
 - "**Application Form E**" for students applying for the second or third time.
- You may type directly onto the form and save to your computer for completion at a later time.
- Print a hard copy of your completed application, sign it and date it.
- Applications submitted electronically to SIM will not be accepted.
- Finally, scholarship applications must be **submitted as a complete package**. That is to say, we ask you to collect all the required documents and send them to your bishop for his/her approval and have your bishop send the signed and completed application package to us at the address below. Remember, **your application must be approved by your bishop** (at the bottom of Page 4 of the application) before it will be considered by our committee.

**The Society for the Increase of the Ministry
924 Farmington Avenue, Suite 100
West Hartford CT 06107**

- The deadline to receive your completed application in the SIM office from your bishop's office is March 15, 2011. Therefore, we strongly urge you to let your bishop's office know that you are applying, and to make sure he or she (or designee) will be in the office in late February or early March to sign and send to us.
- Owing to the late date of Easter, it is our intention that you will know of our decision by May 20, 2011.

If you have any questions, you may email or call the SIM office:

info@simministry.org (860) 233-1732

I forward to receiving your application.

Sincerely,

Ms. Ruth McElraevy
Scholarship Program Administrator

To Recap required papers:

Form D – New Application

- **4 page application**
- **Bishop's signature and comments on page 4**
- **Essay**
- **Resume**
- **Bishop's letter showing Admission to Postulancy**
- **Sponsoring Rector OR Bishop's letter of reference**
- **Letter of reference from one lay person**
- **Checklist**

Form E – Renewal Application

- **4 page application**
- **Bishop's signature and comments on page 4**
- **Essay**
- **Checklist**

