



Candidate Assessment Programme Information for Candidates

We look forward to welcoming you to the Centre as part of your vocational discernment and would like to give you some information on what the programme offers you and the Diocese or Community.

The **Candidate Assessment Programme** at the St. Luke's Centre offers a robust broad-based team approach to assessing the spiritual, psychological and psychosocial make-up of candidates coming forward for service in the Church. We firmly believe that our assessment programme offers the individual a grace-filled opportunity to know themselves more fully, to share this knowledge with those accompanying them in their discernment and ultimately to have the freedom to say 'yes' to the next step of the journey. Our programme offers you and the Diocese or religious Community the confidence of working with trained professionals grounded in the Roman Catholic Tradition. (Please review the enclosed booklet on the Centre's Staff outlining their qualifications and areas of work at the Centre). We work with you to make your time at St. Luke's supportive and useful in your ongoing discernment and formation.



An Overview of the Programme

Before you arrive at the Centre: The formation staff from the Diocese or Community will have contacted us to arrange for you to come to the Centre. We will have contacted you to arrange a mutually agreeable date and will have informed you about the welcome pack and questionnaires we send out in preparation for your time with us. Your Diocese or Community will send us some background information on you and your journey so far with them. We ask you to give us detailed information about yourself and your spiritual journey by completing the enclosed questionnaires which you can post back to us or bring with you when you come to the Centre. Once you have reviewed the various enclosures in this welcome pack please feel free to contact us with any questions and to let us know if you have any dietary needs. The Centre offers comfortable en-suite accommodation and prides itself on maintaining a high standard of food and a warm welcome from our staff. The Centre is easily accessible by road and rail and we are twenty minutes from Manchester airport. (Please see the enclosed directions sheet to the Centre).

A Team Approach: Building on the referral information we have from you and the Diocese/Community, our staff members - a clinical psychologist, counsellor/psychologist and spiritual director work with you to gain a thorough appraisal of your psychological and spiritual make-up. This team approach offers you and the Diocese/Community the benefit of utilizing three distinct professionals focusing on bringing their expertise to the task of candidate assessment, human and spiritual development.

The Process: When you arrive at the Centre you will have an initial meeting which outlines this process. You will be given an individualized schedule of meetings with the staff and a time for your feedback meeting prior to leaving the Centre. We will go over much of the information in this sheet as well as asking you to give us permission to release information to the Diocese or Community once the assessment is completed.

Interviews: You will be invited to meet with three different members of our staff for face-to-face interviews in the following areas:

1. **Psychosocial Interview** with one of our Counsellors/psychologists: Covering your background, family life, sexual development, school/work life, vocational journey, recreational pursuits and general child protection screening. It builds on the information you have given in the Personal Profile Questionnaire in this pack.
2. **Clinical Interview** with one of our Clinical Psychologists: Your general mental health and history. It builds on the information you have given in the Personal Profile Questionnaire in this pack.
3. **Intellectual Screening** with one of our Clinical Psychologists: this involves completion of a short (20 minutes), paper and pencil, standardised test of intellectual functioning, an aid to detecting possible cognitive impairment in adults with normal intelligence. The results of this test will be explained at the feedback meeting.
5. **Spiritual Assessment** with one of our counsellor spiritual directors: this interview looks at your general spiritual life and vocational journey. It builds on the answers you have given in the questionnaire in this pack.

Our staff are mindful that you will be meeting us for the first time and we will be inviting you to share personal information through these interviews. We work very hard to make the process as non-threatening as possible by explaining everything along the way and we encourage you to ask us as many questions as you like. You are under no duress to answer questions if you do not wish to do so; please note that we ask you to share with us so that we can get as rounded a picture of you as possible. This helps us to be of best service to you and the Diocese/Community. Please contact us if you have any questions about the interviews.



As well as the above interviews you will also be asked to complete some computerised questionnaires. Our staff will show you how to answer these and the results will be explained to you by our clinical psychologist at the feedback meeting before you leave the Centre:

6. **Computer Questionnaires** facilitated by our staff: These questionnaires are Psychological Tests looking at your personality and general mental health.

The final part of the assessment at the Centre is the **Feedback Meeting** with our staff members who have worked with you during your stay.

7. **Feedback Meeting:** You will meet with the staff so they can give you feedback on the various tests and interviews. They will also give you practical suggestions or recommendations for your ongoing discernment/formation journey.

Part of the purpose of the programme is to assess if you have any psychological or behavioural issues that warrant focussed attention at this time in your journey prior to going on to formal seminary formation or formation for Religious Life. If you present with any of these issues the staff will explain in great detail what they are and how they may affect your ongoing vocational discernment. Please note that the Centre does not say whether you should be accepted or not by the Diocese or Community; this decision is up to the relevant ecclesial authority. Our staff offers professional advice to you and the Diocese/Community so you can all make an informed decision about the road ahead. Throughout the process we ask you to be yourself, to be open and honest and not to be anxious about the outcome. Our staff are not looking for 'problems' but ways to encourage and support you in your vocational journey.

The assessment also hopes to offer you practical suggestions about the ongoing human development and spiritual growth needs for your vocational journey. It is our hope that your time at St. Luke's and our feedback (verbal and in the Report Letter) will be of use to you in your ongoing vocational journey. We remain available to you whenever you may wish to contact us in the future.

Feedback and Report Letter: These final stages in the process are very important and we are committed to providing you and the Diocese/Community with clear feedback and a written report that is succinct but thorough. Our aim is to make the feedback and report relevant and useable for you and the people concerned with the ongoing process of selection, discernment and training. Within two weeks of leaving the Centre we send you a draft copy of the Report Letter which contains the verbal feedback you received in person with more details in written format addressed to the vocations/formation director. This letter contains the information you have already heard. We ask you to review the draft letter and let us know if there are any factual errors-if there are we correct them and then send out the final version of the letter to you and the vocations/formation director. How this letter is used in the selection process varies and if you have any questions about this we would encourage you to ask your vocations/formation director.



Confidentiality is a building block of the work at St. Luke's Centre and as mentioned before we need to have your permission in order to share information about you with specific named people from your Diocese/Community. This is typically the Bishop/Superior and vocations/formation director. We know that you and they are expecting a written report letter outlining the results of the assessment programme. In order for us to send this letter or speak about you with the named people above we need to have your verbal and written permission to do so. When you arrive at the Centre you will be asked to review and sign a release of information form so that we can share information with these named people (we will not share information with any other person). This release of information form will be explained to you when you arrive, you will be asked to sign and date it and we will sign and date it as a witness. Confidential information sharing is a crucial part of the assessment programme and we cannot complete the programme if you do not give us permission to share the report letter; if you have any doubts or concerns we would encourage you to discuss this with the Diocesan or Community representative prior to arriving at the Centre. If after arriving at the Centre and beginning the programme you decide to cancel the release of information, the assessment will stop and we will not produce any report or share any information about you. You are free to cancel the permission to release information at any time. It is our experience that this is not an issue for most people coming to the Centre.

As you can see we take confidentiality in our work very seriously. There are however legal requirements placed on professionals receiving information in the general area of individual and community protection; that means that we are legally bound to inform the statutory authorities if we receive information in the following areas:

1. Past or current sexual abuse of a minor.
2. Suicidal or Homicidal plans.

If we receive information about these areas of concern we will work with our clients to inform the statutory authorities. We are duty bound to explain this to you prior to arriving at the Centre and we will explain it again when you arrive.

Ongoing Support: For some candidates the assessment programme highlights areas that could benefit from ongoing therapeutic or spiritual support. We are available to facilitate this ongoing support should it be needed. We believe it is a privilege to be part of your vocational discernment and remain a resource to you for the long-term not just for your assessment; we encourage you to contact us at any time in the future. Our staff work with the seminaries and houses of formation throughout the UK and abroad.

Others at the Centre: There is an easy sociable atmosphere at the Centre which we encourage. People come to St. Luke's for different reasons and we ask you to be respectful of each others' privacy. We would encourage you to speak to others from your diocese or community who may have been through our programme. If you are married, we do not need to interview your wife as part of the assessment.

Housekeeping Information: When you arrive at the Centre you will be shown around and given a single occupancy room which is en-suite. We provide towels and have stocks of toiletries should you forget to bring your own. The Centre is a non-smoking environment but should you wish to smoke you are free to do so outside. You are free to come and go as you please; we will explain the signing in/out board which we use for fire regulations. If you have any requirements around mobility or diet please let us know and we will accommodate your needs. There is a lift in the Centre which accesses all levels.

The daily schedule is usually:

	Breakfast: this is self serve in the refectory before or after Mass
9 – 9:30 am	Mass
10 am – 1 pm	Time for Meetings
1 – 2 pm	Lunch (Served in the refectory)
2 – 6:30 pm	Time for Meetings
6:30 – 7.30 pm	Dinner (Served in the refectory)
8 pm	Possible Meetings

Your personal schedule will have the times of your meetings; not all the time allotted above will be used.

Please Contact Us: If you have any questions about the information in the welcome pack, questionnaires or general programme please feel free to contact Fr. Gerard (gerardfbyrne@stlukescentre.org.uk) or Gill Boardman (gillboardman@stlukescentre.org.uk) on 0161 226 4563.

We look forward to meeting you soon. For more information please see our website:

www.stlukescentre.org.uk

