Ember Letters

The “Ember Days” are days of special prayer for the ministry of the church. Ember Days are traditionally observed after the First Sunday in Lent, the Day of Pentecost, Holy Cross Day (Sept 14) and December 13. If you have the letter to the bishop by the end of any of these months, that is sufficient.

Postulants in the diaconate or priesthood are required by canon law to report to their Bishop in writing at each of these seasons. Your letters might include references to the following:

1. The content of your studies  
2. Especially challenging or exciting ideas or people you have encountered

3. The nature of your prayer life, challenges and blessings  
4. Family life, joys and challenges  
5. Community life  
6. Recreation  
7. Parish life

It is important to do some reflecting on what the experiences you encounter mean for you. It is not enough to say that you read a book or took a course, but how did it affect you? Did you learn something that you didn’t know before? Was it helpful or challenging? Are you struggling with long held beliefs that no longer seem tenable? If you are like most of us, your spiritual journey has ups and downs. Where are you today? What works? What is hard and why? Use some feeling words. It is important for you to know and to explain your own spiritual journey for it is in that way we begin to understand and empathetically respond to another’s journey.

Usually a page or two is sufficient. If you use e-mail, please make your letter look like one that you would send through the mail.