

Deacon Handbook

Norms, Policies and Guidelines for Permanent Deacons in the Diocese of La Crosse



*Receive the Gospel of Christ,
whose herald you now are.
Believe what you read, teach what you believe,
and practice what you teach.*

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Introduction

Before His Ascension, Christ commissioned the Apostles: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you” (*Matthew* 28:19-20). The Sacrament of Holy Orders is the means through which “the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1536).

The Three Degrees of Holy Orders

Since the earliest days of the Church, the ordained ministry has been conferred in three separate and distinct degrees, each with successively higher sacramental effects: the episcopate, the presbyterate, and the diaconate. Like the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation, the Sacrament of Orders imprints an indelible character which can never be lost, and which “configures the recipient to Christ by a special grace of the Holy Spirit, so that he may serve as Christ’s instrument for his Church” (CCC 1581).

Of the three distinct degrees of Holy Orders, those men ordained to the episcopate and the presbyterate share in the ministerial priesthood of Christ. The third degree, the diaconate, “is intended to help and serve them” (CCC 1554). This principle was confirmed in *Lumen Gentium*: “At a lower level of the hierarchy are deacons, upon whom hands are imposed ‘not unto the priesthood, but unto a ministry of service’” (29). More recently, this same principle was reiterated in Pope Benedict XVI’s 2009 Apostolic Letter issued *Motu Proprio*, *Omnium in Mentem*, which stipulated several amendments to the Code of Canon Law. In it, the Holy Father decreed that the text of canon 1086§3 is henceforth to read, “Those who are constituted in the order of the episcopate or the presbyterate receive the mission and capacity to act in the person of Christ the Head, whereas the deacons are empowered to serve the People of God in the ministries of the liturgy, the word and charity.” The deacon, then, is called to assist the Bishop and priests in the threefold ministry of the liturgy, the word and charity.

The English word, “deacon,” comes from the Greek, “diakonos,” meaning *servant*, or *helper*. As in the early days of the Church, men ordained to the diaconate are ordained to service, in imitation of the servant *par excellence*, Our Lord Jesus Christ. During His earthly sojourn, Jesus’ radical admonition to His Apostles applies no less to us today: “[W]hoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (*Mark* 10:43-45). While every Christian is called to serve, “each according to his own vocation” (CCC 1546), the service rendered by each is essentially different. It is through the Sacrament of Orders that Our Lord’s own power is communicated; therefore, the ordained minister must “be measured against the model of Christ, who by love made himself the least and the servant of all” (CCC 1551).

The Deacon in Divine Revelation

References to deacons in both Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition are plentiful. In the *Acts of the Apostles* (6:1-6), we learn of the seven holy men ordained to care for the widows and serve at table, thus freeing the Apostles to devote themselves to prayer and the ministry of the word. When the disciples had selected “seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom,” the Apostles “prayed and laid their hands upon them.” Among these men was the Church’s first martyr, Saint Stephen, who was stoned to death (cf. *Acts* 6:5-7:60). Another was Philip, called

the evangelist. It was Philip who provided lodging for Paul and Luke in Caesarea (cf. *Acts* 21:8). The remaining five were Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolaus. In his letter to the Philippians, Saint Paul specifically addresses deacons, among others: “To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons...” (1:1). And in his first letter to Timothy, Paul lays down basic principles for the selection of deacons (cf. 3:8-13).

The early Fathers of the Church also bear witness to the role of deacons in the Church. In 96 A.D., for instance, Saint Clement of Rome spoke of bishops and deacons as the first fruits of the Apostles. Saint Ignatius of Antioch (110 A.D.) refers to the threefold hierarchy of bishop, priest, and deacon, who, he noted, “are most dear to me.”

The Decline and Subsequent Renewal of the Diaconate

While the diaconate flourished up to the 4th or 5th century in the western Church, subsequent abuses led to its gradual decline until it came to be understood, on a practical level, as the temporary stage for men prior to priestly ordination. Although the Council of Trent proposed the restoration of the Permanent Diaconate in its original form, this proposition never came to fruition.

And so, for sixteen centuries, the Permanent Diaconate remained dormant, resting in the heart of the Church, until the Second Vatican Council determined that “the diaconate can in the future be restored as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy.” Since its renewal, the deacon’s service more truly reflects the practice of the early Church: “For, strengthened by sacramental grace they are dedicated to the People of God, in conjunction with the bishop and his body of priests, in the service of the liturgy, of the Gospel and of works of charity.” (*Lumen Gentium* 29).

Chapter One

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE DIACONATE

The following excerpt from the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (nn. 1-13) offers a concise historical overview of the diaconate during and after the Second Vatican Council. It presents the U.S. Bishops' vision for the diaconate in the United States and offers important and invaluable insights to men at all stages of diaconal formation. The numbers preceding each paragraph correspond with paragraphs in the *National Directory*.

The Diaconate in the Second Vatican Council and the Post-Conciliar Period: A Historical Overview

1. One of the great legacies of the Second Vatican Council was its renewal and encouragement of the order of deacons throughout the entire Catholic Church. The Council's decisions on the diaconate flowed out of the bishops' discussions on the sacramental nature of the Church. The Fathers of the Council present in concise, descriptive, and complementary images a comprehensive magisterial teaching: The Church is "mystery," "sacrament," "communion," and "mission." The Church is "like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race. . . ." "In her whole being and in all her members, the Church is sent to announce, bear witness, make present, and spread the mystery of the communion of the Holy Trinity." This "missionary mandate" is the Church's sacred right and obligation. Through the proclamation of God's word, in sacramental celebrations, and in response to the needs of others, especially in her ministry of charity and justice, "the Church is Christ's instrument . . . 'the universal sacrament of salvation,' by which Christ is 'at once manifesting and actualizing the mystery of God's love for men.'"

2. Central to the Second Vatican Council's teaching on the Church is the service or ministry bestowed by Christ upon the apostles and their successors. The office of bishop "is a true service, which in sacred literature is significantly called a 'diakonia' or ministry." The Council Fathers teach that the bishops, with priests and deacons as helpers, have by divine institution taken the place of the apostles as pastors of the Church. Priests and deacons are seen as complementary but subordinate participants in the one apostolic ministry bestowed by Christ upon the apostles, with Peter as their head, and continued through their successors, the bishops, in union with the Roman Pontiff. When discussing Holy Orders as one of the sacraments "at the service of communion" (along with Matrimony), the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that these two sacraments "are directed towards the salvation of others; if they contribute as well to personal salvation, it is through service to others that they do so. They confer a particular mission in the Church and serve to build up the People of God."

3. In the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, the Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, and the Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches, the Second Vatican Council reestablished the diaconate "as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy." The Sacred Order of Deacons is to be "a driving force for the Church's service or diakonia toward the local

Christian communities, and as a sign or sacrament of the Lord Christ himself, who ‘came not to be served but to serve.’” “The deacon’s ministry of service is linked with the missionary dimension of the Church: the missionary efforts of the deacon will embrace the ministry of the word, the liturgy, and works of charity which, in their turn, are carried into daily life. Mission includes witness to Christ in a secular profession or occupation.” Further, “neither should the prospect of the mission ad gentes be lacking, wherever circumstances require and permit it.” In its renewal the Order of Deacons is permanently restored as “a living icon of Christ the Servant within the Church.”

4. Following the closing of the Second Vatican Council, Pope Paul VI formally implemented the renewal of the diaconate. In his apostolic letter *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*, he reestablished the Order of Deacons as a permanent ministry in the Catholic Church. The apostolic constitution *Pontificalis Romani Recognito* promulgated new liturgical rites for the conferral of the Sacrament of Holy Orders upon bishops, priests, and deacons in the Latin Rite. The apostolic letter *Ad Pascendum* established norms concerning the Order of Deacons. The apostolic letter *Ministeria Quaedam* addressed the suppression in the Latin Rite of first tonsure, the minor orders, and the subdiaconate; established norms for entrance into the clerical state; and instituted the ministries of reader and acolyte.

The Diaconate in the United States

5. Since the Second Vatican Council consigned the decision of the restoration of the diaconate to individual episcopal conferences, the bishops of the United States voted in the spring of 1968 to petition the Holy See for authorization. In their letter of May 2, 1968, the bishops presented the following reasons for the request:

- To complete the hierarchy of sacred orders and to enrich and strengthen the many and various diaconal ministries at work in the United States with the sacramental grace of the diaconate;
- To enlist a new group of devout and competent men in the active ministry of the Church;
- To aid in extending needed liturgical and charitable services to the faithful in both large urban and small rural communities;
- To provide an official and sacramental presence of the Church in areas of secular life, as well as in communities within large cities and sparsely settled regions where few or no priests are available;
- To provide an impetus and source for creative adaptations of diaconal ministries to the rapidly changing needs of our society.

6. On August 30, 1968, the Apostolic Delegate informed the United States bishops that Pope Paul VI had agreed to their request. In November of that year, a standing committee on the diaconate was created by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB). In 1971, the conference approved and authorized the publication of the committee’s document, *Permanent Deacons in the United States: Guidelines on Their Formation and Ministry*. These *Guidelines* served the Church in the United States well as it began to assimilate the new ministry of deacons. In February 1977, the committee organized a comprehensive study “to assess the extent to which the vision” for the diaconate had been realized. The results of that appraisal were published in 1981 under the title *A National Study of the Permanent Diaconate in the United States*. The report acknowledged that the purpose of the diaconate and its integration into the life of the Church in the United States had not yet been fully realized. Building on this *Study*, the NCCB

commissioned the revision of the 1971 *Guidelines*. In November 1984, new guidelines were published with the release of *Permanent Deacons in the United States: Guidelines on Their Formation and Ministry, 1984 Revision*.

7. The committee approved and authorized the publication of a series of monographs as part of a structured national catechesis on the diaconate. In collaboration with the committee, the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy issued the document *The Deacon: Minister of Word and Sacrament, Study Text VI* (1979), which was devoted to the liturgical ministries of the deacon. A second monograph addressed *The Service Ministry of the Deacon* (1988), and a third monograph, *Foundations for the Renewal of the Diaconate* (1993), offered an international and historical perspective on the theology of the diaconate.

Recent Developments

8. The documents of the Second Vatican Council convey "a great deal about bishops and laity and very little about priests and deacons." In 1990, Pope John Paul II convened an Extraordinary Synod of Bishops to consider the life and ministry of priests within the Church in order "to close this gap on behalf of priests with the completion of some important initiatives . . . for example . . . the publication of the post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* and, as an implementation of this document, the *Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*."

9. Seeking further to promote "a certain unity of direction and clarification of concepts, as well as . . . practical encouragement and more clearly defined pastoral objectives," the Congregation for the Clergy and the Congregation for Catholic Education organized a plenary assembly to study the diaconate. This gathering responded to concerns that had surfaced through the *ad limina* visits and reports of the bishops since the restoration of the diaconate was begun. The members of the congregations and their consultants convened in November 1995. Pope John Paul II met with the participants and focused his comments on the identity, mission, and ministry of the deacon in the Church.

10. Following this plenary assembly, the Congregation for the Clergy published a *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* and concurrently, the Congregation for Catholic Education issued *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons*. Both documents provide Episcopal conferences with directives and norms on the selection, formation, and pastoral care of aspirants, candidates, and deacons in accord with the intent of the Second Vatican Council and the subsequent teachings of Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul II. These documents were promulgated as a joint text by Pope John Paul II on February 22, 1998, the Feast of the Chair of Peter.

11. In 1995-1996, the Bishops' Committee on the Diaconate, under the chairmanship of Most Rev. Dale J. Melczek, issued three documents: (1) *Protocol for the Incardination/Excordination of Deacons*, (2) *Policy Statement: Self-Study Instrument and Consultation Team Procedures*, and (3) *A National Study on the Permanent Diaconate in the Catholic Church in the United States, 1994-1995*. This *Study* focused on concerns that had surfaced at a special assembly of the Conference that was convened to address vocations and future church leadership. Those concerns included the identity of the deacon, his effective incorporation into the pastoral ministries of dioceses and parishes, and the need for better screening and training. The *Study* confirmed the success of the renewal of the diaconate in the United States in terms of the number of vocations and in its significant, almost indispensable service to parochial communities.

However, the *Study* also substantiates the concerns raised by the bishops and provides guidance in addressing them.

12. In 1994, the committee organized a national conference for deacons. Its purpose was to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of their renewal in the Church in the United States. The first National Catholic Diaconate Conference was convened in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. The theme of this conference was *Diaconate: A Great and Visible Sign of the Work of the Holy Spirit*. In June 1997, the participants gathered in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee and there explored the theme *The Deacon in a Diaconal Church: Minister of Justice and Charity*. A third conference was convened in June 2000 in the Diocese of Oakland; the theme of this Jubilee Year 2000 conference was *The Deacon in the Third Millennium - New Evangelization*.

13. In March 1997, Most Rev. Edward U. Kmiec, chairman of the Bishops' Committee on the Diaconate convened two subcommittees to oversee the revision of the 1984 *Guidelines*. . . The members of both subcommittees brought varied professional and personal experience to the work and were representative of the geographic, cultural, and social profile of the Church in the United States . . . Extensive consultation with the bishops and the major superiors of men religious, as well as diocesan directors of the diaconate and the executives of national diaconate organizations, preceded the approval of [the *National Directory for the Formation, Life and Ministry of Permanent Deacons in the United States*] by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops at its general meeting in June 2000. In November 2001, Most Rev. Robert C. Morlino, S.T.D., was elected by the conference as chairman of the committee. Under his chairmanship, the committee revised the document in response to the observations received in March, 2002, from the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy. The document was then approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops at its general meeting in June 2003 [and promulgated on November 15, 2004.]

Chapter Two

In light of the “almost total disappearance of the permanent diaconate from the Church of the West for more than a millennium,” the following excerpt from the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (nn. 20-40) offers some theological points of reference which will help to shed light on the “profound reality of this ministry” for men at all stages of diaconal formation (cf. *National Directory* 19). The numbers preceding each paragraph correspond with paragraphs in the *National Directory*.

Please note that the italicized *Pastoral Reflections* following some paragraphs are comments from one or more members of the Diocese of La Crosse Deacon Community Board.

DOCTRINAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE DIACONATE

The Sacramental Nature of the Church

20. The Second Vatican Council spoke of the Church as “mystery,” “sacrament,” “communion,” and “mission”: “The Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race.” The Church is the People of God, the Body of Christ, and the Temple of the Holy Spirit. It is “the community of faith, hope and charity” as well as “an entity with visible delineation.” “But, the society [formed] with hierarchical [structures] and the Mystical Body of Christ . . . [is] not to be considered as two realities, nor are the visible assembly and the spiritual community, nor the earthly Church and the Church enriched with heavenly things; rather they form one complex reality, which coalesces from a divine and a human element.”

21. Jesus Christ, through his ministry, life, death, and resurrection, established in human society and history a new and distinct reality, a community of men and women, through whom “He communicated truth and grace to all. Through the Church, the Good News of Jesus Christ continues to be told and applied to the changing circumstances and challenges of human life. As Christians live their lives in the power of the Holy Spirit and in the assurance of Christ’s return in glory, they offer to others a hope to live by, encouraging them also to embrace Christ and overcome the forces of evil. In the sacraments, which symbolize and make real again the gifts of God that are the origin, center, and goal of the Church’s life, the power of Jesus Christ’s redemption is again and again at work in the world. In her ministry of charity and justice, the Church “encompasses with love all who are afflicted with human suffering and in the poor and afflicted sees the image of her poor and suffering founder. She does all in her power to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ.” Thus, in the communion of life, love, and service realized under the leadership of the successors of the apostles, a vision of reconciled humanity is offered to the world.

Ecclesial Communion and Mission

The Sacraments of Christian Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist

22. Initiation into the Church, the Body of Christ, comes about first through the Sacrament of Baptism - the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In Baptism, every member of the Church receives

new life in the Spirit and becomes a member of Christ's Body - a participant in the new creation. This new life is strengthened in the Sacrament of Confirmation, through which the baptized receives the Spirit and is more perfectly bound to the Church and obliged to bear witness to Christ, to spread and defend the faith by word and deed. In the Sacrament of the Eucharist, the child of God receives the food of new life, the body and blood of Christ. In this Holy Communion, Christ unites each of the baptized to all the faithful in one body - the Church:

Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are sacraments of Christian initiation. They ground the common vocation of all Christ's disciples, a vocation to holiness and to the mission of evangelizing the world. They confer the graces needed for the life according to the Spirit during this life as pilgrims on the march towards the homeland.

Communion and mission are profoundly connected with each other, they interpenetrate and mutually imply each other, to the point that communion represents both the source and the fruit of mission: communion gives rise to mission and mission is accomplished in communion. It is always the one and the same Spirit who calls together and unifies the Church and sends her to preach the Gospel "to the ends of the earth."

The Sacrament of Holy Orders

23. The Church, itself the great sacrament of Christ's presence, rejoices in another "outpouring of the Spirit" - the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Out of the body of initiated believers - anointed in the Holy Spirit through the Sacrament of Baptism, strengthened in the Sacrament of Confirmation, and nurtured with the Bread of Life - Christ calls some to ordained service. The Church, discerning their vocational charism, asks the bishop to ordain them to *diakonia*.
Pastoral Reflection: Ordination to Holy Orders is not a right of the individual.

24. "Holy Orders is the sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles [and their successors] continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time." Thus, it is the sacrament of apostolic ministry: "The mission of the Apostles, which the Lord Jesus continues to entrust to the pastors of his people, is a true service, significantly referred to in Sacred Scripture as '*diakonia*,' namely, service or ministry." This *diakonia* "is exercised on different levels by those who from antiquity have been called bishops, priests and deacons." "The ordained ministries, apart from the persons who receive them, are a grace for the entire Church."

Pastoral Reflection: Deacons are not "mini priests."

25. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* speaks of the Sacrament of Holy Orders in this way:

Catholic doctrine, expressed in the liturgy, the Magisterium, and the constant practice of the Church, recognizes that there are two degrees of ministerial participation in the priesthood of Christ: the episcopacy and the presbyterate. The diaconate is intended to help and serve them. For this reason the term *sacerdos* in current usage denotes bishops and priests but not deacons. Yet Catholic doctrine teaches that the degrees of priestly participation (episcopate and presbyterate) and the degree of service (diaconate) are all three conferred by a sacramental act called "ordination," that is, by the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

26. St. Paul points out that the Holy Spirit is the source of all ministries in the Church and that these services are quite distinct. The distribution of ministerial gifts follows a design set by Christ:

In the building up of Christ's Body various members and functions have their part to play. There is only one Spirit who, according to His own richness and the needs of the ministries, gives His different gifts for the welfare of the Church. What has a special place among these gifts is the grace of the apostles to whose authority the Spirit Himself subjected even those who are endowed with charisms.

The Reestablished Order of Deacons

27. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council, taking seriously the role of the deacon to which St. Paul refers in his first letter to Timothy, remind us that "those who serve well as deacons gain good standing and much confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus." It was for serious pastoral and theological reasons that the Council decided to renew the Order of Deacons as a permanent rank in the hierarchy of the Church.

Pastoral Reflection: Permanent Deacons are unique in their role of service to the Church.

28. The Sacrament of Holy Orders marks deacons "with an *imprint* ('character') which cannot be removed and which configures them to Christ, who made himself the 'deacon' or servant of all." For this level of Holy Orders, Christ calls and the Church asks the bishop to ordain deacons to be consecrated witnesses to service. In his post-synodal exhortation *The Church in America*, Pope John Paul II makes his own the words of the bishops of that gathering: "We see with joy how deacons 'sustained by the grace of the Sacrament, in the ministry (*diakonia*) of the liturgy, of the word and of charity are at the service of the People of God, in communion with the Bishop and his priests.'"

Pastoral Reflection: Do not take ordination lightly; it is for forever!

29. Ordination confers an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It configures the deacon to Christ's consecration and mission. It constitutes the deacon as "a sacred minister and a member of the hierarchy," with a distinct identity and integrity in the Church that marks him as neither a lay person nor a priest; rather, the deacon is a cleric who is ordained to *diakonia*, namely, a service to God's People in communion with the bishop and his body of priests. "The principal function of the deacon, therefore, is to collaborate with the bishop and the priests in the exercise of a ministry which is not of their own wisdom but of the word of God, calling all to conversion and holiness."

Pastoral Reflection: To fulfill one's vocation as a deacon, though not easy, is possible through the deacon's configuration to Christ the Servant.

30. Referring to the traditional description of the deacon's *diakonia* to the Church and the bishop, Pope John Paul II observes that in an ancient text, the deacon's ministry is defined as a "service to the bishop." This observation highlights the constant understanding of the Church that the deacon enjoys a unique relationship with his bishop. The Pope clearly has in view, therefore, the reason for not only the diaconate but the whole apostolic ministry: serving the discipleship of God's people.

Pope John Paul II notes that the deacon's tasks include that of "promoting and sustaining the apostolic activities of the laity." To the extent he is more present and more involved than the priest in secular environments and structures, he should feel encouraged to foster closeness between the ordained ministry and lay activities, in common service to the kingdom of God.

Pastoral Reflection: Service is given to the bishop under the supervision of the assigned pastor. The deacon enjoys a truly unique relationship with his bishop, a relationship which is to be recognized in faithfully meeting the needs and expectations of the bishop.

In particular, "a deeply felt need in the decision to reestablish the permanent diaconate," the Pope recalls, "was and is that of a greater and more direct presence of Church ministers in the various spheres of the family, work, school, etc., in addition to existing pastoral structures." Deacons, both married and celibate, serve God's People by their witness to the gospel value of sacrificial love, a quality of life too easily dismissed in today's society. In their secular employment, deacons also make evident the dignity of human work. Contemporary society is in need of a "new evangelization which demands a greater and more generous effort on the part of [all] ordained ministers." This is especially an opportunity and obligation for deacons in their secular professions to boldly proclaim and witness to the Gospel of life.

Pastoral Reflection: Pay particular attention to your vocation and your loud, "Present," at ordination. Sacrifices and choices will confront you for the rest of your life.

The Church's Ministry of the Word: The Deacon as Evangelizer and Teacher

31. The deacon participates as an evangelizer and teacher in the Church's mission of heralding the word. In the liturgy of the word, especially in the Eucharist or in those liturgies where he is the presiding minister, the deacon proclaims the Gospel. He may preach by virtue of ordination and in accord with the requirements of Canon Law. Other forms of the deacon's participation in the Church's ministry of the word include catechetical instruction; religious formation of candidates and families preparing for the reception of the sacraments; leadership roles in retreats, evangelization, and renewal programs; outreach to alienated Catholics; and spiritual direction, to the extent that he is properly trained. The deacon also strives to "transmit the word in [his] professional [life] either explicitly or merely by [his] active presence in places where public opinion is formed and ethical norms are applied."

Pastoral Reflection: This entire paragraph is devoted to the essence of being a Permanent Deacon. Ordination, in accordance with Canon Law, means participation in the Church's ministry at all levels, both in the parish and in public places.

32. In these and many other formal and informal ways, the deacon leads the community to reflect on their communion and mission in Jesus Christ, especially impelling the community of believers to live lives of service. Because the deacon sacramentalizes service, he should proclaim the word in such a way that he first witnesses its empowerment in his own life. Then he can effectively challenge others to practice the Church's ministry of charity and justice in the social environments in which people live their baptismal vocation. By his own faithful practice of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, the deacon "by word and example . . . should work so that all the faithful, in imitation of Christ, may place themselves at the constant service of their brothers and sisters."

Pastoral Reflection: As a leader in your parish, you will be imitated. Prayerfully lead others to God.

The Church's Ministry of Liturgy: The Deacon as Sanctifier

33. For the deacon, as for all members of the Church, the liturgy is “the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the fount from which all the Church’s power flows.” For the Church gathered at worship, moreover, the ministry of the deacon is a visible, grace-filled sign of the integral connection between sharing at the Lord’s Eucharistic table and serving the many hungers felt so keenly by all God’s children. In the deacon’s liturgical ministry, as in a mirror, the Church sees a reflection of her own diaconal character and is reminded of her mission to serve as Jesus did.

Pastoral Reflection: Even when not vested, you will stand out as a sign of God’s grace. Be sure to “look at yourself in the mirror.” Is the reflection of you, or is it of Christ and His Church?

34. In the context of the Church’s public worship, because of its centrality in the life of the believing community, the ministry of the deacon in the threefold diakonia of the word, of the liturgy, and of charity is uniquely concentrated and integrated. “The diaconate is conferred through a special outpouring of the Spirit (*ordination*), which brings about in the one who receives it a specific conformation to Christ, Lord and servant of all.” “Strengthened by sacramental grace, they are dedicated to the people of God, in conjunction with the bishop and his body of priests, in a service of the liturgy of the word and of charity.”

35. During the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy, the deacon participates in specific penitential rites as designated in the *Roman Missal*. He properly proclaims the Gospel. He may preach the homily in accord with the provisions of Canon Law. He voices the needs of the people in the General Intercessions, needs with which he should have a particular and personal familiarity from the circumstances of his ministry of charity. The deacon assists the presider and other ministers in accepting the offerings of the people - symbolic of his traditional role in receiving and distributing the resources of the community among those in need - and he helps to prepare the gifts for sacrifice. During the celebration he helps the faithful participate more fully, consciously, and actively in the Eucharistic sacrifice, may extend the invitation of peace, and serves as an ordinary minister of Communion. Deacons have a special responsibility for the distribution of the cup. Finally, he dismisses the community at the end of the Mass. Other liturgical roles for which the deacon is authorized include those of solemnly baptizing, witnessing marriages, bringing *viaticum* to the dying, and presiding over funerals and burials. The deacon can preside at the liturgies of the word and communion services in the absence of a priest. He may officiate at celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours and at exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. He can conduct public rites of blessing, offer prayer services for the sick and dying, and administer the Church’s sacramentals, as designated in the *Book of Blessings*. In the Eastern Catholic Churches, the liturgical ministries of deacons are prescribed by the legislative authority of each particular Church.

Pastoral Reflection: Deacons are oftentimes quite visible. Keeping a low profile is an art form that takes practice, dedication and, most of all, humility.

The Church's Ministry of Charity and Justice: The Deacon as Witness and Guide

36. The deacon's ministry, as Pope John Paul II has said, "is the Church's service sacramentalized." Therefore, the deacon's service in the Church's ministry of word and liturgy would be severely deficient if his exemplary witness and assistance in the Church's ministry of charity and justice did not accompany it. Thus, Pope John Paul II affirms both: "This is at the very heart of the diaconate to which you have been called: to be a servant of the mysteries of Christ and, at one and the same time, to be a servant of your brothers and sisters. That these two dimensions are inseparably joined together in one reality shows the important nature of the ministry which is yours by ordination."

37. The deacon's service in the Church's ministry of charity and justice is integral to his service in the Church's ministry of word and liturgy. "The three contexts of the diaconal ministry . . . represent a unity in service at the level of divine Revelation: the ministry of the word leads to ministry at the altar, which in turn prompts the transformation of life by the liturgy, resulting in charity." "As a [participant] in the one ecclesiastical ministry, [the deacon] is a specific sacramental sign, in the Church, of Christ the Servant. His role is to 'express the needs and desires of the Christian communities' and to be 'a driving force for service, or *diakonia*,' which is an essential part of the mission of the Church." The ancient tradition appears to indicate that because the deacon was the servant at the table of the poor, he had his distinctive liturgical roles at the Table of the Lord. Similarly, there is a reciprocal correspondence between his role as a herald of the Gospel and his role as an articulator of the needs of the Church in the General Intercessions. In his formal liturgical roles, the deacon brings the poor to the Church and the Church to the poor. Likewise, he articulates the Church's concern for justice by being a driving force in addressing the injustices among God's people. He thus symbolizes in his roles the grounding of the Church's life in the Eucharist and the mission of the Church in her loving service of the needy. In the deacon, in a unique way, is represented the integral relationship between the worship of God in the liturgy that recalls Jesus Christ's redemptive sacrifice sacramentally and the worship of God in everyday life where Jesus Christ is encountered in the needy. The deacon's service begins at the altar and returns there. The sacrificial love of Christ celebrated in the Eucharist nourishes him and motivates him to lay down his life on behalf of God's People.

38. The apostles' decision to appoint ministers to attend to the needs of the Greek-speaking widows of the early Church at Jerusalem has long been interpreted as a normative step in the evolution of ministry. It is seen as a practical response to Jesus' command during the Last Supper of mutual service among his followers. In washing his disciples' feet, Jesus as head and shepherd of the community modeled the service that he desired to be the hallmark of their faithfulness. This gave the disciples a powerful sign of the love of God that was, in Jesus himself, incarnate and intended to be forever enfleshed in the attitudes and behaviors of his followers. The deacon, consecrated and conformed to the mission of Christ, Lord and Servant, has a particular concern for the vitality and genuineness of the exercise of *diakonia* in the life of the believing community. In a world hungry and thirsty for convincing signs of the compassion and liberating love of God, the deacon sacramentalizes the mission of the Church in his words and deeds, responding to the master's command of service and providing real-life examples of how to carry it out.

An Intrinsic Unity

39. By ordination, the deacon, who sacramentalizes the Church's service, is to exercise the Church's *diakonia*. Therefore, "the diaconal ministries, distinguished above, are not to be separated; the deacon is ordained for them all, and no one should be ordained who is not prepared to undertake each in some way." "However, even if this inherent ministerial service is one and the same in every case, nevertheless, the concrete ways of carrying it out are diverse; these must be suggested, in each case, by the different pastoral situations of the single churches." A deacon may also have greater abilities in one aspect of ministry; and, therefore, his service may be marked by one of them more than by the others. Fundamentally, however, there is an intrinsic unity in a deacon's ministry. In preaching the word, he is involved in every kind of missionary outreach. In sanctifying God's People through the liturgy, he infuses and elevates people with new meaning and with a Christian worldview. In bringing Christ's reign into every stratum of society, the deacon develops a Christian conscience among all people of good will, motivating their service and commitment to the sanctity of human life.

Concluding Reflection

40. When one reflects upon the Order of Deacons, it is worthwhile to recall the words from the ordination ritual of deacons:

Like those once chosen by the Apostles for the ministry of charity, you should be men of good reputation, filled with wisdom and the Holy Spirit. Firmly rooted and grounded in faith, you are to show yourselves chaste and beyond reproach before God and man, as is proper for the ministers of Christ and the stewards of God's mysteries. Never allow yourselves to be turned away from the hope offered by the Gospel. Now you are not only hearers of this Gospel but also its ministers. Holding the mystery of faith with a clear conscience, express by your actions the word of God which your lips proclaim, so that the Christian people, brought to life by the Spirit, may be a pure offering accepted by God. Then on the last day, when you go out to meet the Lord you will be able to hear him say, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of your Lord."

Chapter Three

THE MINISTRY AND LIFE OF DEACONS

The following excerpt from the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (nn. 41-85) presents an overview of the deacon's state of life, relationships and spirituality. It further addresses the diaconate as a permanent and stable rank of ordained ministry, and discusses the obligations and rights of deacons. The numbers preceding each paragraph correspond with paragraphs in the *National Directory*.

The Relationships of the Deacon

Relationship with the Diocesan Bishop

41. The deacon exercises his ministry within a specific pastoral context - the communion and mission of a diocesan Church. He is in direct relationship with the diocesan bishop with whom he is in communion and under whose authority he exercises his ministry. In making his promise of respect and obedience to his bishop, the deacon takes as his model Christ, who became the servant of his Father. The diocesan bishop also enters into a relationship with the deacon since the deacon is his collaborator in the service of God's People. It is, therefore, a particular responsibility of the bishop to provide for the pastoral care of the deacons of his diocese. The bishop discharges this responsibility both personally and through the director of deacon personnel.

42. The bishop appoints the deacon to a specific assignment normally by means of an official letter of appointment. The principal criteria for the assignment are the pastoral needs of the diocesan Church and the personal qualifications of the deacon, as these have been discerned in his previous experience and the course of his formation. The assignment also acknowledges the deacon's family and occupational responsibilities.

43. The bishop promotes "a suitable catechesis" throughout the diocesan Church to assist the lay faithful, religious, and clergy to have a richer and firmer sense about the deacon's identity, function, and role within the Church's ministry. Such a catechesis is "an opportunity for the bishop, priests, religious, and laity to discern the needs and challenges of the local Church, to consider the types of service needed in order to meet them, to tailor a diaconal program to address them, and to begin the process of considering which men in the church might be called upon to undertake diaconal ministry."

44. The assignment of a deacon to a specific ministry, the delineation of his duties and responsibilities, and the designation of his immediate pastor or pastoral supervisor, should always be clearly stated in the letter of appointment signed by the diocesan bishop. This document should make as explicit as possible the implicit expectations of the participants, thereby establishing a clear line of mutual responsibility and accountability among them. "For the good of the deacon and to prevent improvisation, ordination should be accompanied by clear investiture of pastoral responsibility." Although the wife of a married deacon has already given her permission before her husband's ordination to the demands of the diaconal ministry, nevertheless she should be "kept duly informed of [her husband's] activities in order to arrive at a harmonious balance between family, professional and ecclesial responsibilities." Until the letter

of appointment is signed by the bishop and publicly announced by the bishop's office, all parties are bound to confidentiality.

45. The diocesan bishop also ensures that the "rights and duties as foreseen by canons 273-283 of the *Code of Canon Law* with regard to clerics in general and deacons in particular" are promoted.

46. The transition from candidate formation into an active diaconal ministry requires sensitivity. "Introducing the deacon to those in charge of the community (the parish, pastor, priests), and the community to the deacon, helps them not only to come to know each other but contributes to a collaboration based on mutual respect and dialogue, in a spirit of faith and fraternal charity." Newly ordained deacons, therefore, are to be appointed to and supervised by a priest. This pastoral care of a newly ordained deacon, coordinated by the director of deacon personnel, extends for the first three years after ordination. This time would include opportunities for ongoing formation, with an initial emphasis upon the issues and concerns voiced by the newly ordained as he gains ministerial experience. It is likewise a unique opportunity to assist the deacon's family as it begins to adjust to its new situation within the community.

47. With the approval of the diocesan bishop, a realistic program for the continuing education and formation of each deacon and the entire diaconal community should be designed "taking due account of factors such as age and circumstances of deacons, together with the demands made on them by their pastoral ministry." The preparation, implementation, and evaluation of this program are to be coordinated by the director of deacon personnel. "In addition to the [continuing] formation offered to [all] deacons, initiatives should be arranged for those deacons who are married," including the participation of their wives and families, "where opportune...However, [care must be given] to maintain the essential distinction of roles and the clear independence of the ministry." Similarly, continuing formation should be conducted for deacons who are not married.

Relationship with the Diocese

48. While assuming different forms of diaconal ministry, a deacon exercises his service in both a diocesan setting and in an individual assignment. Therefore, he may be given specific responsibility, if he meets the necessary requirements, in an administrative position at a diocesan or parochial level. However, in discharging these administrative responsibilities, "the deacon should recall that every action in the Church should be informed by charity and service to all...Those deacons who are called to exercise such offices should be placed so as to discharge duties which are proper to the diaconate, in order to preserve the integrity of the diaconal ministry."

49. Deacons who possess the necessary requirements, experience, and talent may be appointed members of the diocesan council, finance council, or commissions. They may be assigned to diocesan pastoral work in specific social contexts: e.g., the pastoral care of the family or the pastoral needs of ethnic minorities. They may also participate in a diocesan synod. They may exercise the offices of chancellor, judge, assessor, auditor, promoter of justice, defender of the bond, and notary or may serve as the diocesan finance officer. However, deacons do not "act as members of the council of priests, since this body exclusively represents the presbyterate." Deacons may not "be constituted judicial vicars, adjunct judicial vicars, or vicars forane, since these offices are reserved for priests." To strengthen the diaconal character of the diocesan Church, care is to be taken, therefore, to include, as much as possible, a diaconal presence within

diocesan structures, as well as within parish communities. Deacons who have parochial administrative training and experience may be entrusted, under a canonically appointed pastor or priest supervisor, to assist in the pastoral care of a parish or to temporarily guide a parish that lacks, because of a shortage, the immediate benefit of a resident pastor. In these extraordinary situations, deacons “as always have precedence over the non-ordained faithful,” and their authority and responsibility “should always be clearly specified in writing when they are assigned office.”

Relationship with the Priesthood

50. Deacons exercise their ministry in communion not only with their bishop but also with the priests who serve the diocesan Church. As collaborators in ministry, priests and deacons are two complementary but subordinate participants in the one apostolic ministry bestowed by Christ upon the apostles and their successors. The diaconate is not an abridged or substitute form of the priesthood, but is a full order in its own right. Permanent deacons ought to foster fraternal bonds with transitional deacons. Through formal contacts arranged by the diocesan diaconate and vocation offices with the seminary program, in collaborative diocesan and parochial ministries, and in opportunities for shared study and prayer, the Order of Deacons can more clearly be understood and appreciated among those to be ordained to the Order of Priests.

51. The diocesan bishop may assign a deacon to a parish to assist a priest entrusted with the pastoral care of one or several parishes. Deacons who possess administrative experience and have received pastoral theological training also may be called to guide Christian communities that do not have the immediate benefit of a resident priest. “While it is a duty of deacons to respect the office of parish priest and to work in communion with all who share in his pastoral care, they also have the right to be accepted and fully recognized by all.” When a deacon is entrusted to guide a parish community, “it is necessary to specify that the moderator of the parish is a priest and that he is its proper pastor. To him alone has been entrusted the *cura animarum*, in which he is assisted by the deacon.” “When deacons supply in places where there is a shortage of priests, they do so by ecclesial mandate.... It is they who preside at [such] Sunday celebrations” in the absence of the priest. In dioceses where parish pastoral councils are constituted, these deacons are members of such councils by law.

52. Deacons and priests, as ordained ministers, should develop a genuine respect for each other, witnessing to the communion and mission they share with one another and with the diocesan bishop in mutual service to the People of God. To foster this communion, it is important for the diocese to offer opportunities annually for shared retreats, days of recollection, deanery meetings, continuing education study days, and mutual work on diocesan councils and commissions, as well as regularly scheduled occasions for socialization. Further, the Church’s communion and mission “is realized not only by the ministers in virtue of the Sacrament of Orders but also by all the lay faithful.” Therefore, the bishop, priests, and deacons need to welcome, inspire, and form the lay faithful to participate in the communion and mission of the Church “because of their Baptismal state and their specific vocation.”

53. Priests should be informed about the sacramental identity of the deacon. They also are to be aware of the nature of diaconal spirituality and the specific functions the deacons will perform within the diocesan Church. Priests need to collaborate with the diocesan bishop in planning for the inclusion of deacons into the life and ministry of the diocesan Church. Pastors especially are involved in the presentation, selection, and assessment processes of aspirants and candidates. Priests must serve as spiritual directors and pastoral supervisors and may serve as members of the faculty. They are expected to catechize the people on the ordained vocation of the deacon and

to actively seek out, with the assistance of the parish community, competent nominees for this ministry.

Relationship with Those in Formation

54. By virtue of their ordination, a sacramental fraternity unites deacons. They form a community that witnesses to Christ, the Deacon-Servant. “Each deacon should have a sense of being joined with his fellow deacons in a bond of charity, prayer, obedience to their bishops, ministerial zeal and collaboration.” Therefore, “with the permission of the bishop . . . it would be opportune for deacons periodically to meet to discuss their ministry, exchange experiences, advance formation and encourage each other in fidelity.” Canonically, deacons may “form associations among themselves to promote their spiritual life, to carry out charitable and pious works and pursue other objectives which are consonant with their sacramental consecration and mission.” However, it must be noted that associations that form as pressure groups that could promote conflict with the bishop are completely irreconcilable with the clerical state. It may be desirable, therefore, for the diocesan bishop to form a diocesan structure composed of a proportionate number of deacons to coordinate diaconal ministry and life within the diocese. The diocesan bishop would serve as its president and approve its statutes. Finally, the diaconal community should be, for those in the aspirant and candidate paths in formation, “a precious support in the discernment of their vocation, in human growth, in the initiation to the spiritual life, in theological study and pastoral experience.”

Relationship with Women and Men Religious

55. Deacons ought to promote collaboration between themselves and women and men religious who also have dedicated their lives to the service of the Church. Pastoral sensitivity between deacons and religious should be carefully nurtured. Opportunities for dialogue among deacons and religious could serve the Church well in developing and maintaining mutual understanding and support of each other’s unique vocation, each of which accomplishes in its own way the common mission of service to the Church.

Relationship with the Laity

56. By ordination, deacons are members of the clergy. The vast majority of deacons in the United States, married or celibate, have secular employment and do not engage exclusively in specific church-related ministries. This combination of an ordained minister with a secular occupation and personal and family obligations can be a great strength, opportunity, and witness to the laity on how they too might integrate their baptismal call and state in life in living Christian faith in society.

57. The laity, as members of the Church, have an obligation and right to share in the communion and mission of the Church. Through his ordination to service, the deacon promotes, in an active fashion, the various lay apostolates and guides these in communion with the bishop and local priests. In collaboration with his bishop and the priests of his diocese, the deacon has a special role to promote communion and to counter the strong emphasis on individualism prevalent in the United States. Set aside for service, the deacon links together the individual and diverse segments of the community of believers. In his works of charity, the deacon guides and witnesses to the Church “the love of Christ for all men instead of personal interests and ideologies which are injurious to the universality of salvation . . . the *diakonia* of charity necessarily leads to a growth of communion within the particular Churches since charity is the very soul of ecclesial communion.”

Relationship with Society

58. The diaconate is lived in a particularly powerful way in the manner in which a deacon fulfills his obligations to his secular occupation, to his civic and public responsibilities, and among his family and neighbors. This, in turn, enables the deacon to bring back to the Church an appreciation of the meaning and value of the Gospel as he discerns it in the lives and questions of the people he has encountered. In his preaching and teaching, the deacon articulates the needs and hopes of the people he has experienced, thereby animating, motivating, and facilitating a commitment among the lay faithful to an evangelical service in the world.

59. Specifically, in the third Christian millennium, “the whole Church is called to greater apostolic commitment which is both personal and communitarian, renewed and generous.” At the heart of this call is an awareness of a new evangelization: i.e., “to rekindle the faith the Christian conscience of many and cause the joyful proclamation of salvation to resound in society.” The deacon, as herald of the Gospel, has an important pastoral responsibility in new evangelization. Pope John Paul II reminds the Church that “what moves me even more strongly to proclaim the urgency of missionary evangelization is the fact that it is the primary service which the Church can render to every individual . . . in the modern world. The deacon is ordained precisely for service in both the sanctuary and the marketplace.

60. The secular employment of a deacon is also linked with his ministry. Although his secular work may benefit the community, some professions can become incompatible with the pastoral responsibilities of his ministry. The bishop, “bearing in mind the requirements of ecclesial communion and of the fruitfulness of pastoral ministry, shall evaluate individual cases as they arise, [and may require] a change of profession after ordination.”

Unity in Pastoral Activity

61. Under the diocesan bishop’s authority, joint meetings and cooperative action “arranged between priests, deacons, religious, and laity involved in pastoral work [can] avoid compartmentalization or the development of isolated groups and . . . guarantee coordinated unity for different pastoral activities.”

Diaconal Spirituality

Introduction

62. The primary sources of a deacon’s spirituality are his participation in the sacraments of Christian initiation, as well as his sacramental identity and participation in ordained ministry. For a deacon who is married, his spirituality is nurtured further in the Sacrament of Matrimony, which sanctifies conjugal love and constitutes it as a sign of the love with which Christ gives himself to the Church. For the celibate deacon, loving God and serving his neighbor roots his whole person in a total and undivided consecration to Christ. For each deacon, his model *par excellence* is Jesus Christ, the Servant, who lived totally at the service of his Father, for the good of every person. To live their ministry to the fullest, “deacons must know Christ immediately so that He may shoulder the burdens of their ministry.”

Spiritual Life

63. Deacons are obligated to give priority to the spiritual life and to live their *diakonia* with generosity. They should integrate their family obligations, professional life, and ministerial responsibilities so as to grow in their commitment to the person and mission of Christ, the Servant. Clerics have a special obligation to seek holiness in their lives “because they are

consecrated to God by a new title in the reception of orders as dispensers of God's mysteries in the service of His people."

Simplicity of Life

64. Deacons are charged at ordination to shape a way of life always according to the example of Christ and to imitate Christ who came not to be served but to serve. Therefore, deacons are called to a simple lifestyle. Simplicity of life enables a cleric "to stand beside the underprivileged, to practice solidarity with their efforts to create a more just society, to be more sensitive and capable of understanding and discerning realities involving the economic and social aspects of life, and to promote a preferential option for the poor." The prophetic significance of this lifestyle, "so urgently needed in affluent and consumeristic societies," is its important witness in animating the *diakonia* of every Christian to serve "especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted."

Pastoral Service

65. As Pope John Paul II observed, "a deeply felt need in the decision to reestablish the diaconate was and is that of a greater and more direct presence of Church ministers in the various spheres such as family, work, school, etc., in addition to existing pastoral structures." While transforming the world is the proper role of the laity, the deacon - in communion with his bishop and the diocesan presbyterate - exhorts, consecrates, and guides the People of God in living faithfully the communion and mission they share in Christ, especially in making the Gospel visible in their daily lives through their concern for justice, peace, and respect for life.

The Deacon in his State of Life

The Married Deacon

66. The majority of deacons in the United States are married. These men bring to the Sacrament of Holy Orders the gifts already received and still being nurtured through their participation in the Sacrament of Matrimony. This sacrament sanctifies the love of husbands and wives, making that love an efficacious sign of the love of Christ for his Church. Marriage requires an "interpersonal giving of self, a mutual fidelity, a source of [and openness to] new life, [and] a support in times of joy and sorrow." Lived in faith, this ministry within the domestic Church is a sign to the entire Church of the love of Christ. It forms the basis of the married deacon's unique gift within the Church.

67. "In particular the deacon and his wife must be a living example of fidelity and indissolubility in Christian marriage before a world which is in dire need of such signs. By facing in a spirit of faith the challenges of married life and the demands of daily living, they strengthen the family life not only of the Church community but of the whole of society. They also show how the obligations of family life, work and ministry can be harmonized in the service of the Church's mission. Deacons and their wives and children can be a great encouragement to others who are working to promote family life."

68. A married deacon, with his wife and family, gives witness to the sanctity of marriage. The more they grow in mutual love, conforming their lives to the Church's teaching on marriage and sexuality, the more they give to the Christian community a model of Christ-like love, compassion, and self-sacrifice. The married deacon must always remember that through his sacramental participation in both vocational sacraments, first in Matrimony and again in his Holy Orders, he is challenged to be faithful to both. With integrity he must live out both sacraments in

harmony and balance. The wife of a deacon should be included with her husband, when appropriate, in diocesan clergy and parochial staff gatherings. A deacon and his wife, both as a spiritual man and woman and as a couple, have much to share with the bishop and his priests about the Sacrament of Matrimony. A diaconal family also brings a unique presence and understanding of the domestic family.

The Celibate Deacon

69. The Church acknowledges the gift of celibacy that God grants to certain of its members who wholeheartedly live it “*according to its true nature* and according to its real purposes, that is for evangelical, spiritual and pastoral motives.” The essential meaning of celibacy is grounded in Jesus’ preaching of the kingdom of God. Its deepest source is love of Christ and dedication to his mission. “In celibate life, indeed, love becomes a sign of total and undivided consecration to Christ and of greater freedom to serve God and man. The choice of celibacy is not an expression of contempt for marriage nor of flight from reality but a special way of serving man and the world.”

70. The celibate commitment remains one of the most fundamental expressions of Jesus’ call to radical discipleship for the sake of the kingdom on earth and as an eschatological sign of the kingdom of heaven. “This perfect continency, out of desire for the kingdom of heaven, has always been held in particular honor in the Church. The reason for this was and is that perfect continency for the love of God is an incentive to charity, and is certainly a particular source of spiritual fecundity in the world.”

71. If the celibate deacon gives up one kind of family, he gains another. In Christ, the people he serves become mother, brother, and sister. In this way, celibacy as a sign and motive of pastoral charity takes flesh. Reciprocity, mutuality, and affection shared with many become channels that mold and shape the celibate deacon’s pastoral love and his sexuality. “Celibacy should not be considered just as a legal norm . . . but rather as a value...whereby [the celibate deacon] takes on the likeness of Jesus Christ . . . as a full and joyful availability in his heart for the pastoral ministry.”

Celibacy Affects Every Deacon

72. In one way or another, celibacy affects every deacon, married or unmarried. Understanding the nature of celibacy - its value and its practice - are essential to the married deacon. Not only does this understanding strengthen and nurture his own commitment to marital chastity, but it also helps to prepare him for the possibility of living celibate chastity should his wife predecease him. This concern is particularly unique within the diaconate. Tragically, some deacons who were married at the time of ordination only begin to face the issues involved with celibacy upon the death of their wives. As difficult as this process is, all deacons need to appreciate the impact celibacy can have on their lives and ministry.

The Widowed Deacon

73. The death of a married deacon’s wife is a “particular moment in life which calls for faith and Christian hope.” The death of the wife of a married deacon introduces a new reality into the daily routine of his family and ministry. Charity should be extended to the widowed deacon as he assesses and accepts his new personal circumstances, so he will not neglect his primary duty as father to his children or any new needs his family might have. As required, a widowed deacon should be assisted to seek professional counsel and spiritual direction as he encounters and integrates the bereavement process. Further, the fraternal closeness of his bishop, the priests with whom he ministers, and the diaconal community should offer comfort and reassurance in

this special moment in his life. This adjustment to a new state of life can be achieved only in time through prayer, counsel, and an “intensification of one’s dedication to others for the love of God in the ministry.” [See also “Death of a Deacon or Spouse,” p. 40]

74. A similar sensitivity also should be given to the widow of a deacon since she shared so intimately in her husband’s life and ministerial witness. The bishop and her pastor, as well as the diaconal and parish communities, should extend appropriate and adequate support in her bereavement. Widows of deacons ought to remain connected with the diaconal community, not only because of support and encouragement, but because of the unique bonds that had been forged by virtue of her husband’s ordination.

75. In exceptional cases, the Holy See may grant a dispensation for a new marriage or for a release from the obligations of the clerical state. However, to ensure a mature decision in discerning God’s will, effective pastoral care should be provided to maintain that a proper and sufficient period of time has elapsed before either of these dispensations is sought. If a dispensation for a new marriage is petitioned and granted, additional time will be required for the formation of a stable relationship in the new marriage, as well as the enabling of his new wife to obtain sufficient understanding and experience about the diaconate in order to give her written, informed consent and support.

A Deacon and Family Confronting Divorce

76. Divorce between a deacon and his wife can happen. In this situation, suitable pastoral care should be offered to the deacon, his wife, and their children. This pastoral care, which may be facilitated by the director of deacon personnel or any other qualified person on behalf of the bishop, should include ample time to work through the various stages of grieving and adjustment caused by divorce. The determination of the divorced deacon’s ministerial status will require sensitivity and prudence on the part of the bishop, the pastor or pastoral supervisor, the ministerial community, and other institutions in which the deacon serves. Members of the diaconal community are also in a unique position to reach out, as appropriate, in order to help the divorced couple and family deal with the challenges the divorce may entail.

The Permanency of the Order of Deacons

77. Underlying the renewal of the diaconate at the Second Vatican Council was the principle that the diaconate is a stable and permanent rank of ordained ministry. Since the history of the order over the last millennium, however, has been centered on the diaconate as a transitory stage leading to the priesthood, actions that may obfuscate the stability and permanence of the order should be minimized. This would include the ordination of celibate or widowed deacons to the priesthood. “Hence ordination [of a permanent deacon] to the Priesthood . . . must always be a very rare exception, and only for special and grave reasons...Given the exceptional nature of such cases, the diocesan bishop should consult the Congregation for Catholic Education with regard to the intellectual and theological preparation of the candidate, and also the Congregation for the Clergy concerning the program of priestly formation and the aptitude of the candidate to the priestly ministry.”

The Obligations and Rights of Deacons

Incardination

78. “Through the imposition of hands and the prayer of consecration, [the deacon] is constituted a sacred minister and a member of the hierarchy.” Having already clearly expressed in writing his intention to serve the diocesan Church for life, upon his ordination the deacon is incardinated into the diocesan Church. “Incardination is a juridical bond. It has ecclesiastical and spiritual significance in as much as it expresses the ministerial dedication of the deacon to a specific diocesan Church.”

The Church’s Ministry of the Word

79. As a participant in the Church’s ministry of the word, the deacon heeds the charge given him at ordination: “Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you now are. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach.” The deacon must always remain a student of God’s word, for only when the word is deeply rooted in his own life can he bring that word to others. The deacon ought to remember that since he is a member of the hierarchy, his actions and public pronouncements involve the Church and its Magisterium. Therefore, he is obligated to cherish the communion and mission that bind him to the Holy Father and his own bishop, especially in his preaching of the Scriptures, the creed, Catholic teachings, and the disciplines of the Church.

80. Deacons are ordained “to proclaim the Gospel and preach the word of God.” They “have the faculty to preach everywhere, in accordance with the conditions established by [Canon Law].” “Deacons should be trained carefully to prepare their homilies in prayer, in study of the sacred texts, in perfect harmony with the Magisterium and in keeping with the [age, culture, and abilities] of those to whom they preach.” Further, “by their conduct...by transmitting Christian doctrine and by devoting attention to the problems of our time...[deacons] collaborate with the bishop and the priests in the exercise of a ministry which is not of their wisdom but of the word of God, calling all to conversion and holiness.”

81. Deacons are obliged to obtain the permission of their bishop before submitting for publication written material concerning faith and morals. Deacons are required to adhere to the norms established by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops or diocesan policies when participating in radio or television broadcasts, public media, and the Internet.

The Church’s Ministry of Liturgy

82. As an ordained participant in the Church’s ministry of liturgy, the deacon confirms his identity as servant of the Body of Christ. In the celebration of the sacraments, whether he serves as a presider or assists the presider, “let him remember that, when lived with faith and reverence, these actions of the Church contribute much to growth in the spiritual life and to the increase of the Christian community.”

83. Deacons, in hierarchical communion with the bishop and priests, serve in the sanctification of the Christian community. “In the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the deacon does not celebrate the mystery: rather, he effectively represents on the one hand, the people of God and, specifically, helps them to unite their lives to the offering of Christ; while on the other, in the name of Christ himself, he helps the Church to participate in the fruits of that sacrifice.” While

exercising his liturgical ministries, “the deacon is to observe faithfully the rubrics of the liturgical books without adding, omitting or changing of his own volition what they require.... For the Sacred Liturgy they should vest worthily and with dignity, in accordance with the prescribed liturgical norms. The dalmatic, in its appropriate liturgical colors, together with the alb, cincture and stole, ‘constitutes the liturgical dress proper to deacons.’”

The Church’s Ministry of Charity and Justice

84. As an ordained participant in the Church’s ministry of charity and justice, the deacon assumes the duties entrusted to him by his bishop with humility and enthusiasm. At the core of his spirituality, a deacon puts on Christ and is guided by the love of Christ in caring for all in his charge: “Charity is the very soul of ecclesial communion.”

85. In the prayer of diaconal ordination, the bishop implores God that the deacon may be “full of all the virtues, sincere in charity, solicitous towards the weak and the poor, humble in their service . . . [and] may . . . be the image of your Son who did not come to be served but to serve.” Therefore, “by word and example,” the deacon places himself “at the constant service of [his] brothers and sisters.” This service will include diocesan and parochial works of charity, including the Church’s concern for social justice. It will also extend into Christian formation – working with youth and adults in promoting justice and life in all its phases – transforming the world through personal witness in conformity with the Gospel of life and justice. The deacon must strive, therefore, to serve all humanity “without discrimination, while devoting particular care to the suffering and the sinful.” Ultimately, the deacon’s principal *diakonia* - a sign of the Church’s mission-”should bring [all whom he serves] to an experience of God’s love and move [them] to conversion by opening [their] heart[s] to the work of grace.”

THE MINISTRY OF THE DEACON IN THE LITURGY OF THE MASS

Norms for the Diocese of La Crosse

Sources: *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*¹

*Ceremonial of Bishops*²

*Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*³

Pastoral Reflections: Comments from individuals on the Deacon Community Board for the Diocese of La Crosse

Deacons are asked to familiarize themselves with and observe the norms set forth in this guide. These guidelines set forth the minimum standards to be followed by deacons when assisting at the Sacred Liturgy in the Diocese of La Crosse. **They are not intended to be exhaustive; therefore, in situations where a difference of instruction may arise, deacons are asked to defer to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and/or the *Ceremonial of Bishops*, and to consult with their pastor.**

Pastoral Reflection: The following norms hold the key to the deacon's proper positions and gestures during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. All deacons should be familiar with them so as to be properly prepared, and so as to be able to explain the mechanics of the liturgy to servers, lectors, cantors and others who assist. When necessary, practicing in an empty church will prove most fruitful; this responsibility should not be taken lightly. The tasks described in the above publications do not come easily. If necessary, discuss questions and concerns with your deacon mentor to gain insight from his experience. Consider purchasing your own (or a parish) copy of the *Ceremonial for Bishops*. It will be beneficial to have this book accessible.

THE HOLY SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

It is within the context of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass that the faithful, in union with Christ Himself, and with all the angels and saints, give thanks to God and praise Him for His greatness. The Mass is made up, as it were, of two parts: the *Liturgy of the Word* and the *Liturgy of the Eucharist*. These, however, are so closely interconnected that they form but one single act of worship (28). Eucharistic Liturgy invites the faithful to “take part in a foretaste of that heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the holy city of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium* 8). The Eucharistic Sacrifice, rightly called the source and summit of the Christian life, “is wholly directed toward the intimate union of the faithful with Christ through Communion” (CCC 1382). The other sacraments, indeed, the entire work of the Church, “are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the Blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ Himself, our Pasch” (*Presbyterorum Ordinis* 5). When we receive the Holy Eucharist, “we receive the very One who offered himself for us, we receive his body which he gave up for us on the Cross and his blood which he ‘poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins’” (*Ecclesia de Eucharistia* 16).

¹ *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, hereafter referred to as GIRM. Parenthetical numbers in this section refer to paragraphs in the GIRM, unless otherwise noted.

² *Ceremonial of Bishops*, hereafter referred to as CB.

³ *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*, hereafter referred to as DMLPD.

The deacon's privileged role at Mass has a sacramental connection to his vocation as minister of the word, liturgy and charity. This threefold ministry, "inseparably joined in God's plan for redemption," represents "a unity in service at the level of Divine Revelation: the ministry of the word leads to ministry at the altar, which in turn prompts the transformation of life by the liturgy, resulting in charity" (DMLPD, pp. 103-104). From the liturgy, the deacon is enabled to become the advocate of the "widows and orphans," and the minister of the table and hospitality.

Pastoral Reflection: Sometimes the functions of a deacon at Mass are seen as "window dressing." Not so! The deacon's role at Mass is an integral part of the Liturgy. In addition, it is a reflection, in the liturgical setting, of his vocation to love, through service, God and neighbor.

THE ROLE OF THE DEACON IN THE LITURGY OF THE MASS

Chapter II of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* provides a most helpful and detailed explanation of the general structure, various elements and individual parts of the Mass. Chapter III explains the various duties and ministries of ordained ministers in the Mass, while more detailed norms, including a section entitled "Mass with a Deacon" (cf. 171-193), may be found in Chapter IV. Chapter V provides general principles regarding the arrangement and furnishing of churches for Mass. Finally, Chapter VI provides instruction on such requisites for Mass as the bread and wine, sacred vessels, vestments, liturgical books and so on.

When he is present at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the deacon should exercise his ministry (171), always consulting with the celebrant in advance regarding preparations for the liturgy. The deacon who assists at the Mass exercises his ministry in the following ways:

- Assists the priest and remains at his side;
- Ministers at the altar, with the chalice as well as the Missal;
- Proclaims the Gospel and, at the direction of the priest celebrant and with faculty, may preach the homily;
- Guides the faithful by appropriate introductions and explanations, and announces the *Prayer of the Faithful*;
- Assists the priest celebrant in distributing Holy Communion (particularly in the distribution of the Precious Blood), and arranges and purifies the sacred vessels;
- As needed, fulfills the duties of other ministers (e.g. thurifer, acolyte, crucifer) himself if none are present (171).

Pastoral Reflection: Assisting the priest at the altar is a visible and vital part of diaconal service. When the faithful see a deacon carrying out his ministry at Mass, they witness the sacramental presence of Christ the Servant.

Preparation for Mass

The deacon should arrive early for Mass, leaving sufficient time for both recollection and attending to responsibilities before the liturgy begins. The deacon is normally responsible for assisting with the preparation for the Mass, as needed. For example, the altar should be made ready (altar cloth, candles, etc.), and the liturgical books (e.g. Missal and hymnal) and vessels (e.g. chalice, corporal and purificator) set in place. The Lectionary should be properly marked and placed on the ambo (116-119).

Pastoral Reflection: Common sense dictates that the deacon should arrive early for any scheduled events, especially for Mass. Also, it is inappropriate to arrive improperly attired in casual or sports attire.

Vesture

The vestment proper to the deacon is the dalmatic, although the dalmatic may be omitted out of necessity or on account of a lesser degree of solemnity. The deacon will vest in the sacristy with the alb, cincture, stole and dalmatic (if possible) over his street clothes. The alb should cover the collar of the deacon's shirt; otherwise, an amice should be worn. The alb is tied at the waist with a cincture, if necessary. The stole is worn on the *left* shoulder and *under* the dalmatic (336, 338). The dalmatic is to be worn over the alb and stole.

Incensation during Mass

The use of incense is an expression of reverence and prayer fittingly used in the Sacred Liturgy:

- During the Entrance procession;
- At the beginning of Mass, to incense the cross and the altar;
- At the Gospel procession and the proclamation of the Gospel itself;
- After the bread and the chalice have been placed upon the altar, to incense the offerings, the cross, and the altar, as well as the priest and the people;
- At the showing of the host and the chalice after the consecration.

After placing incense into the thurible, the priest silently blesses it with the *Sign of the Cross*. Before and after an incensation, a profound, or a deep, bow is made to the person or object that is incensed, except for the incensation of the altar and the offerings for the Sacrifice of the Mass (276-277). In light of the most recent liturgical tradition, a “swing,” as articulated in the GIRM, may be interpreted as a double swing.

The following are incensed with *three* double swings of the thurible: the Blessed Sacrament, a relic of the Holy Cross and images of the Lord exposed for public veneration, the offerings for the Sacrifice of the Mass, the altar cross, the *Book of the Gospels*, the Paschal Candle, the priest and the people.

The following are incensed with *two* double swings of the thurible: relics and images of the Saints exposed for public veneration. This should, however, be done only at the beginning of the celebration, after the incensation of the altar. Here, again, this may be interpreted as two double swings.

Pastoral Reflection: Fluid movements of the thurible are most desired, but can be difficult to achieve. Since it may seem strange or awkward, practicing the mechanics of incensation with an empty thurible at a time when the church is empty will provide a level of confidence that will be most helpful in the liturgy itself. The newly ordained deacon may find it beneficial to ask his pastor or mentor for assistance in learning how to incense properly.

THE ORDER OF THE MASS

The Introductory Rites (cf. GIRM 46-54, 171-174)

Carrying the *Book of the Gospels* slightly elevated, the deacon precedes the priest as he approaches the altar. When he reaches the altar, he omits the reverence (bow) and goes up directly to the altar. The deacon places the *Book of the Gospels* on the altar, after which, together with the priest, he venerates the altar with a kiss. If, however, he is not carrying the *Book of the Gospels*, he makes a profound bow to the altar with the priest in the customary way and, with the priest, venerates the altar with a kiss (173). NOTE: If, however, the tabernacle is located in the

sanctuary, all ministers genuflect to it only when they approach the altar and when they leave the sanctuary, but not during the celebration of Mass itself (274).

If incense is used, the deacon assists the priest in preparing the thurible and in incensing the cross and the altar (173). After the incensation of the altar, the deacon goes to the chair, together with the priest, takes his place at the side of the priest and assists as necessary (174).

The celebrant, deacon and musicians should confer prior to Mass regarding the form and setting of the Penitential Act. Only the priest may lead and begin Option A, the *Confiteor*. However, a deacon or the choir may lead Option C, with petitions and *Kyrie* combined. If the deacon is to lead Option C, he is to pause briefly after the priest calls the people to acknowledge their sins, and then he may begin. The various options provided in the *Roman Missal* should be used.

Pastoral Reflection: All of the actions performed upon entering the sanctuary require practice. There is a difference between rehearsing and the actual carrying out of your role. Discuss and practice the various movements with your pastor or deacon mentor, especially when newly ordained. Practice will help to build confidence.

The Liturgy of the Word (cf. GIRM 55-71, 175-177)

Except for very serious reasons, the deacon should always proclaim the Gospel. He is the proper minister of the Gospel. If incense is used, the deacon may assist the priest when he puts incense in the thurible during the singing of the *Alleluia* or other chant. After the incense is prepared, or if no incense is used, the deacon makes a profound bow before the priest and asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice, “*Your blessing, Father.*” The priest says in a low voice, “*May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips, that you may proclaim his Gospel worthily and well, in the name of the Father, and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.*” The deacon signs himself with the *Sign of the Cross* and responds, “*Amen.*” No other words or phrases (e.g., “*thank you*”) are to be used to conclude the blessing.

Then, moving to the altar, the deacon makes a profound bow, takes up the *Book of the Gospels*, which was previously laid flat on the altar, and processes to the ambo with the *Book of the Gospels* slightly elevated and with the front of the *Book of the Gospels* facing the congregation. The thurifer and servers holding lighted candles normally precede him.

From the ambo, the deacon greets the people, saying with his hands joined, “*The Lord be with you.*” After the congregation responds, he continues, “*A reading from the Holy Gospel...*” while simultaneously signing the cross on the open *Book of the Gospels* with his thumb and, afterwards, on his own forehead, lips and breast.

If incense is used, the deacon makes a profound bow, incenses the *Book of the Gospels*, and then makes another profound bow.

He then proclaims the Gospel. After the reading, he acclaims, without raising the *Book of the Gospels*, “*The Gospel of the Lord.*” All respond, “*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*”

The deacon venerates the book with a kiss, saying inaudibly to himself, “*Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away.*” Normally the *Book of the Gospels* is left on the ambo. It may, however, be carried to the side table or another appropriate and dignified place (175).

Deacons, with the appropriate faculty, may preach the homily with the permission of the celebrant/pastor. The homily should be suitable and well prepared, and should speak to the readings of the day or another text taken from the *Ordinary* or *Proper of the Mass* (65).

The Creed is to be recited at those celebrations for which it is prescribed. All should bow at the times indicated in the missal. The deacon does not introduce the Creed or the *Prayer of the Faithful*.

After the priest introduces the *Prayer of the Faithful/General Intercessions*, the deacon announces the intentions from the ambo or another suitable place (177). He remains at the ambo while the priest concludes the *Prayer of the Faithful* with a prayer.

Liturgy of the Eucharist (cf. GIRM 72-83, 178-183)

After the *Prayer of the Faithful*, while the priest remains at the chair, the deacon prepares the altar. Although he may be assisted by servers, the care of the sacred vessels belongs to the deacon. The deacon may also assist the priest in receiving the gifts brought forward at the offertory.

Next, he hands the priest the paten with the bread to be consecrated. In preparing the chalice, the deacon pours wine and then a little water into the chalice, saying inaudibly, “*By the mystery of this water and wine....*” After this the deacon presents the chalice to the priest. NOTE: If Communion is to be distributed under both species and additional communion cups will be used, a little water may be poured into the flagon and then the wine distributed into the additional communion cups. It is not necessary to pour water into each additional communion cup. As an option, the additional communion cups may be pre-filled with wine before Mass. Pouring of the Precious Blood from a flagon or pitcher into the additional communion cups should never be done.

If incense is used, the deacon may assist the priest with the incensation of the gifts, the cross and the altar. Afterwards, he incenses the priest, then any concelebrants and, finally, the people (178).

During the *Eucharistic Prayer*, the deacon stands near but slightly to the right of and behind the priest, so that he may assist the priest with the chalice or the *Roman Missal* (179). If there are concelebrants, the deacon stands behind them as well, but in such a way that he may assist at the cup and the book as needed. No one should stand between the concelebrants and the altar (CB 153).

As a general rule, the deacon kneels from the epiclesis until immediately before the *Memorial Acclamation*. He resumes standing when the celebrant completes his genuflection after the elevation of the chalice. If, however, due to age or infirmity, a deacon cannot kneel, he is to remain standing, and is to bow as the priest genuflects in adoration after the showing of the host and chalice. NOTE: If more than one deacon serves at a Mass, all should assume the same position, e.g., if one is unable to kneel, all should stand.

The deacon has no vocal part during the *Eucharistic Prayer* except those parts that are said with the congregation, namely, the proclaiming of the *Mystery of Faith* and the *Great Amen*. Deacons are neither to introduce the *Mystery of Faith*, nor join the celebrant in the *Doxology* (i.e., “*Through him, with him, in him...*”).

At the final doxology of the *Eucharistic Prayer*, the deacon stands next to the priest and, after the priest hands him the chalice, he elevates the chalice as the priest raises the paten until the people have responded with the acclamation, “*Amen*” (180).

The proper position for the deacon’s hands during the *Lord’s Prayer* is folded.

After the priest has said the prayer at the *Rite of Peace* and the greeting, “*The peace of the Lord be with you always,*” and the people have responded, “*And with your spirit,*” the deacon may invite all to exchange the sign of peace, saying, with hands joined and facing the people: “*Let us offer each other the sign of peace.*” He himself receives the sign of peace from the priest and may offer it to the other ministers near him (181). The deacon should not leave the sanctuary to offer the sign of peace.

After the priest’s Communion, the deacon receives under both species from the priest and then assists the priest in giving Communion to the people. If Communion is given under both species, the deacon generally distributes the Blood of Christ.

If a host or any particle of a host should fall, it is to be picked up reverently, and the area washed with water and a purificator as soon as possible. If any of the Blood of Christ is spilled, the area where the spill occurred should be washed with water and a purificator(s); any remaining water should then be poured into the sacrarium or directly into the earth (280).

After the distribution of Communion, the deacon returns to the altar with the priest to assist him in collecting any remaining fragments. The deacon should immediately consume any of the Blood of Christ which remains. He may be assisted, if need dictates, by other deacons and priests (182) or, in their absence, by extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion.

The sacred vessels are then purified immediately after the distribution of Communion or after Mass. It is permissible to leave the vessels for purifying immediately following the dismissal, provided the vessels are placed on a corporal and suitably covered at the credence table.

Concluding Rite (cf. GIRM 84-90, 184-186)

Following the *Prayer after Communion*, if there are any brief announcements, the deacon may make them, unless the priest prefers to do so himself (184).

There are several forms for the blessing that will follow. For the “simple form,” the priest blesses the people with no words from the deacon. On certain days or occasions, a “solemn blessing” or “prayer over the people” may be used. If the “solemn blessing” or “prayer over the people” is used, the deacon says: “*Bow down for the blessing.*”

After the priest’s blessing, the deacon, with hands joined and facing the people, dismisses them, using one of the following formulas from the *Roman Missal* (185):

Go forth, the Mass is ended.

Or: Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

Or: Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

Or: Go in peace.

All reply, “*Thanks be to God*” (CB 170).

Along with the priest, the deacon venerates the altar with a kiss, then genuflects (or makes a profound bow if the tabernacle is not in the sanctuary), and leaves in the same manner prescribed for the entrance procession (186).

Pastoral Reflection: The above instructions may appear to be simple. It may seem that if a step is missed, no one will notice. This is not the case. Every movement, every step, is closely watched by the congregation, including some discerning a call to Holy Orders. Rather than being nervous, deacons should strive to be proficient and confident in their abilities and skills.

THE ROLE OF THE DEACON WHEN ASSISTING THE BISHOP AT MASS

Norms for the Diocese of La Crosse

Deacons should therefore look on the bishop as a father and assist him as they would the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who is the eternal High Priest, present in the midst of his people (CB 24).

Deacons are asked to familiarize themselves with and observe the norms set forth in this guide. They are taken directly from the *Ceremonial of Bishops*, with minor adaptations for the Diocese of La Crosse. While not exhaustive, these norms represent the minimum standards to be observed by deacons when assisting the Bishop at pontifical liturgies, that is, liturgies at which the Bishop presides, in the Diocese of La Crosse. In situations where a difference of instruction or questions may arise, deacons are asked to defer to the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, the *Ceremonial of Bishops*, or guidelines provided by the Pontifical Master of Ceremonies.

The Scheduling of Deacons to Assist at Pontifical Liturgies

When necessary, the scheduling of deacons to assist at pontifical liturgies will be arranged through the Office of Deacon Personnel in coordination with the Office of Sacred Worship and the Pontifical Master of Ceremonies.

THE ORDER OF THE MASS

The Introductory Rites

The liturgical procession may include altar servers, deacons, priests, Knights of Columbus, Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre, the Master of Ceremonies and the Bishop (CB 128).

The order of procession, for which a diagram may be found on page 39, is generally as follows:

- Knights of Columbus
- Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulcher
- Boat Holder (if incense is used)
- Thurifer (if incense is used)
- Crucifer, walking between two candle bearers
- Other servers
- Assistant Master of Ceremonies (if present)
- Deacon carrying the *Book of the Gospels*
- Other deacons
- Concelebrating priests
- Pastor
- Two assisting deacons walking slightly ahead of the Bishop
- Bishop
- Vimps: miter and crosier bearers
- Lead Master of Ceremonies

As each member of the liturgical procession reaches the foot of the sanctuary, he will make the appropriate reverence (bow) or a genuflection if the tabernacle is in the sanctuary, and then go directly to his place in the sanctuary. Ministers should **not** wait until all in the procession have reached the sanctuary before entering it.

If the tabernacle is not in the sanctuary, there is neither a stop nor a genuflection if the procession passes in front of the Blessed Sacrament chapel.

The deacon carrying the *Book of the Gospels* places it on the altar without making a bow or genuflection. He then proceeds to his place in the sanctuary.

At diocesan liturgies where there are large numbers of deacons and priests in procession, clergy will enter the sanctuary two by two, making a profound bow to the altar. They then venerate (kiss) the altar and proceed to their proper place as assigned.

When the Bishop reaches the front of the altar, he hands his crosier to a minister and removes his miter.

Together with the assisting deacons accompanying him, the Bishop makes a profound bow to the altar if the Blessed Sacrament is not located in the sanctuary. With the Bishop, the two deacons assisting him venerate the altar.

The Bishop, who may be accompanied by the two deacons assisting him, incenses the altar and the cross, and then proceeds to the cathedra. The deacons stand on either side of the Bishop, near his chair, in order to assist him as needed (CB 131).

Penitential Act

When the third form of the *Penitential Act* (Option C) is used, the invocations are said by the assisting deacon (CB 132).

On Sundays, if the *Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling Water* replaces the usual *Penitential Act*, the Bishop receives the aspergillum (sprinkler) from the deacon. He sprinkles himself and the concelebrants, the ministers, the clergy and the people. As the situation suggests, he may go through the church, accompanied by the deacons, before returning to the cathedra for the singing of the *Gloria* (CB 133).

Liturgy of Word

When it is time for the Gospel to be proclaimed, the thurifer goes to the Bishop and, as one of the deacons presents the incense boat, the Bishop places incense into the thurible and silently blesses it. The deacon who is to proclaim the Gospel rises and stands before the Bishop, makes a deep bow, and asks for the Bishop's blessing, saying in a low voice, "*Your blessing, Father.*"

The Bishop blesses him using the words, "*The Lord be in your heart....*" The deacon signs himself with the *Sign of the Cross* and responds, "*Amen.*" The *Alleluia* should begin when the deacon receives the blessing from the Bishop.

Then the Bishop takes off the miter and stands. The deacon is led in procession to the altar by the thurifer holding the thurible and by the candle bearers. After bowing to the altar, the deacon reverently takes the *Book of the Gospels* and, without any further reverence to the altar, carries the *Book* with solemnity to the ambo, preceded by the thurifer and candle bearers (CB 140).

At the ambo the deacon, with hands joined, greets the people in the customary manner. At the words, “*A reading from the holy Gospel,*” he signs the cross on the *Book* and then on his own forehead, lips and breast. All present do the same. At this point, the Bishop takes the crosier.

The deacon incenses the *Book* (using three double swings) and proclaims the Gospel reading.

After proclaiming the Gospel, the deacon does not kiss the *Book of the Gospels*, but brings it, still open, to the Bishop, who reverences it with a kiss. The Bishop may impart a blessing to the people with the *Book of the Gospels*.

Then the deacon carries the *Book of the Gospels* to the side table or some other suitable place, or hands it off to the Master of Ceremonies (CB 141).

After the *Profession of Faith*, the Bishop, standing at the cathedra with hands joined, introduces the *Prayer of the Faithful*. Then one of the deacons (unless otherwise specified) announces the intentions at his station next to the Bishop. The Bishop says the closing prayer (CB 144).

Liturgy of the Eucharist

After the *Prayer of the Faithful*, while the Bishop remains seated, the deacon prepares the altar by placing the corporal in the proper place and unveiling the chalice. The chalice, along with any additional ciboria and pre-filled communion cups, are usually brought to the deacon by the altar servers. The additional ciboria and pre-filled communion cups should be arranged on the top area of the corporal. NOTE: A corporal normally has creases which form nine squares. When assisting the Bishop, place nothing on the lower six squares. Place all other ciboria and pre-filled cups on the top three squares. If it is a rather large liturgy and there are numerous ciboria and cups, use a second corporal and place this corporal to the immediate right of the principal corporal. All additional vessels can be placed on this corporal by the deacon. (The main paten and chalice are always left off the corporal and handed to the Bishop at the proper time.) The deacon then receives the gifts brought forward at the Offertory. The bread and wine are brought by the deacon to the altar with the assistance of the altar servers (CB 145).

The deacon then prepares the chalice by pouring wine and a little water into the chalice saying inaudibly, “*By the mystery of this water and wine...*”. NOTE: The deacon should fill the chalice sufficiently to allow for the Presider and all the concelebrants (and ministers) to drink from it.

The additional communion cups, which are to be pre-filled prior to the beginning of Mass, do not need to be mingled. That is, water is not poured into each additional communion cup. Nor is the Precious Blood ever to be poured from a flagon or pitcher into the communion cups after the consecration.

The Bishop then goes to the altar and receives the main paten with the host from the deacon. The deacon then passes the chalice to the Bishop (CB 146-147). After the Bishop places the chalice on the corporal, the deacon may cover it with a pall (CB 147).

Next, the thurifer goes to the Bishop. As the deacon holds the incense boat, the Bishop puts incense in the censer and blesses it. The Bishop receives the thurible from the deacon and, in the same way as at the beginning of Mass, may be accompanied by the deacon as he incenses the gifts, as well as the altar and the cross.

After this, the deacon, standing at the side of the altar, incenses the Bishop, then the concelebrants, and finally, the people (CB 149).

At the washing of his hands, the Bishop may remove his ring.

Immediately before the *Eucharistic Prayer*, the Bishop removes his zucchetto and hands it to the Master of Ceremonies.

During the *Eucharistic Prayer*, the deacon stands near but slightly to the right of and behind the Bishop, so that he may assist the Bishop with the chalice or the *Roman Missal*. If there are concelebrants, the deacon stands behind them as well, but in such a way that they may assist at the cup and the book as needed. No one should stand between the concelebrants and the Bishop or between the concelebrants and the altar (CB 153).

If the chalice and ciborium are covered, a deacon may uncover them before the epiclesis. As a general rule, a deacon kneels from the epiclesis until immediately before the *Memorial Acclamation*. He resumes standing when the Bishop completes his genuflection after the elevation of the chalice (CB 155).

After the consecration, the deacon may re-cover the chalice with a pall.

After the Bishop has said the prayer at the *Rite of Peace* and the greeting, “*The peace of the Lord be with you always,*” and the congregation has responded, the deacon may invite all to exchange the sign of peace, saying, with hands joined and facing the people, “*Let us offer each other the sign of peace.*” The deacon receives the sign of peace after the Bishop has exchanged the sign of peace with any concelebrating priests first. The deacon may then offer it to the other ministers near him (CB 161). The deacon should not leave the sanctuary to offer the sign of peace.

After the Bishop’s Communion, the deacon receives under both species from the Bishop. If two deacons are assisting the Bishop at the altar, both receive Holy Communion from his right side. The deacon(s) then assists the Bishop in the distribution of Holy Communion according to the directives of the Master of Ceremonies. If Holy Communion is distributed under both species, the deacon(s) normally distributes the Precious Blood and remains near the Bishop.

After distributing Holy Communion, the Bishop returns to the chair where the servers assist him with washing his hands.

After Holy Communion, the deacon consumes any remaining Precious Blood. He then purifies the chalice and the other Sacred Vessels at a location predetermined by the Master of Ceremonies. Another deacon, or one of the concelebrants, takes any remaining consecrated particles to the tabernacle (CB 165). If necessary, it is permissible to purify the vessels immediately following the dismissal of the people, provided the vessels are on a corporal and are suitably covered at a side table.

After a period of prayerful silence, the Bishop, standing at the chair, prays the *Prayer after Communion*.

Concluding Rite

The *Final Blessing* takes place after any necessary brief announcements.

There are several forms which the Bishop may use. It is important for the deacon to inquire before Mass which blessing will be used. If a solemn blessing is used, the Bishop greets the people with “*The Lord be with you*” and all reply, “*And with your spirit.*” The deacon will then say the words of invitation, “*Bow down for the blessing.*” The Bishop then imparts the blessing in the usual way (cf. CB 169, 1116-1128).

After the blessing, the deacon, with hands joined and facing the people, dismisses the people, using one of the following formulas from the *Roman Missal*.

Go forth, the Mass is ended.

Or: Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.

Or: Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

Or: Go in peace.

All reply, “*Thanks be to God*” (CB 170).

The Master of Ceremonies normally provides guidance for the procession at the end of the Mass. Generally, the altar servers and concelebrants line up in the sanctuary or main aisle, facing the altar.

As a rule, the Bishop, together with the deacon(s) who assisted him during Mass, venerate the altar with a kiss. The concelebrants and all in the sanctuary join the Bishop after he venerates the altar, typically by genuflecting in unison, if the tabernacle is located in the sanctuary. If the tabernacle is not in the sanctuary, the proper reverence is a bow.

All process out behind the cross, in the reverse of the order in which they processed into the sanctuary. (See diagram, p. 39.)

Order of Procession

Knights of Columbus

Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre

Thurifer

Crucifer

Candle bearer* Candle bearer*

Assisting Acolytes

Assisting Master of Ceremonies

Deacon carrying the *Book of the Gospels*

Other Deacons

Concelebrants

Pastor

Two Assisting Deacons

Bishop

Vimp Vimp

Lead Master of Ceremonies

* Flanking the Crucifer

PARTICULAR LAW GOVERNING DEACONS IN THE DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE

Because a number of practical concerns have emerged regarding diaconal ministry, and because of the diverse responses to these concerns that exist throughout the United States, the U. S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has published its *Particular Law Governing Deacons in the United States*⁴ to provide a more harmonious approach to the practice of diaconal ministry (86). The following has been adapted from that document for application in the Diocese of La Crosse.

Age for Ordination

In accord with Canon Law, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops establishes the minimum age for ordination to the permanent diaconate at 35 for all candidates, married or celibate (87). In the Diocese of La Crosse, the maximum age at ordination is 65, but exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Bishop.

Retreat

Every other year, the Diocese of La Crosse sponsors a retreat which deacons are expected to attend. On the alternating years, each deacon is expected to arrange for and to participate in a retreat of his own choosing.

Clerical Attire

The Code of Canon Law (canon 284) does not oblige permanent deacons to wear ecclesiastical garb. Each diocesan Bishop should, however, determine and promulgate any exceptions to this law, as well as specify the appropriate clerical attire if it is to be worn (89). Deacons in the Diocese of La Crosse have the option to wear a gray clerical shirt with Roman collar when the deacon is exercising his ministry. This includes, but is not limited to: visits to hospitals, prisons/jails, hospices and nursing homes; visible participation in charitable outreach, meetings with individuals, couples or classes for religious instruction, sacramental preparation or other spiritual purposes and settings in which the deacon is leading the faithful in prayer. When serving in a specific liturgical ministry, deacons are to wear the vesture that is prescribed in the rubrics. The wearing of a black clerical shirt with Roman collar is not permitted.

Clerical Title

While various forms of address have emerged with regard to deacons, the Congregation for the Clergy has determined that in all forms of address for permanent deacons, the appropriate title is “Deacon” (88).

Death of a Deacon or Spouse

Sensitivity is to be shown to the deacon who loses his wife. A similar sensitivity should likewise be shown to the deacon’s wife who loses her husband. The charity extended by the Bishop, priests and the diaconal community at this most difficult time should help to reassure the living spouse as he or she adjusts to this new state of life.

⁴*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, hereafter referred to as the *National Directory*. Parenthetical numbers refer to paragraph numbers in Chapter 2, Section VI of the *National Directory*.

Decree of Appointment

A deacon shall receive a decree of appointment from his Bishop. The decree should delineate the deacon's specific duties and responsibilities and the designation of his proper pastor or priest supervisor (93).

Diocesan Liability

The diocesan Bishop should provide for insurance regarding the liability of the Diocese for actions taken by a permanent deacon in the course of his public official ministry. The same policies that govern liability for priests in the Diocese should apply to permanent deacons (101).

The Divorce of a Deacon and his Wife

In the Diocese of La Crosse, the Director of Deacon Personnel must be notified of an impending divorce at the earliest possible time.

Fall Clergy Conference

Since it involves a unique meeting of all the clergy (priests and deacons) of the Diocese with their Bishop, attendance at the Fall Clergy Conference is strongly encouraged. At the same time, since it involves a small portion of the work week, it is recognized that deacons in full-time employment may at times find it impossible to attend, or may be able to attend only a portion of the conference.

Leave of Absence

A leave of absence is the cessation of formal activity in the deacon's assigned ministry for the Diocese. A leave of absence may be granted for serious reasons such as health or employment-related problems, or for other personal reasons. Please refer to Addendum #4, "Leave of Absence Protocol for Deacons."

Liturgy of the Hours

Permanent deacons are required to include, as part of their daily prayer, those parts of the Liturgy of the Hours known as Morning and Evening Prayer. Permanent deacons are obliged to pray for the universal Church. Whenever possible, they should lead these prayers with the community to whom they have been assigned to minister (90).

Loss of Diaconal Status

A deacon can be returned to the lay state by canonical dismissal or because of a dispensation granted by the Holy See. Once dismissed or dispensed, he no longer enjoys any rights or privileges accorded clerics by the law of the Church. Any responsibility, financial or liability, ceases on the part of the Diocese (99).

Mentoring Program for the Newly Ordained

The Diocese of La Crosse has particular concern for the newly ordained, realizing that it is important that they receive support as they begin their diaconal ministry. For this reason, the Diocese has a special program of continuing formation for the first three years of ministry following ordination to the diaconate. Please refer to Addendum #2, "Mentoring Program for Newly Ordained Deacons."

Ongoing Spiritual Formation and Continuing Education

Post-ordination spiritual formation and continuing education should provide the deacon with ample opportunities to develop the human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral dimensions of his

life and ministry. In the Diocese of La Crosse, deacons are required to complete and report a minimum of twenty (20) clock hours of ongoing spiritual formation and continuing education annually. Please refer to Addendum #3, “Policy for the Ongoing Formation of Deacons” and to Addendum #6, “Ongoing Spiritual Formation and Continuing Education: Annual Clock Hours and Reporting Requirement for Deacons.”

Participation in Political Office

A permanent deacon may not present his name for election to any public office or in any other general election, or accept a nomination or an appointment to public office, without the prior written permission of the diocesan Bishop. A permanent deacon may not actively and publicly participate in a political campaign without prior written permission of the diocesan Bishop (91).

Remuneration (96)

1. Permanent deacons in full-time employment by the Diocese, parish, or agency are to receive remuneration commensurate with the salaries and benefits provided to the lay men and women on staff for that particular occupation. Please refer to Addendum #1, “Compensation for Permanent Deacons Ministering Full-Time.”
2. Permanent deacons in full-time secular employment, as well as those in part-time ministries, are to be reimbursed for legitimate expenses incurred in their ministry. Please refer to Addendum #1.

Retirement/Resignation from Assignment

Deacons, as members of the clergy, are ordained for life-long ministry in the Church. Since the Code of Canon Law does not provide for any mandatory age of retirement for deacons, they are encouraged to maintain their diaconal assignment as long as they are able to carry out their ministry. Deacons who experience difficulty in fulfilling their ministerial responsibility due to age, health or other issues are to meet with the Director of Deacon Personnel to review their situation.

Service of a Deacon from another Diocesan Church

A diocesan Bishop is under no obligation to accept a permanent deacon—ordained or incardinated elsewhere—for assignment to a diocesan or parochial ministry. Nevertheless, since a permanent deacon is an ordained cleric, the Bishop may not ordinarily forbid a visiting permanent deacon the exercise of his order provided that the deacon is not under censure (102).

Social Security Insurance

To provide for their own upkeep, every permanent deacon is obliged to satisfy the legal requirements for Social Security benefits or a comparable program (95).

Supervision of the Newly Ordained and of Deacons by the Pastor

All deacons should meet and confer with their pastor or supervisor on a regular basis. Newly-ordained deacons must complete a “Diaconal Ministry Review” on a yearly basis for the first three years after ordination. All other deacons are required to complete the “Diaconal Ministry Review” every two years, or sooner, if there are significant changes in the deacon’s ministry. A written format for this review shall be provided by the Office of Deacon Personnel, and a completed copy of the signed review should be returned to that office.

Support of the Clergy

Permanent deacons are to take care of their own and their family's needs using income derived from their full-time employment by the Diocese, parish or secular profession. In an individual situation of need, the diocesan Church ought to assist the deacon and his family in charity (94).

Withdrawal of Diaconal Faculties

If the ministry of a permanent deacon becomes ineffective or even harmful due to some personal difficulties or irresponsible behavior, the deacon's ministerial assignment and faculties are to be withdrawn by the diocesan Bishop in accord with Canon Law (100).

NORMS, POLICIES AND GUIDELINES FOR PERMANENT DEACONS IN THE DIOCESE OF LA CROSSE

In June of 1983, Auxiliary Bishop John Paul presided at the ordination of ten men to the Permanent Diaconate. It was the very first class of men – ever – to be ordained to the Permanent Diaconate in the (then) one hundred and fourteen year history of the Diocese of La Crosse. Since that time, other men have come forward, ready to begin an arduous process of vocational discernment, through a program which integrates prayer with doctrinal and pastoral formation.

The obvious and steady growth of the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of La Crosse has given rise to the formulation of certain norms, policies and guidelines specific to our own Diocese. It is hoped that the standards set forth in the following addenda will help to clarify diocesan standards, while unifying and giving direction to some of the more practical dimensions of diaconal ministry in the Diocese of La Crosse.

Addendum 1



Compensation for Permanent Deacons Ministering Full-Time

Guidelines for the Diocese of La Crosse

General Norms

The *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*, issued by the Congregation for the Clergy in 1998, addresses the question of compensation for permanent deacons. It takes its general principle, applicable to all members of the clergy, from Canon Law: “When clerics dedicate themselves to the ecclesiastical ministry they deserve a remuneration which is consistent with their condition in accord with the conditions of time and place” (canon 281§1).

In paragraphs 17-20, the *Directory* applies this general principle of law specifically to permanent deacons as follows:

17. Celibate deacons who minister full-time in a diocese have a right to be remunerated according to the general principle of law should they have no other source of income.
18. Married deacons who minister full-time and who do not receive income from any other source are to be remunerated, in accordance with the aforementioned general principle, so that they may be able to provide for themselves and for their families.
19. Married deacons who minister full-time or part-time and who receive income from a secular profession which they exercise or have exercised are obliged to provide for themselves and for their families from such income.
20. It is for particular law to provide opportune norms in the complex matter of reimbursing expenses, including, for example, that those entities and parishes which benefit from the ministry of a deacon have an obligation to reimburse him those expenses incurred in the exercise of his ministry.

Compensation of Permanent Deacons Employed Full-Time

As an icon or image of Christ the Servant, a deacon who has the means from secular employment to provide for himself and his family is called to offer his diaconal service freely. At the same time, most deacons who have left secular careers in order to serve the Church full-time do not have sufficient means, without compensation for the ministry they carry out, to provide for themselves and their families.

For this reason, the following set of guidelines is to be applied in the case of those permanent deacons in full-time ministry who depend for their livelihood on a just level of compensation from the parish or institution they serve.

General Assumptions Regarding a Just Wage

1. The Diocese upholds the theory and practice of a just level of remuneration for human work.
2. Compensation is just when it provides sufficient wages and benefits to meet the ordinary economic needs of the church worker.
3. Ordinary economic needs encompass more than bare necessities, such as food, shelter, clothing and health care. They include other items which allow a person to live in dignity, such as transportation, education, contributions to charity and church, retirement savings, taxes, and modest expenditures for entertainment or enrichment and personal care.
4. Two factors can impact the value of just compensation, namely, the level of employee benefits and the geographical region. Just compensation may mean higher benefits with lower wages, or lower benefits with relatively higher wages.
5. The breadth of ministry and skills required of permanent deacons ministering full-time influences the breadth of the just wage spectrum.
6. Proposed compensation in this document assumes a 40-hour week and a 12-month year.
7. Church teaching does not advocate paying wages which could bring the diocesan institution (parish) to ruin (*Quadragesimo Anno* 72).

Guidelines

Beginning in 2002-2003, the Diocese of La Crosse has recommended using the following compensation ranges for permanent deacons ministering full-time. The data used to determine these guidelines is based on current practice in the Diocese, on comparative data from other Midwest Dioceses, and on the professional just wage for 2000 reported by the National Association of Church Personnel Administrators, factoring in an annual cost of living increase on July 1st of each year.

Included in the formula are:

- A. Salary base (If employer provides housing, its monetary value would be included in the salary base).
- B. Benefits, including provision for FICA (social security tax), retirement, health insurance, continuing education, paid vacation, sick leave, and reimbursement for ministry-related mileage and expenses.

This model is to be used as a guideline; as such, there is freedom to negotiate according to local needs and opportunities, but the model will serve as a plan to follow. In addition, benefits are to be calculated according to the local parish policy or, if there is no local policy, then the diocesan policy on benefits is applicable.

Negotiation for compensation of the permanent deacon ministering full-time is implemented between the pastor, the permanent deacon, and the parish finance council.

BASE SALARY RANGES*

(Levels documented below are from original policy and are offered as a general guideline only.)

LEVEL I

Masters Degree relevant to diaconal ministry
(Permanent deacon formation considered equivalent to MA)
\$29,500 - \$39,500

LEVEL II

Doctoral Degree relevant to diaconal ministry
\$33,500 - \$43,000

*Annual cost of living increase July 1 of each year.

Monetary value of employer-provided housing considered part of base salary.

To be reviewed annually.

References:

Daly, William P., *A Theoretical Framework for a Just Wage*, Church Personnel Issues, NACPA, Nov. 1992.
Daly, William P., *Church Employee Compensation and Just Wage Guidelines*, Church Personnel Issues, NACPA, Nov. 1992.
Daly, William P., *Just Wage Guidelines and the Church Workplace*, NACPA Update, 1993.
Daly, William P., *Living Wage Update for 1999 and 2000*, NACPA Newsnotes, June/July 2000.

Benefits

FICA (Social Security)	0.765 multiplied by salary
Retirement	As applicable per plan document (salary multiplied by current billing percentage of pay)
403(b) Thrift Plan	As applicable per plan document
Health Insurance	75% of current premium (single or family)
Dental Insurance	Optional - paid by employee
Disability Insurance	Optional - paid by employee; available for employees meeting eligibility rules based on salary and age; directly administered by Custom Benefit Administrators (CBA)
Mileage*	Current diocesan or IRS rate
Continuing Education	\$400 (documentation required)
Housing	At discretion of employer; monetary value = \$4800-9600 (based on \$400-800/month, including utilities)
Ministry-related Expenses*	Reimbursed with submission of original receipts (mileage and ministry expenses not to exceed \$250/month unless approved by the pastor due to excessive needs of the parish)
Days Off	One day per week minimum; recommended six days per four weeks
Vacation	Up to one continuous or interrupted month per year. Not to be accumulated beyond one month per year. Those days which the deacon spends once a year in spiritual retreat are not computed as part of his vacation time.
Paid holidays	New Year's Day; Good Friday and Easter Monday; Memorial Day; Independence Day; Labor Day; Thanksgiving Day and the Friday following; Christmas day, one-half day preceding, and the day following. Holidays that are normal work days for deacons (e.g., Good Friday and Christmas) should be compensated with time off in either the days before or after the holiday.
Sick Leave	Use Paid Leave Time as per policy for parishes
Funeral Leave	Paid leave up to three working days to attend the funeral of an immediate family member or a father-in-law or mother-in-law; remaining policy at discretion of pastor

**Expense Forms available from Diocesan Office of Ministries*

Mentoring Program for Newly Ordained Deacons

The Diocese of La Crosse is aware of the critical importance of a deacon's first years in ministry and the need to ensure a smooth transition from diaconal formation to ordained ministry. Out of genuine concern for younger priests, the Bishops of the Second Vatican Council urged older, more experienced priests to become partners and companions with the newly ordained in helping them grapple with the first and sometimes formidable challenges of their ministry. The newly ordained were invited to look to older and more experienced priests as brothers to whom they could turn as mentors along the way.

What is true of the priestly community is equally true of the diaconal community. Realizing that newly ordained deacons stand to benefit greatly from the wisdom and counsel of more experienced, "seasoned" deacons, the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* calls for the development of deacon mentoring programs for the first three years of diaconal ministry.⁵ As a consequence, the Diocese of La Crosse has established its *Mentoring Program for Newly Ordained Deacons*. The goal of the program is quite simple: to support and guide each newly ordained deacon in his transition into diaconal life and ministry by means of a positive and supportive mentoring relationship with a more experienced brother deacon. St. Paul's exhortation to the Thessalonians is most pertinent in this regard: "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, as you are doing" (*1 Thessalonians* 5:11).

The *Directory* refers to the post-ordination path in diaconal formation as, "first and foremost a process of continual conversion ... [and]... a human necessity which must be seen in continuity with the divine call to serve the church in the ministry...."⁶ In other words, continuing formation is not optional. Ministerial service in the church demands ongoing conversion and formation. However, the *Directory* also reminds us that, "the primary source for post-ordination formation is the ministry itself."⁷ Mentoring, though just one aspect of post-ordination formation, is surely an important aspect.

Continuing formation is motivated by the same dynamism as the holy order received: "Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophetic utterance when the elders laid their hands upon you. Practice these duties, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress. Take heed to yourself and to your teaching; hold to that, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers" (*1 Timothy* 4:14-16).

⁵ Ibid., n. 251.

⁶ Ibid., n. 239; see also Congregation for the Clergy, *Directory for the Ministry and Life of the Permanent Deacons (Directorium Pro Ministerio et Vita Diaconorum Permanentium)*, (Washington DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1998), n. 71, 63.

⁷ Ibid.

The Nature of the Mentoring Program

The essence and strength of this mentoring program is its simplicity. The program provides a basic framework to ensure that newly ordained deacons are connected with mentor deacons during a critical time of their budding ministry. While a few formal parameters are delineated, the aim is to foster a natural and personal mentoring relationship that will fulfill the important supportive and formative purpose envisioned in the *Directory*.

Duration of the Mentoring Relationship

The mentoring relationship begins during the candidate's final year of formation in order to facilitate a bond between the two men prior to the candidate's ordination. The relationship continues for three years.

Mentoring Program Objectives

- To offer personal, collegial, brotherly, ministerial, pastoral and spiritual support to deacon candidates in their final year of formation and to newly ordained deacons.
- To assist and encourage candidates/newly ordained deacons in their ongoing human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral formation.
- To assist and support the development of healthy and effective ministry relationships with the newly ordained deacon's pastor, parish staff and laity in ministry with him.
- To assist the newly ordained deacon and his family in developing support systems for diaconal life and ministry.

Establishing the Mentoring Relationship

- Each deacon candidate selects a mentor from a list of experienced deacons provided by the Director of Deacon Personnel. These men have volunteered to act as mentors.
- The Director of Deacon Personnel has final approval in the selection process.

The Role of the Director of Deacon Personnel

- The Director of Deacon Personnel oversees the program and coordinates the pairing of each deacon candidate with a mentor.
- The Director of Deacon Personnel maintains a list of deacons who are willing to serve as mentors.
- The Director of Deacon Personnel has final approval in the selection process.
- The Director of Deacon Personnel will contact both mentors and the newly ordained on an annual basis to verify each newly ordained deacon's participation in the program.
- In case of non-compliance with program requirements, the Director of Deacon Personnel will review the situation and take appropriate remedial action.
- The Director of Deacon Personnel will address any difficulties that the newly ordained and their mentors have in fulfilling the required number of contacts.

The Role of the Mentor

- A mentor is a deacon in good standing in the Diocese of La Crosse.
- The mentor's primary role is one of listening and offering advice, guidance and encouragement in response to issues raised by the newly ordained. (Note that he is not a supervisor, an evaluator of performance, or a reporter to the Bishop.)
- The mentor does not intervene directly in the resolution of problems between the newly ordained and his pastor or others. Rather, he encourages the deacon to resolve matters on his own. If problems remain unresolved and, if necessary, he may encourage the newly ordained deacon to contact the Director of Deacon Personnel, the Vicar for Clergy or the Bishop.

The Role of the Newly Ordained Deacon

- Those who are mentored participate in the program for three years, beginning with their final year of formation before ordination.
- The newly ordained deacon is required to take the initiative in making contact with his mentor and in arranging the time, date and location of meetings.
- The mentored deacon is responsible for identifying and raising topics for discussion with his mentor. He should actively engage his mentor for advice about any aspect of diaconal life that he may want or need to discuss.
- The mentored deacon is responsible for ensuring that the minimum number of required contacts, as defined below, are met.

Mentoring Program Contacts

- Contacts between the newly ordained deacon and his mentor should take place at least four times each year (quarterly). Face-to-face meetings are strongly encouraged, while meetings exclusively via phone or electronic communications should be avoided.
- The mentoring contact / meeting is intended for the benefit of the newly ordained deacon and should occur at the latter's initiative and advance planning. The mentor and newly ordained deacon should agree on a mutually convenient time and location.
- If a serious situation arises involving civil or criminal statutes (e.g. child or spousal abuse) in which the law or safe environment policy of the Diocese indicates the need to report the incident, the Director of Deacon Personnel should be immediately notified.

The Role of the Pastor

As designated by the newly ordained deacon's assignment from the Bishop, the pastor is generally considered to be the deacon's supervisor in his diaconal ministry.

The Role of the Spiritual Director

The Spiritual Director is someone other than the pastor and mentor and with whom the deacon meets regularly. Communication with the spiritual director is always confidential. The mentor will generally not consult with the pastor or spiritual director.

Policy for the Ongoing Formation of Deacons in the Diocese of La Crosse

Deacons are called to holiness in imitation of Christ the Servant. Accordingly, all deacons should take care to faithfully and regularly “rekindle the gift of God” (2 *Timothy* 1:6) first imparted at the time of ordination. The ministry of the deacon is nourished and sustained, first and foremost, by his relationship with Our Lord, but other vitally important sources of ongoing formation will work together to “rekindle the gift.” The following excerpts from the *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* and the *National Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* underscore the importance of a variety of forms and sources for ongoing diaconal formation. Parenthetical numbers refer to paragraphs from the *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*.

The continuing formation of deacons is a human necessity which must be seen in continuity with the divine call to serve the Church . . . Indeed, those who are ordained to the diaconate are obliged to ongoing doctrinal formation which perfects and completes what they received prior to ordination (63).

The primary locus of ongoing formation for deacons is the ministry itself. The deacon matures in its exercise and by focusing his own call to holiness on the fulfillment of his social and ecclesial duties, in particular, of his ministerial functions and responsibilities. The formation of deacons should, therefore, concentrate in a special way on awareness of their ministerial character (75).

Ongoing formation must include and harmonize all dimensions of the life and ministry of the deacon. Thus, as with the permanent formation of priests, it should be complete, systematic and personalized in its diverse aspects, whether human, spiritual, intellectual or pastoral (68). Regardless of the form it takes, such formation is to be, for the deacon, “first and foremost a process of continual conversion” (65). It should help the deacon to configure every aspect of his life to Christ.

***The Human Dimension of Formation* (69)**

To effectively carry out his diaconal ministry, the deacon must extend himself generously in various forms of human relations without discrimination so that he is perceived by others as a credible witness to the sanctity and preciousness of human life. Post-ordination formation should enable the deacon to pursue this witness to the faith with greater effectiveness.⁸

***The Spiritual Dimension of Formation: “Diaconal Spirituality”* (70-71)**

In Baptism, each disciple receives the universal call to holiness. In the reception of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, the deacon receives a “new consecration to God” through which he is configured to Christ the Servant and sent to serve God’s people. Growth into holiness, therefore, is “a duty binding all the faithful.” But, “for the deacon it has a further basis in the special consecration received.” It includes the practice of the Christian virtues and the various evangelical precepts and counsels according to his own state of life” . . . To foster and nurture his diaconal ministry and lifestyle according to his state in life, each deacon must be rooted in a

⁸*National Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*, no. 245.

spirit of service that verifies “a genuine personal encounter with Jesus, a trusting dialogue with the Father, and a deep experience of the Spirit.”

Some recommended spiritual exercises to assist the deacon in developing and promoting his spiritual life include the following:

- a. Daily or frequent participation in the Eucharist, the source and summit of the Christian life, as well as daily or frequent eucharistic adoration;
- b. Regular reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation;
- c. Daily celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, especially morning and evening prayer;
- d. Shared prayer with his family;
- e. Meditative prayer using Sacred Scripture—*lectio divina*;
- f. Devotion to Mary, the Mother of God;
- g. Prayerful preparation prior to the celebration of the sacraments, preaching, or beginning one’s ministry of charity;
- h. Regular theological reflection;
- i. Regular spiritual direction;
- j. Participation in the bi-annual retreat sponsored by the Diocese;
- k. Authentic living of one’s state of life;
- l. Time for personal and familial growth.⁹

The Intellectual Dimension of Formation: Theological Renewal (72)

The intellectual dimension of diaconate formation does not end with ordination but is an ongoing requirement of the vocation. The theological demands of their call to a singular ministry of ecclesial service and pastoral servant-leadership require of deacons a growing love for the Church—for God’s Holy People—shown by their faithful and competent carrying out of their proper functions and responsibilities. The intellectual dimension of post-ordination formation must be systematic and substantive....¹⁰

The Pastoral Dimension of Formation (73)

Pastoral formation constantly encourages the deacon “to perfect the effectiveness of his ministry of making the love and service of Christ present in the Church and in society without distinction, especially to the poor and to those most in need.” Indeed, it is from the pastoral love of Christ that the ministry of deacons draws its model and inspiration.¹¹

⁹ Ibid., no. 247.

¹⁰ Ibid., no. 248.

¹¹ Ibid., no. 249.

Leave of Absence Protocol for Deacons in the Diocese of La Crosse¹²

A leave of absence is the cessation of formal activity in the deacon's assigned ministry for the Diocese. A leave of absence may be granted for serious reasons such as health or job-related problems, or for other personal reasons.

1. Requesting a leave of absence

A leave of absence from active ministry must be requested in writing from the Bishop. The deacon will be notified regarding the outcome of his request.

2. Status of the deacon during the leave of absence

The deacon on a leave of absence may continue to participate in the diaconal community, will remain on the mailing list of the diaconal community, and is encouraged to participate in diaconal community activities.

3. Returning from a leave of absence

The request for formal re-assignment from "Leave of Absence" to "Active" status shall be accompanied by letters from the deacon's pastor and/or supervisor and the deacon's wife, if he is married.

In addition, an assessment of the last Diaconal Ministry Review must be completed by the pastor and the deacon. Any proposed changes to the deacon's ministry must be noted on a new Diaconal Ministry Review and submitted to the Director of Deacon Personnel at that time.

¹² Adapted from *Deacon Handbook for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*, Rockford Diocese, 2006, p. 66.

Protocol for the Incardination/Excardination of Deacons in the Diocese of La Crosse¹³

Incardination refers to the canonical act by which a cleric is attached to a Diocese and subject to the authority of the diocesan Bishop. *Excardination*, on the other hand, is the canonical act by which a cleric is separated from the particular Church to which he has been attached.

In 1995, the United States Bishops' Committee for the Diaconate published a protocol to assist diocesan Bishops in the implementation of the provisions of Canon Law pertaining to the excardination of deacons from one Diocese and incardination into another. The provisions of this protocol are not intended to constitute particular law.

CANONICAL PRESCRIPTIONS

- A. Canon 265: Every cleric must be incardinated into some particular Church...
- B. Canon 266§1: A person becomes a cleric through the reception of the diaconate and is incardinated into the particular Church or personal prelature for whose services he has been advanced.
- C. Canon 267§1: In order for a cleric already incardinated to be incardinated validly into another particular Church, he must obtain from the diocesan Bishop a letter of excardination signed by the Bishop; he must likewise obtain from the diocesan Bishop of the particular Church into which he desires to be incardinated a letter of incardination signed by that Bishop.

Canon 267§2: Excardination thus granted does not take effect unless incardination into another particular church has been obtained.

- D. Canon 268§1: A cleric who has legitimately moved from his own particular Church into another one is incardinated into this other particular Church by the law itself after five years if he has made such a desire known in writing both to the diocesan Bishop of the host church and to his own diocesan Bishop and provided neither of them informed the cleric of his opposition in writing within four months of the reception of this letter.
- E. Canon 269: A diocesan Bishop is not allowed the incardination of a cleric unless:
 - 1. the necessity or advantage of his own particular Church demands it, with due regard for the prescriptions of the law concerning the decent support of clerics;
 - 2. he is certain from a legitimate document that excardination has been granted, and he also has in addition appropriate testimonials from the excardinating diocesan Bishop, in secrecy if necessary, concerning the cleric's life, morals, and studies;

¹³Adapted from *Protocol for the Incardination/Excardination of Deacons*, Bishops' Committee for the Diaconate (March 1995; revised September 2002).

3. the cleric has declared in writing to the same diocesan Bishop that he wishes to be dedicated to the service of the new particular Church in accord with the norm of law.
- F. In accordance with the provisions of Canon 269§1, a host particular Church accepts a deacon transferring into it from another particular Church and will allow him to function in an official capacity provided there is a need for his services. The host Bishop makes the final decision concerning the granting of faculties for all the ordained in his particular Church.
 - G. For a thorough commentary on Incardination and Excardination, refer to *Clergy Procedural Handbook*, published by the Canon Law Society of America in 1992, edited by Randolph R. Calvo and Nevin J. Klinger.

IMPLEMENTATION

- I. A permanent deacon transferring from his own Diocese to another will do the following:
 - A. When the decision has been made to move to a new Diocese, the deacon will inform his Bishop of the impending move. In like manner, the deacon will write to the Bishop of the new Diocese to inform him of his pending arrival, stating his intention to call on the Bishop or his delegate in person after his arrival.
 - B. The deacon will request that a letter be forwarded to the Bishop of the new Diocese from the previous Bishop providing information regarding the new move, together with appropriate letters of recommendation and evaluation.
- II. The diocesan Bishop will send to the receiving Bishop the following:
 - A. A letter informing the receiving Bishop of the impending move with statement of the just cause of the deacon's move (e.g. employment, retirement or health conditions) together with letters of recommendation and evaluation.
 - B. A résumé of the deacon's personal history, which will be the basis for a character reference together with the recently adapted protocol between Bishops and religious superiors testifying to the deacon's record of conduct and moral integrity.
 - C. A written record of the deacon's academic, spiritual and pastoral formation, including a notation of academic degrees awarded or citations earned.
 - D. An evaluation of the deacon's ministry.
- III. Upon arrival in the new Diocese, the deacon will call upon the Bishop to make his presence known, as well as his desire for diaconal faculties and a diaconal assignment.
- IV. The Bishop will evaluate the deacon's résumé and examine the needs of the Diocese. After favorable review, the Bishop will give the deacon faculties and an assignment. He will appoint a supervisor to the deacon and indicate that evaluations will take place at appropriate intervals.

- V. After due and prayerful consideration, the deacon will write to advise his diocesan Bishop of his intent to seek incardination in the Diocese in which the deacon now resides, and excardination from his Diocese of incardination.
- VI. After the deacon has served in the new Diocese for a time, usually for a minimum of five years, and after suitable evaluations, he may petition the Bishop for incardination, assuming it is his intent to remain permanently within the Diocese.
- VII. After receiving suitable letters of evaluation and the recommendation of the Director of Deacon Personnel, and after having weighed the relative merits of the deacon's petition and the needs of the Diocese, the Bishop of the new Diocese will respond to the petition, indicating his decision regarding incardination.
- VIII. If the Bishop expresses a willingness to incardinate the deacon, the deacon will write to his Bishop of incardination, requesting a letter of excardination. The deacon's request must include an explanation of the just cause(s) for the request.
- IX. The excardinating Bishop executes a document to the effect that the deacon is granted a permanent and unconditional excardination. In accord with Canon 267, the letter must be signed by the diocesan Bishop and, in view of Canon 270, it must include the declaration that the excardination is being given for just cause.
- X. After receiving the legitimately executed document of excardination, the new diocesan Bishop issues a *Decree of Incardination*, and notifies the Diocese of excardination of the incardination of the deacon. Incardination to the receiving Diocese is not completed until both documents have been executed and the Bishops have been duly notified.

Ongoing Spiritual Formation and Continuing Education: Annual Clock Hours and Reporting Requirement for Deacons in the Diocese of La Crosse

All deacons with an assignment in the Diocese of La Crosse are required to complete and report a minimum of twenty (20) clock hours of ongoing spiritual formation and continuing education every calendar year. There is no exact formula for balancing these two components; however, the twenty hours should be comprised of a relatively comparable number of hours from each.

This program relies upon each the deacon's willingness to participate in a combination of spiritual and educational formation, and to accurately document that formation. While it is not necessary to submit more than 20 credit hours, each deacon is encouraged to submit all ongoing formation activities to the Director of Deacon Personnel so that the deacon's personnel files are complete and up-to-date. Senior deacons, deacons on an approved leave of absence, or those who have been granted a waiver by the local ordinary or the Vicar for Clergy are exempt from this obligation.

Based on the ongoing spiritual formation and continuing education hours reported by the deacon, the Office of Deacon Personnel shall maintain an up-to-date, cumulative transcript of hours completed for each deacon, and shall issue an annual compliance report to the Bishop. In instances in which a lack of balance is noted, the deacon may be advised or directed to move toward a more balanced distribution.

Ongoing Spiritual Formation

Ongoing spiritual formation commonly refers to the means by which a deacon's spiritual life is nurtured and deepened. Such formation helps a deacon to grow in holiness by nurturing his relationship with Jesus Christ. This requirement may be met by participation in documented retreats and days of recollection.

Continuing Education

Continuing education commonly refers to the means by which the more intellectual or pastoral dimensions of diaconal ministry are developed. The scope and nature of continuing education should contribute to a deacon's ministerial competence in the areas of liturgy, word and charity. Continuing Education hours may be met by any combination of documented course work in theology, Scripture, liturgy, pastoral ministry, spirituality and other subjects that contribute to ministerial competence. It may include the updating of his current ministry, or preparation for some future ministry, for example, the study of Spanish or Hmong. Also eligible are documented national, regional and diocesan continuing education events, including the annual Deacon Continuing Education Weekend and the Fall Clergy Conference. Diocesan events should be

given first priority, but it is understood that unavoidable conflicts may occasionally occur. Distance learning is acceptable.

General Criteria for Continuing Education

To ensure that continuing education requirements are met, certain criteria have been established to assist each deacon and the Deacon Community Board in determining qualified hours. The following guidelines should be used:

1. Certificate courses: many national, regional and local courses issue a certificate of completion at the end of an instructional seminar or conference. All credit hours shown on the completion certificate may be credited.
2. College courses: deacons who wish to use college courses to meet a portion of their continuing education requirement are instructed to contact the Director of Deacon Personnel to determine how to apply those hours.
3. Adult enrichment courses at parishes or local educational institutions: count one hour for each classroom or lecture hour attended.
4. Other courses, conferences, seminars, workshops: eliminate all nonacademic activities (e.g. social hours, mealtimes, coffee breaks, etc.) before recording the continuing education hours.
5. Hours may not be earned in advance; that is, if more than 20 hours are earned in any given year, excess hours may not be used to satisfy the requirement for the following year(s).
6. Deacons are required to submit an Ongoing Spiritual Formation and Continuing Education Report Form to qualify for clock hours. Forms should be sent to the Director of Deacon Personnel. (See form on p. 61.)

Only actual “session hours” qualify as continuing education hours. The following activities, for example, do not qualify:

- Travel to and from the place where instruction is given;
- Informal meetings and conferences;
- Prayer services and liturgies;
- Spiritual direction sessions;
- Parish council or committee meetings;
- Social gatherings;
- Diocesan board and committee meetings;
- Administrative and business meetings;
- Support group functions;
- Courses not related to ministerial service.

Non-Compliance

A deacon whose records do not show compliance with this policy will be notified that his diaconal records indicate non-compliance. If the deacon provides information that the records are incomplete or inaccurate, the records will be corrected. A deacon who fails to comply shall be found in non-compliance and shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A non-compliance notice will be issued for any of the following:

(a) Failure to report hours. It may be that a deacon found not to be in compliance has, in fact, completed sufficient ongoing spiritual formation and continuing education hours, but has neglected to report the hours completed. If this is the case, the deacon will be directed to provide evidence that the hours have been completed but were unreported. The deacon should provide this information in a timely fashion, but failure to do so within sixty (60) days of notification will constitute a finding of a failure to report according to policy. Such a failure will be treated in the same manner as a failure to complete the required hours.

(b) Failure to complete twenty (20) hours. Deacons who have failed to complete the required 20 clock hours within a given year shall be notified of this failure in writing.

(c) Extension. The notice shall provide for an automatic extension of sixty (60) days, during which the deacon is expected to achieve compliance. An additional extension may be granted at the discretion of the Director of Deacon Personnel upon a written request from the deacon. If granted, the extension will be noted in the record of the deacon.

Addendum 7

Diocese of La Crosse
Ongoing Spiritual Formation and Continuing Education
Report Form

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Year of Ordination: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Parish: _____

List below the courses, conferences, seminars, workshops, programs etc., which may qualify as credit towards your 20 hour requirement. Please provide this information to the office as it occurs so that your records may be kept up to date.

<u>DATE(S):</u>	<u>COURSE DESCRIPTION</u> <u>INCLUDE NUMBER OF SESSIONS</u>	<u>PRESENTER/FACILITATOR/</u> <u>INSTITUTION</u>	<u>HOURS/CREDITS</u>

Send completed form to:

Diocese of La Crosse
Office of Deacon Personnel
P. O. Box 4004
La Crosse, WI 54602-4004

Sources / Acknowledgements

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