



# DIACONATE HANDBOOK



## **DIocese OF STOCKTON**

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September 22, 2016

Dear Deacons,

***Re: Permanent Diaconate Handbook, Revised 9/21/16***

The Permanent Diaconate Handbook for the Diocese of Stockton has been updated in providing guidelines for your ministry. I am very grateful to you and your spouses for the dedication you bring to diaconal ministry in our Diocese. Your love for God and your commitment to serve in the name of Jesus the Servant of God produces much fruit in the lives of our Catholic people.

I hope you will find these guidelines helpful. They have been updated in accordance with the Code of Canon Law and the National Directory.

May the Lord bless you and your wives in the great work of the Church.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Stephen E. Blaire  
Roman Catholic Bishop of Stockton

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## Diaconate Board

- The members of the Board are appointed by and responsible to the Bishop of Stockton.
- Members will serve a term of three years and may be reappointed to an additional term. The terms will be staggered to maintain continuity. Those members who are not *ex officio members* will be nominated by the Diocese of Stockton Diaconate Community.
- The Bishop is the president of the Board. One member will be designated by the Bishop as chair.
- The Board will meet quarterly and at the discretion of the Board Chair.
- The Bishop, the Vicar General, the Chancellor, and the Chief Financial Officer may attend meetings at their request or when agenda items need their consultation.

## Responsibilities

The Diaconate Board has the following responsibilities:

- Diaconate program policy determination and curriculum development.
- Selection and evaluation of candidates.
- Recommendation of candidates for ordination.
- Recommendation to the Bishop for assignments in diaconal service.

All decisions pertaining to the above must be approved by the Bishop.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality concerning all matters brought to their attention is binding on members of the Diaconate Board. Personal interviews and requests for particular assignments shall be held in confidence unless the individual chooses to make these public. It is expected that information given to an individual board member in his capacity as board member will be shared with other board members.

# THE NATURE OF THE DIACONATE

## The Role of the Deacon

The diaconate has its origins in apostolic times and flourished in the first four centuries of the Church's history. Later, for complex reasons, the diaconate went into decline until it became little more than a step on the way to the priesthood in the Western Church.

When the Second Vatican Council restored the diaconate as a permanent ministry in the Church, it did so for three primary reasons: first, a desire to restore to the Church the full complement of active apostolic ministries; second, the desire to integrate and strengthen those who were, in fact, already exercising diaconal functions, and third, to provide ministries for those regions where functions vital to the Church's life cannot be carried out.

Loving service is a task that falls upon every Christian as an immediate privilege of Baptism and a duty of life in obedience to and in imitation of Jesus. Service is also a primary and central task of Presbyters and Bishops, but the deacon especially has this role in virtue of his ordination to be a representative person in the Church. The deacon, in other words, in his person and in his role, continually makes visible to the Church the redemptive service fulfilled by Jesus Christ and represents and promotes in the Church what the community of faith must be, namely, a community of service.

## Ministry of Love and Justice

From its beginning, and particularly during the first centuries, the diaconate has been primarily a ministry of love and justice. The early metaphorical description of the deacon as "the eyes and ears, the mouth, heart and soul of the Bishop" referred to the duty of the deacon to identify the needy, to report their needs to the Bishop and the Church, and to direct the Church's loving service to them.

As the diaconate has developed in the United States, it is hard to find a single category of needy people in the Church and society who are not being served by deacons: the homeless, the ill, prisoners, refugees, the rural poor, street people, victims of racial and ethnic discrimination, the aged, the bereaved, battered women, the blind, the deaf, the divorced, drug addicts, the dying, the disabled, abused children, et al. Deacons are meeting these people, in the name of the Church, representing the care of Jesus Christ, the Servant. At this time in the Church, the well-being of children and advocacy on their behalf are a critical witness of Gospel values. In the state of California all deacons and Presbyters are required by law to report child abuse. See the Appendix for the California Law and Procedures regarding mandatory reporting of child abuse.

By his ordination, particularly and officially committed to service, the deacon is to inspire, promote, and help coordinate the service that the whole Church must undertake in imitation of Christ. He has

a special responsibility to identify to the Church those who are in need. Among such people the deacon is to speak about Christ and to offer them the Church's varied assistance. But in the Church, he is also to speak about the needy, to articulate their needs, and to inspire and mobilize the whole community's response. He becomes the representative figure in whom the Church reaches out to the needy.

## The Ministry of the Word of God

The deacon's ministry of the Word is also a far-ranging one. It may include proclaiming the Gospel at the liturgy, preaching, catechetical instruction and other forms of teaching, counseling with referral, instruction of catechumens, giving retreats, outreach to alienated Catholics, parish renewal programs, etc. Besides these more or less formal occasions, deacons may also have many opportunities to speak about Jesus Christ more informally, especially as they carry out their ministries of love and justice. Deacons who have secular occupations are also able to witness to the Gospel in the marketplace where they meet the demands of their work both as committed Catholics and as ordained ministers and to use the opportunities their work provides to bring the Gospel to bear on the concrete circumstances of everyday individual and social life. In turn, their involvement outside of the Church setting also can equip them to bring questions and insights to bear on the Gospel and can thus help lead the Church to a richer and deeper appreciation of the faith by which it lives.

## The Ministry of the Liturgy

The Second Vatican Council asserted that "the Liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed and the source from which all its power flows." (SC, 10) This is as true for the deacon as it is for the Church in general. To the Church gathered in worship, the deacon both brings the gifts of the people and articulates their needs. At the Eucharistic assembly, the deacon assists the community in its worship and helps to minister the great mystery of Jesus Christ's redemptive gift of himself in Word and sacrament. And, in such liturgical celebrations in which all three of the deacon's ministries, i.e., Love and Justice, the Word, and Liturgy, are uniquely concentrated and integrated, the deacon finds the source from which he draws his own Christian life and the grace to carry out his ministry.

At the Eucharist, the deacon proclaims the Gospel, may preach, voices the needs of the people in the general intercessions, assists in the preparation of the altar and gifts, is the minister of the cup and distributes communion, especially from the cup. The deacon may also perform other liturgical roles such as baptizing, witnessing marriages, bringing Viaticum to the dying and presiding over funerals and burials. In addition to these roles, he may also preside over the liturgies of the Word, the Liturgies of the Hours, exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, lead non-sacramental reconciliation services, conduct prayer services for the sick and dying, and administer certain of the Church's sacramentals.

*See Appendix for Pagella of Faculties Granted to Deacons in the Diocese of Stockton, signed 9/12/15.*

## Integration of Diaconal Ministries

The diaconal ministries, distinguished above, cannot be separated. The deacon is ordained for them all. No one should be ordained who is not prepared to undertake each in some way. This is not to say that a particular deacon may not have greater abilities in one ministry, and that, therefore his ministry may not be marked by one of them more than by the others. But there is an intrinsic relationship among the three areas of the deacon's ministry if he is to be a sign of the Servant Christ who redeemed us as Prophet, Priest and King. In his person and in his roles, the deacon is also to represent to the Church the full range of services which it itself is called to carry out in the world. When the deacon preaches or teaches, it is as one whose ministry and presence in the world have well acquainted him with the needs of the people. When he ministers at the altar, he brings those needs to the Church and to Jesus Christ. As he ministers to the needy in his day-to-day service, so also at the Eucharist he ministers the Blood of Christ to the People of God. And when he works for the needy, he does so as one who has himself both received and ministered at the table of the Word and at the table of the Eucharist.

*Permanent Deacons in the United States, Guidelines on Formation and Ministry, Bishops' Committee on the Permanent Diaconate, National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1984.*

## The Role of a Deacon's Wife

The permanent Diaconate is the first modern day experience of married clergy of the Latin Church. This experience has two aspects affecting the wife of a deacon: How does the Church view this new role? How does the wife view her new role?

The husband who takes on the lifestyle and commitment of a deacon must always remember that he first took on the lifestyle and commitment of sacramental family life. He now must involve his wife and family intimately in both. Serving as a deacon enhances being a husband, and where applicable, a father.

The deacon's wife is an integral part of the diaconate community within the Diocese of Stockton. An applicant must have his wife's consent before he can apply to enter the formation process. During the formation process, the wife is encouraged to attend most of the classes during the years of formation. Her attendance enables her to be part of what her husband is doing and to support him and grow along with him. Her presence is not always easy and may require a possible rearranging of priorities developed over a relationship of many years. One purpose of the formation process is to help couples discern what these priorities must be and how each couple intends to live out this new lifestyle and commitment within the context of their family situation.

After the husband is ordained, the wife may or may not minister alongside him in areas of service. It depends on her desire and her ministerial gifts as well as other commitments. The deacon must listen to his wife for signs of strain in their relationship that may be caused by an excessive attention being paid to diaconal work. He must remember that his work succeeds only in the context of a good spiritual balance evident to others by the peace within his own family.

Wives of deacons are participating members of the Diaconate Community and are invited and encouraged to take part in whatever spiritual growth and continuing education opportunities that are offered to the deacons. In addition, wives of clergy may wish to join together to share and discuss items of mutual interest. Any additional needs in those areas should be brought to the attention of the Director of Deacons.

Pastors and supervisors of deacons must be sensitive and attentive to the new needs of a married clergy in the form of deacons and their priority to their family life. There will be times when the deacons' commitment to his family must take top priority to their pastoral service. Although the sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders are compatible in the lives of deacons, adjustments must be made whenever there are conflicts.

We owe our deacon wives a continuing debt of gratitude for their hard work, undying patience, and continuing witness of loving service among and with the People of God.

## Ongoing Formation

The formation of a deacon is an ongoing process. His formation does not end with ordination. It is a never ending process by which the deacon continually expands his knowledge so that his spiritual journey might be always progressive and that he will increasingly become the unique image of the Lord Christ.

A vocation to ordained ministry is a process with different stages. It is an open-ended calling to continued personal growth and development to image the Servant Christ. The basic components which comprise the diaconal formation program (spiritual, theological, pastoral and liturgical) also serve to structure a deacon's ongoing formation program. The deacon's primary vocation to personal holiness, to be realized in his specific state and mission, demands that he be open to and actively engage in both spiritual and educational programs designed to further his continued formation and effectiveness. The academic knowledge and pastoral skills, which are imparted during his four-year formation program, are just the beginning of the deacon's life-long effort to reflect upon his ministry in the light of faith. Theological study and reflection need to be a permanent element of the deacon's continuing education.

## Spiritual Development Retreats

Permanent deacons, as members of the clergy, are declared by canon law to be especially bound to pursue holiness 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. In order to pursue this perfection, canon law requires deacons to:

1. Faithfully and untiringly fulfill the duties of pastoral ministry;
2. Nourish their spiritual life from the two-fold table of Sacred Scripture and the Eucharist;

3. Be conscientious in devoting time regularly to mental prayer, in approaching the sacrament of penance regularly, in cultivating special devotion to Mary, the Mother of God, and in using other common and particular means for his sanctification.

In addition to Canon Law, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and/or diocesan policies require the deacon to:

1. Pray Morning and Evening Prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours daily, and other portions of the Liturgy of the Hours as his circumstances allow;
2. Make an annual retreat. The Diocese of Stockton currently sponsors one diaconate retreat in October which the deacon is expected to attend. The Bishop may dispense from this requirement for a serious reason, such as health, upon receiving a written request from the deacon. Each deacon is to make note of the retreat he has attended on the *Retreat and Continuing Education Form* to be submitted by February 1 each year, which covers the previous calendar year.  
*See Appendix for Annual Reporting Form.*
3. Have a spiritual director with whom he is able to meet on a regular basis. The School of Ministry can provide a list of trained spiritual directors. Meet annually with his pastor/supervisor for the purposes of reviewing and evaluating his diaconal ministry in order to revise and update the Service Agreement. A copy of the resultant agreement is to be sent by the Deacon to the Director of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate by September 1 of each year.

Deacons are strongly encouraged to participate in support groups which meet regularly to pray and to reflect about ministry, to address common problems, to study together and to be of support to one another.

## Continuing Education

In addition to the annual retreat, each deacon engaged in active ministry in the Diocese of Stockton is expected to complete a minimum of 20 hours of continuing education each calendar year. Ten of these hours may be achieved by attendance at offerings made by the Office of Diaconate Formation. The remainder of the requirement can be fulfilled through attendance at offerings made by the following:

- Office for Worship;
- Catholic School Department;
- Continuing Education of the Clergy;
- School of Ministry;

- Conferences, conventions, workshops and symposia offered by other dioceses and by various national resources for the permanent diaconate,
- Ministry Celebration Day.

The Director of Deacons may dispense from the requirements for continuing education for a serious reason, such as health, upon receiving a written request from the deacon. Each deacon must submit a record of his continuing education on the *Retreat and Continuing Education Form* by February 1<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year.

*See Appendix for Annual Reporting Form*

Wives of deacons are encouraged to participate with their husbands in both spiritual and ongoing education growth activities.

Expenses for both the deacon and his wife for one annual retreat and the required ongoing education are paid by the parish/agency to which the deacon is assigned. These provisions shall be addressed in the Service Agreement. Retired deacons and widows will continue to be invited, with registration fees paid by the Diocese.

## Assignment to Ministry

A deacon is ordained for the service of the diocesan Church. Through the imposition of hands by the Bishop, the deacon shares sacramentally in the diaconal ministry of Christ. A collaborative bond is thereby established between the deacon and the Bishop in union with the presbyters to carry on the mission of Christ to his people. Since the deacon is bound by the bond of obedience freely undertaken in the Rite of Ordination, he is assigned by the Bishop of the Diocese of Stockton.

The principle criteria for an assignment are the pastoral needs of the diocese, especially as these relate to the issues of social justice and reflect the personal qualifications and abilities of the deacon.

The deacon should be the one who brings to the pastoral staff an awareness of the needs of the people, not only in the parish, but also in the broader community. The deacon should be the one who is free to respond to the immediate needs and demands of the poor, the unemployed, the sick, and the neglected that are present in each of our communities. The deacon should be the one prepared to address social justice issues in the larger community, and in the workplace - bringing back awareness and a rising of consciousness to the faith community which he also serves. This is the unique contribution which the deacon can make both to the parochial staff and community.

*The Call to Service, Pastoral Statement on the Permanent Diaconate, -- Joseph Cardinal Bemadin*

The scope of the deacon's exercise of his ministry is determined by the universal law of the Church, by the faculties granted him by the Bishop and by the terms of the letter of appointment given him by the Bishop of the diocese.

A deacon assigned to a parish renders his service in pastoral ministry as a coworker with the pastor and under his authority. A deacon assigned to a non-parochial ministry has a similar relationship to a supervisor nominated in his letter of appointment. The specific

ministerial responsibilities are determined by the pastor/supervisor as delineated in the Service Agreement between the deacon and the pastor/supervisor.

*See Appendix for sample Service Agreement.*

The Bishop will make a public announcement of assignments and changes of assignments for deacons. Each deacon and each pastor/supervisor and the Director of Deacons must have a written Agreement for Diaconal Service prior to beginning an assignment. A deacon's assignment is effective on the dates determined by the Bishop as stated in the letter of appointment. A copy of the letter will be sent to the pastor/ supervisor and to the Director of the Deacons.

The Bishop may take direct action in making an assignment without the normal consultative process.

Newly ordained deacons are expected to participate in a mystagogy program for the first five years of ministry. Evaluation for the newly ordained deacons will take place on an annual basis for the first five years.

## Change of Assignment

Proposed changes in an assignment may be made at the initiative of the Bishop upon recommendation of the Diaconate Personnel Committee, the parish or agency through the pastoral supervisor, and/or by the deacon himself. The assignment may be revised when changes in the church needs or in the development of the deacon himself suggest it.

A pastor/supervisor seeking the transfer of a deacon will send a letter requesting the transfer to the Bishop with a copy to the Director of Deacons, stating the reasons for the request. A pastor/supervisor seeking the assignment of a deacon to his parish/agency will send a letter requesting such an assignment to the Bishop with a copy to the Director of Deacons, stating the reasons for the request. In each of the cases just stated, the Director of Deacons will meet with the person making the request to discuss the matter. Subsequently, either or both of these officials will meet for the same purpose with any other person who is directly and immediately affected by the request.

As a general rule a deacon who wishes to be reassigned should notify his pastor or supervisor that he is asking for a new assignment or change in the present assignment status.

It is not the deacon's right simply to withdraw unilaterally from an area of ministry. Nor is it the right of the pastor, agency director or administrator to unilaterally terminate or change the deacon from an area of ministry without first consulting with the Director of Deacons who will begin the procedure which will include the Bishop.

Deacons also exercise their ministries in their places of employment, being truly deacons in the market place. Some deacons may seek an assignment within the area of public service. While the Code of Canon Law permits a deacon to hold political office, a deacon

must consult with his Bishop before seeking or accepting such an office. In particular cases, the Bishop may forbid such an undertaking.

When a new pastor or administrator is named to a place where a deacon is already assigned, the new pastor with the deacon and the Director of Deacons meet to develop a new Service Agreement. Deacons and new pastors do not make the new assignment. Only the Bishop assigns a deacon to a specific ministry and specific place. This process provides for the protection of the rights of the priest and the deacon as prescribed by the Code of Canon Law (c.274).

## Diaconal Status in the Diocese of Stockton

### **Part I. Incardination / Incardination**

#### I. Foundational Principles

##### A. Historical and Theological Principles

1. Incardination specifies the relationship of clerics to the Church and the service which they render in it. Taken from the Latin term *incardinare* (to hang on a hinge) incardination is traditionally used to refer to the attachment of the priest or deacon to a particular local church headed by a diocesan Bishop. Theologically, it underscores the close, permanent association of Bishops, presbyters and deacons in the church's ordained ministry and hierarchical structure.
2. Before the Council of Nicea, incardination was maintained solely by custom, and the priests and deacons ordained by a Bishop were considered part of a local church's ordained ministry. From earliest times (e.g. Chalcedon canon 6) all ordains were ordered to be subject to an ecclesiastical superior; similarly incardination bound a cleric for life to the diocese for which he had been ordained (Chalcedon canon 5). The Council of Nicea forbade clerics from moving from one city to another, thus affirming the lasting principle that an ordained cleric is always attached to a diocese.
3. This principle had to be reaffirmed in the following centuries because of the rise in the middle Ages of absolute ordinations of clerics not attached to a particular diocese or Bishop. Hence, the Third Lateran Council (canon 5) forbade Bishops from ordaining deacons and priests without a definite title. The desired effect of instilling the incardination of the ordained was not uniformly or universally achieved immediately, and the Bishops at Trent decreed that no one was to be ordained unless in the Bishop's judgment he would be useful or necessary for the church to which he could be assigned.

From this period on, incardination was understood ecclesiological as referring to the bond between a priest or deacon and the local church for which he was ordained and as

an expression of the Bishop's solicitude for the local diocese. Canonically, the term referred both to one's diocese of ordination as well as the practice of transferring one's allegiance from one local church to another, and hence from one Bishop to another. The ordained priest or deacon may thus be incardinated from one diocese and incardinated into another but only at the judgment of the Bishops involved in the transfer.

4. In light of the teaching of Vatican II on the ordained ministry, the restoration of the diaconate as a permanent order in the church, and the revised rites of ordination, the notion of incardination is grounded theologically in the call to ordination in and for a local church and in the way priests and deacons function for the service of a local church. Priests and deacons are ministers of the community and as such are representatives of the Bishop.

## B. Canonical Prescriptions

*See canons 265-269 in the Code of Canon Law.*

For a thorough commentary on incardination and excardination, refer to *Clergy Procedural Handbook*, Canon Law Society of America, 1992, edited by Randolph R. Calvo and Nevin J. Klinger.

## II. Implementation

- A. A permanent deacon transferring from his own diocese to another diocese will do the following:
  1. When the decision has been made to move to a new diocese, the deacon will inform the Director of Deacons or his Bishop of the impending move. In like manner, the deacon will write to the Bishop of the new diocese to inform the Bishop of his pending arrival, stating his intention to call on the Bishop or his delegate in person after his arrival. *(See Appendix B, Sample Letter 1)*
  2. The deacon will request that the Director of Deacons forward to the diaconate office or the Bishop of the new diocese a letter from his Bishop providing information regarding the new move together with appropriate letters of recommendation and evaluation.  
*(See Appendix. B, Sample letter 2)*
- B. The Bishop will send or cause to have sent to the receiving Bishop and/or his Director of the Diaconate the following:
  1. A letter informing the receiving Bishop of the impending move with a statement of the just cause of the deacon's move (e.g. employment, retirement or health conditions) together with letters of recommendation and evaluation.
  2. A resume of the deacon's personal history, which will be the basis for a character reference together with the recently adapted protocol between Bishops and

3. religious superiors testifying to the deacon's record of conduct and moral integrity.
  4. A written record of the deacon's academic, spiritual and pastoral formation, to include notation of academic degrees awarded or citations earned, and an evaluation of the deacon's ministry. (*Appendix B, Sample Letter 3*)
- C. Upon arrival in the host diocese, the deacon will call upon the Bishop or his Director of Deacons to make his presence known as well as his desire for diaconal faculties and a diaconal assignment.
  - D. The Bishop or his Director of Deacons will evaluate the deacon's resume and examine the needs of the diocese. After favorable review, the Bishop will give the deacon faculties and a temporary assignment. The Bishop should appoint a supervisor to the deacon and indicate that the evaluations will take place at six and twelve month intervals. (*Appendix B, Sample Letter 4*)
  - E. After due and prayerful consideration, the deacon will write to his diocesan Bishop to advise him of his intent to seek incardination in the diocese in which he is now resident and excardination from his diocese of incardination. (*Appendix B, Sample Letter 5*)
  - F. After the deacon has served in the diocese for a time, usually for a minimum of two years, and after suitable evaluations, the deacon may petition the Bishop for incardination, assuming it is his intent to remain permanently within the diocese. (*Appendix B, Sample Letter 6*)
  - G. After receiving letters of suitable evaluation and the recommendation of his permanent deacon director and having weighed the relative merits of the deacon's petition and the needs of the diocese, the Bishop will respond to the petition and indicate his willingness regarding incardination. (*Appendix B, Sample Letter 7*)
  - H. If the Bishop expresses willingness to incardinate the deacon, the deacon will write to his Bishop of incardination for a letter of excardination which will include an explanation of the just cause(s) for the request. (*Appendix B, Sample Letter 8*)
  - I. 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 include the declaration that the excardination is being given for a just cause. (*Appendix B, Sample Letter 9*)
  - J. After receiving the legitimately executed document of excardination, the new diocesan Bishop issues a decree of incardination within one month 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 (a quo and ad quem) have been duly notified. (*Appendix B, Sample Letter 10*)

## Part II. Diaconal Status

The following categories define "diaconal status" within the Diocese of Stockton.

**Active:** A deacon who has a current Service Agreement.

Two categories further define "active."

1. Those assigned by the Bishop to a parish, agency or institution of the diocese in a full or part-time capacity;
2. Those assigned to an agency or institution not under diocesan governance in a full or part-time capacity.

**Retired:** A deacon who reaches the age of 75 must submit a letter of retirement to the Bishop. Deacons may also retire for health or other compelling reasons. He and his wife continue to be welcome at all diaconal community events.

**Inactive or Administrative Leave:** An inactive deacon or a deacon on leave has no Diaconal Service Agreement within the diocese. If he wishes to return to active service, he shall submit his letter of application to the Director of Deacons and the Bishop.

**Sabbatical Leave:** A sabbatical is an extended period of time (three months to a year) away from a deacon's normal assignment. A sabbatical is usually given for the purposes of renewal or ongoing education. A letter must be submitted to the Bishop to request a sabbatical leave. It is highly recommended that deacons take an approved sabbatical at least every ten years.

**Leave of Absence:** A deacon may be granted authorization by the Bishop to withdraw from active ministry for a fixed period of time because of personal or medical reasons. The total length of the leave is to be requested, i.e., the date it begins and the date it ends. The deacon will set specific goals for personal accountability during this time of absence. These goals will be discussed with the Director of Deacons prior to submission. The deacon on leave will have regular contact with the Director or someone designated as his contact. Return to active ministry requires the recommendation of the Director of Deacons to the Bishop. A "leave of absence" will be reviewed after one year and normally will not be extended beyond a second year. If contact is not maintained by the deacon after three months, the leave becomes "unauthorized."

**Administrative Leave:** When a deacon is relieved by the Bishop of all diaconal responsibilities, he loses his diocesan faculties. He may not represent himself as an active deacon while this status is in effect.

**Unauthorized Leave:** A deacon who leaves his assignment without the permission of the Bishop is on unauthorized leave. As a result, the deacon opens himself up to the penal process. (*Canon 1371, 2*)

**Suspended:** A deacon is suspended when the Bishop removes faculties as a medicinal penalty. The deacon may not function as an ordained minister nor represent himself as an active deacon while this status is in effect.

**Laicized:** A deacon who voluntarily or involuntarily is returned to the lay state by authority of the Holy Father at the recommendation and request of the Bishop.

**Absence from the Diocese:** If a deacon is required because of his employment or another circumstance to be absent from the diocese beyond six weeks, the deacon should notify the Director of Deacons. The deacon should give in writing his temporary address and telephone number. He should also indicate the approximate time length of his absence. Since he is incardinated in the Diocese of Stockton, this procedure provides for mutual accountability during the time of absence. If he plans to become involved in diaconal ministry in the diocese in which he is in temporary residence, the deacon must obtain verification of his diaconal status and obtain a letter of introduction from his Bishop prior to his departure.

**Identification Card/Celebret:**

Deacons receive identification cards indicating they are "in good standing" on a five-year basis. Deacons should contact the Communications Department at the Diocese for a celebret.

## **Miscellaneous Policies**

### **Remuneration**

It is the policy of the Diocese of Stockton that the deacons do not receive payment for their diaconal services. In accordance with universal law (canon 531), stipends for weddings, funerals and baptisms should be turned over to the parish consistent with the parish policy. Any further monetary arrangement, including out-of-pocket expenses, rests upon the mutual agreement of the deacon and the pastor or the diocesan office in which he functions.

Deacons employed full time by the diocese or parish are to receive remuneration commensurate with salaries and benefits attached to a particular position. Deacons are reimbursed for legitimate expenses as part of their ministry. Deacons must comply with regulations established by the United States Internal Revenue Service as well as state and municipal authorities.

### **Clerical Attire**

In the Diocese of Stockton the deacons do not wear the Roman collar, nor do they wear any distinctive clerical garb outside of liturgical functions. It may be necessary for those in jail and prison ministries to wear some kind of identifying clerical garb; this exception will be subject to the approval of the Bishop. It is appropriate for deacons to wear their "deacon"

lapel pins or crosses. However, there is no uniform pin or symbol, and deacons who wear them do so according to their own personal tastes. The Bishop must approve deviations from this policy.

**Title and Identification** In the Diocese of Stockton deacons are addressed by the title "Deacon." In written communication the form "Reverend Mr." is used in this diocese. When performing marriages, the deacon signs the marriage license of the state of California with "Reverend Mr. John Doe," or if the Deacon has earned a doctorate degree, "Reverend Dr. John Doe." In the box marked "denomination" print *Roman Catholic*. In verbal communication, the title "Deacon" is used. Upon ordination, the deacon will receive an identification card indicating his status within the diocese.

### **Guidelines for a Deacon Wishing To Witness a Marriage outside His Assigned Parish**

1. The deacon may assist at marriages in the name of the Church by specific delegation, having first complied with the requirements of the Code of Canon Law on all matters that are preliminary to the licit and valid assistance at marriage.
2. All official documents are to be signed "Reverend Mr." or "Reverend Dr." and name.
3. The deacon may assist the pastor in the recording of the fact of marriage in the parochial books, observing the provision of Canon Law. (c, 1121,1,3).
4. These faculties are to be used within the territorial limits of the parish to which the deacon is assigned.
5. Whenever there is a need to assist at a marriage outside of the parish to which the deacon is assigned, the specific delegation of the pastor of the parish in which the marriage is to take place or of a cleric with general delegation for that territory must be obtained. The deacon, if unknown to the pastor, identifies himself with his diaconate identification card and/or a current copy of his faculties.
6. When there is a need to assist at a Wedding Mass or Baptism outside of the Diocese of Stockton, the deacon will need to contact the Office of Clergy Services for a Letter of Good Standing. This request should be made at least 3 weeks in advance.
7. The vesture for the deacon in liturgical ceremonies is the dalmatic worn over the alb and stole. The dalmatic may be omitted either out of necessity or for less solemnity.

## Liturgical Vestments

When the ministry exercised by a deacon in a parish or institution entails the regular involvement in the Liturgy, the parish/institution shall provide dalmatic, alb and diaconal stoles, with the approval of the pastor/supervisor, for the use of the deacon.

## Liability

While a deacon is exercising his ecclesiastical ministry, he is insured under the liability policy of the Bishop of Stockton. As regards accidents that occur while the deacon is using a privately owned automobile, that is, one not owned by the diocese or an ecclesiastical entity of the diocese, in the course of exercising his ministry, the automobile liability policy of the registered owner shall be primary, that is, benefits/insurance provided by such a policy shall be applicable first.

## Letters of Complaint and Concern

In the case of signed letters of concern (health, etc.) or complaint, the writer shall be contacted for permission to use his/her name in discussing the matter with the deacon concerned. In matters of serious complaint or concern, the Director of Deacons shall investigate the matter thoroughly. As prudence and compassion and concern indicate, the Bishop, in person or through his representative, shall either contact the deacon in question to respond to the matter or ask the Director of Deacons to respond. The deacon shall have the right to see the letter and to know the name of the writer. Ordinarily the writer shall receive a written reply.

Anonymous letters to the Bishop, Diaconate Board or diocesan authorities shall be filed but no action taken. However, any letter, anonymous or signed, regarding illegal or sexual misconduct involving minors shall be brought immediately to the attention of the Vicar General. Both discretion and just concern for the deacon and any other person involved in the allegation will be followed.

In cases where a caller identifies him/her, the name and telephone number or address of the party shall be obtained and the matter addressed as above. Anonymous telephone calls shall be treated in the same way as anonymous letters.

Complaints as a rule are to be submitted in writing unless circumstances dictate otherwise.

## Recourse

Appropriate processes as described in the Diocesan Personnel Manual shall be followed where the situation warrants.

## Records

Records pertaining to permanent deacons are to be kept with the clergy files in a secure place in the Pastoral building. These records are confidential and are to be available only to the Bishop, the Personnel Board, the Director of Deacons, the Director of Formation, and the deacon. The records of those in formation are kept in the Office of Diaconate Formation.

## Guidelines for Separated and Divorced Deacons

The deacon, married or single, is a precious resource for the Church. It is the intention of the diocese to offer assistance, support and guidance to help the deacon when personal or marital problems threaten or impact upon his ministry. Because the majority of deacons are married, emphasis is here placed on the "deacon couple" who often act as a team in the deacon's ministry. The single deacon is also subject to the everyday problems of modern life, and these guidelines will provide appropriate service for them also in time of need. The revised guidelines for permanent deacons, which were issued in 1984 by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, emphasize the primary importance of a stable and solid marriage to the successful and effective ministry of the married deacon.

"A stable marriage and loving family life are positive attributes contributing to this new ministry ... The married deacon must never lose sight of a practical order of priorities: the sacrament of matrimony preceded the sacrament of orders, and this established a practical priority in the deacon's life ... The marriage bond should be enriched by the sacrament of orders, just as public ministry is enriched by married ordained ministers of the gospel." (Chapter N.I.O.).

Throughout his ministry the married deacon is called to be a role model to those he serves, and the deacon couple will be regarded by many in the parish as an example of how the sacrament of marriage is manifest in their relationship and in the service they render to others. By the very nature of the deacon's ordination, he assumes a public role and is expected to witness in a special way the meaning of Christian marriage to those whom he serves in the larger family of the parish.

As the deacon couple deal with the normal stress and strains of married life, their manner of meeting challenges will be viewed as offering hope and promise by other couples who face similar issues or problems. Along with other leaders in parish life their struggles and mastery of life's problems will provide inspiration and guidance to many.

In our complex modern world, no couple is immune from incapacitating stress, and for the deacon couple, already subject to the normal stress of active ministry, marital problems, separation, and even divorce can unfortunately occur. More unfortunate still is the fact that deacon couples will often deny or minimize to themselves and to others the personal problems they cannot resolve. The social pressure of "looking good" can prevent the deacon couple from obtaining the help or assistance they need in a timely manner. The tendency to wait too long before asking for outside help can make matters worse. Sometimes the couple then faces the prospect of separation or even divorce instead of healing and reconciliation.

Whenever the deacon couple senses their marriage is in trouble, or when tensions and problems become such that routine responsibilities to family, occupation and ministry are affected, the Office of the Diaconate hopes and prays that either party will seek consultation. The staff serves to help identify the problem and assist in selecting a remedial course of action that might include referral for marital counseling, spiritual guidance and peer support. These recommendations will be made with respect to cost, available health benefits and confidentiality. We are interested in the early resolution of personal or marital barriers to ministry and wish to support and respect confidentiality.

Because of the delicate balance between ordination and marriage, and between private life and public ministry, there is a need for clear guidelines for deacons facing separation or divorce. Sometimes the personal problems of married or single deacons can impact upon the parish family and upon the public in such a way that administrative action will be required. Guidelines generalize and every situation is different. Consequently, each deacon and spouse, and each single deacon will be treated with careful regard for dignity and uniqueness. These guidelines are designed to balance the compassionate gentleness of Christ with the needs and the good order of the Church which we all serve.

The following procedures are to be followed when the deacon couple faces separation or divorce:

1. The deacon has the responsibility to notify the Director of Deacons at the time of separation or the filing of civil divorce action.
2. The deacon has the responsibility to notify the Judicial Vicar requesting permission to separate (canon 1692) to be granted by the diocesan Bishop.
3. The Director will seek a full understanding of the deacon couple's decision and will ask for a personal interview.
4. The Director will notify the Bishop, pastor, and Diaconate Board of the separation or divorce. The Bishop may choose to meet with each person at this time.
5. A plan for notifying the diaconate community will be prepared regarding the deacon couple's situation, their intention, and requesting personal and peer support. This plan will be developed with the couple and relevant personnel and will clarify the changes this decision imposes upon the deacon's ministry.
6. The transition period of separation or divorce is the time to seek healing, refocusing and mutual assessment. Because the deacon couple gives "public witness," a minimum of twelve months leave of absence from ministry is required of the deacon and his wife if she is involved significantly in ministry with her husband.
7. As the deacon couple is able to present information regarding progress toward the goals identified at the beginning of the leave of absence, the Director of Deacons will arrange one or more joint meetings to assess the current situation and the advisability of returning to ministry. The Director will ask permission to consult with any

professional personnel involved in the plan for healing during the leave of absence and review this information with the couple. Any written reports or personal data will be maintained in a confidential manner.

8. The Director of Deacons will consult with the pastor and the Diaconate Board and make recommendations to the Bishop who will decide if and when the deacon may return to ministry.
9. Return to ministry will generally involve an assignment to a different parish or ministry unless the consensus in #7 indicates that the best interests of the deacon and parish community can be served by a continuation of the former assignment.
10. In the event that the above marital situation is impacted by the reality of gross personal pathology or publicly causing adverse public reaction, parish scandal or other grave matters, consideration of a change to inactive status or laicization will result.
11. The deacon must live a life in accordance with sacramental vows of marriage and the diaconate. A deacon who is unmarried cannot validly contract marriage (canon 1087); a deacon who is married cannot validly contract another marriage, either because of a declaration of nullity of his marriage or because of the death of his wife. Only the Apostolic See can grant a dispensation from this impediment.

**Any one of the following three conditions is sufficient for a favorable consideration of the dispensation from this impediment, namely:**

- The great and proven usefulness of the ministry of the deacon to the diocese to which he belongs;
  - That he has children of such a tender age as to be in need of motherly care;
  - That he has parents or parents-in-law who are elderly and in need of care.
1. The deacon must fulfill all financial and paternal responsibilities as required by the civil court and canon law.
  2. In the event of a divorce and a return to ministry, the Director shall work closely with the deacon to help him define an acceptable lifestyle as a single person that offers hope and inspiration in the same way that he did in married ministry. The deacon who is separated, widowed, divorced or has received an annulment must follow a lifestyle in accord with the Church's ruling on celibacy as it applies to deacons.
  3. The Director shall monitor the deacon's progress in ministry as a single person for 24 months and review this information with the Diaconate Board or the Bishop as required. Personal support and encouragement will be provided throughout this time of transition.

## Retirement Policy for Deacons

The normal retirement age for deacons is established at the age of seventy-five (75). Because the deacon is called, permanently ordained, and in service to the Church of the Diocese of Stockton, efforts will be made to permit him to continue in some form of informal ministry for as long as he experiences good health, the support of his family, ministerial effectiveness, continued willingness to offer himself in service to the people of God, and the approval of the Bishop. Continuation in some form of ministry beyond normal retirement age will need to be in accord with the deacon's individual gifts and circumstances and the opportunities available in the diocese.

In the event of a deacon's poor health or disability or other significant changes in his life or circumstances before reaching the age of 75, the option of his withdrawing from his formal and assigned ministry always exists, either by reason of his or his family's request or by concern of the parish or the diocese for him and his ministry. Family responsibilities are understood in the context of the deacon's cultural, social, moral and legal obligations. Health is understood in the fullest sense in its spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical dimensions.

## Retirement Status for a Deacon

1. The retirement of a deacon is the cessation of his formal assignment to ministry. Unless otherwise indicated, the deacon retains the diaconal faculties granted by the Bishop as long as he remains in the diocese.
2. Subsequent to a deacon's formal retirement, he may volunteer for or be requested by the pastor or diocesan organization to perform specific services or ministries which are appropriate to the Office of Deacon and his particular charisms. No permission is needed for this service unless the service is planned to be continued on an ongoing basis. Ongoing service needs to be approved by the Bishop.
3. As an ordained person, the deacon retains in retirement a special bond with the Church, his parish, the diaconate community and the diocese. Consequently, he continues to receive the information and service provided to actively assigned deacons and also to have available to him all spiritual and continuing education opportunities offered by the Office of the Diaconate.
4. In order that the retired deacon and his spouse are enabled to continue participating in such opportunities for the sake of their growth and to provide a motivating example to the entire diaconate community, the parish or organization of his final assignment shall make available to him and his wife the financial means provided for retreat and continuing education. If, in the opinion of the Office of the Diaconate, other previous places of assignment should share in these expenses, such will be the case.
5. No retirement benefits or remuneration accrue to a deacon under the provisions of this

policy, except as provided in Section 4 above. This does not preclude a deacon from receiving benefits from the diocese to which he might otherwise be entitled as a result of compensated parish or diocesan service.

## Other Conditions for Retirement

If, because of health or inhibiting family responsibilities the deacon is discerned to be incapable of performing his diaconal duties, the Bishop may suggest or direct the deacon to serve in retired status. Health is understood in the fullest sense, that is, in its spiritual, intellectual, emotional and physical dimensions.

## Retirement Process

1. At age seventy-five (75), the deacon's request for retirement shall be sent in writing to the Bishop through the Director of the Deacons.
2. The Director of the Deacons shall process the deacon's retirement request based on this policy and forward the request to the Bishop for his action.
3. Upon acceptance of the deacon's request for retirement, the Bishop will notify the deacon of his retirement from active ministry and assignment. Copies of the Bishop's letter will be sent to the deacon's final place of formal assignment and to the Director of the Deacons. A copy of the letter will be placed in the deacon's file at the Pastoral Center.

## Guidelines in the Event of the Death of a Deacon

These guidelines for the burial of deacons has been prepared by the Office of the Diaconate, concurred with by the Office for Worship, and are issued with the approval of the Bishop of Stockton.

The death of a deacon is significant, not only in the life of his family but also in the diocese and in his parish. His life, by its very nature, assumed a public dimension, and both personal and community considerations must be made a part of the planning of his funeral. Mutual planning between the family and the person making arrangements (the coordinator referred to below) is important. These guidelines may serve to facilitate these arrangements.

It is the policy of the Diocese of Stockton to provide interment at no cost, including the vault or bell liner and interment charge, to the deacon of the Diocese of Stockton in good standing. This does not include the price of the memorial marker. The above-mentioned charges would be given at half price to the spouse (with the approval of the Director of Cemeteries) at the time of need or "pre-need."

Please note that the graves for deacons and families are in the mid-range priced areas of the Catholic cemeteries. The above-mentioned discounts are available only if the purchase is

made at one of the Catholic cemeteries owned by the Diocese.

## Preliminary Steps

Each deacon should provide the Office of the Diaconate information regarding his families and his personal requests/preferences relative to burial arrangements and maintain currency of such information. This does not refer to the normal last will and testament, but rather an informal document that should contain the following: preferred presiding celebrant for the funeral Vigil~ funeral Mass and committal; names of the principal concelebrants, names of the deacons to assist at the Mass; names of pall bearers; readings to be proclaimed and names of the reader(s); name of the homilist and the name of the priest or deacon to be responsible for arrangements (i.e., the coordinator referred to below). *See Appendix for this form.*

At the time of death, a family member or other appropriate person should notify the Bishop's secretary and the Director of the Deacons. The choice of funeral directors should also be a part of this notification.

## Role of the Director of Deacons

1. The Director of the Deacons will confirm the information in Preliminary Step 1 above with the family. If such information has not previously been provided, he will consult with the family and designate a priest or deacon to supervise arrangements, including the coordinator's duties outlined below.
2. The Director of Deacons, on behalf of the family, is to contact the Bishop's office to arrange that the vigil and/or funeral liturgy might accommodate the Bishop's calendar. This can then be coordinated with the family and parish. It is recommended that the Vigil Service be scheduled for evening services in the parish of the deceased deacon on the evening prior to the funeral and burial.
3. The Director of the Deacons will advise all members of the deacon community of the time and place of the vigil service and the funeral. The Vicar General should be requested to advise the presbyterate of the deacon's death and details concerning the vigil service, funeral and burial.

Name as you want it to appear on prayer card and worship aid:

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## Liturgical Preparation for Clergy Funeral Services

The death of a priest or deacon is a time of loss felt through the parish(es) he served as well as the entire diocese. The Bishop has assigned to the Office for Worship the task of coordinating the funeral liturgies for a priest or deacon in the Diocese of Stockton. To assist the Office for Worship in preparing prayerful liturgies, this form provides the priest or deacon an opportunity to express his wishes for the ministers, readings, prayer texts, and liturgical music he desires to have considered for his funeral services.

This form may be updated at any time by requesting a new one from the Office for Worship.

Please type or print the information below. If you have no preference, please leave the line blank.

### General Information

Date born: \_\_\_\_\_

Date baptized: \_\_\_\_\_

Date ordained: \_\_\_\_\_

Date made Prelate of Honor (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Please attach the following to this form if you would like:

- Image preference for worship aids
- Image preference for prayer cards
- Quote, scripture citation, or prayer text for prayer cards

**Name and contact information for family member** or executor we will work with in making funeral arrangements: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Place of Burial \*** \_\_\_\_\_

*\*The Diocese of Stockton provides internment to all priests and deacons in good standing, at a Catholic cemetery within the Diocese.*

# Ministers

## Presiding Celebrant

**For priests:** Normally, the Bishop of Stockton will be presiding celebrant at the Vigil, Funeral Mass and Committal. If the Bishop is unavailable, the vicar general, vicar for priests, or dean will celebrate the Funeral Mass. If the Bishop is unavailable, please indicate whom you would like to celebrate the vigil and committal.

Funeral Vigil: \_\_\_\_\_

Rite of Committal: \_\_\_\_\_

**For deacons:** Normally, the Bishop of Stockton will be presiding celebrant at the Funeral Mass. If the Bishop is unavailable, the vicar general, dean or pastor will celebrate the Funeral Mass. If the Bishop is unavailable, please indicate whom you would like to celebrate the vigil and committal.

Funeral Vigil: \_\_\_\_\_

Rite of Committal: \_\_\_\_\_

## Homilist

Funeral Vigil: \_\_\_\_\_

Funeral Mass: \_\_\_\_\_

## Assisting Deacons

Funeral Vigil (1): \_\_\_\_\_

Funeral Mass (3): \_\_\_\_\_

## Cantor

Funeral Vigil: \_\_\_\_\_

Funeral Mass: \_\_\_\_\_

## Pall Bearers (6-8)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Funeral Vigil

## Place

Last Church of ministry       Cathedral       Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Rosary (*optional*)

During Visitation       One decade during Vigil

## Introductory Rites

Opening Song: \_\_\_\_\_

## Liturgy of the Word

Reading 1/Lector: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm and Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading 2/Lector: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Gospel: \_\_\_\_\_

## Concluding Rite

Closing Song: \_\_\_\_\_

## Additional Notes

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# Funeral Mass

**Place**     Last Church of ministry     Cathedral     Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Introductory Rites

Entrance Song: \_\_\_\_\_

Mass text for a Priest:     A     B    (*There is only one option for Deacons*)

## Liturgy of the Word

Reading 1/Lector: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Psalm and Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

Reading 2/Lector: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Gospel: \_\_\_\_\_

Intercessions:                     167A                     167B

## Liturgy of the Eucharist

Gift Bearers: \_\_\_\_\_

Song at Preparation: \_\_\_\_\_

Preface for the Dead:     1     2     3     4     5

Eucharistic Prayer: \_\_\_\_\_

Communion Hymn(s): \_\_\_\_\_

## Final Commendation

Words of Remembrance: \_\_\_\_\_

Song of Farewell: \_\_\_\_\_

Processional Song: \_\_\_\_\_



