

# **DIOCESE OF CHEYENNE**



## **Directory Concerning Personnel Issues of Permanent Deacons**

Second Edition  
February 22, 2016  
The Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter

# DIOCESE OF CHEYENNE



## DIRECTORY CONCERNING PERSONNEL ISSUES OF PERMANENT DEACONS

Second Edition (February 22, 2016)

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## DIOCESE OF CHEYENNE

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### DECREE

The Diocese of Cheyenne is greatly blessed with those men who have been ordained to the Order of Deacons. These deacons dedicate themselves permanently to the ministry of charity and service, especially to the poor and the marginalized. They also serve as ministers of the liturgy and of the word. Conformed in a special way to the Diocesan Bishop, deacons help make present the face of Christ in the community. As coworkers in the vineyard with their Bishop, the Bishop has fraternal concern for assisting them in their life and ministry. In the light of this concern, I hereby promulgate this *Directory Concerning Personnel Issues of Permanent Deacons, Second Edition*.

Taking into consideration the uniqueness of the Diocese of Cheyenne, this document seeks to address the particular situation we have in our local Church. We have based this document on the *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons* and the *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* from the Congregations for Education and Clergy, and the *National Directory for the Life and Ministry of Permanent Deacons* from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. My hope is that this new *Directory* will give guidance and direction to our priests, deacons, religious, and laity as our deacons seek to fulfill their sacred function.

This *Directory Concerning Personnel Issues of Permanent Deacons, Second Edition*, becomes effective on February 22, 2016, the Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter, and abrogates the prior *Directory*, its subsequent amendments and modifications, and all other diocesan norms and policies not in conformity with these new norms and instructions.

Given in Cheyenne, Wyoming, on January 23, 2016, the Feast of Saint Vincent, Deacon and Martyr.

The Most Reverend Paul D. Etienne, DD, STIL  
Bishop of Cheyenne

Carol DeLois  
Chancellor

## I. THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR PERMANENT DEACONS:

In the sixth chapter of The Acts of the Apostles the beginning of the Order of Deacon is described: “At that time, as the number of disciples continued to grow, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution. So the Twelve called together the community of disciples and said, ‘It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table. Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task, whereas we shall devote ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the word.’ The proposal was acceptable to the whole community, so they chose Stephen, a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit, also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas of Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them.”

While acknowledging that the Order of Deacon has experienced a great deal of change in the history of the Church, the seeds of the ministry of the deacon are expressed in this account of the calling of the first deacons.

A deacon is called to a ministry of charity and service, assisting in caring for the poor and those in need.

A deacon brings the needs of the poor and marginalized from his service to his liturgical ministry and to his personal prayer.

A deacon is to be a man of integrity with a good reputation, who is well regarded by the Church.

We see in this account from the Acts of the Apostles that the first deacons were ordained to assist the Apostles by caring for the widows of the Hellenists in the daily distribution of food. In the early Church, deacons were often given large administrative responsibilities to oversee the charitable activity of the Church. The legend of Saint Lawrence the Deacon reminds us of this principle, that when asked to surrender the treasure of the Church, he brought the poor and destitute who were being cared for by the Church - the treasure of Saint Lawrence and of the Church of Rome.

In our own time, the fathers of the Second Vatican Council wrote, “dedicated to duties of charity and of administration, let deacons be mindful of the admonition of Blessed Polycarp: ‘Be merciful, diligent, walking according to the truth of the Lord, who became the servant of all.’”<sup>1</sup>

All who are to be ordained deacon must be committed to the activities of justice and compassion that occupy the life of the parish and diocese. The deacon is not merely a worker doing service, but one who inspires and animates the baptized to respond to the call to serve. The ministry of every deacon is to be directed to the ministries of charity

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<sup>1</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, 29, quoting The Gospel of Matthew 28:18 and following.

and the altar. When the deacon assists at the liturgy, he carries with him the concerns and needs of all to whom he ministers. In his preaching and in the Universal Prayer, his concerns are rooted in his ministry of charity.

This document is an attempt to provide a framework for the ministry of Permanent Deacons in the Diocese of Cheyenne. It is based upon the document “National Directory for the Life and Ministry of Permanent Deacons” produced by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as well as the “Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons/Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons” produced by the Vatican Congregations for Catholic Education and for the Clergy. While not every situation can be foreseen by this directory, it is an attempt to clarify situations of importance in the life and ministry of permanent deacons.

## II. DIRECTOR OF DEACON PERSONNEL:

The bishop shall appoint a Director of Deacon Personnel who is either a priest or deacon.<sup>2</sup> Among the duties and responsibilities of the Director of Deacon Personnel are to:

1. Assist the bishop in his supervision of the spiritual and personal welfare of deacons and their families;<sup>3</sup>
2. Serve as the bishop’s representative in the implementation of post-ordination deacon formation;<sup>4</sup>
3. Oversee the three (3)-year program of ongoing formation for the newly ordained deacon;<sup>5</sup>
4. Be involved in the assignment of the deacon with the pastor or priest supervisor and with the deacon;
5. Conduct regular and comprehensive communication with the bishop on matters regarding individual deacons, as well as their families;<sup>6</sup>
6. Assist pastors of deacons or their priest supervisor in their annual review of diaconate ministry;
7. Assist the bishop in maintaining contact with and providing pastoral care to retired deacons and their families, as well as to deacon widowers, widows of deacons, and their families;<sup>7</sup>
8. Propose an annual budget to the Chief Financial Officer of the Diocese of Cheyenne for ongoing formation.

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<sup>2</sup> *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2003)*, 286.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid*, 287.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, 287.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid*, 251, see also: *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons/Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons (Vatican Congregations for Catholic Education and for the Clergy, 1998)*, no. 24.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*, 286.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, 73-74.

9. Chair the diaconal board, provided that the Bishop of Cheyenne has created said board.
10. Plan, coordinate, and evaluate ongoing formation if a diaconal board does not exist.

The Director of Deacon Personnel is bound to confidentiality regarding all information about deacons that he gains in the course of this ministry.

### III. DIACONAL BOARD:

The Bishop of Cheyenne may choose to create a diaconal board. If this board is created, it shall consist of the Bishop of Cheyenne or his delegate, the Director of Deacon Personnel, and four members appointed by the Bishop of Cheyenne; two (2) from the diaconal community (deacon, spouse, or widow), two (2) priests. Members of this board are bound to confidentiality. Among the duties and responsibilities of the diaconal board are to:<sup>8</sup>

1. Encourage a spirit of respect and support within the presbyteral and diaconal community;
2. Propose needed changes to the Directory Concerning Personnel Issues of Deacons of the Diocese of Cheyenne, specifying appropriate norms or policies—rights, obligations, and responsibilities—for deacons serving the Diocese of Cheyenne, the text of which is ultimately authorized by the bishop;<sup>9</sup>
3. Plan, coordinate, and evaluate the ongoing formation program;<sup>10</sup>
4. Advise the bishop, when asked, on possible assignments for deacons;<sup>11</sup>
5. Offer advice to the bishop, when asked, of service of a deacon beyond the age of seventy-five (75).<sup>12</sup>

### IV. INCARDINATION AND EXCARDINATION:

#### A. Incardination into the Diocese of Cheyenne:

Candidates for the diaconate for the Diocese of Cheyenne are incardinated into the Diocese of Cheyenne upon ordination.<sup>13</sup>

A deacon desiring to incardinate into the Diocese of Cheyenne must either present a letter from his diocesan bishop expressing the bishop's willingness to

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 290.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 291.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 103.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, 78.

excardinate him, should the Bishop of Cheyenne approve the deacon's incardination into the Diocese of Cheyenne, or present a letter from his appropriate superior granting permission for the deacon to be received *ad experimentum* for the service of the Diocese of Cheyenne.<sup>14</sup>

Ordinarily, the Bishop of Cheyenne will not consider a request for incardination into the Diocese of Cheyenne until the deacon has lived and ministered in the Diocese for a period of three (3) years. If the deacon lacks the appropriate level of formation, he will meet the requirements of the Diocese of Cheyenne prior to incardination. After having observed this prescription, the deacon who desires to be considered for incardination into the Diocese of Cheyenne, must petition in writing the Bishop of Cheyenne and present a letter of excardination from his bishop or an indult of departure from his superior.<sup>15</sup> If the incardination of the deacon presents an advantage to or fulfills the needs of the Diocese, the Bishop of Cheyenne will consider the petition. After receiving advice, the Bishop of Cheyenne will make his decision regarding the incardination of the petitioning deacon. The Bishop of Cheyenne will then inform the deacon in writing of his decision, and, if granting the request of the petitioning deacon for incardination, will issue a decree of incardination.

B. Excardination From the Diocese of Cheyenne:

A deacon considering petitioning for excardination from the Diocese of Cheyenne will need to find a bishop, institute of consecrated life, or society of apostolic life willing to accept him. A deacon seeking to incardinate into a different diocese is encouraged to seek permission to live and minister in the diocese where he is seeking incardination and will be given permission to do so by the Bishop of Cheyenne, unless the needs of the Diocese of Cheyenne prevent it or unless there is some other grave reason.<sup>16</sup> If requested, the Bishop of Cheyenne may also provide the deacon with a letter expressing the Bishop's willingness to excardinate the deacon should the new bishop be willing to incardinate the deacon and the deacon requests it. A deacon will be granted a letter of excardination from the Diocese of Cheyenne for a just cause, such as the benefit of the Church or the good of the deacon himself.

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<sup>14</sup> *Codex Iuris Canonici Auctoritate Ioannis Pauli PP. II Promulgatus [CIC]* (Vatican City: Libreria Edictrice Vaticana, 1989), cc. 693, 727, 743; translations from *Code of Canon Law – English, New English Translation*, Second printing, trans. Canon Law Society of America (Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America, 2012).

<sup>15</sup> See *CIC*, cc. 267 §1; 693; 727 §2; 743.

<sup>16</sup> See *CIC*, cc. 271.



V. ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Introduction:

The *National Directory* writes of the relationship that exists between the deacon and the diocesan bishop:

“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.”<sup>17</sup>

B. Letter of Appointment:

The Bishop of Cheyenne appoints the deacon to a specific assignment normally by means of an official letter of appointment.<sup>18</sup> The preparation of the letter of appointment will normally be made with the involvement of the deacon, the Director of Deacon Personnel, and the deacon’s designated pastor or priest supervisor.<sup>19</sup> Until the Bishop of Cheyenne allows it to be publicly announced, all parties are bound to confidentiality.

Pastors who have a deacon assigned to their parish must insure that the deacon is utilized in effective and ongoing ministry in accordance with his faculties. In such instance, the deacon should be viewed by the faith community as an integral part of the “pastoral team.”<sup>20</sup>

The Bishop of Cheyenne may assign a deacon to assist a priest entrusted with the pastoral care of one or several parishes. While the priest may not be in residence, it is to be clear that the priest has been entrusted with the *cura animarum* and that the deacon assists in this mandate.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> *National Directory*, 41.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, 42.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, 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, who must be a priest, should always be clearly stated in the letter of appointment signed by the diocesan bishop.”

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid*, 50.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, 51, additionally see *CIC* cc. 519, 517:1; also see *CIC* cc 517:2, DMLPD, no 41.

C. Assignment for Newly-Ordained:

Particular concern and sensitivity is to be shown to newly-ordained deacons in the transition from candidate formation to active diaconal ministry. Pastors or priest supervisors of newly-ordained deacons are called to provide guidance and assistance that “contributes to a collaboration based on mutual respect and dialogue, in a spirit of faith and fraternal charity.”<sup>22</sup> The Director of Deacon Personnel is to coordinate pastoral care for three (3) years to newly-ordained deacons. This is a time for ongoing formation and assistance to the deacon’s family.<sup>23</sup>

D. Changes of Assignment:

A new assignment may be requested in writing by the deacon, by the priest supervisor, or by the Director of Deacon Personnel. Additionally, the Bishop of Cheyenne may give a new assignment to a deacon at any time.

Conversation between the deacon, the Bishop of Cheyenne, the priest supervisor, and the Director of Deacon Personnel is recommended when the pastoral assignment of a deacon is changed, even if the deacon does not change residences. Care should be exercised to be as clear as possible in the letter of appointment to clearly delineate the duties and responsibilities of the deacon.

E. Accountability and Self-evaluation:

The deacon and the priest supervisor, based upon the letter of assignment, are to enter into a signed ministry agreement at least once per year that is to last no more than twelve (12) months (see Appendix A). Additionally, the priest supervisor is to write an evaluation of the ministry of the deacon once per year (see Appendix B). This evaluation is to be reviewed with the deacon and signed by both and then sent to the Director of Deacon Personnel. A copy of the evaluation will be retained in the permanent personnel file for ten (10) years before it is destroyed, unless it concerns a matter which requires permanent retention.

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<sup>22</sup> *National Directory*, 46, quoting DMLPD, no. 61.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*, 46.

F. Absence from Assignment:

1. Authorized Leave of Absence:

After discussion with the priest supervisor, a deacon who is planning to be absent from his assignment for a period of more than one (1) month for reasons including: the health and welfare of his family, employment needs, educational pursuits, military deployment, and other needs, must make a written request to the Director of Deacon Personnel. The Director of Deacon Personnel may seek clarification and input from the deacon and from the priest supervisor. The Director of Deacon Personnel will make a recommendation to the Bishop of Cheyenne regarding the request for a leave of absence from his assignment. The decision of the Bishop of Cheyenne will be communicated to the deacon, the priest supervisor, and the Director of Deacon Personnel.

2. Unauthorized Leave of Absence:

A deacon absent from his assignment without notifying his priest supervisor creates grave problems. If a deacon is absent for more than one (1) week from his assigned responsibilities, the priest supervisor is to contact the Director of Deacon Personnel. The Director of Deacon Personnel may advise the Bishop of Cheyenne as to the best solution in addressing this matter. The decision of the Bishop of Cheyenne will be communicated to the deacon, the priest supervisor, and the Director of Deacon Personnel.

G. Retired Deacons:

A retired deacon no longer has an appointment, but retains the faculties that are not linked to an appointment to a parish. He may still minister in whatever manner is acceptable to him and the pastor of the parish where he resides. A deacon is always an ordained minister and never retires from being a deacon. If he changes residence, he should inform the Director of Deacon Personnel and the pastor of both the parish he is leaving and the one in which he will reside. A retired deacon is still expected to participate in the annual deacon retreat and other deacon gatherings as he is able. A retired deacon is invited but not expected to be involved in other ongoing deacon formation.

## VI. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DEACON:

### A. Introduction:

The *National Directory* teaches of the nature of Holy Orders and the deacon:

“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.’<sup>24</sup> For this level of Holy Orders, Christ calls and the Church asks the bishop to ordain deacons to be consecrated witnesses to service.”<sup>25</sup>

It goes on to speak of the configuration of the deacon by writing:

“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’<sup>26</sup> 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.’”<sup>27</sup>

Therefore, a deacon’s conduct must always present the loving presence of Jesus to the world. He, along with the other ordained ministries of priest and bishop, are held to the highest levels of Christian faithfulness and integrity.

### B. Deacons and State of Life:

#### 1. Deacons and Holy Matrimony:

The majority of deacons in the Diocese of Cheyenne 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

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<sup>24</sup> Quoting *Catechism of the Catholic Church* no. 1570.

<sup>25</sup> *National Directory*, 28.

<sup>26</sup> Quoting DMLPD, no. 1.

<sup>27</sup> *National Directory*, 29, quoting DMLPD, no 23.

Matrimony.”<sup>28</sup> The call to faithfully live both the Sacrament of Matrimony and the Sacrament of Holy Orders can be a challenge to every deacon. “The married deacon must always remember that through his sacramental participation in both vocational sacraments, first in Matrimony and again in Holy Orders, he is challenged to be faithful to both. With integrity he must live out both sacraments in harmony and balance.”<sup>29</sup> The wife of a deacon should be included with her husband, when appropriate, in diocesan clergy and parish staff gatherings.

## 2. Deacons And Problems in Marriage:

A deacon or his wife is asked to request help early when experiencing a need or difficulty in marriage and family. Many people are prepared to offer pastoral care.<sup>30</sup> A deacon or his wife is never alone in their married commitment, and the pastor to whom they are entrusted, the Director of Deacon Personnel, and the Bishop of Cheyenne are all willing to provide support. Appropriate pastoral care will also be offered in the case of divorce to the deacon, his wife, and to their children.<sup>31</sup> Other members of the diaconal community are also encouraged to reach out and support a deacon and/or his wife who is struggling in marriage.

In the event that a deacon and his wife separate or divorce, the deacon is to notify the Bishop of Cheyenne, the Director of Deacon Personnel, and the pastor or priest supervisor. Following an evaluation by the Bishop of Cheyenne and the Director of Deacon Personnel a determination will be made whether the deacon should continue in active ministry at this time.

The deacon and wife are encouraged to continue to work for reconciliation and healing. Appropriate counseling services are encouraged for the deacon and wife. The deacon is reminded that Divine Law requires behavior appropriate to his marital and diaconal vows. In the event that the deacon is determined to be the culpable party and/or scandal is caused, appropriate canonical action will be taken.

## 3. Celibate Deacons:

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<sup>28</sup> *National Directory*, 66.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid*, 68.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid*, 244.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*, 76.

Celibacy for the sake of the Kingdom of God, following the teaching and example of Jesus, is a rich facet of Christian life.<sup>32</sup> The vocations to marriage and to celibacy are basic paths by which the baptized respond to the call of God. The examples of priests and of women and men in consecrated life show that celibacy opens people up to grace and transformation in Christ. Candidates preparing for ordination and their wives should receive catechesis on the vocations of marriage and celibacy to help them understand and live their vocations more fully. Married men are to be instructed before ordination that should their wives predecease them, they are committing themselves to live as celibate deacons. Unmarried men who are ordained deacons make a promise to live as celibates. Married and celibate deacons witness to one another a unity in the order of deacon lived out in complimentary ways. All deacons support widowed deacons in living out the celibate life.

An ordained deacon is prohibited from entering into marriage.<sup>33</sup> During formation, married men are informed of this reality and should be given some preparation for celibacy should their wives predecease them. A possible dispensation from this impediment might be sought from the Holy See.<sup>34</sup> A deacon considering a dispensation to marry again should contact the Director of Deacon Personnel.

C. Ongoing Formation for Permanent Deacons:

1. Introduction:

Intellectual formation of a deacon does not cease upon ordination, but is the call of every deacon throughout his life.<sup>35</sup> Deacons of the Diocese of Cheyenne are to be attentive to continuing their formation through regular attendance at seminars, classes, and other forms of learning.

2. Ongoing Intellectual, Pastoral, and Human Formation:

a. Institutes:

Deacons are required to attend the Diocesan Institutes held normally in September and January. A deacon involved in

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<sup>32</sup> Gospel of Matthew 19:12

<sup>33</sup> *CIC* cc.1087

<sup>34</sup> CDWDS, "Circular Letter to Diocesan Ordinaries and to Superiors General of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life," June 6, 1997, Prot. N. 263/7, 8; *Origins* 27 (1997) 171.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 248.

a secular profession may be excused with the consent of the Director of Deacon Personnel.

b. Days of Reflection:

Deacons are to attend the Days of Reflection which are to be scheduled by the Director of Deacon Personnel one (1) time per year. Wives are invited and strongly encouraged to attend the Days of Reflection with her husband. The Day of Reflection will serve to encourage diaconal fraternity, enable specific diaconal formation, and support deacons and wives in fruitful living of their state of life. A deacon may be excused from a day of reflection by the director. Topics for the Day of Reflection include: human, intellectual, spiritual, pastoral formation, married life, and family concerns specific to the needs of deacons.

c. Notification for Days of Reflection:

The Director of Deacon Personnel will notify priests who have been assigned to supervise deacons to ensure that the deacon is free from obligations to attend required formation events.

d. Spanish Formation:

Deacons should have the opportunity to learn an additional language, and are encouraged in the Diocese of Cheyenne to commit to the study of the Spanish Language.

3. Ongoing Spiritual Formation:

a. Introduction:

Deacons are reminded of the call to holiness that they have received in baptism, and, “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 state of life.”<sup>36</sup> The *National Directory* recommends several spiritual exercises to assist the deacon: frequent participation in the Eucharist, frequent Eucharistic adoration, regular reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, daily celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, shared prayer with the family, meditative prayer on the Scriptures, Marian devotion, regular spiritual direction, participation in an annual retreat, and other practices.<sup>37</sup>

b. Annual deacon retreat:

All deacons of the Diocese of Cheyenne are to attend the annual retreat for the deacons of the Diocese of Cheyenne. Under extraordinary circumstances a deacon may be excused with the consent of the Bishop of Cheyenne. Wives are invited and strongly encouraged to attend the annual retreat to grow their own spiritual lives and to continue to strengthen the Sacrament of Matrimony with her husband. A notification of excused consent will be forwarded from the Diocesan Bishop to the Director of Deacon Personnel. If a deacon desires to fulfill his retreat obligation by attending a retreat other than the retreat offered by the Diocese of Cheyenne, it must be approved by the Diocesan Bishop.

c. Prayer days and support groups:

Deacons should participate in regular spiritual days of prayer at least one (1) day per month. Deacons are encouraged to form support groups and to have regular spiritual direction.

4. Accountability and Self-Evaluation:

a. Plan of Ongoing Formation:

Deacons are to commit to a minimum of twenty five (25) hours of ongoing formation per year. They are to submit a written plan to the Director of Deacon Personnel that indicates their plan to achieve the minimum number of ongoing formation hours using Appendix D of this Directory. Deacons are able to count

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 246, quoting *Presbyterium Ordinis* no 45.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid 247.



instruction time for September Institute, January Institute, Days of Reflection, and recognized Church conferences.<sup>38</sup> Deacons are also able to count accredited coursework that impacts their ministry and reading that is done in preparation for teaching a course. A deacon is requested to attain the minimum of hours using at least two (2) different means of ongoing formation so as not to over-rely on only one form of formation.<sup>39</sup>

b. Self-evaluation:

Deacons are to complete a yearly self-evaluation and submit to the Director of Deacon Personnel. This is primarily an opportunity for the deacon to cooperate with the Holy Spirit in discerning the course of his ministry and formation. The Director of Deacon Personnel will retain the document for ten (10) years in the permanent file of the deacon. After ten (10) years the evaluation will be destroyed unless it concerns a matter which requires permanent retention.

c. Failure to Participate:

Deacons who do not notify the Director of Deacon Personnel prior to not attending required formational events will receive notification from the director in writing. Continued nonparticipation with legitimate requests from the director will result in the director notifying the Bishop of Cheyenne who will decide what steps are needed to ensure cooperation and full participation in the diaconal community.

D. Personal Health:

The maintenance of a deacon's health is his personal responsibility, and is a response to God's gift of life. He is strongly urged to exercise regularly and to eat a balanced diet to benefit himself and those to whom he ministers. He is strongly encouraged to have an annual physical and regular dental and eye examinations. A deacon who has been ill or who continues in office after he has reached his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday may be evaluated annually by a healthcare professional to ensure he has the proper physical and mental abilities to fulfill his duties. A deacon may be asked to undergo a psychological evaluation; and although he cannot be required

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<sup>38</sup> Retreat, Days of prayer, and support group meetings are not counted for the ongoing formation requirement.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid, 256.

to do so or to release the results to the Bishop of Cheyenne, he may freely and explicitly agree to undergo the testing and to release the results.

E. Attire and Address:

1. Attire:

Deacons are to wear the appropriate liturgical vestments (alb and stole, dalmatic, or cope if available and called for by the liturgical norms) when serving in the liturgy, celebrating sacraments, or leading prayer. As a general practice, a deacon will dress in a manner that reflects the professional attire of others in the local community when he is engaged in ministry.<sup>40</sup> In the Diocese of Cheyenne, a deacon is to wear normal attire unless specified differently by the bishop. Examples might include ministry in an incarceration facility, hospital, military base or other circumstances where clerical garb is expected.

2. Address:

The appropriate form of address for a permanent deacon in all forms is the title "Deacon."<sup>41</sup>

F. Other Concerns:

Deacons are members of the parish pastoral council by law and should attend council meetings as often as possible.<sup>42</sup>

Deacons may, with permission of the Bishop of Cheyenne, or in an emergency, preside at the Sunday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest.<sup>43</sup>

The widows of permanent deacons deserve the pastoral care of the Church, as well. Because of the unique bonds that are forged by virtue of her husband's

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<sup>40</sup> Regarding attire, the *National Directory* writes, "The Code of Canon Law does not oblige permanent deacons to wear an ecclesiastical garb. Further, because they are prominent and active in secular professions and society, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops specifies that permanent deacons should resemble the lay faithful in dress and matters of lifestyle." (89, referencing *CIC* cc. 288)

<sup>41</sup> *National Directory*, 88.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid*, 51, see also *CIC* cc. 536.

<sup>43</sup> *National Directory*, 51.

ordination, widows of deacons ought to be supported and remain connected to the diaconal community through personal contact, invitation to annual retreats, and other functions.<sup>44</sup>

Deacons are bound by the Diocese of Cheyenne Employee Handbook, where appropriate.

## VII. REMUNERATION OF DEACONS:

### A. Introduction:

The deacon is responsible to provide for the needs of his family using income derived from employment in a secular profession, the church, or other suitable means.<sup>45</sup> Deacons are expected to place a portion of their income aside for their retirement. Deacons are also obliged to satisfy the legal requirements for Social Security benefits or a comparable program.<sup>46</sup>

### B. Full-time and part-time employment:

The deacon in full-time employment by the diocese, parish, or church institution is to receive remuneration commensurate with the salaries and benefits provided to the lay members of the staff for that particular occupation.<sup>47</sup> These benefits include full payment of health insurance premiums and waiver of 403(b) waiting period. In addition to full-time employment, the deacon who is employed by the diocese, parish, or other church institution on a part-time basis should be provided with salary and benefits that are justly commensurate to their work.

### C. Ministry expenses:

The deacon is to be reimbursed by the institution to which he is assigned for all legitimate expenses incurred in his ministry.<sup>48</sup> These expenses (which may include mileage, registration fees, food, and reasonable accommodations) include the annual deacon retreat, Diocesan Institutes, spiritual direction, and days of reflection. The deacon will receive reimbursement for mileage from the institution to which he is assigned for all travel for parish or institutional business,

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 74.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 94.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, 95.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid, 96.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

deanery business, common diocesan business, spiritual direction, a monthly prayer day and a monthly deacon support group meeting.

D. Funding for formation:

If a deacon wishes to participate in formation opportunities in addition to those provided by the Diocese of Cheyenne, funding may be requested from the Director of Deacon Personnel. Additional funds may be available from the Wyoming Catholic Ministries Foundation.

E. Providence of Diaconal Vesture:

Every parish or institution in the Diocese of Cheyenne which regularly receives the scheduled liturgical ministry of a deacon should have a diaconal stole and dalmatic in violet, white, red, and green for his use.

VIII. RETIREMENT OF DEACONS:

A. Age of Retirement:

Deacons are requested to submit a letter of resignation when they reach their 75<sup>th</sup> birthday, but may submit a letter when they reach their 70<sup>th</sup> birthday. Six (6) months prior to his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday a deacon must give the Bishop of Cheyenne a notice of resignation or a letter expressing his desire to continue in service. A deacon who continues in office after he has reached his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday may be requested to undergo an annual evaluation by a healthcare professional to ensure that he has the proper physical and mental ability to fulfill his duties. The Bishop of Cheyenne may also request advice from the deacon's pastor, the Director of Deacon Personnel, and the diaconal board.

B. Term of Service:

Following ordination, a deacon is requested to offer at least ten (10) years of ordained service as a deacon before retiring from active ministry.

C. Notice of Resignation:

A deacon is requested to give six (6) months' notice of resignation of office to the Bishop of Cheyenne. A deacon can submit a letter of resignation prior to his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday for health reasons, disability, or for the good of his family.

If he deems it necessary, the Bishop of Cheyenne may for sufficient reason request a letter of resignation from any deacon after consultation with the priest supervisor of the deacon, the Director of Deacon Personnel, and the diaconal board if it exists.

D. Retired Deacons:

A deacon who has resigned from office retains the ordinary faculties granted generally by the Code of Canon Law, and more particularly by the bishop and may continue to exercise his order, with permission of the proper pastoral authority. Resignation of office does not affect the good standing of a deacon in the Diocese of Cheyenne.

A retired deacon and his wife, or his widow, may receive reimbursement for mileage and costs from the Diocese of Cheyenne for all travel for Diocesan Institutes, days of reflection, and the annual deacon retreat. A retired deacon may additionally request reimbursement for mileage and expenses for travel for deanery business, common diocesan business, spiritual direction, a monthly prayer day, and a monthly deacon support group meeting. The retired deacon or his widow is asked to consult the Director of Deacon Personnel regarding these reimbursements.

A retired deacon is strongly encouraged to maintain and deepen a spirit of prayer appropriate for his state in life.

IX. DEATH OF A DEACON:

A. Arrangements prior to death:

The deacon is to provide the Chancellor of the Diocese of Cheyenne a letter, separate from his Last Will and Testament, outlining his desires concerning funeral and burial arrangements and naming all persons to be contacted in the event of his death. In addition to designating the Scripture readings, music, and other aspects of the liturgy, this letter is to specify who is to preach at the Vigil Service and Funeral Mass.

In anticipation of death, the deacon should make proper arrangements for the welfare of his family. The deacon is to compose a Last Will and Testament. A sealed duplicate copy and sealed copy of any changes may be sent to the Chancellor of the Diocese of Cheyenne.

B. Upon the death of a deacon:

The family or pastor of the deacon is asked to notify the Chancellor of the Diocese of Cheyenne as soon as possible of the death of the deacon.

Upon the death of a deacon, the family with pastoral assistance shall make funeral arrangements. These should take into account the Christian community's need to honor the work and ministry of the deacon.

C. Funeral Liturgy:

The clear preference of the Church is for the body of the deceased to be present for the funeral rites.<sup>49</sup> Deacons, therefore, are discouraged from choosing cremation, and if cremation is desired, for cremation to take place after the Funeral Mass.<sup>50</sup> The deceased deacon may be vested in an alb, stole and dalmatic.

The Bishop of Cheyenne will normally be principal celebrant at the Funeral Liturgies of deceased deacons.<sup>51</sup> It is the custom of deacons of the Diocese of Cheyenne to make every effort to be present at the funeral of a brother deacon. The Vigil Service and Funeral Mass are to be celebrated in the parish church.<sup>52</sup> The Vigil Service is normally to be celebrated as Evening Prayer with the Rite of Reception of the Body at the Church.<sup>53</sup> Where possible, an all-night vigil with the body in the church following Evening Prayer is preferred. All presbyters of the Diocese of Cheyenne are encouraged to concelebrate the Funeral Mass, unless otherwise restricted from doing so. The Rite of Committal follows at the cemetery, with the Bishop of Cheyenne presiding and assisted by the appropriate ministers.

D. Pastoral care of the family:

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<sup>49</sup> *Order of Christian Funerals*, n. 413.

<sup>50</sup> *Order of Christian Funerals*, n. 418.

<sup>51</sup> *Ceremonial of Bishops*, n. 821.

<sup>52</sup> See *CIC*, c. 1177 §1; *Order of Christian Funerals*, nn. 55; 154; 369.

<sup>53</sup> See *Order of Christian Funerals*, nn. 54; 82-86; 348-349; 351-372; 386-395.

The diaconal community and the Diocese of Cheyenne must take special care for the ongoing spiritual support of the deacon's spouse and family. The surviving spouse should be regularly included in ongoing social and spiritual activities of the diaconal community.

## APPENDIX A: Sample Ministry Agreement

This ministry agreement will be in effect for \_\_\_\_ months from date: \_\_\_\_\_. It is agreed between Deacon \_\_\_\_\_ and Father \_\_\_\_\_.

Deacon commits to the following ministries of charity:

Deacon commits to the following ministries of the Word:

Deacon commits to the following liturgical ministries:

Additional ministries:

Additional considerations and commitments between the institution and the deacon:



APPENDIX B: Sample Evaluation between Deacon and Priest Supervisor

Deacon: \_\_\_\_\_

Priest Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

What blessings has this deacon brought to his assignment in the last year?

What strengths do you see the deacon using in his ministry?

In what areas do you believe the deacon is being called to improve?

What resources are you committing to assist the deacon in these areas?

Any additional concerns:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date:

APPENDIX C: Sample Self-Evaluation of deacon.

What is your current assignment?

Describe your current ministry:

Do you currently have a Signed Ministry Agreement with your priest supervisor? When was it reviewed?

What about your ministry as a deacon is a source of blessing for you?

What about your ministry as a deacon is a source of suffering for you?

How do you act as a servant of charity:

How would you like to improve in the next year:

How do you act as a servant of the Word:

How would you like to improve in the next year:

How do you act as a servant of the Liturgy:

How would you like to improve in the next year:

How does your ministry interface with social justice needs in the larger community?

How does your ministry as a deacon affect your employment?

How would you describe your relationship with the bishop?

How would you describe your relationship with your priest supervisor?

How often do you meet with your priest supervisor?

Do you have a spiritual director? How often do you meet?

How has your deacon ministry been a blessing for your marriage and family relationship(s)?

How has your deacon ministry been a source of suffering for your marriage and family relationship(s)?

APPENDIX D: Sample Ongoing Formation Commitment

Please indicate the means by which you plan to achieve the minimum requirement of twenty-five (25) hours of ongoing formation for the Diocese of Cheyenne in this next year. In an attempt to promote balance in formational approaches, please plan to achieve your minimum number of hours using at least two (2) areas of formation. Please sign and return to the Director of Deacon Personnel.

DAYS OF REFLECTION:

Day of reflection: (can count as many as six (6) hours) Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
Day of reflection: (can count as many as six (6) hours) Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
Christm Day of Reflection: (can count as many as four (4) hours) Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

INSTITUTES/CONFERENCES:

September Institute: (Can count two (2) hours for Tuesday and Thursday each and up to eight (8) hours Wednesday) Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
January Institute: (Can count two (2) hours for Tuesday and Thursday each and up to eight (8) hours Wednesday) Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
Church Conference (Can count up to ten (10) hours) Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
Conference Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics: \_\_\_\_\_

PERSONAL READING FOR TEACHING A COURSE: Approx. Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
Books: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours: \_\_\_\_\_

ACCREDITED COURSEWORK: Dates: \_\_\_\_\_  
Educational Institute: \_\_\_\_\_ Hours: \_\_\_\_\_  
Course Name:  
Credits:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Number of Hours Commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

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