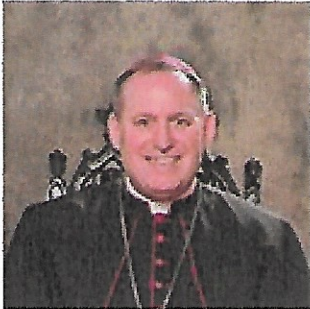


Diocese of Paterson  
Office of the Bishop



*Dear Brothers in Christ,*

*Thank you for your interest in the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Paterson. This pamphlet will give you some information to help with your discernment.*

*The deacon has a unique calling and his response to that call acknowledges God's special design in his life and, indeed, in the life of his family if he is a husband and father. The call is not away from the world but rather into it. The deacon, a symbol of service, makes a difference through his dedication and the manner and form in which he publicly responds through ministry. He is willing to take risks and to re-define his life by selfless service to others who, with him, share the enterprise of life. Yet, as a man of God, the deacon must be a man of prayer and reflection, open to pondering his experiences in the light of his faith.*

*Please contact the Office of the Permanent Diaconate for added information.*

*Yours in Christ,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin J. Sweeney". The signature is written in a cursive style with a cross at the beginning.

*Most Rev. Kevin J. Sweeney*

*Bishop of Paterson*

## **CRITERIA / QUALIFICATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO THE DIACONATE**

The following conditions should be evident in one who is considered a prospective candidate for the diaconate:

- Between the ages of 31 and 59 at the time of application.
- Adequate physical and psychological health.
- Personal faith commitment over a number of years.
- A faithful, stable marriage and family life. If single, a stable, settled life.
- Written consent of wife.
- A free acceptance of conditions of continued celibacy for single candidates and no re-marriage after ordination in the event of his spouse's death.
- Evidence of ministry/service in parish (minimum 5 years).
- Evidence of good relationships with others outside the home especially on the job.
- Evidence of stable employment and financial security.
- Openness to spiritual, theological and ministerial formation.
- Bachelor's degree and learning capability to assimilate study material and fulfill academic requirements leading to a Master's Degree in Theology. (Exceptions may be made for non-degree applicants who have other outstanding qualifications.)
- Ability to make time for formation without detriment to quality time with family or interference with work schedule.
- Demonstrated willingness to invest oneself in formation (commitment).