

# **THE CANDIDATE**

## **HANDBOOK**

**2011- 2012**

Diaconate Formation Program  
Archdiocese of New York

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# Diaconate Formation Program

## Archdiocese of New York

### Introduction

Dear Candidate and spouse,

The 2011-2012 Candidate Handbook assists you in your journey to the Sacred Order of Deacon. Unlike the handbooks in the past, this handbook introduces the *Ratio* (the Vatican document issued through the Congregations of Clergy and Catholic Education in 1999) and the National Directory for the formation and ministry of permanent deacons issued by the USCCB in 2004.

You will make a preliminary commitment to service (*diakonia*) in the church when you are admitted as a Candidate. During the Candidate Path you will be installed as a Reader who proclaims the good news to the parish community. Likewise, during your fourth year of formation, you will be installed as an Acolyte to serve at the altar. The experiences you will have during formation in these two ministries will prepare you well to be a minister of word and altar. However, your vocational goal is to be a minister of charity/justice which requires that you invest mind, heart, and spirit to service. It is in this ministry that you will find true joy and peace because you will be an *altus Christus* to all those you serve. Jesus came not to be served but to serve and to sacrifice Himself on the cross for love of you. We in turn have the privilege and grace to extend to our brothers and sisters that same love and concern that Jesus showed us by our life of service/charity.

The pastoral role of the deacon in the church today is a role that is not often seen or understood by the laity in the church today. The deacon's faithful dedication to the People of God through pastoral outreach balances the known roles of the deacon as a minister of Word and Sacrament that often identify the deacon in a parish community. For this reason, both aspirants and candidates share a common responsibility to nurture a love for pastoral ministry. They are to dedicate at least 2 hours per week or 60 hours per formation year to pastoral outreach.

***Specifically during the Candidate Path, the man in formation is to become a minister to those homebound, in nursing homes, or in hospitals (Year III); and finally a minister to those who are terminally ill or in hospice care (Year IV). The pastoral outreach ministries assigned to Candidates are to assist them to become compassionate, caring, and sensitive individuals who learn to journey with their brother and sister as they face life's challenges.***

Through your pastoral ministry and the knowledge you acquired through theological studies, you are best able to give witness to the gospel message by word and example. The challenge for you is to sustain a daily prayer life that includes *Lectio Divina* so that from prayer you are able to bear witness to Christ who came not to be served, but to serve his brothers and sisters.

We pray that all who enter the Candidate Path discover in this handbook a helpful guide as they discern their vocation to follow Jesus, the servant.

Sincerely yours in Christ

Deacon Anthony Cassaneto

Deacon Anthony P. Cassaneto, Ph.D.  
Director of Formation

**N.B. *The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States provides these insights regarding the Candidate Path:***

**Paragraph 204.** “The candidate path in diaconal formation is the occasion for continued discernment of a diaconal vocation and immediate preparation for ordination.”

**Paragraph 205.** “**Readiness for ordination is assessed annually** by both the candidate and formation personnel to ascertain what level of achievement the candidate has reached in his understanding of his diaconal vocation, its responsibilities, and its obligations; his growth in the spiritual life; his competency in required diaconal knowledge and skills; his practical experience in pastoral ministry; and his witness of human and affective maturity. If he is married, an appraisal of his wife’s readiness and consent is also to be made.”

In a Circular Letter directed to diocesan ordinaries on assessing the readiness of candidates for ordination, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments recalls that “St. Paul’s admonition remains true for the Church today, as it did in his own time: ***Do not be hasty in the laying-on of hands.***”

**Paragraph 206.** “Regarding the precise number of hours for lectures, seminars, and related educational activities specified in the *Ratio*, the objective is to guarantee the planning and implementation of an integral and substantive program of formation that adequately prepares a candidate to represent the Church as a deacon. A substantive program includes not only class preparation, participation, and attendance, but also seminars, workshops, field education projects, theological reflection, shared opportunities for spiritual growth (e.g. liturgical celebrations and prayer, spiritual conferences, retreats), individual spiritual direction, and other formation experiences.”

**Paragraph 209.** “To create an environment conducive to adult Christian formation, **the director of formation should prepare a candidate handbook** that details the components of the program; provides the rationale, criteria, and guidance for assessments, especially regarding readiness for institution into the ministries of lector and acolyte, and ultimately, for ordination to the diaconate; and clearly delineates the expectations and responsibilities of the candidate, including the wife of a married candidate. This handbook is to be approved by the bishop.”

**SECTION 1**

**THE DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM  
Archdiocese of New York**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The Diaconate Formation Program, a small, caring community where the dignity of the individual is valued, provides a four-year formation that integrates the human with the spiritual, intellectual, pastoral and diaconal dimensions.

Through prayer, study and the grace of the Holy Spirit, the aspirant/candidate undergoes a transformation of heart and mind as he prepares to be a servant-leader (*diakonos*) of Word, Altar, and Charity to the People of God in the Archdiocese of New York.

**THE DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM**  
**Archdiocese of New York**  
*A Newly Ordained Diaconal Profile*

The aspirant begins formation in a small, intimate, caring environment where the dignity of the individual is valued. He actively participates in a four-year formation program that integrates the human with the spiritual, intellectual, pastoral and diaconal dimensions so that at the end of the four-year formation program the newly ordained deacon has:

strengthened his prayer, meditative, and sacramental life through his faithful recitation of the Divine Office, the daily use of *Lectio Divina*, and his attendance at sacred liturgies as often as possible

committed himself to spiritual direction throughout his post ordination ministerial life

acquired a strong foundation in scripture, liturgy, dogma, moral and pastoral theology

witnessed the Gospel values in his words and deeds by his outreach to the poor and marginalized

became an evangelizer to people of all ages, of every ethnic / racial background

become a compassionate, caring pastoral leader as he outreaches to those in hospitals, nursing homes, and under hospice care

acquired pastoral skills so that he can resolve human conflict by peaceful solutions

grown ever closer to Mary, Mother of God, whose life of service is a model for all aspirants and candidates

and received permission from his informed spouse who is well aware of the impact diaconal ministry may have on her and their family life.

**THE DIACONATE OFFICE**  
**Archdiocese of New York**

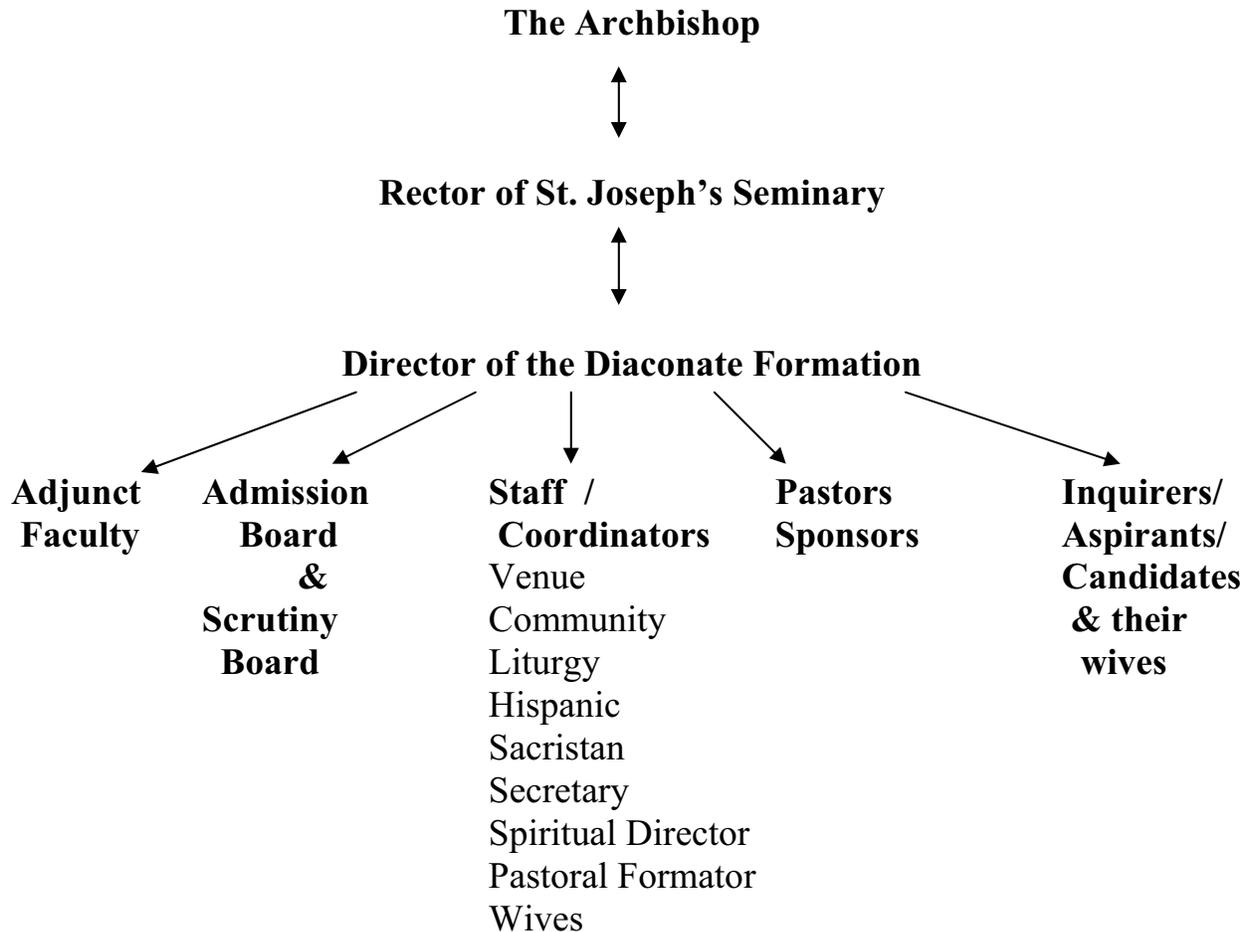
**MISSION STATEMENT**

Committed to the pastoral ministry begun by Jesus, the deacon is ordained to the Ministry of Service (*diakonia*). He is a living icon of Jesus, the Servant (*diakonos*), who has come not to be served, but to serve the People of God in Word, Altar, and Charity.

He is, moreover, to be a sign of Christ's love (*agape*) to the adolescent and young adult; to those seeking the truth; to the married the single; and those consecrated to the Lord; to the infirm; to the elderly; to prisoners; and to all who are seeking to develop a closer relationship with the Lord.

The deacon's ministry is always in collaboration with the presbyterate and in obedience to the Ordinary of the Archdiocese of New York.

**SECTION 2**  
**DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE**



The **Archbishop** is the chief administrative officer of the Archdiocese and is ultimately responsible for the welfare of the souls in his Archdiocese. The Archbishop's involvement permeates every phase of religious and clerical life of the Archdiocese.

The **Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary** answers directly to the Archbishop and oversees the formation of seminarians, as well as the formation of aspirants and candidates in the Diaconate Formation Program. He recommends to the Archbishop candidates who are qualified, in the judgment of those responsible for their formation, to advance to the Priesthood or to the Sacred Order of Deacon.

The **Director of Formation** *"has the task of coordinating the different people involved in the formation, of supervising and inspiring the whole work of education in its various*

*dimensions, and of maintaining contacts with the families of married aspirants and candidates and with their communities of origin. . ."*[*Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium*, § 21].

The Director meets regularly with the Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary to confer with him regarding changes in curriculum and staff; the assessment of aspirants and candidates; and the establishment and management of the Diaconate formation program budget.

The **Spiritual Director** is chosen by each inquirer, aspirant, and candidate and must be approved by the Bishop (or his delegate). His task is that of discerning the workings of the Spirit in the soul of those called and, at the same time, of accompanying and supporting their ongoing conversion; he must also give concrete suggestions to help bring about an authentic diaconal spirituality and offer effective incentives for acquiring the associated virtues. Because of this, inquirers, aspirants, and candidates are invited to entrust themselves for spiritual direction only to priests of proven virtue, equipped with a good theological culture, of profound spiritual experience, of marked pedagogical sense, of strong and refined ministerial sensibility. [Ratio, §23].

The **Pastor** *"is called to offer to the one who has been entrusted to him a lively ministerial communion and to introduce him to and accompany him in those pastoral activities which he considers most suitable; he will be careful to make a periodic check on the work done with the candidate himself and to communicate the progress of the placement to the director of formation"* [*Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconorum...*, § 24].

The **Pastoral Formator** is specifically responsible to supervise each aspirant and candidate in the field. A practical internship is provided for each aspirant and candidate to permit him to meet in the field what he has learned in his study. It must be gradual, tailored to the individual and under continual supervision. Care is to be taken that the aspirant and candidates be actively introduced into the pastoral activity of the diocese and that they have periodic sharing of experiences with deacons already involved in the ministry.

They are to be helped to be strongly aware of their missionary identity and prepared to undertake the proclamation of the truth also to non-Christians, particularly those belonging to their own people.

In the wide sense, pastoral formation coincides with spiritual formation: it is formation for an ever greater identification with the *diakonia* of Christ. (*Ratio*, §85, 86, 87, 88)

The **Adjunct Faculty** *"contribute in a relevant way to the formation of the future deacons. In fact by teaching the sacrum depositum held by the Church, they nourish the faith of the aspirants/candidates and qualify them to be teachers of the People of God. . ."* (*Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconorum...*, § 25).

### **SECTION 3**

#### **Administration and Adjunct Faculty 2011-2012**

The Most Reverend Gerald Walsh, D.D., Rector

Deacon Anthony P. Cassaneto, Ph.D., Director

#### **Administrative Staff:**

Deacon John Barone, Poughkeepsie coordinator/adjunct faculty  
Mrs. Gabriela Cassaneto, M.S., Attendance and wives' program,  
Deacon Vincent Laurato, M.A., Spiritual Director-Dunwoodie /adjunct faculty  
Deacon William Mueller, M.A., M.S., adjunct faculty,  
Deacon Thomas Nepl, Poughkeepsie coordinator/adjunct faculty  
Deacon Frank Orlando, J.D. M.A. Spiritual Direction  
Deacon Joaquim Pereira, liturgical music /adjunct faculty

#### **Adjunct Faculty: St. Joseph's Seminary venue, Yonkers, N.Y.**

Rev. Lorenzo Ato, M.Div., Dogma  
Dr. Enrique Aguilar, D.S.S., Scripture (Hispanic)  
Mr. Juan Blanchard, M.A., Scripture  
Rev. Francis Corry, M.A., Church History  
Mr. Oscar Cruz, Catechetical Office--Faith Formation  
Sr. Joan Curtin, C.N.D., M.A., Catechetical Director  
Mrs. Giovanna Czander, Ph.D., Scripture  
Mr. Thomas Dobbins, J.D., Social Justice  
Rev. Msgr. John Gallagher, Ph.D., Pastoral Counseling,  
Rev. Msgr. Neil Graham, M.A., (Pastoral Spanish) Dunwoodie  
Mr. George Horton, J.D., Social Justice  
Rev. Paul LeBlanc, M.A. Spirituality  
Rev. James Loughran, S.A., Ecumenism  
Fr. Michael Martine, JCL, Canon Law  
Mr. Edward Mechmann, M.A., Christian anthropology  
Rev. John T. Monaghan, M.A., Homiletics  
Mr. Robert Garrison, J.D., Moral Theology  
Rev. Stephen Norton, M.A., M Div. Spirituality  
Dr. Jennifer Pascual, Ph.D., Liturgical Music  
Rev. S. Niranyin, Ph.D., Rodrigo, Ecumenism  
Rev. Kenneth Smith, S.T.L., Canon Law, Moral Theology (Hispanic)  
Rev. Msgr. James Turro, Ph.D., Scripture  
Rev. James Villa, O.F.M., M.A., Scripture

#### **Adjunct Faculty: Our Lady of Lourdes venue, Poughkeepsie**

Ms. Patricia Bell, Spirituality  
Mrs. Domenica Bellacicco, M.A., Scripture  
Deacon Thomas Cornell, M.A., Social Justice  
Fr. Francis D'Amodio, O. Carm. Spirituality  
Mrs. Karen D'Anselmi, M.A., Dogmatic Theology  
Mrs. Linda Fitzsimmons, M.A. Spirituality  
Mrs. Jean Gallo, M.A., RCIA  
Br. John Nash, Ph.D., Pastoral Counseling  
Fr. Dennis Nikolic, M.Div. Church History  
Deacon Victor Salamone, M.A., Church History

**SECTION 4**  
**DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM**  
**Formation Team Positions and Responsibilities**

POSITION TITLE: **DIRECTOR OF THE FORMATION PROGRAM**

**I. POSITION CONCEPT**

The Director is responsible for the spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation of aspirants/candidates in the Archdiocese of New York.

**II. POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES**

**A. COLLABORATION**

1. The Director meets regularly with the Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary to update him on faculty and staff changes, on policy revisions as well as curriculum changes; to review monthly calendar events and activities; and to discuss issues and concerns that affect the smooth operation of the formation program.

2. The Director conducts monthly staff meetings from September through June.

3. The Director meets with faculty and staff in September to review the calendar, faculty and staff handbook, and to update the members on new directives, changes, or developments in the formation program since the last meeting.

4. The Director meets with the pastors of the aspirants/candidates annually at St. Joseph's Seminary to update them on new directives, to encourage them to engage the aspirant/candidate in the pastoral life of the parish, and to provide an opportunity for pastors to also meet and dialogue with the formation staff.

**B. ADMISSION PROCESS**

1. The Director schedules Information Nights during the Fall for pastors.

2. The Director corresponds with all applicants and reviews all documentation and recommendations received from the applicants.

3. The Director establishes an Admission Board, meets with the members of the Admission Board in January to discuss interview and evaluation procedures, establishes interview teams and an interview calendar.

4. The Director schedules applicants and their wives for an interview with the Admission Board.

5. The Director periodically meets with the psychologist to review the psychological testing process and establish a calendar for psychological testing. If the applicant is approved by the Board, the Director then schedules the applicant for psychological testing. The results of the psychological evaluation are sent to the Director.

6. After a careful review of all documentation, the Director sends a summary of the applicant's interview with the Admission Board, the results of the psychological testing, and his recommendation to the Rector.

7. The Director prepares letters of acceptance, non-acceptance, or postponement for the Rector's signature.

**DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM**  
**Formation Team Positions and Responsibilities**

POSITION TITLE: **DIRECTOR OF THE FORMATION PROGRAM**

**C. CURRICULUM**

1. The Director is the curriculum coordinator and academic dean of the formation program.
2. The Director is responsible for the formation records of the aspirants/candidates; and for keeping an updated evaluation on each aspirant and candidate.
3. The Director is responsible to send annual reports to Archdiocesan agencies, the National Diaconate Office, and the Bishops' Committee on the Diaconate.

**D. EVALUATION**

1. The Director is responsible to annually collect evaluations from staff, candidates, spouses, and pastors. Each semester faculty members submit their academic evaluation to the Director.
2. The Director submits an annual evaluation of aspirants/candidates to the Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary.

**E. BUDGET**

1. The Director establishes the annual budget.

**F. SPIRITUAL/LITURGICAL/PASTORAL ACTIVITIES**

1. The Director is responsible to coordinate days of formation, retreats, liturgical assignments, ministry days, the pastoral care outreach, and diaconal ordination.

**G. STAFF**

1. The Director assesses the personnel needs of the formation program. He submits the names of potential faculty and staff to the Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary for approval.
2. The Director supervises and evaluates the performance of staff members.

**RELATIONSHIPS**

- > The Director reports to the Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary.
- > The Director collaborates with staff, faculty, and pastors.
- > The Director collaborates with the Hispanic coordinator regarding course offerings and adjunct faculty.
- > The Director meets periodically with aspirants/candidates.

**DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM**  
**Formation Team Positions and Responsibilities**  
POSITION TITLE: **COORDINATOR OF A VENUE**

**I. POSITION CONCEPT**

The Coordinator is responsible to supervise the diaconate formation program at his assigned venue - St. Joseph's Seminary, Dunwoodie or Our Lady of Lourdes, Poughkeepsie, or St. Joseph-by-the-Sea, Staten Island.

**II POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The Coordinator monitors a candidate's progress and supervises personnel at the venue. He will work with aspirants/candidates who are experiencing job or home conflicts; who lack sanctuary poise to the Liturgical Coordinator, and who experiencing overall formation difficulties to the Director.

2. The Coordinator meets with the Director and staff to review policies and procedures regarding admission of aspirants, evaluation of aspirants/candidates, reception of ministries; to establish an annual calendar of events; and to plan staff and faculty meetings.

3. The Coordinator attends monthly staff meetings, formation days, ministry ceremonies, and ordination to the Diaconate. He also attends the annual retreat of candidates.

4. The Coordinator is a liaison between the Director and the adjunct faculty; and a member of the evaluation panel that conducts semester evaluations.

5. The Coordinator distributes course evaluation forms to the faculty at the end of each semester; and collects the attendance folders each semester and submits them to the Diaconate Office.

6. The Coordinators at Our Lady of Lourdes, Poughkeepsie, and St. Joseph-by-the-Sea, Staten Island, conduct liturgical pastoral workshops. They also prepare the aspirants for the reception of candidacy.

7. The Coordinator at St. Joseph's Seminary is responsible to maintain a record of those candidates and wives who eat in the refectory on days of recollection, or on a regular class night; and the collection of money.

8. The Coordinator of each venue is to keep track of those who cannot attend a Saturday formation day; assignment to the aspirant/candidate a reflection paper based on the material covered during the conferences; and collect the assignment, comment on its content and return it to the Diaconate Formation Office for filing.

9. The Coordinator is available to the Director for ad hoc assignments, for example, serves on the Admission Board.

10. The Coordinator serves at the discretion of the Director to meet the needs of the program to the extent the budget allows.

**RELATIONSHIPS**

> The Coordinator reports to the Director.

> The Coordinator works collaboratively with other formation team members.

*A Reflection*

**What will they say... about you?**

It will sound strange to say this, but it is nonetheless a fact:

The most significant thing  
that can be said of Mary  
is that she gave in.

She gave in to God.

Mary bent her will to God's will  
in all that she said and did.

*"I am the Lord's servant. May it  
happen to me as you have said."*

Luke 1: 38

When they come to tell your story,  
your storytellers may have some  
remarkable things to say about you.

They may say you were:

- . a hard worker;
- . an effective manager
- . a brilliant student,
- . a loving parent.

But, by far,  
the most important thing they could say  
is that you revered God's will  
in all you said and did --  
that you gave in to God!

by Rev. Msgr. James Tuno, Ph.D.

## SECTION 5 THE OFFICE OF THE DEACON

### **Historical Highlights**

*"For the nurturing and constant growth of the people of God, Christ the Lord instituted in the Church a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole body."*<sup>1</sup>

From the apostolic age, the Diaconate has had a clearly outstanding position among these ministries, and it has always been held in great honor by the Church. Explicit testimony of this is given by the Apostle Paul both in his Letter to the Philippians 1:1 (*circa* AD 60-62), in which he sends his greetings not only to the bishops, but also to the deacons, and in the First Letter to Timothy 3:8-13 (*circa* AD 65), in which he illustrates the qualities and virtues that deacons must have in order to be worthy of their ministry.

In the same way, deacons must be respectable men whose word can be trusted, moderate in the amount of wine they drink and with no squalid greed for money. They must be conscientious believers in the mystery of the faith. They are to be examined first, and only admitted to serve as deacon if there is nothing against them. In the same way, women must be respectable, not gossips but sober and quite reliable. Deacons must not have been married more than once, and must be men who manage their children and families well. Those of them who carry out their duties well as deacons will earn a high standing for themselves and be rewarded with great assurance in their work for the faith in Christ Jesus.

Moreover in the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, commonly called the *Didache* (*circa* AD 70 or 90) we read, "...You must, then, elect for yourselves bishops and deacons who are a credit to the Lord, men who are gentle, generous, faithful, and well tried. For their ministry to you is identical with that of the prophets and teachers. You must not, therefore, despise them, for along with the prophets and teachers they enjoy a place of honor among you."<sup>2</sup>

St. Ignatius of Antioch, martyred *circa* AD 106, declared that the office of the deacon is nothing other than "the ministry of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before all ages and has been manifested in the final time."<sup>3</sup> He also made the following observation: "The deacons too,

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<sup>1</sup> Vatican II, *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* #18.

<sup>2</sup> *Didache* XV, 1,2; Richardson: *Early Christian Fathers* 1, p. 178.

<sup>3</sup> *Ad Magnesios*, VI, 1; Funk, *Patres Apostolici* 1, p. 235.

who are ministers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, should please all in every way; for they are not servants of food and drink, but ministers of the Church of God."<sup>4</sup>

Correspondingly show the deacon respect. They represent Jesus Christ, just as the bishop has the role of the Father, and the presbyters are like God's council and an apostolic band. You cannot have a church without these."<sup>5</sup>

Finally, St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna (born AD 69/70; martyred AD 155/156), in his Letter to the Philippians stated, "...the deacons should be blameless before his righteousness, as servants of God and Christ and not of men; not slanderers, or double-tongued; not lovers of money; temperate in all matters; compassionate, careful, living according to the truth of the Lord, who became "a servant of all."<sup>6</sup>

The first four centuries (AD 100 - AD 300), or from Ignatius of Antioch to Gregory the Great, are called the Golden Age of the Diaconate. It was during this period that deacons flourished in numbers and importance. They oversaw the pastoral care of the Church; were administrators of the church's charities; were assistants of its bishops, often succeeding them in office; and had a major role in the Church's liturgies. At the same time, deacons gave outstanding witness of love for Christ and the brethren through the performance of works of charity, the celebration of sacred rites, and the fulfillment of pastoral duties.

With the steady transformation of the presbyterate and the increasing importance of the presbyter as an individual apart from the corporate presbyterate, the diaconate begins to decline, though deacons continue for a long time as men of importance. By the latter part of the fourth century, for example, the deacons ceased to form the bishop's personal staff. As the presbyters took the place of the bishop in the churches of the "dioceses," the deacons became their assistants. Unfortunately, their relationship with the presbyters was never clearly defined. Vischer observes that this lack of definition caused repeated difficulties and rightly sees it as one of the major reasons for the decline of the diaconate in the Middle Ages.

From the Middle Ages (AD 475 - 1475) to the days of World War II

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<sup>4</sup> *Ad Trallianos*, II, 3: *ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>5</sup> *Ad Trallianos*, III, 1: Richardson, *Early Christian Fathers*, 1, p. 99.

<sup>6</sup> *Ad Philippenses*, V,2: *ibid.*, p. 133.

(1930s - 1940s) the office of deacon was in eclipse in the Western Church. To be sure, it lingered in the twilight world of the mystic, but it really wasn't taken too seriously in its own right.

The human tragedy of World War II not only changed the map, but also the mind of Europe. In Germany, theologians who had been in prison at Dachau urged for the ordination of permanent and married deacons. As a result of their efforts, the Community of the Diaconate was founded in Freiburg-Breisgau in 1951.

In 1959 Caritas International requested that the diaconate be restored. From October 4 to October 16, 1963, the restoration of the Diaconate, for celibate and married men, was debated by the Fathers during Vatican Council II. On September 29, 1964, the Council Fathers approved the restoration of the Diaconate for the Latin Church. *Lumen Gentium 29* specifically lists the sacramental and liturgical functions of the Diaconate but only hints at the pastoral need this ministry would meet in the future.

During the next several years, Pope Paul VI implemented the Council's decision in three important steps. The Apostolic Letter, *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem* (June 18, 1967), established canonical norms for the permanent diaconate. The new rites for the conferral of all three of the ordained ministries were authorized on June 17, 1968 in the Apostolic Constitution, *Pontificalis Romani Recognitio*. Finally, on August 15, 1972, Pope Paul VI published new norms for the diaconate in the Apostolic Letter, *Ad Pascendum*.

Following the publication of the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis* on priestly formation and the Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests, the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy devoted particular consideration to the permanent Diaconate. Both Congregations, having consulted the Episcopate throughout the world and numerous experts, discussed the permanent Diaconate at their Plenary Assemblies in November 1995. As a result, the final texts of the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium* and the Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons were drafted by the two Congregations and faithfully reflect points and proposals from every geographical area represented at the Plenary Assemblies.

The documents are a response to a widely felt need to clarify and regulate the diversity of approaches adopted in experiments conducted up to now, whether at the level of discernment and

training or at that of active ministry and ongoing formation. In this way it would be possible to ensure a certain stability of approach which takes account of legitimate plurality and in turn guarantees that indispensable unity, necessary for the success of the ministry of the permanent Diaconate which has been fruitful and which promises to make an important contribution to New Evangelization (pp.7-10).

Pope John Paul II approved the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium* (Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons) and the Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons on February 22, 1998, Feast of the Chair of Peter.

### **United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)**

The Bishops of the United States petitioned the Holy See on May 2, 1968 to restore the Diaconate. In their letter, they offered the following reasons for their request:

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

On August 30, 1968, an Apostolic Delegate informed the United States Bishops that Pope Paul VI had acceded to their request. In November 1969, the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops established the Bishops' Committee on the Permanent Diaconate. By the spring of 1971, thirteen programs were in operation, with a total of 430 candidates. The first group of ordinations to the Diaconate took place in May and June of 1971.

Late in 1971 the Bishops' Committee on the Permanent Diaconate issued Permanent Deacons in the United States: Guidelines on Their Formation and Ministry. These guidelines drew upon the experience and knowledge gained in the initial programs and served the American Church well as it began to assimilate the new ministry in the parishes and (Arch)dioceses of the United States.

However, in 1981, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, motivated by the concern of diocesan bishops that existing formation and ministerial efforts be corrected based on the increased theological understanding and ecclesial practice of the Diaconate, requested that a national survey be conducted in order to update the existing 1971 Guidelines. After two revisions and consultation with bishops, supervisors, deacons, and the wives of deacons, the 1984 Guidelines were approved by the Committee on the Permanent Diaconate and forwarded to the NCCB Administrative Committee on June 20, 1984 to present to the general membership for action and publication. The 1981 Guidelines are presently used across the United States as the criteria for the establishment of a Permanent Diaconate Formation Program.

In 1986, the Bishops= Committee on the Permanent Diaconate was authorized by the general membership of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops to prepare a series of monographs as part of a structured catechesis on the permanent diaconate. The first monograph was issued by the Bishops= Committee on the Liturgy entitled, *The Deacon, Minister of Word and Sacrament: Study Text VI*. The second monograph in the series, *Service Ministry of the Deacon*, was approved by Bishop Skylstad, chairman of the BCD, and written by Reverend Timothy Shugrue. The third document in the series, *Foundations for the Renewal of the Diaconate*, was approved by Bishop Melczek, chairman of the BCD, and Deacon Samuel Taub, executive director of Secretariat of the BCD. These documents provided an aspirant and candidate with important diaconal understanding of the role and ministry of the deacon as well as historical, pastoral, and liturgical understandings that could be used by formation directors in their effort to best prepare men for the ministry.

In June 2000 the National Conference of Catholic Bishops approved and submitted its final draft of the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*. This document was the product of two national committees that had been convened to revise 1981 formation guidelines and to create the first national directory that would establish a unified core spiritual, pastoral, and theological program for formation programs throughout the United States. The 1998 documents issued by the Congregation of Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy would serve as a basic outline for the future directory.

The National Directory is prescribed for the use of the diocesan bishop and those responsible for its implementation. After more than thirty years of experience with the restored diaconate, the National Directory is expected to guide and harmonize the various formation programs that . . . at times vary greatly from one to another.

## **SECTION 6**

### Historical Development of the Diaconate Program Archdiocese of New York

#### Context of the Revisions

The newly formed Committee on the Permanent Diaconate, chaired by Monsignor O'Brien, met for the first time in September 1969. The members of the committee who represented the Pastoral Renewal Committee of the Senate of Priests were: Msgr. Doherty, Chairman, Msgrs. Byrne, Curran, Montano, Mooney, O'Keefe; and Frs. Devers, Rox, Leonard, Stern, and Bardes. The committee met several times to discuss the possibility of implementing a diaconate formation program in the Archdiocese of New York. It was the decision of the committee members to recommend to His Eminence, Terence Cardinal Cooke, the inauguration of a diaconate formation program in the Archdiocese. His Eminence, Terence Cardinal Cooke, supportive of the diaconate, received and accepted the recommendation of the committee members.

As a result, a sub-committee was established under the chairmanship of Msgr. Harry Byrne. Members of this committee were: Frs. Drew, Grange, Dugan, Cody, McPeak, and Fr. Giles Nathe, OSB. This subcommittee was charged to address "The Deacon Role in New York." The subcommittee met twice and in the period between the meetings met with pastoral associates and the laity to explore the topic. The subcommittee's report was presented to Msgr. Doherty on April 23, 1970 and stated:

1. The formation program should be initially experimental with a more permanent definition given to it and the Role of the Deacon only after some experience has been developed.
2. "Human contact work" would include establishing relationships with people who have not related to the Church and who are not responsive to the clergy and conducting a referral program assisting people to find the proper agency to meet problems pertaining to housing, welfare, health, etc.
3. Organizing and conducting CCD program
4. "In country areas" visiting the many poor back country "tobacco road" type of communities; arrange for home Masses; conduct Eucharistic services; be in charge of country mission churches where there is no priest

5. Baptize, Witness marriages, conduct wake services and burials, preach
6. Visit hospitals, jails
7. Youth and young adult ministry especially with young people in difficulties and/ or involved in court proceedings

The subcommittee pointed out that the success of the permanent diaconate would **require providing a definite job description and a careful spelling out of the deacon's relationship to the pastor, assistant pastors, other deacons and the people.** It would have to be made clear as to who takes orders from whom so that later disenchantment of the deacons will be guarded against.

The deacon apostolate could involve both full time deacons and part time deacons who would be acting as a bridge, keep them from becoming "clericalized" and provide them with an income.

Concerns expressed by the subcommittee:

1. The people may not be ready for this for some time, and many parishes may not be prepared for a new diaconate apostolate which simply would not work in the context of traditional parish structure and clerical thinking
2. Pastors might not provide effective supervision of an apostolate (broader based supervision and direction by an episcopal delegate or an area vicar may be necessary).

Msgr. Doherty on July 21, 1970 informed the members of the subcommittee on "Formation for the Permanent Diaconate" that its task was to provide a proposal of a formation program for the diaconate which included:

Qualifications for diaconate: academic, personal recommendations, community approval, and psychological testing;

Formation program: nature of education, place, time, length of courses, faculty and other personnel, spiritual formation, pastoral in-service, financial aspects, and the calendar for inaugurating the program.

The members of the subcommittee were: Fr. Leonard, chairman; Msgr: Flynn, Mooney, Cox, and Vaughan, representing the Senate of Priests; Frs. Connolly, Mulcahy, Thompson, Moore, Kault, Daly, Arias, OAR, and Fussner, representing the Senate of Priests.

The Diaconate Formation Program in the Archdiocese of New York began at the end of

September 1971. The first class of deacon-candidates was admitted to a **two-year formation program at Saint Joseph's Seminary ~ Dunwoodie, Yonkers, NY.**

## **Outline of the Two-Year Formation Program September 1971**

### **The First Year.**

#### ***First Semester***

Theme: God Calls: Vocation:

**Scripture** (a general survey of the Bible);

**General Theology;** and

**Liturgy** (working toward a definition of liturgy: possibilities drawn from anthropology, philosophy, revelation. The uniqueness of Christian revelation will be the starting point).

#### ***Second Semester***

Theme: Man Responds: Life of Faith:

**Religion and Society** (function of religion; Rite, ritual myths and forms of worship; salvation history by themes with examples in the New Testament and liturgical life);

**Spirituality** (Prayer and forms of Christian prayer; the Christian Eucharist; Spirituality in the Church; Relationship of Christian prayer to action);

**General Moral** (Man's response to God's call in a life of loving service).

### **The Second Year**

#### ***First Semester***

Theme: God Calls Through Christ:

**Scripture** (brief survey of first year work; God and the Kingdom of Promise, Prophecy, the major prophets);

**Christ** (themes of the New Testament, sending of the Spirit, resurrection);

**Sacraments** (the sacramental economy, discipline of the sacraments, sacraments of initiation, sacraments of healing, sacrament of Holy Orders, Sacrament of Marriage).

#### ***Second Semester***

Theme: Man's Dealing with Man:

**Catechetics** (survey history of salvation as proclamation, religious education);

**Counseling** (Basic principles of counseling);

**Special Moral** (conscience, freedom, law, war, abortion, poverty and greed).

Deacon-candidates were required to attend a weekend mini-retreat and a summer in-service project.

In September 1975 a two-year Spanish formation program began at Cathedral Preparatory Seminary located on the West side of Manhattan. As the Diaconate Formation Program expanded into the upper counties, a formation venue north of Westchester County became necessary.

In February 1976, Mount Saint Alphonsus, a Redemptorist Seminary in Esopus, NY, became the third venue for diaconal formation. The two-year Diaconate Formation Program, initiated in 1971, came to an end with the ordination class of 1985. Two hundred twenty men were ordained deacons from 1973 -1985.

In a letter dated January 19, 1983 to Bishop O'Keefe, Vicar General, Msgr, Connors, Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary, suggested that the formation program be extended from a two year formation program to a three-year program. The Clergy Life Committee meeting on March 10, 1983 likewise discussed a proposal to extend the diaconate formation program to three years; to place emphasis during the first year on discernment and evaluation; to continue evaluating all candidates with more rigorous academic evaluation of those seeking preaching faculties. It was suggested that a subcommittee be established to draw up a curriculum for the three-year formation program.

On February 18, 1983, Msgr. Connors reported a summary of key items to be considered, namely,

- (1) that the training include a year of evaluation before a man is officially accepted;
- (2) that consideration be given to a "moratorium" on accepting candidates while a new policy is implemented;
- (3) that since deacons are assuming more demanding roles (i.e. preaching) then training must be more rigorous and controlled (i.e. exams);
- (4) that in addition to the parish, other sources (hospitals, other ministries) be used to recruit deacon candidates;
- (5) and the difficulties that arise from a change of pastor or a move to another (Arch)diocese.

On August 29,1983, Msgr. James Connolly, Director of Priest Personnel, indicated in his letter to priests in the Archdiocese that His Eminence Terence Cardinal Cooke approved the

extension of the permanent diaconate formation program from two years to three years. A committee of priests and permanent deacons revised and expanded the curriculum to offer better academic preparation prior to ordination. The members of the committee were: Deacons Ward, Fontanez, Msgrs. Connolly, Connors, Considine, Mulcahy, and Powers, and Frs. del Valle and Collieran. The three-year Diaconate Formation Program began in September 1983.

### **Outline of the Three-Year Formation Program September 1983**

<b>First Year</b>	<u>First Semester</u>	<u>Second Semester</u>
	Old Testament	Old Testament
	Dogma	7 classes Christology; 8 classes Ecclesiology
	Spirituality	Moral Theology
<b>Second Year</b>	<u>First Semester</u>	<u>Second Semester</u>
	New Testament	New Testament
	Church History	Church History
	Sacramental Theology	Liturgy
<b>Third Year</b>	<u>First Semester</u>	<u>Second Semester</u>
	Canon Law	Canon Law
	Counseling	7 classes Homiletics; 8 classes Liturgical Practicum
		7 classes Social Justice; 8 classes Ecumenism

There were 269 academic hours offered during the three-year formation program.

[N.B. Three venues were in operation at that time. They were: Saint Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers, NY; Mount Saint Alphonsus, Esopus, NY; and Cathedral Preparatory for hispanic candidates. Each venue established a specific formation curriculum and schedule. The three-year formation program, initiated in 1983, ended with the ordination class of 1989. Eighty-nine men were ordained deacons from 1986 – 1989].

Msgr. Connolly also informed the priests on August 29, 1983 that **new classes of permanent deacons would be accepted once every three years**. No new classes would begin in 1984 or 1985. Evaluation of the three-year program would take place to determine the three-year formation's pastoral value and to plan the future direction of the permanent diaconate program after 1986. However, Msgr. Connors, Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary, wrote to the priests of the Archdiocese and announced that a new class of candidates will begin their studies

in September 1986.

An evaluation team of experienced deacons was formed in February 1987 to review the three-year formation program.

Areas of needed improvement were:

- (1) A clearer portrait of the permanent deacon in identity and activity; and
- (2) Organizational improvements.

The following recommendations were made:

The nature of the diaconate is vague and misunderstood in the minds of many in the Church. Therefore, a one year formation period would serve as an introduction to the spiritual life and a clear picture of the nature of the Order of Deacon. It will be a year of discernment in which the individual begins to develop his specific gifts of service.

Guidelines for admission should be spelled out and rigorously followed by an Admission Board appointed by the Cardinal or the Vicar General.

- a. the aspirant should have a high school diploma or its equivalent and score a passing grade on a religious knowledge inventory;
- b. a strong and stable spiritual life evidenced by frequent sacramental participation;
- c. prior apostolic activity is so important in discerning a diaconal call that there should be ample evidence of two years or more of extensive lay involvement in the parish prior to application;
- d. a stable family life;
- e. a pastor's /sponsor's support and participation;
- f. a letter of recommendation from the pastor / sponsor
- g. a positive psychological report

The Episcopal vicars should serve an active role in the formation and evaluation of candidates. This will emphasize the deacon role in service to the bishop and will help assure the deacon candidate of a specific ministry upon ordination.

Four committees of deacons were formed: Aspiring, Learning, Developing and Functioning. These committees met from, September 1986 to March 1987 at which time they submitted a recommendation for a four year formation program commencing in September 1987. Under the direction of Monsignor Edwin O'Brien, Rector of Saint Joseph's Seminary, a four-year formation program was approved.

In 1998, Deacon Anthony Cassaneto, Director of Formation and Director of Ministry and Life of Deacons, began the process of updating the four-year formation program. He referred to the 1998 Vatican document from the Congregation for Catholic Education entitled, *The Basic*

*Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons*, and the latest draft of the *National Directory for the Formation of Deacons, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* issued by the USCCB. Faculty, staff, aspirants, and candidates periodically met during the year to review the documents and to establish a time-line to incorporate the standards, norms and directives recommended by the National Directory. Monsignor Francis McAree, Rector of Saint Joseph's Seminary, the Vicar General, Bishop Patrick Sheridan, D.D., and His Eminence John Cardinal O' Connor supported and encouraged the work of the Director. The work of implementation is now at its final stages. In the Spring of 2004, Deacon Anthony Cassaneto presented the updated four-year Diaconate Formation Program to Monsignor Peter Finn, Rector of Saint Joseph's Seminary, Monsignor William Smith, Academic Dean of Saint Joseph's Seminary, and to His Eminence, Edward Cardinal Egan, for review.

[NB The challenge is to maintain and to strengthen the quality of the formation program while not exceeding the present four-year formation structure. The Vatican and the USCCB documents require more theological education and pastoral skills so that the newly ordained deacon is fully equipped to competently minister to the People of God. Monsignor Francis McAree encouraged Deacon Cassaneto to maintain a formation program that is no longer than four years.

In 2004, Deacon Cassaneto initiated the beginning of the Inquiry Period, a period of discernment that begins with the pastor in the parish. The pastor meets with the man and his wife, if married, to invite him to consider diaconal ministry. Through ongoing conversation with the man or the couple, the pastor will assess whether or not it is the right time for him to begin the discernment process. The pastor determines the man's suitability for ministry by using the standards established by the Council of the Archdiocese of New York. If the pastor finds that the man is ready to begin the discernment process, he completes an initial interview of the man or the couple and returns the completed form to the Diaconate Office. Upon receipt of the pastor's recommendation, the Director of Formation invites the parishioner to attend the Inquiry Period at St. Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers, NY or at Our Lady of Lourdes High School, Poughkeepsie, NY. The Inquiry Period extends from October to December. The inquirer attends liturgy or evening prayer with the men in formation and a series of lectures and spiritual exercises that will assist him with his discerning his call to diaconal ministry. The Inquiry Period lasts ten weeks.

Another area of change was in the theological formation structure. To satisfy the requirements made by the National Directory, a trimester schedule structure replaced the semester schedule. Twelve courses, four in each trimester, are scheduled each year. During the summer, men in formation will be assigned 3 specific readings based on recommendations made after the 1994-1995 national survey of deacons in the United States. The readings are discussed during the year in specific class settings and at the weekly community meetings throughout the year.

Lastly, the pastoral formation program is focused on three areas of pastoral outreach:

- (1) the marginalized, the homeless, the indigent;
- (2) the children, adolescent, and young adult in religious education programs,
- (3) and the infirmed in hospitals, nursing homes, and in a hospice setting.

Each aspirant and candidate is to dedicate at least two hours per week to an assigned pastoral outreach area assigned by the formation program or in the sponsoring parish. During formation year, pastoral formation workshops provide aspirants and candidates with the opportunity to share their stories and develop parish social ministry skills. A journal of pastoral experience is kept and reviewed periodically by a staff member.

#### **Summary of the Revised Program**

1. Each formation year has three trimesters: fall, fall/winter, and spring. Each trimester is ten weeks long. The trimester structure provides the opportunity to schedule the new academic requirements stipulated in the National Directory.
2. The diaconate formation program starts and ends the same time each year for the aspirants and candidates at the Dunwoodie and Poughkeepsie venues. There is now in place a unified formation program throughout the Archdiocese.
3. The National Directory stipulates four dimensions: Human, Spiritual, Intellectual, and Pastoral. These dimensions are present in each of the three paths: Aspirant, Candidate, and Post-Ordination.
4. Pastoral and liturgical formation is conducted through workshops, monthly conferences, liturgical practicum sessions, and Saturday conferences, e.g. the Catechetical Congress, Saint Ephrem Day, and Saint Lawrence Day;

5. Spiritual and human formation occurs:

- > through directed spiritual direction,
- > monthly spiritual conferences for the community,
- > weekly liturgy celebrated by a pastor or priest-friend of an aspirant or candidate,
- > praying the divine office (evening and night prayer) on Monday and Wednesday evenings,
- > devotional prayer to the Miraculous Medal on Monday evenings, and
- > Pope John Paul's prayer for vocations on Wednesday evenings immediately after liturgy.

N .B. The full implementation of the revised diaconate formation program begins with the Class of 2010. It is recommended that the present policy for requesting Archdiocesan preaching faculties for a deacon will remain intact, namely, that a pastor will wait one year after ordination before requesting faculties.

**Section 7**  
Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons  
and  
Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons  
February 22, 1998

**Joint Declaration**

The Permanent Diaconate, restored by the Second Vatican Council, has flourished in these last decades in many parts of the Church. The growth of the permanent Diaconate, however, now gives rise to a **need for a certain unity of direction and clarification of concepts**, as well as for practical encouragement and more clearly **defined pastoral objectives**.

The total reality of the Diaconate-embracing its fundamental doctrinal vision, discernment of vocation, as well as the life, ministry, spirituality and formation of deacons - **calls for a review of the journey thus far made**, so as to arrive at a **global vision** of this grade of Sacred Orders corresponding to the desire and intention of the Second Vatican Council.

Following the publication of the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis* on priestly formation and the *Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests*, the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy, completing the treatment of what pertains to the Diaconate and the Priesthood, *now wish to devote particular consideration to the subject of the permanent Diaconate*.

Both Congregations, having consulted with the Episcopate throughout the world and numerous experts, discussed the **permanent Diaconate** at their Plenary Assemblies in November 1995. As a result, the final texts of the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium* and the *Directory/or the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* were drafted and faithfully reflect points and proposals from every geographical area represented at the Plenary Assemblies.

**The Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons**, as in the case of the **Directory on the Ministry and Life of Priests**, has **juridically binding force** where its norms "recall disciplinary norms of the Code of Canon Law" or "determine with regard to the manner of applying universal laws of the Church, explicitate their doctrinal basis and inculcate or solicit their faithful observance." In these specific cases, it is to be regarded as a formal, general, executory Decree (cf. canon 32).

The *Ratio Fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium*, prepared by the Congregation for Catholic Education, is intended not only as a guideline for the formation of permanent Deacons but also **as a directive** of which due account is to be taken by the **Episcopal Conferences** when preparing their respective "*Rationes*."

As with the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis sacerdotalis*, the Congregation offers this aid to the **various Episcopates** to facilitate them in their discharging adequately the prescriptions of canon 236 of the Code of Canon Law and **to ensure for the Church, unity, earnestness and completeness in the formation of permanent Deacons.**

These documents are intended as a response to a widely felt need to clarify and regulate the diversity of approaches adopted in experiments conducted up to now, whether at the level of discernment and training or at that of active ministry and ongoing formation. In this way, it will be possible to ensure a certain stability of approach, which takes account of legitimate plurality and in turn guarantees that indispensable unity, necessary for the success of the ministry of the permanent Diaconate.

### **Introduction to the Ratio...**

#### **The paths of formation**

The first indications about the formation of permanent deacons were given by the Apostolic Letter *Sacrum diaconatus ordinem* written by Pope Paul VI on June 18, 1967. (*Ratio... par.1*)

In paragraph 9 of *Sacrum*...., the following points were made:

- The period of preparation for the diaconate should run for a period of at least three years (N.B. The diaconate formation program in the Archdiocese of New York began with a two-year program in 1971; the formation program was updated in 1983 to a three-year program)
- The course of studies should be arranged in such a way that the candidates make (1) orderly and gradual progress toward gaining an understanding of the various duties of the diaconate and (2) toward being able to carry them out effectively.
- The whole course of studies might well be so planned that in the last year special training will be given in the principal functions to be carried out by the deacon (Years 3 + 4 Liturgical Practicum).
- In addition, there should be
  - (1) practice in teaching the fundamentals of the Christian religion to children and others of the faithful (*Year 2 The Pastoral Outreach is Catechetical Instruction, Adult Faith Formation, RCIA*);
  - (2) in teaching people to sing sacred music (*Year 4 Liturgical music*);
  - (3) in reading the books of Scripture at gatherings of the faithful (*Years 2,3,4*);
  - (4) in giving talks to the people (*Year 4-parochial outreach*); (5) in visiting the sick (*Year 3-Pastoral Outreach to Hospitals in the*

*local area*); and in general, in carrying out the ministries which

Secondly, it was the Circular Letter of the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education of 16 July 1969, *Come è a conoscenza*, in which were foreseen "different types of formation" (for celibates, married, or mission territories, etc.) (*Ratio...par. 1*)

may be required of them:

Regarding **doctrinal formation**, the Circular Letter specified that the doctrinal formation must be above that required for a simple catechist and, in some way, analogous to that of the priest. The subject matter to be considered was listed:

- 1) the study of sacred scripture and its right interpretation; the theology of the Old and New Testament; the interrelation between Scripture and Tradition; the use of scripture in preaching, catechesis and pastoral activity in general
- 2) introduction to the study of the Fathers of the Church and an elementary knowledge of the history of the Church
- 3) fundamental theology, with illustration of the sources, topics, and methods of theology, presentation of the questions relating to Revelation and the formulation of the relationship between faith and reason, which will enable the future deacons to explain the reasonableness of the faith
- 4) dogmatic theology, with its various treatises; Trinity, creation, Christology, ecclesiology and ecumenism, Mariology, Christian anthropology, sacraments (especially theology of the ordained ministry), eschatology
- 5) Christian morality, in its personal and social dimensions and, in particular, the social doctrine of the Church
- 6) canon law
- 7) liturgy
- 8) technical training, such as, psychology, catechetical pedagogy, public speaking, sacred song, organization of Catholic groups, ecclesiastical administration, keeping up to date the registers of baptism, confirmation, marriage, deaths, etc.
- 9) spiritual theology (*Ratio par.81*).

Lastly, the subsequent Apostolic Letter *Ad pascendum* (August 15, 1972) written by Pope Paul VI specified that "in regard to the course of theological studies that are to precede the ordination of permanent deacons, the Episcopal Conferences are competent to issue the appropriate norms and submit them to the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education for approval. (*Ratio. . . par. 1*)

To assist the Episcopal Conferences in preparing a formation which will be in harmony

with the universal direction of the Church, the Congregation for Catholic Education has prepared the *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium (Ratio...)* which is intended as a **point of reference** for defining the criteria of vocational discernment and the various aspects of formation.

The *Ratio...* --by its very nature--establishes only **some basic guidelines** of a general character, which constitute the norm to which the Episcopal Conferences must make reference **for the preparation** or eventual perfecting of their respective national *rationes*.

In this way the principles and criteria on the basis of which the formation of permanent deacons can be programmed with surety and in harmony with the other Churches shall be illustrated, without stifling the creativity or originality of the particular Churches (*Ratio...* par. 14).

In the same way that the Second Vatican Council established for the *rationes institutionis sacerdotalis*, with the *Ratio...*, the Episcopal Conferences which have restored the permanent diaconate are requested to submit their respective *rationes institutionis diaconorum permanentium* for examination and approval by the Holy See. The same will approve them, firstly, *ad experimentum*, and, then for a specified number of years, so as to guarantee periodic revisions. (*Ratio...* par. 15)

In June 2003, the members of the USCCB approved the **The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States**. This action of the USCCB, made in accord with canon 236 of the Code of Canon Law and with par. 15 of the *Ratio*, was confirmed *ad quinquennium experimenti gratia* by the Congregations for Catholic Education and for Clergy, and dated October 30, 2004 to be observed in the formation of Permanent Deacons. The USCCB **promulgated** the National Directory on **December 26, 2004**, the Feast of Saint Stephen, Deacon and Martyr, with **full implementation by August 10, 2005**, the Feast of Saint Lawrence of Rome, Deacon and Martyr.

## **Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons**

*[Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium]*

*Highlighting important paragraphs*

### **INTRODUCTION†**

#### **1. The paths of formation**

#2. After thirty years from the first directives, and with the contribution of subsequent experiences, it has been thought opportune now to draw up the present *Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium*. **Its purpose is that of *providing an instrument for guiding and harmonizing***, while respecting legitimate diversity, the educational projects drawn up by the Episcopal Conferences and (Arch)dioceses, which at times vary greatly from one to another.

#### **4. Diaconal spirituality**

#11. The outlines of the specific spiritualities of the deacon flow clearly from his theological identity; **this spirituality is one of service.**

The model “par excellence” is Christ the servant, who lived totally at the service of God, for the good of men. He recognized himself as the one announced in the servant of the first son of the *Book of Isaiah* (cf *Lk* 4:18-19), he explicitly qualified his action as *diakonia* (cf *Mt.* 20:28; *Lk.* 22:27; *Jn* 13:1-17; *1 Pet* 2:21-25) and he entrusted his disciples to do the same (cf. *Jn* 13:34-35; *Lk* 12:37).

...In a specific way, this is the spirituality of the deacon. In fact, with sacred ordination, he is constituted a **living icon of Christ the servant** within the Church. The *Leitmotiv* of his spiritual life will therefore be **service**; his sanctification will consist in making himself a generous and faithful servant of God and men, especially the poorest and most suffering; his ascetic commitment will be directed towards acquiring those virtues necessary for the exercise of his ministry.

...Accordingly, the same diaconal spirituality acquires diverse connotations according to whether it be lived by a married man, a widower, a single man...”

### **Chapter II.**

#### **CHARACTERISTICS of CANDIDATES for the PERMANENT DIACONATE**

#29. “The history of every...Christian vocation is the history of an *inexpressible dialogue between God and human beings*, between the love of God who calls and the freedom of individuals who respond lovingly to him.” However, alongside God’s call and the response of individuals, there is another element constitutive to a vocation, especially a ministerial vocation: **the public call of the Church.**” “*Vocari a Deo dicuntur qui a legitimis Ecclesiae ministris vocantur.*” This expression should be taken in a *sacramental sense* that considers the authority that calls as the sign and instrument for the personal intervention of God, which is realized with the laying on of hands.

The discernment must be conducted on the basis of objective criteria which treasure the ancient tradition of the Church and take account of present day pastoral needs.

## **Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons**

*[Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium]*

*Highlighting important paragraphs*

### **1. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

# 30. *[The first diaconal profile was outlined by St. Paul to Timothy 3:8-10, 12-13]*

“Deacons likewise must be serious, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for gain; they must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. And let them also be tested first; then if they prove themselves blameless let them serve as deacons. . . Let deacons be the husband of one wife, and let them manage their children and their households well. . .

The Didaché urges: “Elect for yourselves therefore bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, meek men, not lovers of money, honest and proven.”

St. Polycarp counsels: . . .they must not be slanderers, double-tongued, or lovers of money, but temperate in all things, compassionate, industrious, walking according to the truth of the Lord, who was the servant of all.”

# 31. *[The requirements of the Code of Canon Law]*

. . . These are firstly those which are valid for orders in general: “Only those are to be promoted to orders who. . . have sound faith, . . ., are motivated by the right intention, are endowed with the requisite knowledge, enjoy a good reputation, and have moral probity, proven virtue and the other physical and psychological qualities appropriate to the order to be received” (can. 1029, can. 1051, 1°).

# 32. *[Human qualities and evangelical virtues necessary for “diakonia”]*

. . . Among the human qualities which should be highlighted are: **psychological maturity**, capacity for dialogue and communication, sense of responsibility, industriousness, equilibrium and prudence. Particularly important among the evangelical virtues: **prayer, Eucharistic and Marian devotion, a humble and strong sense of the Church, love for the Church and her mission, spirit of poverty, capacity for obedience and fraternal communion, apostolic zeal, openness to service, charity towards the brothers and sisters.**

# 33. *[Active membership within a Christian community]*

. . .In addition, applicants for the diaconate must be active members of a Christian community and already have exercised praiseworthy commitment to the apostolate [for at least two or three years prior to formal entrance into the diaconate formation program].

#35. *[Minimum age]*

Regarding the minimum age, the Code of Canon Law prescribes that: “the candidate for the permanent diaconate who is not married may be admitted to the diaconate only when has completed at least his **twenty-fifth year**; if he is married, not until he has completed at least his **thirty-fifth year** [please refer to the draft of the National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States (1999)]. Lastly, candidates must be free of irregularities and impediments.”

## **Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons**

*[Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium]*

### ***Highlighting important paragraphs***

#### **2. Requirements related to the candidate's state of life**

##### **#36. [Unmarried] “*Undivided heart*”**

“On the basis of Church law, confirmed by the same Ecumenical Council, young men called to the diaconate are obliged to observe the law of celibacy.

The permanent diaconate, lived in celibacy, gives to the ministry a certain unique emphasis...the sacramental identification with Christ is placed in the context of the undivided heart....service of the Church can count on a total availability; the proclamation of the Kingdom is supported by the courageous witness of those who have left even those things most dear to them for the sake of the Kingdom.

##### **# 37. [Married] “*Positive Family experience*”**

“In the case of married men, care should be taken that only those are promoted to the diaconate who have **lived as married men for a number of years** and have shown themselves to be **capable of running their own homes**, and whose **wives and children lead a truly Christian life and have good reputations.**”

Moreover, in addition to **stability of family life**, married candidates cannot be admitted unless “their wives not only consent, but also have the Christian moral character and attributes which will neither hinder their husbands’ ministry nor be out of keeping with it.”

##### **#38. [Widowers] “*Human and spiritual soundness*”**

...a precondition for accepting widowed applicants is that they have already provided, or have shown that they are capable of providing adequately for, the human and Christian upbringing of their children.

### **Chapter III.**

#### **THE PATH OF FORMATION TOWARDS THE PERMANENT DIACONATE**

##### **1. The presentation of Aspirants**

**#40.** ...On behalf of the community, **it is the pastor who must present to the Bishop the Aspirant to the diaconate.** He will do so accompanying the candidacy with an illustration of the motivations which support it and with a *curriculum vitae* and pastoral history of the Aspirant.

##### **2. The Propaedeutic period**

**# 41.** With admission among the Aspirants to diaconate there begins a ***propaedeutic period***, which must be of an appropriate length. During this period the Aspirant will be introduced to a deeper knowledge of theology, of spirituality and of the ministry of deacon and they will be led to a more attentive discernment of their call.

## **Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons**

*[Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium]*

*Highlighting important paragraphs*

### **The RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR OF FORMATION based on the Ratio...**

# 42. **The Director of Formation is responsible for the propaedeutic period.** He may entrust the Aspirants to one or more **Tutors**.

**The Director of Formation** will ensure that each Aspirant is accompanied by an approved **Spiritual Director** and will make contact with the **pastor** of each one in order to program the **Pastoral placement**.

**The Director of Formation** will make **contact with the families of married Aspirants** to make sure of their openness to accepting, sharing and accompanying the vocation of their relative.

# 44. At the end of the propaedeutic period, the Director of Formation, after consulting with the formation team..., will present to the proper Bishop a declaration which outlines the profile of the Aspirant's personalities and also, on request, a judgment of suitability.

# 54. The Director of Formation will check that during the whole time of formation every candidate will maintain his commitment to Spiritual Direction with his own approved spiritual director.

The Director of Formation will ensure the accompaniment, evaluation and eventual modification of each one's pastoral internship.

### **Regarding the presence of wives and children**

# 43. During the propaedeutic period, care should be taken, whenever possible, to involve the wives of the Aspirants.

# 56. The wives and children of married candidates and the communities to which they belong should also be involved in appropriate ways. In particular, there should be also a specific programme of formation for the wives of candidates, to prepare them for their future mission of accompanying and supporting their husband's ministry.

# 55. The formation program *must integrate* in a harmonious manner the different areas of formation (*human, spiritual, theological, and pastoral*), it must be *theologically well founded*, have a specific *pastoral* finality and be *adapted to local needs* and pastoral programs.

## **Chapter IV.**

### **THE DIMENSIONS OF THE FORMATION OF PERMANENT DEACONS**

#### **4. Pastoral Formation**

#85. In the wide sense, pastoral formation coincides with spiritual formation; it is formation for an ever greater identification with the *diakonia* of Christ.

†**Reference:** Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons *Congregation for Catholic Education, 1998*].

## **Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons**

*[Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium]*

*Highlighting important paragraphs*

### **THE DIMENSIONS OF THE FORMATION OF PERMANENT DEACONS**

*(Ratio... paragraphs 66-88).*

#### **Human Formation**

#### **HUMAN DIMENSION**

##### **1. Human Formation**

# 66. *[Formation in the human virtues].*

The scope of human formation is that of molding the personality of the sacred ministers in such a way that **they become ‘a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their meeting with Jesus Christ the Redeemer of man’**. (*Pastores dabo vobis* par. 43).

Accordingly, they must be educated to acquire and perfect a series of human qualities which will permit them to enjoy the trust of the community, to commit themselves with serenity to the pastoral ministry, to facilitate encounter and dialogue.

...to love the truth, to be loyal, to respect every person, to have a sense of justice, to be true to their word, to be genuinely compassionate, to be men of integrity and, especially, to be balanced in judgment and behavior.”

# 67. *[Capacity to relate to others]*

Of particular importance for deacons, called to be men of communion and service, is the **capacity to relate to others**. This requires that they be affable, hospitable, sincere in their words and heart, prudent and discreet, generous and ready to serve, capable of opening themselves to clear and brotherly relationships, and quick to understand, forgive and console.”

# 68. *[Affective maturity]*

At the root of the capacity to relate to others is **affective maturity**, which must be attained with a wide margin of certainty in both celibate and married candidates.

For **celibate candidates**, to live love means offering the totality of one’s being, of one’s energies and readiness, to Christ and the Church. It is a demanding vocation, which must take into account the inclinations of affectivity and the pressures of instinct and which therefore requires renunciation, vigilance, prayer and fidelity to a precise rule of life.

For **married candidates**, to live love means offering themselves to their spouses in a reciprocal belonging, in a total, faithful and indissoluble union, in the likeness of Christ’s love for his Church; at the same time it means welcoming children, loving them, educating them, and showing forth to the whole Church and society the communion of the family.

Aspirants and candidates must be educated to acquire and perfect a series of **human qualities** (*psychological maturity, capacity for dialogue and communication, sense of responsibility, industriousness, equilibrium and prudence, Ratio..* . par 32) which will permit them (1) to enjoy the trust of the community, (2) to commit themselves with serenity to the pastoral ministry, and (3) to facilitate encounter and dialogue; and **evangelical virtues** (prayer,

Eucharistic and Marian devotion, a humble and strong sense of the Church, love for the Church and her mission, spirit of poverty, capacity for obedience and fraternal communion, apostolic zeal, openness to service, charity towards the brothers and sisters, **Ratio..** .par 32) necessary for *diakonia*. (**Ratio..** .par. 66).

Similar to the indications of **Pastores dabo vobis** for the formation of priests, deacon-candidates, too, must be educated (1) "to love the truth, (2) to be loyal, (3) to respect every person, (4) to have a sense of justice, (5) to be true to their word, (6) to be genuinely compassionate, (7) to be men of integrity and, especially, (8) to be balanced in judgment and behavior"(**Ratio...** par. 66).

Of particular importance for deacons, called to be men of communion and service, is **the capacity to relate to others**. This requires that they be affable, hospitable, sincere in their words and heart, prudent, discreet, generous, and ready to serve, capable of opening themselves to clear and brotherly relationships, and quick to understand, forgive, and console (**Ratio...**par. 67).

At the root of the capacity to relate to others is **affective maturity** that presupposes the discovery of the centrality of love in their own lives and the victorious struggle against their own selfishness. As Pope John Paul II explains in **Pastore dabo vobis**, this is a love which involves all the aspects of the person, physical, psychological and spiritual and which therefore demands full dominion over his sexuality, which must become truly and fully personal. (**Ratio...** par. 68).

A pre-condition for an authentic human maturity is **training in freedom** that is expressed in obedience to the truth of one's own being. This freedom requires the person to be truly master of himself, determined to fight and overcome the different forms of selfishness and individualism which threaten the life of each one, ready to open out to others, generous in dedication and service to one's neighbor (**Ratio...** par. 69).

**Training in freedom** also includes the education of the moral conscience which prepares one to listen to the voice of God in the depths of one's heart and to adhere closely to it (**Ratio ...** par.69)

## **Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons**

*[Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium]*

*Highlighting important paragraphs*

### **THE DIMENSIONS OF THE FORMATION OF PERMANENT DEACONS**

#### **SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

*(Ratio... paragraphs 66-88)*

#### **SPIRITUAL DIMENSION**

“To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” [NIV] (*Micah 6:8b*).

*The element which most characterizes Diaconal spirituality is the discovery of and sharing in the love of Christ the servant, who came not to be served but to serve. The aspirant / candidate must therefore be helped progressively to acquire those attitudes which are specifically diaconal, though not exclusively so, such as, simplicity of heart, total giving of self and disinterest for self, humble and helpful love for the brothers and sisters, especially the poorest, the suffering and the most needy, the choice of a life-style of sharing and poverty. Let Mary, handmaid of the Lord, be present on this journey and be invoked as mother and auxiliatrix, the daily recitation of the Rosary. [Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconorum Permanentium. ¶ 72].*

The goal of Christian spiritual formation is union with God in Christ. As with all other Christians, the aspirant or candidate's spiritual life, founded on his baptism, should be centered in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. His faith should be constantly nourished by reading and meditating on the Scriptures. His activity should be enlivened and strengthened by regular participation in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Spiritual formation is the keystone of the diaconate formation program. The diaconate is meant to enhance the Church to which the aspirant or candidate is committed for life, the parish for which he provides a visible sign of service, and the person of the deacon and his family. Spiritual growth of the aspirant / candidate, his wife, and family is integrated into the total formation program. Theological knowledge and pastoral experience will naturally enter into the aspirant or candidate's prayer life.

Aspirants and candidates bring to the formation program a spirituality reflective of their age, and the culture in which they were raised and in which they now live and work. The formation program builds upon the individual's spiritual foundation, and fosters a realistic spirituality of Christian service and liturgical life.

For the married aspirants and candidates, their experience of the Sacrament of Matrimony is central to their spirituality. The commitment to their union and the conviction of the sacrament's sacred character are fundamental to an appreciation of a covenant relationship with God. The concern is not to propose or to teach a standard spirituality, but to encourage reflection

on the shared spiritual journey of husband and wife that has already flowered in a rich mutual relationship and a healthy family life, and has nurtured the impulse toward and the talent for the ministry of Christian service.

The demands of ministry will require a shared spiritual perspective as well as good communication skills. An aspirant and a candidate soon recognize that the marriage relationship will be the source of a deacon's strongest support. Likewise it is important that both husband and wife demonstrate a commitment to ongoing spiritual growth.

**The goals of the spiritual formation program are:**

1. to deepen his prayer-life;
2. to deepen his commitment to Christ and the Church;
3. to assist the aspirant / candidate, with the help of his Spiritual Director, in discerning his call to the diaconate;
4. to prepare him for the challenges of spiritual leadership that his ministry will entail;
5. to integrate ministerial commitment with commitments to family and to work;
6. to develop personal qualities and abilities that will be needed in ministry.

**The spiritual formation program requires:**

#71. ...When a candidate begins the path of formation for the diaconate, generally he has already had a certain experience of the spiritual life, such as, recognition of the action of the Spirit, listening to and meditating upon the Word of God, the thirst for prayer, commitment to service of the brothers and sisters, willingness to make sacrifices, the sense of the Church, apostolic zeal.

#72. The element which most characterizes diaconal spirituality is the discovery of and sharing in the love of Christ the servant, who came not to be served but to serve...to acquire those attitudes which are specifically diaconal, though not exclusively so, such as simplicity of heart, total giving of self and disinterest for self, humble and helpful love for the brothers and sisters, especially the poorest, the suffering and the most needy, the choice of a life-style of sharing and poverty.

**1. Spiritual Direction**

Each aspirant and candidate has as his **Spiritual Director** a priest, with whom he will meet on a regular basis to assess and encourage his growth in the spiritual life. He will be asked to keep a journal which will contain his daily thoughts and meditations on his life as a Christian. This will help the aspirant or candidate to realize where he is spiritually and to share this with his spiritual director. It is suggested that the Spiritual Director meet with the aspirant or candidate's wife and family as often as possible or necessary.

*The spiritual director's task is that of discerning the workings of the Spirit in the soul of those called and, at the same time, of accompanying and supporting their ongoing conversion; he must also give concrete suggestions to help bring about an authentic*

*diaconal spirituality and offer effective incentives for acquiring the associated virtues. Because of all this, aspirants and candidates are invited to entrust themselves for spiritual direction only to priests of proven virtue, equipped with a good theological culture, of profound spiritual experience, of marked pedagogical sense, a strong and*

*refined ministerial sensibility.* [Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconorum Permanentium. ¶ 23]

## **2. An Annual Retreat / Evenings for Reflection and Reconciliation**

An annual retreat is scheduled each year for aspirants, candidates, and their wives. In addition, holy hours are scheduled throughout the year. Sitting before the Lord provides the aspirant and candidate with an opportunity to reflect on the gift of his call and help to develop an ongoing relationship with the Lord. The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available during each holy hour.

## **3. Praying the Liturgy of the Hours**

#74. [*The Word of God*]

Another characteristic element of diaconal spirituality is the **Word of God**, of which the deacon is called to...know the Word of God ever more deeply and to seek in it constant nourishment for his spiritual life by means of its loving and thorough study and the daily exercise of *lectio divina*.

*Indeed praying in the name of the Church and for the Church is part of the ministry of the deacon.* (Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconorum Permanentium. ¶ 75). Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer are introduced to the aspirants and candidates in the early stages of their formation. Aspirants and candidates pray Evening and Night Prayer as a community on Mondays and Wednesdays. The men are strongly encouraged to pray the Liturgy of the Hours privately as part of their daily spiritual exercise

## **4. Frequent reception of the sacraments**

#73. [*The Eucharist*]

Aspirants and candidates are encouraged to receive the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis. These sacraments enrich and strengthen their spiritual lives so that they can go about doing the Lord's work among His people. . . . *The source of this new capacity to love is **the Eucharist**, which, not by chance, characterizes the ministry of the deacon...* Therefore, the candidate will be invited to participate every day or at least frequently within the limits of his family and professional commitments, in the celebration of the Eucharist and will be helped to penetrate ever deeper into its mystery.

*In fact, service of the poor is the logical consequence of service of the altar. . . Within the context of this Eucharistic spirituality, care will be taken to give adequate appreciation to the sacrament of Penance.* (Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconorum Permanentium. ¶ 73]

## **Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons**

*[Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium]*

***Highlighting important paragraphs***

### **THE DIMENSIONS OF THE FORMATION OF PERMANENT DEACONS**

***(Ratio... paragraphs 66-88)***

#### **THEOLOGICAL FORMATION**

##### **INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION**

Theological Formation is a necessary dimension of diaconal formation insofar as it offers the aspirant and candidate a substantial nourishment for his spiritual life and a precious instrument for his ministry. It is particularly urgent today, in the face of the challenging of the new evangelization to which the Church is called at this difficult juncture of the millennium. Religious indifference, obscuring of values, loss of ethical convergence, and cultural pluralism demand that those involved in the ordained ministry we an intellectual formation which is complete and serious. [*Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconorum Permanentium* ¶ 79].

*The goal of diaconate formation is not to form a theological expert, but to form a person who understands his faith so well that he can explain it to others through the use of every available resource.*

*To see theological formation as essentially distinct from preparation for ministry would be a grave error. Because the aspirant and candidate are ministers of the church, they are to radiate the gospel and the teachings of the church not only in their ministry, but also in the total commitment of their life to Christ. Spiritual, pastoral, and theological aspects of formation are an interlocking triad.*

##### ***The following general norms are applied:***

*1. Given the differing backgrounds, educational levels, circumstances of commitment to wife, family, and work, and the absolute necessity for a solid theological formation, the theological formation process will extend over the entire four years of diaconal formation.*

*2. The setting and the process for theological formation is adult-centered. Group dynamics are encouraged and the classroom atmosphere is informal. The courses have substantive content and are taught by qualified instructors, most of whom have their Masters degree or their Doctorate in their field of instruction.*

*3. Aspirants and candidates are required to attend all class sessions. If an emergency arises which prevents him from attending class, it is aspirant / candidate's responsibility to contact the diaconate office as soon as possible. He is also to make arrangements to meet with a classmate or the teacher to obtain information presented on the night he was absent.*

*4. Aspirants and candidates are evaluated each trimester by the members of the formation team. Projects, examinations, or reports are the ordinary means of evaluation for most*

## **Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons**

*[Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium]*

***Highlighting*** important paragraphs

### **INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION** *(continued)*

*instructors. A permanent record of all course work is kept as part of an aspirant or candidate's file.*

*5. The theological formation program is structured on a trimester basis. A trimester course may be either 15 or 10 hours of instruction. There are four courses per trimester or a total of 12 courses for the academic year. Classes meet at St. Joseph's Seminary, Yonkers, or at Our Lady of Lourdes High School, Poughkeepsie, on Mondays or Tuesdays and Wednesday evenings from 6:45 pm to 10 pm for both English and Spanish programs.*

## **Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons**

*[Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium]*

*Highlighting important paragraphs*

### **THE DIMENSIONS OF THE FORMATION OF PERMANENT DEACONS**

*(Ratio... paragraphs 66-88)*

#### **PASTORAL FORMATION**

#### **PASTORAL DIMENSION**

*In the wide sense, pastoral formation coincides with spiritual formation: it is formation for an ever greater identification with the diakonia of Christ. . . In the strict sense, pastoral formation develops by means of specific theological discipline and a practical internship. [Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconorum Permanentium , ¶85].*

*Practical internship should be provided for each candidate to permit him to meet in the field what he has learned in his study. It must be gradual, tailored to the individual and under continual supervision. For the choice of activities, account should be taken of the instituted ministries received, and their exercise should be evaluated [Ratio. . . ¶ 87].*

The pastoral formation program provides a "hands-on" opportunity for the aspirants and candidates to become familiar with the pastoral needs of their parish community and to assist the pastor in his endeavor to service his people through the ministries of charity, word, and sacrament. To prepare him for effective leadership, an aspirant or candidate is assigned to a specific ministry by the Director of the Formation Program: shelter ministry, catechetical, hospital or hospice ministries. In addition an aspirant and candidate will assist his pastor in the local parish community and will be under the guidance of the pastor or his delegate within the parish. This placement becomes a catalyst for study and prayerful reflection.

As Minister of Word, the candidate prepares himself by teaching the Word in religious education courses and adult education programs in the parish; preparing converts for Baptism; and serving as Reader at liturgical assemblies. The candidate participates in the parish sacramental preparation programs, and assists the priest or deacon at sacramental celebrations, i.e. Baptisms and Marriages.

As Minister of Charity the aspirant and candidate reach out to those in need. The following areas of ministry are, by no means to be considered as limits of this ministry. These are but some of the many areas in which an aspirant/candidate may minister:

- a. work in a facility to aid the poor and needy e.g. soup kitchen, shelter, S. Vincent de Paul Society. etc.;
- b. visit the handicapped, shut-ins, elderly, sick in the parish;
- c. visit the hospitalized;
- d. work with young adult groups, divorced/remarried Catholics, senior citizens groups;

- e. transportation of the elderly or handicapped to church functions;
- f. ecumenical outreach;
- g. prison ministry;
- h. college campus ministry

Maria Harris stated:

Works that serve justice...are best-known being the works of mercy...such as, feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick and the imprisoned, and burying the dead. These are the works that serve justice as described by Jesus in the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew's Gospel with the reminder that "As long as you did these things to the least of my brothers and sisters, you did them to me" (p. 21).

When we participate in worship or liturgy, this is an intensely corporate act, a gathering of the people to tell the story, break the bread, share the cup, and then go forth in spirit and in truth. The going forth, especially to do [the works of mercy]...Our own times have seen a reclaiming of these works of mercy as central to spirituality and part of the core. In the ordinary, daily life, moreover, people need to remember that much of their lives is devoted to doing exactly these works...Such works, instead of being thought of as apart from spirituality, are actually a part of it (p. 118).

### **Parish Social Ministry**

Harris continues to discuss education for justice. She stated that there are four forms: **social care, social ritual, social empowerment, and social legislation** that local religious communities have at their disposal. Each of these forms is essentially *social*, which is to say that justice is always relational, and neither individualistic nor isolated.

**Social care**, in particular, is a virtue, a power, and a strength...and parishes are almost ways involved in pastoral care, responding to every social need imaginable, from domestic violence to families coping with Alzheimer's to bereavement and grief over the death of family members and mends.

All acts of care have an impact on the wider society. Care is rooted in attitudes of relation(ship), receptivity, and response, and these attitudes contribute positively to the social order and the social fabric... At its best, care moves in the direction of helping others help themselves, though it is basically inseparable from the gospel and the ethic of love for God and neighbor (p. 122).

The parish social ministry aspect of the formation program provides an aspirant or candidate with an opportunity to engage in a specific Ministry of Charity. He will be supervised in this ministry either by his pastor or his pastor's delegate. The aspirant/candidate can be a source of new and innovative pastoral outreach since he comes to ministry with many years of life experiences.

The aspirants and candidates are assigned specific ministries each year as well as ministries undertaken under the guidance of the pastor. For this reason, communal and parish activities undertaken prior to a man's acceptance as an aspirant are to be curtailed.

The aspirants in the First Year assist the Franciscan Friars of Renewal at two shelters: The Padre Pio Shelter in the South Bronx and the San Juan Diego Shelter in Yonkers. The Second Year students teach religious education classes, assist with the RCIA program, or conduct Adult Faith Formation in their home parish or a nearby parish on a weekly basis. The Third Year candidates receive the Ministry of Reader and proclaim the scriptures at their home parish on a weekly basis. They also assist at Westchester Medical Center, Valhalla, NY, under the Supervision of staff members assigned to the Pastoral Care Unit. Finally, the Fourth Year candidates receive the Ministry of Acolyte and assist with the distribution of Holy Communion at their parish on a weekly basis. They also visit patients at Calvary Hospital, Bronx, NY and periodically meet with staff personnel for updating and instruction. They apply themselves to their assigned ministries for at least 2 hours per week. The aforementioned activities are by no means the only possible apostolic endeavors an aspirant or candidate undertakes. He may also assist his pastor at ad hoc assignment in the parish community.

Parish Social Ministry focuses on the Ministry of Charity. The aspirants and candidates have an opportunity to interact with the parochial staff, to develop ministerial skills, and to start the process of defining the type of ministry or apostolic endeavor he can undertake as a deacon in the parish. It is also an opportunity for the aspirant and candidate to help parishioners to understand the role and work of a deacon as a Minister of Charity.

**(Revised 09/01/10)**

## **ADDENDUM TO PASTORAL FORMATION**

### **Washing the Disciples Feet (John 13:1-20): Eucharist and the Call to Service**

*The Eucharist can be truly understood as a call to service in this reflection on the place and importance of the washing of the feet in the Gospel of John.*

The washing of the feet of the disciples (*John 13:1-20*) during the Last Supper serves as a bridge between the various signs given by Jesus in the “Book of Signs” (*John 1:19-12:50*) and the process of exaltation that takes place by virtue of Jesus’ passion, death, and resurrection in the “Book of Glory” (*John 13:1-20:31*). Jesus performs this highly symbolic gesture in order to impress upon his closest disciples his fundamental reason for coming into the world and leaving it. This action reminds the Christian that everything in Jesus’ life must be understood in the context of **humble service** – even the institution of the Eucharist. It also highlights the essential characteristic, par excellence, of Christian discipleship, namely, to be a follower of Jesus means to walk in his footsteps and to dedicate oneself to the welfare of others. The author of John’s Gospel gives the members of the Christian community a concrete example of the direction their following of Christ should take. In the liturgical assembly, “sign” and “glory” merge in the ritual action of the breaking of the bread and the passing of the cup. In Jesus, “The Bread of Life” (*John 6:35*), bread and wine both signify and impart the glory of eternal life to those who believe in Him.

The Eucharist in John’s Gospel is depicted as “the sign” given by Jesus to the community of believers. Just as he had come from and was bound to return to God (v.3), Jesus enters the world of each eucharistic assembly, becoming for them their very food and drink, so that he might take them to the Father and be an instrument of their divinization.

The central place given to the washing of the feet during the Last Supper underscores the drama that is about to take place in Jesus’ own life and, through him, in the lives of all who believe in him. One might go so far as to say that the significance of this humble expression permeates all that is *then taking place* (in the Last Supper), that is *about to take place* (in Jesus’ Paschal Mystery), and that *will take place* (in the life of the Christian community).

A close look at the various components of Jesus’ symbolic washing (vv. 2-20) reveals the nature of the drama that it embodies.

In *verse 2: the evening meal was being served...* Jesus, aware of the power of darkness that had infiltrated his inner circle through Judas who was plotting to prevent the light that has come into the world to carry out its redeeming work for the forgiveness of sins, rises from his place and initiates an action of humble service.

What are we to understand by this verse? Jesus, aware of the foibles and character flaws of his disciples, led them to reflect on their own inner capacity to betray, deny, or even doubt the presence of Jesus in their midst. In the context of its eucharistic worship, the believing community would be challenged to identify those areas where darkness (individually or communally) has penetrated its own life.

In *verse 4: so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing...* This action of Jesus shocked his disciples. Jesus relates to his disciples not as their superior or even as their equal, but as an inferior.

What did the people of the time understand by this action? The believing community at the time would easily have seen in this gesture a symbolic expression of the humiliation of the divine word that took place in the incarnation (*John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-7*). Also a connection would also be easily made in the eucharistic action where Jesus becomes the living bread who gives his flesh for the life of the world (*John 6:51*).

[In *verse 3: Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God...* Jesus' laying aside of his garments at the Last Supper anticipates a later moment when they will be forcibly taken from him (*John 19:23-24*), and he will be left to die hanging from a cross between two thieves (*John 19:17-18*) – yet another divine humiliation].

In *verse 4: and wrapped a towel around his waist...* Jesus is about to perform a menial task – one that a household servant or slave would ordinarily perform. The towel is an instrument of **cleaning** – especially the feet of those traveling on the dusty roads of Palestine. The towel is also an instrument of **preparation**. By girding himself with it, Jesus readies himself for a necessary, but unpalatable task of daily life. He teaches his disciples in a forceful way about the meaning of discipleship.

What are we to understand in this verse? If it is through the Eucharist that the believing community participates in Jesus' humiliation and exaltation, it is through **a life of committed service** that it becomes a visible expression to his ongoing presence in the world. The Christian community is encouraged to identify

and then ready itself for the humble tasks of service that it must take on for the sake of Christ.

In *verse 5: After that, he poured water into a basin...* The Gospel of John is noted for the various levels of meaning that the evangelist is able to evoke in his text. The action of Jesus pouring water into the basin in this verse possesses strong baptismal overtones. At baptism, we are immersed into the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus and become incorporated into his body. Through baptism, we move away from our egoism and self-centeredness and live in a way that is oriented toward the love of God and neighbor. The evangelist reminds his audience that the eucharistic action provides them with an opportunity to recommit themselves to their baptismal promises.

What are we to understand in this verse? The Christian community is called to remember the baptismal context of every eucharistic celebration. It is only because we have been immersed by baptism into Jesus' Paschal Mystery that we are able to partake of the real food and drink of Jesus' body and blood (*John 6:54*).

In *verse 5: and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him...* Ordinarily the washing of the feet occurs before entering the house so that the dirt accumulated on the feet that day from the dusty road of Jerusalem would not be taken into the house. Jesus washes the feet during their last meal together to possibly make a point that, in sharing this Last Supper, the disciples crossed a new threshold, one from which there was no turning back and which would carry them into the kingdom.

What are we to understand in this verse? When hearing this verse read aloud in the liturgical assembly, the believing community could easily have recognized that participating in the eucharistic action involved crossing a threshold to the sacred and that doing so also meant looking out for the unmet needs of others.

In *verses 6-11: He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, Lord, are you going to wash my feet? Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well." Jesus answered "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean."*

Peter's rejection to Jesus' action stem from a fundamental misunderstanding of the meaning of discipleship. Jesus engages Peter in conversation. Peter continues his protestations. Jesus warns him that he would not have any part of him unless he permits him to wash his feet. Peter relents and allows Jesus to perform his humble act of service.

What are we to understand in this verse? When we hear this verse read aloud in the liturgical assembly, the Christian community would see the importance of dialogue and conversation in resolving uncertainties about the mysterious action of Christ in its life.

Dialogue with Christ is **PRAYER**. Those like Peter with roles of leadership in the Christian community have a special obligation to bring their questions, doubts, and protestations to the Lord in prayer. Only in this way will they eventually come to understand the meaning of the Lord's action in their lives and what is being asked of them in the task of discipleship.

*In verses 12-17, 20: When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. You call me, 'Teacher' and 'Lord' and rightly so for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them...I tell you the truth, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me."* Jesus then begins to teach them. Central to his message is the call to service (vv. 14-15). Also present in his teaching is the idea that Jesus' ministry will be continued in those he sends (v. 20). Conscious that the events of his upcoming passion and death are about to unfold, Jesus consciously depicts his life in terms of humble service.

***What are we to understand in this verse? Upon hearing these words in the liturgical assembly, the believing community is called to recognize the important place that teaching has in the life of the community. Likewise, the community would be asked to see the importance of having this same drama unfold in their own lives (v. 16).***

***The importance of the connection between the Eucharist and the washing of the disciples' feet holds a vital place in the unfolding of one of the evangelist's most significant themes – Christian love as the call to service. The close bond between the Eucharist and service in John's Gospel challenges Christian communities to ponder the action of Jesus in their own liturgical assemblies and to ask themselves whether they are truly following in their master's footsteps.***

Reference: Billy, D.J. (November 2001). *Washing the Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-20): Eucharist and the Call to Service*. *Emmanuel* (107)9, 522-529.

**SECTION 8**  
**The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States**

There are **three separate but integral Paths** that constitute a unified diaconate formation program for deacons:

- (1) Aspirant Path
- (2) Candidate Path
- (4) Post ordination Path

These paths become one sole organic journey in diaconal formation

In each path, **there are five essential Dimensions or specific areas in formation:**

- (1) Human
- (2) Spiritual
- (3) Intellectual
- (4) Pastoral [N.D. 104]
- (5) Diaconal (Vocational)

**Dimensions of Formation**

Formation is to promote the development of the whole person. The dimensions are to be so interrelated so as to achieve a progressive integration of their objectives in the life of each participant and in his exercise of his ministry.

<b>Human Dimension</b>
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**HUMAN DIMENSION**

The future deacon comes to formation with a history of interpersonal relationships--his wife, children, relatives, friends, colleagues, neighbors, etc. His ongoing relationship with the Lord transformed his heart and fostered his call to be of service to the People of God. Formation, therefore, begins with human formation and development. The objectives of human formation is to cultivate a series of human qualities that will foster growth to the extend that he will become as Maslow would put it, a "self-actualized individual and a minister to others.

**Personality Traits**

The future deacon should possess:

- (1) a docile personality;
- (2) a capacity to transmit compassion and hope;
- (3) a sense of responsibility, honesty, initiative;
- (4) a spirit of sacrifice;
- (5) a capacity to relate to others--have an affective maturity;
- (6) a healthy attitude and constructive behavior regarding intimacy, diversity, and conflict .

### **Ministerial Qualities**

1. The future deacon should have:

- (a) good human relationships with the children, the young adults, adults, and the seniors;
- (b) the ability to dialogue not only with Catholics but also with other

### **Ministerial Qualities**

Christians and those of other religions;

- (c) a grasp of one's own culture;
- (d) the ability to communicate, collaborate, and organize;
- (e) a balanced judgment;
- (f) the trust of the parish community;
- (g) the ability to confront challenges in a constructive way;
- (h) the openness in listening to others.

2. The future deacon should be:

- (a) a leader;
- (b) a bridge, not an obstacle for others.

### **Specific Human Dimension Outreach**

- (1) Since the future deacon lives and works in the world, he understands today's society and tries to bring solutions to personal and social problems in the light of the Gospel.
- (2) The future deacon ought to be close to the people so that he can understand their needs and frustrations. He is the Bishop's right hand man who brings to the attention of the Church the needs of the People of God and, when necessary, has the courage to speak out for the weak and defend their rights.

Human formation leads to and finds its completion in the spiritual dimension that constitutes the heart and unifying center of Christian discipleship.

## **SPIRITUAL DIMENSION**

Spiritual Dimension

### **Goals of the spiritual dimension**

The future deacon is:

- (1) to establish and to nourish of attitudes, habits, and practices that will set the foundation for a lifetime of ongoing spiritual discipline;
- (2) to have, with the help of his spiritual director and those responsible for formation, a diaconal commitment to God's word, to the Church and to the world;
- (3) to deepen his prayer life: personal, familial, communal, and liturgical;
- (4) to participate in daily Eucharist, if possible;
- (5) to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours daily, especially Morning and Evening prayers;

### **SPIRITUAL DIMENSION (continued)**

- (6) to have devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints;
- (7) to read the *Lectio Divina*;
- (8) receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis
- (9) to have knowledge of Catholic spiritual tradition as reflected in classic spiritual writings;
- (10) to become familiar with contemporary developments in spirituality--a faith seeking to be expressed, celebrated, and renewed.
- (11) to assess the depth and quality of his integration of personal, family, employment and ministerial responsibilities;
- (12) to determine his growth in self-knowledge, his commitment to Christ and His Church, and his dedication to service, especially to the poor and those most suffering;
- (13) to celebrate the ethnic, racial, and cultural religious traditions.
- (14) to incarnate his spirituality in the real life and history of the people whom he encounters each day in places where he lives, works, and serves.

Discernment is an essential spiritual process both in determining the presence of a vocation to the diaconate as well as determining the capacity to live it fully after ordination.

The object of the spiritual life is a deeper union with God. A precondition for the formation of an authentic spiritual life is training in freedom that includes the formation of a moral conscience, preparing one to listen to the voice of God in the depths of one's heart and to adhere closely to it.

A future deacon is to be open to conversion of heart about issues of justice, peace, and respect for life. He understands that his prayer, simplicity of life, and commitment to the poor will add credibility to his capacity to witness and to preach effectively the word of God.

A spirit of service to others is finally an invitation of Christ Himself who came not to do His own will but the will of His Father. Accountability is never simply obedience to the letter of the law but an invitation to a deeper conversion.

*A strong spiritual life and a realistic commitment to serve people converge in the continual transformation of the participant's mind and heart in harmony with Christ.*

#### **Prayer of Saint Francis**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.  
Where there is hatred, let me so love  
Where there is doubt, faith  
Where there is despair, hope  
Where there is sadness, joy  
O Divine Master  
Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console  
To be loved, as to love  
For it is in giving that we receive and  
It is in dying that we are born to eternal life

## **INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION**

Intellectual formation offers the future deacon substantial nourishment for the human and spiritual dimensions of his life. Through study, especially the study of theology, the future deacon assents to the word of God, grows in his spiritual life and prepares himself to fulfill his pastoral ministry.

An increasingly educated society and the new roles of leadership in diaconal ministry require that a future deacon be a knowledgeable and reliable witness to the faith and spokesman for the Church's teaching.

The future deacon must first understand the essentials of Christian doctrine and practice before he can communicate them to others in a dear way.

The criteria that govern the intellectual dimension:

- (1) intellectual content should be organized, presented, and directed fundamentally to prepare future deacons for the pastoral context of service;
- (2) intellectual content should also provide the future deacon with the knowledge, skills, and appreciation of the faith that he needs to effectively fulfill his ministry of word, liturgy, and charity.
- (3) it [intellectual dimension] should also be constructed to help the future deacon to evaluate his society and culture in the light of the Gospel and to understand the Gospel in the light of the particular features of the society in which he will serve, especially in its cultural, ethnic and racial diversity.
- (4) it [intellectual dimension] should make use of the methods and processes of adult education. The future deacon is invited to draw and reflect upon his adult life and faith experiences in light of the Gospel and the Church's teaching and insight.
- (5) it [intellectual dimension] should be designed and presented in such a way as to integrate doctrine, morality, ethics, and spirituality.

**The intellectual formation process is based on:**

- 1(1) Scripture and Tradition
- (2) the Documents of the Second Vatican Council
- (3) the Catechism of the Catholic Church
- (4) the General Directory for Catechesis

**Theological content of the intellectual dimension:**

- (1) Introduction to Sacred Scripture and its authentic interpretation:
  - ◆ the interrelation between Scripture and Tradition;
  - ◆ theology of the Old and New Testaments;
  - ◆ the use of scripture in spiritual formation, preaching, evangelization, catechesis and pastoral activity in genera.
- (2) Introduction to the study of the Fathers of the Church
  - ◆ Elementary knowledge of the history of the Church
- (3) Fundamental Theology with illustrations of the sources

- ◆ Topics and methods of theology
  - ◆ Presentation of the questions relating to revelation
  - ◆ The formulation of the relationship between faith and reason
- (4) Dogmatic theology
- ◆ Trinitarian dimension
  - ◆ Christological dimension
  - ◆ Pneumatological dimension
  - ◆ Ecclesiastical dimension
  - ◆ The Church as a community of churches - the Latin and Eastern churches
  - ◆ Christian anthropology
  - ◆ Sacraments - theology of the ordained ministry and diaconal communion
  - ◆ Eschatology
  - ◆ Mariology
- (5) Christian morality and ethics
- ◆ Personal, familial and social dimensions
  - ◆ Social doctrine of the Church
- (6) Spiritual Theology
- ◆ Spiritual traditions of the Church as applied to one's own spiritual journey and the spiritual life of the faithful
- (7) Liturgy
- ◆ Its principles with particular attention to the RCIA
  - ◆ Liturgical rites the deacon will celebrate
- (8) Canon Law
- ◆ Canonical considerations of the rights and obligations of the clergy
  - ◆ Canons applicable to baptism, marriage, and Christian burial
- (9) Ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue
- ◆ Its principles, norms, and dimension in pastoral ministry
- (10) Theology of Catholic evangelization
- ◆ Evangelization of cultures and the inculturation of the message of faith
  - ◆ Multi cultural expressions of the faith
  - ◆ Missiology

## **DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM**

**2011 - 2012**

<u>Field of Study</u>	<u>Concentration</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Trimester</u>
<b>SACRED SCRIPTURE</b> 105 hours	Introduction to Scripture/	15	1	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Pentateuch /Historical Books	15	1	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Prophets/Wisdom Literature	15	1	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Introduction to New Testament	15	2	1 <sup>st</sup>
	The Synoptic Gospels	15	2	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	The Gospel of St. John	15	2	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Pauline Literature	15	3	3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>THEOLOGY</b> 85 Hours	Introduction to Theology	10	1	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Revelation/Creation	10	1	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Christology/Grace	10	2	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Christian Anthropology	10	2	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Comparative Religions	10	3	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Ecumenism	10	3	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Ecclesiology/Eschatology	15	3	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Mariology	10	4	3 <sup>rd</sup>	
<b>MORAL THEOLOGY</b> 30 hours	Introduction to Moral Theology	15	3	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Applied Moral Theology	15	3	2 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>SACRAMENTAL THEOLOGY</b> 30 hours	Sacramental Theology I <i>BAPTISM/CONFIRMATION</i>	10	3	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Sacramental Theology II <i>EUCHARIST</i>	10	3	2 <sup>ND</sup>
	Sacramental Theology III <i>MARRIAGE/HOLY ORDERS</i>	10	3	3 <sup>RD</sup>
<b>CANON LAW</b> 30 hours	Canon Law I	15	3	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Canon Law II	15	3	2 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>PASTORAL THEOLOGY</b> 117.5 hours	Social Justice Course <i>(Citizenship/Poverty)</i>	10	1	3 <sup>RD</sup>
	Hispanic Inculturation	10	2	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	RCIA - Evangelization	15	2	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Catechist Formation	15	2	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Pastoral Counseling	15	4	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Hispanic Inculturation	15	4	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Social Justice Course	12.5	4	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Pastoral Formation Workshops	25	1,2,3,4	Fri/Sat	
<b>PASTORAL PRACTIUCM</b> 285 hours	Pastoral Care Outreach (Homeless, Religious Education Hospitals, Hospice)	60 per yr.	1,2,3,4	

**DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM**  
**2007- 2008**

<u>Field of Study</u>	<u>Concentration</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Trimester</u>
<b>SPIRITUAL THEOLOGY</b> 80 hours	History of Christian Spirituality I	15	1	1 <sup>st</sup>
	History of Christian Spirituality II	15	1	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Introduction to Spirituality	10	1	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Prayer-Personal and Public	10	1	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Principles of Spiritual Life I	15	2	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Principles of Spiritual Life II	15	2	2 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>SPIRITUAL FORMATION</b> 410 hours	Evening Prayer & Night Prayer weekly		1,2,3,4	
	Community Liturgy weekly			
	An annual retreat (Lent) (aspirant/candidate and wife)			
	Friday night to Sunday afternoon			
	Spiritual Direction (Monthly)			
	Spiritual Convocation (Spring) Spiritual Conferences			
<b>LITURGY</b> 110.5 Hours	Liturgy 1	10	1	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Liturgy 2	10	1	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Baptismal Catechesis	10	2	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Liturgical Practicum 1 (Baptism)	10	3	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Liturgical Practicum 2 (Benediction/Communion Service)	10	3	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Liturgical Practicum 3 (Marriage)	10	3	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Liturgical Practicum 4	15	4	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Liturgical Practicum 5 Liturgical Workshops	15 25	4 1,2,3,4	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sep-May
<b>CHURCH HISTORY</b> 30 Hours	Church History 1	10	4	1 <sup>st</sup>
	Church History 2	10	4	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Church History 3	10	4	3 <sup>rd</sup>
<b>HOMILETICS</b> 40 Hours	Proclamation Skills	10	2	3 <sup>rd</sup>
	Homiletics I	15	4	2 <sup>nd</sup>
	Homiletics II	15	4	3 <sup>rd</sup>

The revised four-year Diaconate Formation Program for the Archdiocese of New York integrates the spiritual, theological, and pastoral dimensions. The overall time structure of the formation program can be broken down into its three major dimensions:

Spiritual dimensions: 490.0 hours  
Theological dimension: 460.5 hours  
Pastoral dimension: 402.5 hours  
Total formation: 1,323.0 hours

**SECTION 9**

**DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM**  
**ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK**  
**CANDIDATE PATH I (Year III)**

**I. HUMAN DIMENSION**

**APPRECIATION 1:** His personality [strengths and limitations] ,

**APPRECIATION 2:** The necessity for ongoing spiritual and academic development

**APPRECIATION 3:** The role of respectful listening and tolerance in dialogue with others whose point of view may differ from his

**KNOWLEDGE OF:** The models of faith and moral development [through discussion and action]

**Abilities/Skills:**

1. To learn how to be self-reflective
2. To appreciate the importance of sharing his experiences and attitudes with others, i.e., the formation team members, his pastor, his spiritual director, his wife.
3. To recognize appropriate boundaries
4. To be a good listener
5. To demonstrate the use of appropriate resources for his physical, emotional and spiritual development
6. To take initiative in self-study and in completing home assignments
7. To respect each person
8. To be open to change through reflective growth in understanding
9. To express his position candidly in sharing for study and dialogue, neither intimidating nor being intimidated in doing so
10. To integrate and prioritize his personal boundaries relating to family, recreation, work, ministry and time alone.
11. To contribute to and utilize a support system
12. To be accepted as a trusted participant who keeps confidences
13. To communicate effectively in speech and written word
14. To assist the aspirant to be a collaborator in ministry

**TIME FRAME:** The Aspirant Period - **September - June**

**PERSONNEL:** The pastoral supervisor, the parochial staff, the formation director and his team,

**II. SPIRITUAL DIMENSION**

**APPRECIATION 1:** God's redeeming activity in his ministerial life and experiences

**APPRECIATION 2:** His commitment to Christian ministry as rooted in the baptismal call

**APPRECIATION 3** A personal and communal prayer life

**APPRECIATION 4** His state in life, responsibilities and role in diaconal discernment

**APPRECIATION 5** An ecumenical perspective in formation

**KNOWLEDGE:** The formation of a strong Christian spirituality

**DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM**  
**Archdiocese of New York**

**CANDIDATE PATH I (Year III)**

**II. SPIRITUAL DIMENSION**

**Abilities/Skills:**

- To practice in prayer and in action an attitude of discipleship to Christian unity
- To reflect on his faith experiences
- To regularly read the Scriptures (*Lectio Divina*), meditating on the mystery of God as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier
- To commit to a pattern of personal and communal prayer through regular praying the Liturgy of the Hours, especially Morning and Evening Prayer
- Devotion to Mary and to the saints
- To frequent the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation as often as possible
- To reflect theologically on his faith experience through regular spiritual direction
- To foster an appreciation of baptismal ministry among others, enabling others to reflect upon their faith journey in relationship to this call
- To ascertain, if married, the quality of his relationship with his wife and children and the need for dialogue and mutual consent to continue in formation
- To commit to perpetual celibacy, if unmarried, and live a single lifestyle in an appropriate manner.

**TIME FRAME:** The Aspirant Period - September - June

**PERSONNEL:** The spiritual director, the pastor, the family

**III. INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION**

**KNOWLEDGE of:** The Catechism of the Catholic Church

**KNOWLEDGE of:** The sacraments of Christian initiation and the Sacrament of Holy Orders, especially the Order of Deacon

**KNOWLEDGE of :** Pastoral resources

**APPRECIATION of:** The Eucharist as the summit and center of Christian communal life, especially in his formation community

**APPRECIATION of:** The Church's spiritual traditions including its various paths of spirituality

**Abilities/Skills:**

- To articulate the primary teachings of the Church and discuss contemporary issues in light of this teaching.
- To speak informally on Christian vocations and ordained ministry, particularly the Order of Deacon and its threefold ministries of Word, Liturgy and Charity
- To actively participate in the Eucharist as a lector or extraordinary minister of the Eucharist and in ministry to the sick
- To experience and invite others into meaningful expressions of prayer and forms of Christian spirituality
- To refer others to appropriate pastoral resources as needed.

**DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM  
Archdiocese of New York**

**CANDIDATE PATH I (Year III)**

**III. INTELLECTUAL DIMENSION**

**Abilities/Skills:**

To study and discuss the following Vatican and post-Vatican documents pertaining to the Sacred Order of Deacon, i.e. *Sacrum Diaconorum Ordinem, Apostolicam Actuositatem, Ad Pascendum, Ad Gentes*

**TIME FRAME:** The Aspirant Period - **September - June**

**PERSONNEL:** The adjunct faculty, the formation director and his staff.

**IV. PASTORAL DIMENSION**

**KNOWLEDGE of:** Effective communication skills

**KNOWLEDGE of :** Theological sources that ground, interpret, and guide the pastoral life of the Church

**KNOWLEDGE of:** How to approach theological study from within the context of his pastoral experience and ministry

**APPRECIATION of:** A multicultural perspective in formation

**Abilities/Skills:**

To discuss in depth the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World [*Gaudium et Spes*]

To highlight and review the pastoral and social teaching documents of the post-Vatican Church

To become familiar with other Christian denominations and other faith experiences so that he develops an ecumenical perspective in his pastoral endeavors to serve the human needs of all peoples.

To appreciate the multi-cultural traditions of the Archdiocese of New York, most especially, the Hispanic and Asian populations

To discern how God is calling him into ministry and to link his pastoral and personal experience to theology—apprehending God’s presence through TOUCHING the needs of the poor, to be an ADVOCATE for people in need, and a FACILITATOR of the community’s resources in response to human needs.

**V. DIACONAL VOCATION AND MINISTRY**

**APPRECIATION of :** His ongoing relationship with God as the source of his ministry and discernment of a diaconal vocation

**APPRECIATION of:** His call and his personal commitment to live the Good News in all aspects of life

**APPRECIATION of:** The role and ministry of the deacon within the faith community

**DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM  
Archdiocese of New York**

**CANDIDATE PATH I (Year III)**

**KNOWLEDGE of:** The teaching that it is the Church that calls and affirms the vocation to an ordained ministry

**Abilities/Skills:**

1. To articulate his relationship with God and reasons for believing he has a call to the Order of Deacons within the formation community.
2. To articulate his call and commitment to his spiritual director and to the formation personnel
3. To communicate his call and commitment through self/peer/formation/pastoral/family assessments.
4. To participate collaboratively in all aspects of formation
5. To be cooperative, open and respectful to all who journey with him
6. To be receptive of insights offered by the formation personnel, his wife and family, peers, and his pastor.
7. To identify, call forth, affirm, and support the gifts, strengths, and talents of others.

**SECTION 10**

## ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Assessment is an integral part of vocational discernment. The internal vocational decision must be validated by the Church. A vocation is a call from God, but an aspirant/candidate cannot be the sole judge in his own case. The Church has a responsibility to determine the authenticity of the call by making careful inquiry in the external forum: "Can this man act and live as a special sign of the servant Christ?"

Admission is only a first step in the formation program. Those appointed by the Ordinary will examine and evaluate the progress of each man, each year, to determine if he should be recommended for the next step. It may prove beneficial that a certain candidate be advised to pursue his baptismal call to holiness in another form of service to the Church. Thus, the guiding principle in the evaluation process is twofold: What can be determined to be in the best interest of the Church? (which always remains paramount), and what can be determined to be in the best interest of the candidate?

*Every assessment has a dual purpose. It affirms the participant in identifying his gifts and capabilities, exhibits areas for his further growth and development, and indicates his limitations. The assessment of the individual participant also points out the strength, potential, and limitation of the formation program. Assessments should be made and communicated on a regular basis. (National Directory, par. 156)*

### **Faculty's Assessment**

Faculty members are asked to assess each student's ability to understand the major concepts presented in class by a measure they deem appropriate: an examination; a research paper or a project. Theological course evaluations are based on key dogmatic and moral principles presented during the course.

*"The requirement for examinations in the fundamental courses and a comprehensive examination at the conclusion of the course of study, prescribed by the Congregation of Catholic Education, may be effectively achieved in a variety of ways" [Draft of the National Directory...paragraph 228]*

- *For certain subjects the traditional assessments by examinations or academic papers are appropriate" [Draft of the National Directory...paragraph 232].*
- *Often, in independent study, the method of assessment usually applied is the traditional methods of examinations or academic papers. Even here, however, the sense of partnership can be fostered with the opportunity for the candidate to present a portfolio of his accomplishments; to design a variety of ways in which he may demonstrate his readiness,' or to engage in a collaborative independent study venture with those charged with his formation [National Directory...par 224]*
- *A comprehensive and integrative seminar, used in professional education, is recommended as a model to determine the level of assimilation and achievement of the candidate at the completion of his theological course of study. The faculty facilitators of the seminar evaluate  
>how effectively the individual candidate is 'able to explain his faith and bring to*

*maturity a lively ecclesial conscience;*

*>how he has acquired 'the capacity to read a situation and an adequate inculturation of the Gospel;*

*>and how successfully he used 'communication techniques and group dynamics, the ability to speak in public, and to be able to give guidance and counsel.*

*In the seminar, he is called upon not only to demonstrate an intellectual understanding of theology, but also its application in pastoral practice.*

*The goal of this comprehensive and integrative seminar is always to project: 'how will this person live a diaconate lifestyle and ministry? [The National Directory, par. 225]*

## Diaconate Formation Program Sample Assessment Report

### I. Human Qualities

1. Is the aspirant respectful of others' opinions?  
 Yes  Occasionally  No
2. Does the aspirant speak appropriately?  
 Always  Occasionally  Rarely
3. Is the aspirant flexible in attitude and behavior?  
 Always  Occasionally  Rarely
4. Is the aspirant open to change?  
 Always  Occasionally  Rarely
5. Is the aspirant a good listener?  
 Yes  Occasionally  No
6. Does the aspirant take the initiative in self-study ?  
 Yes  Occasionally  No
7. Is the aspirant cooperative, open, and respectful to all?  
 Yes  Occasionally  No

### II. Intellectual Dimension

1. Does the aspirant *regularly participate* in class discussions?  
 Frequently  Occasionally  Rarely
- A. Does the aspirant ask *relevant questions*?  
 Frequently  Occasionally  Rarely

### II. Intellectual Dimension

2. Did the student complete his assignments *on time*?

\_\_\_ Always \_\_\_ Occasionally \_\_\_ Rarely

A. The **quality** of completed assignment was:

\_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_ Very Good \_\_\_ Satisfactory \_\_\_ Needs improvement

3. Does the aspirant communicate effectively in speech and written word?

\_\_\_ Always \_\_\_ Rarely \_\_\_ Needs Improvement

## **II. Student Outcomes**

Each course has several student outcomes that the teacher will incorporate into the course material. Each student is responsible to learn, to develop a skill, or to appreciate the concepts taught so that he can use them in his pastoral ministry.

## **III. Teacher Comments**

Teachers are asked to make observations and to assist the formation team with their responsibility to advise, to counsel, and to mentor each student along the way. A teacher's comments assist the teacher in this endeavor.

Teacher's comments/observations \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **IV. Comprehension**

*Directions:* Please check a letter-grade below. The trimester grade (1) indicates the comprehension level achieved by a student during the trimester. Your assessment should be determined by objective criteria, that is, an examination(s), a research paper, or a project, etc. as well as by the quality and frequency of a student's class participation.

Comprehension Assessment: \_\_ A \_\_ B \_\_ C \_\_ D

## **Pastor's Assessment**

The Pastor or his delegate evaluates the aspirant/ candidate's pastoral practicum experience in June of each year.

- *"Can the candidate do that which his training is preparing him to do?"*
- *Does the way in which he presents himself in public ministry show, for example, an integrated and balanced sense of the ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council and an understanding of his role within the Church and in its mission of service?*
- *Does the way he participates in and leads prayerful gatherings of his ministerial community give evidence of not only liturgical knowledge, but also liturgical sensitivity?*
- 
- 

## **Pastor's Assessment (continued)**

- *Can he give evidence in his pastoral field ministries not only of a properly formed*

*conscience and moral sensitivity, but can he form others in a convincing as well as sound manner?" (National Directory, par.220)*

The Pastor also evaluates annually the aspirant/candidate's potential as a team member as well as his ability to communicate with the parochial staff and parishioners. In April of each year, the pastor submits his annual evaluation of the aspirant/candidate.

### **Assessment by the Pastor**

*Does the Candidate demonstrate the Ability/Skill to:*

- ❖ solicit input from those who will be affected by activities or policies
- ❖ recruit, train, coordinate and support parish volunteers in their ministerial development
- ❖ recognize and work to dispel prejudices and cliques within one's own life and that of the community
- ❖ demonstrates appropriate respect, responsibility and. accountability to the pastor and his delegates
- ❖ cooperate in the implementation of diocesan and parish policies and programs
- ❖ set healthy and responsible goals
- ❖ maintain a healthy balance in one's personal life and ministry
- ❖ develop positive support systems among family, mends, and peers
- ❖ be flexible
- ❖ demonstrate dependability
- ❖ enable others to reflect upon and express their faith experiences
- ❖ demonstrate patience and sensitivity in communicating and relating to staff, families and organizations in the parish
- ❖ establish prudent and appropriate boundaries for interpersonal conduct

### **Formation Team Member's Assessment**

Aspirants and candidates are interviewed by formation team members periodically throughout the year. In January, the team reviews the course evaluation, seeks information from both the aspirant/candidate and his wife regarding their progress in the formation program, and makes recommendations to assist the aspirant/candidate with his ongoing formation. In June, after consulting with other appropriate sources of discernment, e.g. the faculty, the pastor, the wife, and the candidate himself, the formation team members present a summary of the information to the candidate with a final recommendation from the Director of formation. The summary with its recommendation is presented to the Rector of the seminary who reviews the information and determines whether to advance the candidate to the next year or recommend an alternate program.

*Interviews are scheduled regularly with the aspirants and candidates. The director of formation and those who collaborate with him address concerns and become collectively aware of their common collaborative role in assisting, counseling, and assessing the aspirant and candidate. This responsibility is of utmost importance. Due care is taken to preserve the confidentiality of spiritual direction at these interviews. (National Directory, par 226).*

### **Formation Team Member's Assessment**

The Director of Formation and the members of the formation team, conscious of their

serious responsibility to build up the Body of Christ, exercise their duty in the faith that God will not allow the Church to lack ministers if the worthy are promoted and those who are not suited to the ministry are guided with fatherly kindness.

**Candidate's self-evaluation and his wife's assessment**

Aspirants/candidates annually evaluate the spiritual, theological, and pastoral progress they have made since entering the formation program. The wife likewise evaluates the effect the formation program has had on her and her family.

**Assessment by the wife**

*Demonstrate Ability/Skill to:*

- ❖ communicate and share one's ministry, prayer and formation with family
- ❖ balance marriage and ministry commitments

### **Ministry requirements [in general]**

*Before an aspirant is admitted to Candidacy or installed as a Reader or Acolyte, he must meet the following criteria:*

1. He attends classes regularly and participates, as required, in all aspects of the Diaconate Formation Program: spiritual, theological, and pastoral.
2. He has completed all written assignments to the best of his ability;
3. He has an approved Spiritual Director who he consults with on a regular basis;
4. He attends Mass as often as possible in his parish and frequents the sacrament of reconciliation on a regular basis;
5. He has the support of a sponsoring pastor, parish community, and his family;
6. He has fulfilled his assigned pastoral responsibilities

### **Admission to Candidacy**

*Before being admitted to Candidacy, an aspirant:*

1. has received a better than satisfactory report from his professors regarding his understanding of the material presented in class;
2. demonstrates the ability, and / or knowledge [understanding] of the following:
  - A. preparation of the altar and sanctuary for Mass;
  - B. Ordo, Lectionary, Sacramentary;
  - C. liturgical calendar / liturgical colors;
  - D. knows the names of the vessels, liturgical symbols, and knows where everything goes in the sacristy, purification of the sacred vessels after Mass.
  - E. prays the liturgy of the hours on a regular basis;
  - F. has successfully completed the pastoral practicum for two semesters in his home parish

### **Ministry of Reader**

*Before being installed as a Reader, a candidate: .*

1. has received a better than satisfactory report from his professors regarding his understanding of the material presented in class;
2. can proclaim the Word of God clearly, authentically, and distinctly; and serve in the sanctuary with poise and ease;
3. has knowledge of the structure of the Lectionary
4. prays the liturgy of the hours on a regular basis;
5. gives evidence of a devotion to the Word of God by reading and reflecting on scriptural passages;
6. has a willingness to share the Word of God with others;
7. continues to maintain a balance among family, job, and formation priorities;
8. articulates a good understanding of the deacon's role in the church today;

### **Ministry of Reader**

*Before being installed as a Reader, a candidate: .*

9. has established qualities of a good deacon-candidate: has a strong belief system; enjoys working with others; is a spiritual person; is highly sensitive, perceptive, and accepting; works hard at building a positive team climate; is very generous with his time and energy; sees himself as a self-giving, "good person;" and finally has a high energy-level and puts a high priority on family.

### **The Ministry of Acolyte**

*Before being installed as an Acolyte, the candidate:*

1. functions as an acolyte in his own parish;
2. demonstrates knowledge of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and the Motu Proprio of Paul VI;
3. gives continued evidence of a deep devotion to the Eucharist by attendance at the liturgy, benediction, holy hours and nocturnal adoration;
4. sets aside a portion of each day for private prayer and meditation on the scriptures;
5. can serve in the sanctuary with ease and poise;
6. is able to present to parish councils and vicariate councils the role and function of a deacon in the church today;
7. can lead a scripture prayer group or other prayer group, or teach a scripture group;
8. can communicate trust, care and support to a person who is ill either at home or in the hospital;
9. has the ability to prepare and deliver a reflection based on a evening prayer reading; .
10. can meet deadlines and keep appointments;
11. can deal with one's own emotions and those of others;
12. can concretize, does not just speak in generalities, but can deal with concrete experience and behavior;
13. can respect the opinions of others and their person when not approving of their behavior;
14. can accept education as a lifetime process and to commit oneself to this process.
15. continues to show qualities of a good deacon-candidate.

### **Assessment by the Pastoral Supervisor**

*Demonstrate Ability/Skill to:*

- ❖ discern, set, and maintain healthy and responsible boundaries in all pastoral relationships
- ❖ create a hospitable environment where people are valued for who they are and who they might become .
- ❖ foster an appreciation for other religious traditions
- ❖ be an active listener
- ❖ have good verbal and non-verbal communication skills
- ❖ express oneself succinctly in a well ordered and logical way
- ❖ express one's feelings and views, yet open to differing views with tolerance
- ❖ manage time well
- ❖ **Assessment by the Pastoral Supervisor (continued):**
- ❖ *Demonstrate Ability/Skill to:*

- ❖ make decisions through consensus model
- ❖ empower others with leadership skills
- ❖ have multi cultural sensitivities
- ❖ be empathetic, genuine, respectful
- ❖ communities
- ❖ communicate with and relate to a wide variety of people
- ❖ initiate, create, and sustain a positive collaborative relationship with all colleagues in ministry
  - have a personal awareness and response to the needs of particular ethnic/racial

**Section 11**

# DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM

## Archdiocese of New York

### THE CANDIDATE and HIS WIFE

**ANNUAL RETREAT...**Third Year Candidates and their wives must attend an annual weekend retreat (Friday - Sunday) each year with members of the formation community. Failure to do so will require a leave of absence for at least one year.

**ATTENDANCE** – Candidates must attend all class sessions, Friday formation evenings and Saturday formation days, the annual retreat, ministry days, and the diaconate ordination.

A candidate who cannot attend a scheduled activity because of **illness or a job conflict** is to call the **Formation Office (914) 367-8269 or 8270 on the day of the absence**. Please leave your name, and the reason(s) for your absence on a voice message. As a follow-up, **on the evening of your return to the formation program**, please provide a **letter** addressed to the Director indicating **the date(s) of your absence and stating the reason(s) for the absence**. Please present your letter to the attendance coordinator at sign-in.

If a candidate knows has a **conflict** because of a planned event in the future, he is to make an appointment with the Director to personally inform him of the situation. As a follow-up, **on the evening of your return to the formation program**, please provide a **letter** addressed to the Director indicating the date(s) of your absence and stating the reason(s) for the absence. Please present your letter to the attendance coordinator at sign-in.

The candidate who cannot attend a class(es) is responsible to contact the instructor, explain the reason(s) for the absence, and request information on the information covered so as to prepare himself for the next class by keeping up with the assigned reading and/or written assignment.

***Prolonged sickness or excessive absence [2 or more absences per trimester]*** due to a family or job conflict will require that the aspirant take a temporary leave of absence from the formation program.

### **ATTENDANCE OF WIVES**

Candidates' wives must attend the annual Orientation evening, Saturday formation days (St. Ephrem, St. Lawrence Day), the annual retreat, ministry days (Admission to Candidacy, Ministries of Lector and Acolyte), and the diaconate ordination.

These gatherings provide an opportunity for the wife to grow spiritually, to dialogue with deacon wives, to learn about the formation process and their future role as a deacon's wife, and to celebrate with the family members of candidates who have advanced to the next level of their formation prior to ordination.

Wives of aspirants and candidates are most welcome to attend classes on either Monday, Tuesday (Poughkeepsie), or Wednesday evenings. They are also encouraged to participate in the Wednesday liturgy with their husband.

#### **CANCELLATION OF CLASSES.**

In the event of a snow storm or if very icy conditions exist (especially in the northern region), the following events will occur:

(1) **the Director will leave a voice message** indicating whether or not classes will be in session or are cancelled for that evening. Aspirants are **to call the Formation Office (914) 367-8269 after 3 pm.**

(2) **a telephone chain relay** is also used to communicate information to students by students. The aspirant who is first on the chain relay list will personally contact the next aspirant to inform him of any changes or important information. If a candidate does not personally speak with another student, he is to leave a message on his voice mail and proceed to call the next student on the list, leave a message if no one is available and continue the same process until he reaches someone who can then continue the chain.

#### **COMMUNICATION**

**The Director will e-mail** candidates on a regular basis regarding program information, schedule changes, or updates on diaconal ministry throughout the country. If you do not have an email, please contact a classmate who can contact you in the event of important program changes or provide you with a copy of the email sent.

**DRESS CODE:** Candidates are to dress neatly. Sport pants (not jeans), shirt, tie and shoes (not sneakers or loafers) **would be standard for Monday (Tuesday) and Wednesday evenings.** Moreover, a candidate assigned to be a leader at Evening Prayer or Reader at Liturgy or who assumes any leadership role is to wear a jacket, sport pants, shirt, tie and shoes.

**FORMATION DAYS/EVENINGS...**are conference days that focus on a spiritual, pastoral or diaconal issue. They are scheduled on Friday evenings or Saturdays throughout the year. Attendance is required. Please refer to your annual calendar for specific dates. Formation evenings we will begin with Evening Prayer at 6:40pm in the Deacon Chapel of Saint Joseph's Seminary.

**Friday formation evenings and Saturday formation days** are less formal. No tie is required. However, casual, neat pants with a sports jacket is expected. No jeans, sneakers, or zippered jackets.

#### **FORMATION DIMENSIONS**

##### **SPIRITUAL FORMATION**

"To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" [NIV]  
(*Micah 6:8b*).

The goal of Christian spiritual formation is union with God in Christ. As with all other Christians, the aspirant or candidate's spiritual life, founded on his baptism, should be centered in the Paschal Mystery of Christ. His faith should be constantly nourished by reading and meditating on the Scriptures. His activity should be enlivened and strengthened by regular participation in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Spiritual formation is the keystone of the diaconate formation program. The diaconate is meant to enhance the Church to which the aspirant or candidate is committed for life, the parish for which he provides a visible sign of service, and the person of the deacon and his family. Spiritual growth of the aspirant / candidate, his wife, and family is integrated into the total formation program. Theological knowledge and pastoral experience will naturally enter into the aspirant or candidate's prayer life.

*"The element which most characterizes diaconal spirituality is the discovery of and sharing in the love of Christ the servant, who came not to be served but to serve. The aspirant / candidate must therefore be helped progressively to acquire those attitudes which are specifically diaconal. . . simplicity of heart, total giving of self and disinterest for self, humble and helpful love for the brothers and sisters, especially the poorest, the handmaid of the Lord, be present on this journey and be invoked as mother and auxiliatrix in the daily recitation of the Rosary" [Ratio Fundamentalibus Institutionis Diaconorum Permanentium, par. 72].*

*The spiritual foundation established during his formation years will help to make him a holy witness of the Gospel. At the time of his ordination, the Candidate will be reminded:*

*"Receive the Gospel of Christ whose Herald you now are.*

***Believe** what you read;*

***Teach** what you believe;*

*And **Practice** what you teach."*

**MONTHLY SPIRITUAL DIRECTION...** enhances the spiritual formation program by providing an opportunity to discuss and reflect on a component of diaconal life. Deacon Vincent Laurato will conduct the spiritual sessions at the Dunwoodie venue and Msgr. Martin at the Poughkeepsie venue. They are the Spiritual Advisors for the formation program. Conferences are regularly scheduled on Monday (Tuesday) evenings throughout the year. Please refer to your annual calendar for specific dates.

## **INTELLECTUAL FORMATION**

*“Intellectual formation is a necessary dimension of diaconal formation insofar as it offers the aspirant... a substantial nourishment for his spiritual life and a precious instrument for his ministry. It is particularly urgent today, in the face of the challenging of the new evangelization to which the Church is called at this difficult juncture of the millennium. Religious indifference, obscuring of values, loss of ethical convergence, and cultural pluralism demand that those involved in the ordained ministry have an intellectual formation which is complete and serious”* [Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconorum Permanentium, par 79].

## **PASTORAL FORMATION**

*“In the wide sense, pastoral formation coincides with spiritual formation: it is formation for an ever greater identification with the diakonia of Christ. . . In the strict sense, pastoral formation develops by means of specific theological discipline and a practical internship”* [Ratio. . . par 85].. . . *a practical internship should be provided for each candidate to permit him to meet in the field what he has learned in his study. It must be gradual, tailored to the individual and under continual supervision. For the choice of activities, account should be taken of the instituted ministries received, and their exercise should be evaluated’* [Ratio. . . par 87].

A candidate will be out of his home two evenings during the week plus an occasional Friday or Saturday. Therefore, it is important to note that the candidate is not expected to maintain the same parish commitment he had prior to his admission into the formation program. Liturgical assignments in the parish, such as, Reader or Eucharistic Minister at Mass, are not considered an integral part of pastoral formation.

The pastoral outreach formation is an opportunity to put into practice the theories studied, and to help develop pastoral skills under the guidance of the pastor/supervisor. It is very important to be conscious **to establish a balance** among job responsibilities, family obligations, and involvement in pastoral outreach formation. The *Ratio* states:

*At the same time as (and possibly in relationship with) the teaching of pastoral theology, a practical internship should be provided for each candidate, to permit him to meet in the field what he has learned in his study. It must be gradual, tailored to the individual and under continual supervision. For the choice of activities, account should be taken of the instituted ministries received, and their exercise should be evaluated (§ 87).*

The following apostolates are assigned to the **3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> years**:

**Third Year Candidates:** Hospital Ministry. In the lower counties the men minister at Westchester Medical Center. In the upper counties the men minister at Vassar or Benedictine Hospitals.

## Fourth Year Candidates: Ministry at Calvary or Rosary Hill

### **MINISTERIAL STEPS TO THE SACRED ORDER OF DEACON**

**ADMISSION TO CANDIDACY**...At the beginning of the **third year of formation**, a public ceremony celebrates not only the intention of the Aspirant to continue, but the approval given to him by the Rector to advance in his preparation toward the Sacred Order of Deacon.

**MINISTRY OF READER**...During the First Trimester of the **third year** of formation, the Candidate is installed as a Reader. This ceremony is the Church's public commissioning of the Candidate to serve the People of God as a Proclaimer of the Word of God.

**MINISTRY OF ACOLYTE**...During the First Trimester of the **fourth year** of formation, the Candidate is installed as a Minister of the Eucharist. He is commissioned to assist in the distribution of Holy Communion during Mass and bring Communion to the sick in hospitals, nursing homes, and to those who cannot attend the parish liturgy.

**ORDINATION TO DIACONATE**...Upon successful completion of the spiritual, theological and pastoral requirements and with the consent of his wife, the Candidate is called by the Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary, in the name of the Cardinal Archbishop, to the Sacred Order of Deacon. The Candidate declares that he is "ready and willing" to become a visible sign of Christ, the Servant-Healer, to the People of God in the Archdiocese of New York.

*The candidate will draw new strength from the gift of the Holy Spirit. He will exercise his duties as a Minister of Word, of Altar, and of Charity with humility, compassion, and gentleness. He will make himself a servant to all. He will faithfully live out his calling as a minister of service and enthusiastically collaborate with the body of priests who sacramentally reach out to the People of God on behalf of the Ordinary.*

### **Pastor's Role as Mentor and Supervisor**

#### **Year III**

#### **Ministry of Word**

The Candidate is to proclaim the scriptures to the parish community at Liturgy. (*The National Directory - Candidate Path - Basic Standards - Intellectual Dimension*).

#### **Ministry of the Liturgy**

The Candidate is to assist at baptisms, marriages, and wake services. The pastor introduces the Candidate to sacramental record keeping.

#### **Ministry of Charity (Justice)**

The Candidate is to visit a nursing home or hospital and assist the priest with the distribution of holy communion. When he is not attending to the catechetical needs of the community, the candidate is ministering in his home parish under the direction of his pastor. A minimum of 2 hours per week is devoted to the *munera* of charity.

*Hospital Ministry. In the lower counties the men minister at Westchester Medical Center. In the upper counties the men minister at Vassar or Benedictine Hospitals.*

### **Prayer and Family Life**

The pastor will make every effort to visit the Candidate's family twice during the year, once preferably at his house. (*The National Directory - Candidate Path - Basic Standards - Spiritual Dimension*)

The pastor makes note of the Candidate's participation in the sacramental life of the parish.

### **Other**

The Candidate gives a brief talk on diaconal ministry to a parish group.

### **Evaluations**

The pastor is to submit his assessments of the Candidate in **December** and **April**. The end-of-year evaluation is due in **June**.

### **Year IV**

#### **Ministry of Word**

The Candidate is to present a baptism instruction to parents. The Candidate is to present a reflection on death at a wake service.

The Candidate is to present a reflection on the Eucharist at an Holy Hour.

The Candidate is to present a reflection on prayer to a parish group.

#### **Ministry of the Liturgy**

The Candidate (acolyte) assists the celebrant at Mass.

The Candidate tends to the pastoral care of the sick.

#### **Ministry of Charity (Justice)**

The Candidate reaches out to those who are dying at Calvary or Rose Hill. When he is not attending to the needs of the dying, the Candidate is ministering in his home parish under the direction of his pastor. A minimum of 2 hours per week is devoted to pastoral outreach.

*Ministry at Calvary or Rosary Hill or at a hospice facility*

#### **Evaluations**

The pastor is to submit two assessments: **December** and **March**.

*In addition to the aforementioned ministries, candidates are asked to assist in their home parish under the supervision of their pastor.*

## **PATHS OF FORMATION**

***Aspirant Path:*** “The goal of a “suitable human dimension” is to help the deacon develop “his human personality in such a way that it becomes a bridge and not an obstacle for others in their meeting with Jesus [the] Christ.”

The Aspirant Path in formation is also a time for a married aspirant and his wife to assess the quality of their relationship and consider the ramifications of his possible ordination to the diaconate for their married life. For the single aspirant, it is a time to discern his capacity and receptivity for celibacy. [N.D. 189-190].

***Candidate Path:*** “Emphasis needs to be placed upon his relational and collaborative qualities and skills, especially his strengths and limitations in this regard. During the Candidate Path the candidate also needs to acknowledge his giftedness and to develop the habit of authentic self-criticism in light of the Gospel. He must learn how to balance his personal, familial, work and ministerial responsibilities.” [N.D. 215].

**REPORTS AND REFERENCE MATERIAL:** Reports and Projects are not to be hand-written. They are to be typed, double-spaced, with an 1.5" margin on the left side and a 1" margin on the right side; 1" from the top and bottom of the page.

We have the **Corrigan Library** at our disposal. The book collection of almost 81,000 volumes, including over 13,000 bound periodicals, reflects more than a century of collection-building by scholars, librarians, and benefactors. Currently, the library purchases at least 1,000 volumes each year to add to the core collection and subscribes to more than 260 periodicals.

The library is now "online." that is, has tapped in via phone lines to the bibliographic database maintained by the Multi-Public Access Library System (MPALS). Using any of the five terminals provided, library patrons can search the complete catalogued holdings of our own library, as well as the holdings of more than 25 other area libraries and library systems. Access to online periodicals and newspaper indices is also included.

Library Hours are as follows:

Monday - Friday	8am - 5pm
Saturdays	10am - 3pm

The library will be closed for the following holidays/holydays: Columbus Day, Thanksgiving Weekend, Immaculate Conception, and Christmas Week.

**If an aspirant or candidate copies material from a primary or secondary reference source and does not acknowledge the reference of that material in his research paper, the writer will receive an F for the research project and will be required to rewrite the paper within two weeks of the completed trimester. He will also be required to take an online course similar to the course offered in the formation program and be required to pass that course before proceeding onto the next year of formation.**

## **WEEKLY PROGRAM**

***MONDAY (TUESDAY) SCHEDULE***

6:40pm Evening Prayer in Chapel *Visperas Capilla de los Diaconos*  
The Holy Rosary in October / Stations of the Cross in Lent  
7:00 pm Conference  
7:25 pm Class session #1 *Clase primera*  
8:50 pm Class session #2 *Clase segunda*  
9:55 pm Night Prayer *Completas Capilla de los Diaconos*

***WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE***

6:40 pm Mass in Sts.Peter & Paul Chapel *Misa (Capilla central);*  
OLL's chapel,Poughkeepsie  
7:25 pm 1<sup>st</sup> period Class *Clase primera*  
8:50 pm 2<sup>nd</sup> period Class *Clase segunda*  
9:55 pm Night Prayer and Dismissal *Completas Capilla de los Diaconos*

**Revised 09/01/10**

### Textbook Order Information

<b>Alba House</b>	<b>1-800-343-2522</b>
<b>Ave Maria Press</b> (Parish Ministry Resources)	<b>1-800-282-1865 (Ext. 1)</b>
<b>Ignatius Press</b>	<b>1-800-651-1531</b>
<b>Liguori Publications</b>	<b>1-800-325-9521</b>
<b>Liturgy Training Publications</b>	<b>1-800-933-1800</b>
<b>Loyola Press</b>	<b>1-800-621-1008</b>
<b>Pauline Books and Media</b>	<b>1-800-872-5852</b>
> Official Documents of the Catholic Church	
<b>Paulist Press</b>	<b>1-800-836-3161</b>
<b>Resource Publications, Inc</b>	<b>1-888-273-7782</b>
> Resources for Ministry, Worship and Education	
<b>Sheed &amp; Ward</b>	<b>1-800-558-0580</b>
<b>St. Joseph's Communication</b> (EWTN resource)	<b>1-800-526-2151</b>
<b>The Liturgical Press Books</b>	<b>1-800-858-5450</b>
> Michael Glazier Books	
> Pueblo Books	
<b>Theological Book Service</b>	<b>1-800-558-0580</b>
<b>United States Catholic Conference</b>	<b>1-800-235-8722</b>
> Publishing Services	
> Publications and Videos	