

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK DIACONATE FORMATION PROGRAM

ADMINISTRATION

The **Cardinal Archbishop** (Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan) is the chief administrative office of the Archdiocese and is ultimately responsible for the welfare of the souls in his Archdiocese. The Cardinal Archbishop's involvement permeates every phase of religious and clerical life of the Archdiocese.

The **Rector of St. Joseph's Seminary** (Msgr. Peter Vaccari) oversees all phases of priestly, diaconal, and lay formation programs. He recommends to the Archbishop candidates who are recommended by faculty and staff to move on to the Sacred Order of the Presbyter or to the Sacred Order of Deacon.

The **Director of Formation** (Deacon Francis B. Orlando) *"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...."* [Ration Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconum Permanentium, par. 21]

THE PROGRAM

The Diaconate Formation Program is to be a spiritual, theological and pastoral preparation program for Catholic men who are called to the Holy Order of Deacon. The goal of the program is to prepare candidates to serve the Church of Archdiocese of New York as ordained ministers of Word, Altar, and Charity. Although fully integrated in one program, the program provides for formation at two venues: St. Joseph's Seminary (Dunwoodie) and Our Lady of Lourdes High School (Poughkeepsie).

The four-year Diaconate Formation Program also assists the families of the men in formation for their important role in supporting the ministry of their husbands and fathers. The formation program encourages the wives, when they are able, to attend formation classes; to participate in conferences and the annual retreat with their husbands. Family members are most welcome at weekly liturgies and to be part of the larger community. Also any deacon with the dioceses of Brooklyn and Rockville Center and the Archdiocese of New York are welcomed to any of the classes at either venue.

Before a man enters the formation program he participates in a yearlong Inquiry Period to discern the call to the diaconate.

The men in formation meet twice a week on [Monday and Wednesday evenings for the men attending at Dunwoodie, and Tuesday and Wednesday evenings for the men attending in Poughkeepsie] for classes, prayer, and fellowship. Courses are offered in Sacred Scripture, Dogma, Moral Theology, Canon Law, Church History, Liturgy, Homiletics, Pastoral Theology, and Spirituality.

The men in formation are also encouraged to take part in individual pastoral formation thought-out the year:

- First Year: the poor and the homeless
- Second Year: religious education with children and adults
- Third Year: patients in hospitals
- Fourth Year: patients who are terminally ill

Mass is celebrated weekly at each venue on Monday evening (on occasion in Spanish). The Liturgy of the Hours (Evening and Night Prayer) is prayed communally on the evenings when the men meet. All the men in formation are encouraged to pray Liturgy of Hours privately on the other evenings of the week. The men are required to have a Spiritual Director who assists them to deepen their personal relationship with God.

Ordination to the Diaconate takes place at the end of the fourth year of formation. Deacons are ordained for service to the Diocesan Ordinary. Presently, it is customary for the Diocesan Ordinary to assign the newly ordained deacon to his home parish since it was this parish community that sponsored him through formation. Some newly ordained deacons may be assigned to specialized ministries such as the prisons or hospitals, or to administrative positions within the diocese. Deacons do work in a variety of ministries including educational, liturgical, sacramental, and charitable.