

Formation Process

The process of formation is one of discernment. The call to the diaconate is questioned, refined, understood and decided within the context of the Human, Spiritual, Intellectual and Pastoral dimensions of his life.

The process begins with an information session; a discussion of the ministry of the deacon, requirements for entrance into discernment and the process of formation. At no time in the process is the man guaranteed ordination.

Key to his discernment is the man's wife who is required to give her informed consent. She is asked to participate in some aspects of formation and is invited to be involved in as much beyond what is required as she desires.

THE INQUIRY PERIOD

During this one year period, the man is invited to learn more about the diaconate, his call as a baptized Catholic and his gifts and talents compared to those of ordained ministry. He is encouraged to question and to listen to God so he may understand and acknowledge the direction to which God is calling him.

He will be enrolled in a class entitled "Introduction to Catholic Teachings" where he will explore the depth and breadth of Church teachings. He and his wife will attend four sessions of prayer and deeper study of the life and ministry of deacons. He will continue to minister in various ways in his parish with an eye toward assessing that ministry.

Reflective writing, recommendations, interviews and assessments are done; all to help the inquirer come to know himself better in the Human, Spiritual, Intellectual and Pastoral dimensions of his life, and allow for a picture of suitability to ordained ministry to develop.

THE ASPIRANCY PERIOD

Following the Bishop's approval to continue, the man will move to a one year period of time to "test the waters" of the formation process. During this time, he continues his parish ministries, reflecting on it in light of what he has

learned thus far. He begins formal theological studies in the Master Degree or the Certificate in Pastoral Studies programs through Christ the King Seminary. He attends a prayer/study weekend each month [September - May] from Friday evening through Sunday afternoon at the Seminary where his wife joins him for part of the weekend.

THE CANDIDACY PERIOD

Upon approval of the bishop, the man enters into candidacy for three years of honing his skills for ministry and deepening his understanding of the call to ordained ministry. He continues his theological studies, is present for the monthly prayer/study weekends, engages in pastoral field ministry and is present for a spiritual retreat. He celebrates the rites of Candidacy, Reader and Acolyte as he moves through to the celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

POST ORDINATION – ONGOING FORMATION

The deacon is provided with a three year post-ordination program after which he will seek continuing education each year on his own. A retreat is required each year following ordination.

ARE YOU INTERESTED?

Those interested in learning more about this ministry are invited to contact:

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Permanent Deacons



M E N O F S E R V I C E

Just as Jesus said...
"I come not to be served,
but to serve."

~ MT 20:28

Who is a Deacon?



Through ordination, a deacon is a man constituted as a sacred minister and member of the hierarchy, with a distinct identity and integrity in the Church that marks him a cleric who is ordained to *diakonia*, namely, a service to God's people in communion with the bishop and his body of priests.

MINISTRY OF

the Word

The deacon participates as an evangelizer and teacher in the Church's mission of heralding the word. In the Liturgy of the Word, especially in the Eucharist or in those liturgies where he is the presiding minister, the deacon proclaims the Gospel. Other forms of his function in the Church's ministry of the word include catechetical instruction, formation of candidates preparing for the sacraments, leadership roles in retreats and renewal programs and outreach to alienated Catholics.

Diakonia ~ \dē-a-kó-nē-a\
service to God's people.

SOME OF THE

Admission Requirements

- Be a Baptized man who is Confirmed.
- Be a Roman Catholic for a minimum of 5 years.
- Be between 30 and 55 years of age at the time of admission to the program.
- Enjoy good physical and mental health with no condition which would impede diaconal ministry.
- Be a registered parishioner within the

MINISTRY OF

Liturgy

In the celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy, the deacon participates in specific penitential rites, proclaims the Gospel, may preach the homily in accord with the provisions of Canon Law and voices the needs of the people in the General Intercessions. He assists the presider in accepting the offerings of the people and helps to prepare the gifts for sacrifice. He may extend the invitation of peace, serve as an ordinary minister of communion and finally he dismisses the community at the end of the liturgy. Other liturgical roles include those of solemnly baptizing infants, witnessing marriages, bringing Viaticum to the dying and presiding over funeral rites. He may officiate at exposition, benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, conduct public rites of blessing and administer the Church's Sacramentals as designated in the Book of Blessings.

Diocese of Buffalo.

- Possess financial security with a history of steady employment. Deacons in the Diocese of Buffalo do not receive financial compensation for their ministry.
- Possess stability in his life regarding career, family relationships, etc. which is in concert with the Church's values.

MINISTRY OF

Charity

The deacon's ministry of Word and Liturgy would be severely deficient, if it were not accompanied by his exemplary witness and assistance in the Church's ministry of Charity and Justice. Thus, Pope John Paul II affirms both: "This is at the very heart of the diaconate to which you have been called: to be a servant of your brothers and sisters." Thus we see the deacon ministering in hospitals, nursing homes, prisons, soup kitchens and being of service to his fellow workers and, of course, his family. In a world hungry and thirsty for convincing signs of the compassion and liberating love of God, the deacon makes the mission of the Church visible in his words and deeds, responding to the master's command of service and providing real-life examples of how to carry it out.

- If married, be married for at least 5 years and live a stable and valid marriage, and have the consent of his spouse.
- If single, enjoy a stable celibate life with a history of healthy relationships, and understand the implications of the charism of celibacy.