

## **PERMANENT DIACONATE**

### **Status of the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Fresno**

Bishop John T. Steinbock started the Permanent Diaconate program in the Diocese of Fresno. Prior to the ordination of our first diocesan diaconate class in 2003, there were four (4) ordained deacons serving in parish ministries. Most of our deacons are married men, but the program is open to both celibate and married men. Diaconate class #2 was ordained in 2007; class #3 in 2011, and class #4 will be ordained in 2016. The current timeframe calls for a new class to be ordained every three (3) years.

Diaconal formation is currently a **total of 5 ½ years** process, consisting of two years of formal lay formation, and 4 ½ years of diaconal academic and liturgical formation. The initial year of diaconal formation, identified as the Aspirancy discernment period, runs *concurrently* with the second year of lay formation through the diocesan Lay Formation Institute, or *LFI* program. The *LFI* Program is administered through the Office of Ministries at the Pastoral Center and not through the Diaconate Office, so please contact them at 559-488-7474 for information on when the next series of classes will be starting.

The policy manual governing permanent deacons and their ministry in this Diocese is very important reading for all pastors who have deacons, candidates or aspirants in their parishes. Please refer to this Permanent Diaconate section of your Clergy Manual when you have questions about procedures for diaconate ministry and service. Questions about the diaconate can be directed to the Director of the Permanent Diaconate at (559) 493-2840, at the Pastoral Center.

### **The Permanent Deacon in the Diocese of Fresno**

The following are excerpts from “Permanent Deacons in the United States, Guidelines on their formation and ministry,” Bishop’s Committee on the Permanent Diaconate, National Conference of Catholic Bishops 1984 revision):

“...the deacon represents and promotes in the Church what the community of faith, as a whole and in all of its members, must be, namely, a community of service.” (26)

“The deacon’s distinctiveness is, rather, sacramental: what all in the Church are to be and to do is made visible and effective by the liturgical consecration and empowerment of some members among them.” (27)

“The deacon is also a representative symbol of the inner connections among the three great areas of the Church’s life: Word, sacrament and service.” (28)

“The deacon, in a unique way, represents the relationship between the worship of God in the liturgy that recalls Jesus Christ’s redemptive service and the worship of God in everyday life where Jesus Christ is again encountered in the needy.” (28)

“As by ordination, particularly and officially committed to service, the deacon is to inspire, promote and help coordinate the service that the whole Church must undertake in imitation of Christ.” (37)

“The diaconal ministries...are not to be separated; the deacon is ordained for them

all, and no one should be ordained who is not prepared to undertake each in some way." (43)

The text quoted above leads to the formulation of THE MAIN VISION OF THE PERMANENT DEACON in his role of service in the Diocese of Fresno.

*THE PERMANENT DEACON, THROUGH THE GRACE OF ORDINATION AND THROUGH THE UNITY OF HIS THREEFOLD MINISTRY OF SERVICE, WORD, AND SACRAMENT, IS A CONSECRATED SIGN IN THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF THE CALL FOR EVERY CHRISTIAN TO SERVE.*

## **Roles of the Deacon**

The permanent deacon is not identified by the particular role of service in which he is involved. The above vision gives ecclesial meaning to his role of service and distinguishes his service from that of a layperson and from a priest. Permanent deacons are not called to take the place of priests or called simply to serve. All of God's people are called to serve through Baptism, Confirmation and their participation in the Eucharistic Liturgy. The threefold ministry of the deacon calls him to inspire, promote, and enable the laity to respond to their call to serve.

The permanent deacon is a minister of service, Word and sacrament who has been ordained to the Order of Deacon by the laying on of hands by the local ordinary. He is called to this sacred order by God; but remains within the secular community from which he has been called. In his daily life, he lives out the servant image of Christ by working and walking with those he encounters in the "marketplace." His activity in the community should be carried out while keeping a balance in the threefold ministry that identifies him as different from his brother clergy – the bishops and the priests.

The service ministry of the deacon is characterized by the model that Christ gives that "when I was in jail you visited me, when I was thirsty you gave me a drink, when I was sick you comforted me, when I was hungry you fed me and when I was naked you clothed me." The deacon is also the one to bring to the attention of the Christian community social injustices that are prevalent and call the Church to respond. When there is a crisis or great loss, he lends an ear that brings healing and comfort.

The ministry of Word begins with teaching by example in the way the deacon lives his life and responds to the call of the Gospel. He brings those to whom he ministers to the altar of the Lord where they relive His passion in the Eucharist feast. He proclaims the Gospel through reading and preaching the sacred texts at Mass and other liturgies. The ministry of the Word extends also to teaching in the RCIA, baptism preparation, marriage preparation, extraordinary minister of holy communion training and other catechetical programs.

The deacon is also to be active in the ministry of sacrament by baptizing, being God's witness at weddings, leading at certain funeral rites and gravesides. He is an ordinary minister of the Eucharist and the guardian of the Blessed Sacrament. He is an official minister of Viaticum for the dying to help prepare the family for the loss of a loved one. As an ordained minister, he does many of the Church's blessings when the need arises.

To sum up the role of the deacon, he is to be the animator of the laity, helping the laity to live out their baptismal priesthood as members of the Mystical Body of Christ under the direction of

the pastor. He seeks out the ministry needs of the parish and trains lay leaders to carry them out, relinquishing the leadership to them. He is not the answer to the shortage of priests by being their replacement, and he does his ministry as a volunteer rather than being salaried. He is normally employed in a secular job and has his own insurance and retirement plans. The only financial assistance the parish is asked to give is to cover ministry costs, continuing education expense, ministry related mileage, and annual retreat and convocation costs.

The permanent deacon's ministry is to be outlined in the "PASTOR AND PERMANENT DEACON AGREEMENT" signed by the pastor, the deacon, his wife, and the bishop. If a Deacon is assigned to a paid position at a parish, or receives a paid diocesan assignment, the details of such assignment shall be acknowledged and incorporated into the Deacon's written assignment from the bishop.

### **Expectations Of The Deacon**

Consistent with their clerical state and diaconal ministry, there are certain expectations of deacons which include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ Participation in daily Mass as often as possible, considering family and employment restrictions.
- ✓ Recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours, at least Morning and Evening Prayer.
- ✓ Develop devotional practices such as regular or daily recitation of the holy Rosary.
- ✓ Participate in an annual diaconate retreat as mandated by Canon Law.
- ✓ Regularly approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- ✓ Maintain a regular and on-going relationship with a Spiritual Director.
- ✓ Continue a regular "immersion" into Sacred Scriptures through diligent reading and study in order to maintain his effectiveness in proclaiming the Word of God and proper instruction of the faithful.
- ✓ Maintain proper and prudent relationships with other clergy and parish staff in conducting liturgies and performing assigned parish duties.



## Characteristics of a Deacon

### CHARACTERISTICS OF A DEACON

- is highly sensitive and perceptive
- seeks to build a team climate
- is giving of self for the good of others
- recognizes those with problems and seeks to help them
- affirms the gifts of others and is a group builder
- is generous with his gifts to the benefit of others
- enjoys working with people and shows flexibility
- is strengthened by working with others and resolving conflict
- is a person who builds and maintains trust among those he works with
- has a good self-image
- seeks to know others at a personal level and is supportive of them
- accepts the authority of others gracefully
- is open and willing to work with other ethnic groups
- has the ability to work effectively with staff and lay ministers, especially women
- can assume responsibility for leadership but is comfortable training others to replace him

### A DEACON IS ONE WHO

- places a high priority on family
- exhibits a high energy level
- draws on his own spirituality to benefit others
- exhibits strength and confidence that is rooted in faith
- holds marriage as a sacred life-long commitment
- believes that he is called to serve others' needs
- believes that he is called from his faith community
- serves his family and faith community with joy
- goes beyond the normal call of duty when needed
- is fulfilled by helping others
- can hold things in confidence
- presides at and leads prayer
- enjoys sharing his faith with others

## General Criteria for Deacon Applicants

*Similarly, deacons must be dignified, not deceitful, not addicted to drink, not greedy for sordid gain, holding fast to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience. Moreover, they should be tested first, then, if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. Deacons may be married only once and must manage their children and their households well. Thus those who serve well as deacons gain good standing and much confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus.*

*1 Tim 3:8-10, 12-13*

The applicant for the Diaconate in the Diocese of Fresno should be a man who:

- is committed to and lives the Gospel message
- must have shown leadership qualities in parish/diocesan ministry for at least five years
- is identified by his parish community as a person of service, with Christian values and justice
- if married, must have been in a stable and happy marriage for a period of 5 years or more and whose wife and children support him in pursuing the diaconate
- if not married, is willing to commit to celibacy
- if divorced or widowed, has lived a single celibate life for 5 years or more
- if divorced and/or remarried, a copy of the letter of the decree of nullity is required
- is no younger than 35 years of age when ordained to the diaconate, and may not be older than 59 years of age when entering into Aspirancy discernment year
- must be enrolled for two years in or have completed the diocesan *Lay Formation Institute (LFI)* lay formation program, or other equivalent lay formation program, and have a certificate of completion
- has a reasonable proficiency in the English language in speaking, reading and writing
- is capable of giving serious attention and time to the demanding Diaconate Formation Program
- is currently employed, with stable work history and/or is retired with adequate financial resources to sustain his family
- has a positive attitude toward the Church and is flexible in adapting to changes and needs in the Church

- can be formally presented by his pastor as a man that he feels he can work with without reservation

## Faculties to be Given

At ordination the deacons will be granted faculties in accord with the Code of Canon Law, the ordinals of the Roman Catholic Church, and any concessions of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. These faculties will be granted in accord with the competency of the deacon. This is a summary of the faculties that will be given:

- To assist the bishop and the priests during liturgical actions in all those activities which the ritual assigns to the deacon.
- To act as an Ordinary Minister of Holy Communion; to bring Viaticum to the dying; to take Holy Communion to the sick in their homes, in hospitals and other healthcare facilities according to the directives given in the Roman Ritual.
- To solemnly proclaim the Gospel at Mass and other liturgical functions.
- To preside at Communion services and other liturgical rites in absence of a priest.
- To preach the homily at Mass and to preach in the celebration of sacraments.
- To solemnly baptize a child who is thirteen years or younger; to baptize a person who is fourteen years of age or older after having received the proper permission from the bishop.
- To preside at Christian funerals in accord with the Order of Christian Funerals. These rites include being celebrant at the vigil or wake service in the home, funeral chapel, or church; the non-Eucharistic rites of the Church (e.g., welcome, Liturgy of the Word, Commendation; and the rites in the cemetery).
- To witness marriages, within the limits of the parish to which they are assigned. This faculty may be sub-delegated to a particular priest or deacon for a particular marriage, but not in general. Delegation for marriages, outside the limits of the parish to which you are assigned, must be obtained for each individual marriage.
- To preside at exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament according to the guidelines of the Decree on Worship of the Eucharistic Mystery (June 21, 1973). This includes wearing the cope, humeral veil and exposing the Blessed Sacrament and giving the blessing with the monstrance or ciborium.
- To function as a deacon at the Sacrament of Reconciliation, during Rite II and III, according to the directives given in the Roman Ritual; to preside at communal penitential services, making the priests available to hear confessions particularly in Advent and Lent. The deacon may also lead non-sacramental celebrations, particularly in Advent and Lent, when a priest is not available, according to the directives of the Roman Ritual.
- To confer blessings and to administer sacramentals which liturgical rites explicitly allow deacons to confer or administer. (Reference: Roman Ritual, Ordo, The Book of Blessings.)

- To perform whatever lawful ministries are granted to deacons either by the general law of the Church or by concession of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

## **Ecclesial Designations**

Due to the sacramental mark which Holy Orders placed on each man at ordination, it is proper to address and refer to these men by their appropriate ecclesial office. It is prudent to suspend the use of an ecclesial title when engaging within secular or business activities outside of non-ecclesial matters, for which the common title of “Mister/Mr.” should be used. In ecclesial settings, the title of “Deacon” should be used as the form by which the deacon presents or introduces himself. In written communications pertaining specifically to ecclesial matters, the title of “Reverend Mister” shall be used as the form of address, and the title of “Deacon” shall be used in the salutation. For deacons who are married, the proper form of address is “Reverend Mr. and Mrs. (Surname), and the salutation should read “Dear Deacon (first name) and (spouse’s first name).

When the deacon’s activities are of the secular world, he should most appropriately be dressed in secular clothes. However, it may be appropriate to wear jewelry displaying the St. Lawrence cross as a sign of his diaconal office even within secular employment when permitted by dress codes, or not discouraged by local practice. Clothing with the St. Lawrence cross appliquéed may be worn for ecclesial activities or other activities for which the visible designation of the diaconal office is appropriate.

## **Ritual Vestments and Attire Appropriate to the Deacon**

The vestments proper to the deacon serving in Masses with a congregation are “the dalmatic, worn over the alb and stole. The dalmatic may, however, be omitted out of necessity or on account of a lesser degree of solemnity.” (No. 338, of the General Instruction on the Roman Missal.) Dalmatics are to be used for Masses at the Cathedral such as ordinations, Holy Thursday Chrism Mass, and other Masses where the bishop is presiding.

In general, the preferred vestments for all other solemnities in which the deacon assists, are the alb, stole, and dalmatic. For other Rites at which the deacon presides, a cope is acceptable to be worn over the alb and stole.

As a general rule, when attending, but not serving at the altar at priestly ordinations or funerals, the deacon does not vest with an alb and stole. It is appropriate for the deacon to vest at diaconal ordinations and funerals.

When deacons are attending Masses or other services where they are not serving at the altar or assisting in distribution of Holy Communion, they should not vest, but should sit with the congregation.

**The Bishop of Fresno expressly prohibits the use of or wearing of the “Roman Collar” by Permanent Deacons of the diocese, except in special situations for which he has given his expressed permission to do so.**

## **Mass With A Deacon<sup>1</sup>**

When he is present at the celebration of the Eucharist, a Deacon should exercise his ministry, wearing sacred vestments. In fact, the Deacon:

- a) assists the priest and walks at his side;
- b) ministers at the altar, both in regards the chalice and the book;
- c) proclaims the Gospel and may, at the direction of the Priest Celebrant, give the Homily;
- d) guides the faithful people by giving appropriate instructions, and announces the intentions of the Universal Prayer;
- e) assists the Priest Celebrant in distributing Communion, and purifies and arranges sacred vessels;
- f) carries out the duties of other ministers himself, if necessary, when none of them is present. (171)

### ***Entrance and Exit***

When two deacons are serving, the deacon not carrying the Book of Gospels, enters on the right of the celebrant. If the aisle is small, the deacon or deacons should precede the celebrant. The deacons should exit in front of the celebrant after kissing the altar with the celebrant. If there is just one deacon serving at Mass, he should exit on the right of the celebrant.

- Carrying the Book of the Gospels slightly elevated, the deacon precedes the priest as he approaches the altar or else walks at the priest's side. (172)
- When he reaches the altar, if he is carrying the Book of Gospels, he omits the sign of reverence and goes up to the altar. It is particularly appropriate that he should place the Book of the Gospels on the altar, after which, together with the priest, he venerates the altar with a kiss. Lastly, if incense is used, he assists the Priest in putting some into the thurible and in incensing the cross and the altar. (173)

### ***Place in the Sanctuary***

When one deacon is present, he should sit on the right of the celebrant, if there is adequate space in the sanctuary. At the altar, the deacon should stand about one step to the right of the celebrant and one step back. If two deacons are serving, the second deacon should be to the left of the celebrant, one step to the side and one step back from the altar.

### ***Penitential Rite***

- For Forms A and B, the priest should lead the prayers after a period of silence, and gives the general absolution at the end.

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<sup>1</sup> B) From the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 2011

- When using Form C, the Priest, or a deacon, or another minister says the invocations with the *Kyrie eleison* (Lord, have mercy). The celebrant introduces the rite and gives the general absolution at the end.

### ***Gospel***

- Prior to the proclamation of the Gospel, if incense is used, the deacon assists the priest when he puts incense in the thurible during the singing of the Alleluia or other chant. Then he makes a profound bow before the priest and asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice, *“Your blessing, Father.”* The priest blesses him, saying *“The Lord be in your heart and on your lips that you may worthily and well proclaim his holy Gospel.”* The deacon signs himself with the Sign of the Cross and responds, *“Amen.”* Having bowed to the altar, he then takes up the Book of Gospels from the altar. He is preceded to the ambo by a thurifer, carrying a thurible with smoking incense, and by servers with lighted candles. There the deacon, with hands joined, greets the people, saying, *“The Lord be with you.”* Then, at the words *“A reading from the Holy Gospel according to . . .,”* he signs the book with his thumb and, afterwards, himself on his forehead, mouth, and breast. He incenses the book with three swings, two times, of the thurible and proclaims the Gospel reading.
- If incense or a formal procession is not used, immediately as the alleluia begins, the Deacon makes a profound bow before the priest and asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice, *“Your blessing, Father.”* The priest blesses him, saying *“The Lord be in your heart and on your lips that you may worthily and well proclaim his holy Gospel.”* The deacon signs himself with the Sign of the Cross and responds, *“Amen.”* Having bowed to the altar, he then takes up the Book of Gospels from the altar and proceeds to the ambo. There the deacon, with hands joined, greets the people, saying, *“The Lord be with you,”* and after announcing *“A reading from the Holy Gospel according to . . .,”* he signs the book with his thumb and, afterwards, himself on his forehead, mouth, and breast, and proclaims the Gospel reading.
- When the reading is concluded, he says the acclamation *“The Gospel of the Lord,”* and all respond, *“Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.”* He then venerates the book with a kiss, saying privately, *“Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away,”* and returns to the priest’s side.
- When the deacon is assisting the bishop, he normally carries the Book of Gospels to the bishop to be revered, or if delegated, kisses it himself, saying quietly, *“Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away.”* (175)
- Lastly, the deacon may carry the Book of Gospels to the credence table or to another appropriate and dignified place. (175)
- If there is no other suitable reader present, the Deacon should proclaim the other readings as well. (176)

### ***Prayer of the Faithful***

It is preferred that the Deacon be the one to announce the petitions with the celebrant giving the introduction and the closing prayer. Specific petitions for the particular congregation should be included. The Deacon should be involved in the preparation of the petitions because of his unique presence in the community.

### ***Preparation of the Altar***

The deacon should prepare the altar during the collection. He may be assisted by an acolyte or altar servers. It is his responsibility to see that the corporal, purificator, chalice and missal are properly placed on the altar before the receiving of the gifts.

### ***Receiving the Gifts***

The priest celebrant with the assistance of the deacon receives the gifts from the gift bearers.

### ***Preparation of the Gifts***

- The Deacon sees that the ciboria are placed on the corporal and presents the paten with the large host to the celebrant. The Deacon prepares the chalice, pours wine into chalices from any decanter or cruet that has been brought forward, adds the water to the main chalice only, saying quietly, “By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity,” and after this presents the chalice to the celebrant after the Celebrant says the prayer over the bread.
- After the Celebrant offers up the chalice, if incense is used, the Deacon holds the boat for the Celebrant to put incense into the thurible. After the Celebrant incenses the gifts and the altar, the Deacon should begin with a profound bow, incenses the Celebrant with three swings of the thurible. Then the deacon incenses any concelebrants, bowing first, with three swings of the thurible. Last, he should direct the congregation to stand while he makes a bow and incenses them with three swings to each of the main sections of the church. (277)

### ***Liturgy of the Eucharist***

During the Eucharistic Prayer, the Deacon stands near the priest, but slightly behind him, sufficient to assist the Priest with the chalice or the Missal. From the epiclesis until the Priest elevates the chalice after the words of consecration, the proper posture for the Deacon is to be kneeling. If multiple Deacons are present, and incense is used, one of them may place incense in the thurible for the Consecration, and incense the host and chalice at the elevation. For Deacons who are unable to assume an extended kneeling posture, from the completion of the epiclesis until the elevation of the chalice at the final doxology, the deacon may remain standing. When standing, the deacon should make a profound bow when the priest genuflects during the consecration.

### ***Memorial Acclamation***

The celebrant, not the deacon, should give the directive to proclaim the Memorial Acclamation.

### ***The Final Doxology***

The deacon is to stand next to the priest and elevate the chalice at the same level as the celebrant elevates the paten while the celebrant alone says the words of the Doxology. He should respond at the end of the doxology joining with the congregation saying "Amen." When the choir is singing the Great Amen, the celebrant and the deacon, ordinarily, should continue to hold the vessels until the singing has finished.

### ***Sign of Peace***

After the priest has said the words "*The peace of the Lord be with you always*" and the people have responded "*And with your spirit,*" the deacon, invites all to exchange the sign of peace. He faces the people and, with hands joined, says "*Let us offer each other the sign of peace.*" Then he, himself, receives the sign of peace from the priest and may offer it to those other ministers who are closer to him.

### ***Receiving Communion***

The celebrant first communicates himself with both species. The celebrant then gives communion to the deacon saying "*The Body of Christ*" and "*The Blood of Christ.*" The deacon should be the one to minister the cup to any other ministers serving at Mass.

### ***Distributing Communion***

The bishop, priests and deacons are ordinary ministers of the Holy Communion and should distribute Communion before any extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are used. Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should understand this. If Communion is distributed under both species, the deacon should normally be a minister of the cup.

### ***After Communion***

The deacon is the guardian of the Eucharist. In that capacity, he receives the ciboria from the priest and any other ministers when they have finished distributing communion. The deacon then combines the hosts into ciboria and places them in the tabernacle, genuflecting, then closing the tabernacle door. The Deacon returns to the altar, collects any remaining fragments, and then carries the chalice and other sacred vessels to the credence table where he purifies them. It is permitted that the Deacon may leave vessels needing to be purified on a corporal, suitably covered, on the credence table, and to purify them immediately after Mass. (183)

### ***Concluding Rite***

Once the Prayer after Communion has been said, the Deacon may make brief announcements to the people, unless the Priest prefers to do this himself. The Deacon with hands joined should dismiss the people after the blessing. If there is to be a solemn blessing, after the Celebrant says, "The Lord be with you," the Deacon should say, "Bow down for the blessing."

## General Policies for the Permanent Diaconate

### Diaconate Advisory Board

The *Permanent Deacon Policy Manual*, approved in June of 1999, makes provision for a diocesan organization called the Deacon Board. As the diaconate has grown and evolved, the purpose and expertise of the board has also experienced a process of transformation, moving from an initial purpose focused on establishing a diaconate formation program, towards promoting an effective application process; implementing a contemporary and relevant discernment and formation program that fulfills the standards set forth in the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, as well as maintaining an effective post-ordination education program. Towards this new configuration, the previous Deacon Board has been reorganized as the Diaconate Advisory Board.

The Director of the Permanent Diaconate will facilitate the conduct of meetings of the Board. The purpose of this Board shall be to assist and advise the diaconate director in various operational matters relating to formation and post-ordination issues, including planning, implementation, enrichment, and evaluation of the permanent diaconate program, for the purpose of aiding the Permanent Diaconate community in serving the Bishop and the Diocese of Fresno. The board will be accountable to the Bishop of the Diocese of Fresno, and membership to this board will be subject to the approval and formal appointment by the Bishop.

The board shall consist of no more than fifteen (15) appointed members, serving two(2) year terms, consisting of consecrated religious, clergy and lay persons, representing the diocesan Vicariates, as well as the ethnic diversity of the diocese. The Director of the Permanent Diaconate and the Assistant Director of Formation shall serve as ex-officio members.

### Diaconate Formation Assessment Committee

In addition to the Diaconate Advisory Board, a *Diaconate Formation Assessment Committee* will be formed to assist the Director of the Permanent Diaconate during the application period and screening process for applicants to the diocesan permanent diaconate formation program.

This committee is made up of no more than twelve (12) members recommended by the Director of the Permanent Diaconate, and appointed by the Bishop. Committee members serve for a period of time sufficient to complete the application process. This committee meets on an as-needed basis during the application period, and conducts interviews with applicants and their wives. The committee, as a whole, provides recommendation to the Director of the Permanent Diaconate as to the potential disposition of a diaconal vocation of each applicant.

The Director of the Permanent Diaconate shall bring forward the recommendations of the committee to the Bishop for his determination as to whether to invite applicants to continue further into the application process.

## Evaluations Within the Formation Process

At the conclusion of the Aspirancy year, Aspirants are evaluated as to their ability to satisfy basic academic performance incumbent within the diaconal formation process, as well as demonstration of a proper disposition towards a spirituality reflective of a potential diaconal vocation. The Director of the Permanent Diaconate will recommend to the bishop those Aspirants who have diligently and satisfactorily completed this initial discernment phase for consideration to be called into the Candidacy phase of diaconate formation.

Diaconate candidates are monitored by staff of the Permanent Diaconate Office during regular academic classes, as well as retreats and other formation-related functions. Each candidate couple is interviewed at the completion of formation years 1 and 2 by either the Permanent Diaconate staff, or the bishop, prior to recommendation as to their continuing in the diaconal formation process for the next year. Pastors of candidates also submit an annual recommendation as to whether they support their candidate continuing in diaconal formation. Towards the end of the third year, prior to the Canonical Retreat, pastors will submit a detailed evaluation of each candidate as to their ability to perform or act in the ministries of word, liturgy and service. as well as a final recommendation as to the candidate's preparedness for diaconate ordination.

## Post-Ordination Evaluations

Following ordination, deacons serving in a diocesan parish will submit a collaborative evaluation by June 30<sup>th</sup> of each even-numbered year. This evaluation of the deacon's ministry will include comments by the deacon, the deacon's wife, (if married), and the pastor. Areas of concern will be addressed by the Director of the Permanent Diaconate in an appropriate manner. A copy of this form is included as an appendix to this policy.

## Criminal Check and Sexual Abuse Policy for all Permanent Deacons and Candidates to the Permanent Diaconate

- ❖ The diocesan policy for allegations of sexual misconduct as described in the Clergy Handbook, applies to **all permanent deacons and those in diaconal Aspirancy or Candidacy formation.**
- ❖ Any permanent deacon refusing to submit to the process will be suspended and may at the discretion of the bishop, have his faculties withdrawn.

Aspirants and candidates who have violated diocesan policy against harassment or discrimination will be dropped from further consideration in the diaconate formation program.

All permanent deacons serving within the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fresno will be fingerprinted and have their criminal information background checks reviewed. All permanent deacons applying for entry into the Diocese will be fingerprinted and have their criminal information background checked before the bishop will grant faculties.

All applicants prior to acceptance into diaconal formation will be fingerprinted and have their criminal background checked before being accepted into the Aspirancy period. A criminal record or

case pending final adjudication deemed to be of a nature that endangers the public safety or protection of minors will be sufficient to prevent entry into the formation program or being accepted for ordination to the Order of Deacon.

Permanent Deacons relocating into the diocese who refuse to comply with fingerprinting background checks may be denied faculties until compliance is verified. Applicants who fail to comply with the background investigation requirement will not be considered for acceptance into the diaconal formation process.

### **Access to Background Investigation Information**

The Director of the Permanent Diaconate and the Assistant Director of Formation will be the only persons to have access to the criminal background reports received from the Department of Justice and the FBI for the diaconate program. Any criminal history information obtained pursuant to Penal Code Section 11105.3 will be confidential and no disclosure of the information will be made except for the purpose for which it was acquired.

The content of information provided by the Department of Justice and the FBI states whether the person fingerprinted has a conviction, or arrest pending final adjudication, for any sex offense, controlled substance offense, crime of violence, or serious felony in their record.

Information on arrests that may happen in the future will also be supplied the Director of the Permanent Diaconate for review when they are received. Reports received under Penal Code Section 11105.3 will be destroyed immediately after the director makes the determination that there is no danger for the public safety or protection of minors. If a criminal record or pending criminal case is revealed that the director believes is of a nature that might endanger the public safety and the protection of minors, the director of the permanent diaconate will bring such information to the attention of the bishop. The bishop may, at his discretion, refuse to grant faculties to serve in the Diocese, remove an aspirant or candidate from diaconal formation, or revoke the faculties of a deacon serving in the Diocese.

### **Guidelines for Mentoring for Aspirants, Candidates, and Recently Ordained Deacons**

As candidates and their wives begin the process to ordination, they need to be able to meet with others who have had the experience of going through diaconal formation. Thus, the relationship with an ordained deacon and his wife will serve to give them support through formation and into ordained ministry. This is recommended as the formation process is long and requires commitment to attendance and study in order to properly prepare the candidate for ordination.

Aspirants and wives will meet with other aspirant couples on a monthly basis in small regional groups facilitated by assigned deacon couples or deacons. These small groups are designed to introduce aspirant couples to diaconal formation issues, and the deacon group facilitators are available to be a resource to aspirant couples in their first formal year of diaconal discernment. Aspirants who are called by the bishop to continue into candidacy will then be assigned a specific mentor couple to work with them throughout the diaconal formation process, and continue into the post-ordination period.

The role of the mentoring deacon and his wife is to be as a companion, friend, and support couple for the candidate and, if married, his wife. When issues arise that are difficult, the deacon and his wife can be there for the candidate couple to provide answers and guidance. The deacon and his wife can also be an example in spirituality for the new couple. After ordination, the new deacon may have questions about ministry that the deacon mentor can help answer. The following are a few things that the mentoring protocol should include:

- Mentors should make appointments with the candidate couple on a regular basis to be sure that they are aware of the needs of the new couple, and any on-going concerns.
- Mentors should meet a minimum of five (5) times each year with the candidate couple during each year of candidate formation.
- Mentors should meet with the recently ordained deacon and his wife two (2) times during the first year after ordination.
- The mentor should encourage the recently ordained to participate within their post-ordination diaconal support group on a regular basis.
- The mentor should reinforce the requirement to meet with one's spiritual director on a regular basis.

### **Guidelines on Financial Compensation for Deacons**

As a general practice, deacons do not receive any compensation for their ministry other than reasonable expenses incurred in carrying out their diaconal ministry. Permanent Deacons in the Diocese of Fresno volunteer their time and services to the parish or parishes where the Bishop of Fresno assigns them. They are expected to have income from stable secular employment with necessary benefits, or they are retired, with adequate resources to support their family. The Diocese does not accept responsibility for post-ordination support of a deacon or his family, and the deacon accepts this condition upon ordination or incardination into the Diocese.

Permanent Deacons may be employed by parishes or the Diocese, providing the pastor and the bishop agree. Deacons who accept employment for paid staff positions within the parish or at the diocesan level, shall have the details of such assignments incorporated into the deacon's letter of assignment from the bishop, thus his employment would become part of his formal assignment. The activity of the employment may or may not be part of the deacon's ministerial agreement.

### **Retreat and Convocation Costs for Active Deacons**

The cost of the annual diocesan deacons' retreat will be divided one-half for the parish, which is the deacon's fee and one-half for the Diocese, which is the fee for the wife. The parish, diocesan agency, or the diocese for which the deacon's ministry is undertaken, will be responsible for paying the full cost of the annual convocation for clergy.

- *Continuing Education Costs*

The continuing education costs up to \$300.00 dollars will be paid by the parish to which the deacon is assigned. Amounts exceeding that allowance will be paid for by the deacon unless an alternative method is approved by the bishop.

- *Expenses Related to Diaconal Ministry*

Deacons may be reimbursed by the parish or agency where their ministry is carried out, for normal expenses incurred in the conduct of their ministry. Such expenses within parish ministry should be clearly identified within their "Pastor / Permanent Deacon Agreement" document as being reimbursable in addition to the allowance for continuing education costs, and subject to parish financial procedures for reimbursement. Deacons working in ministries outside of the parish for organizations or the diocese, should follow reimbursement procedures applicable to that particular entity. Such out-of-parish ministry work should also be referenced in the Pastor/Permanent Deacon Agreement.

The deacon is responsible to have and to pay for his own car insurance and is responsible to maintain the insurance limits of any other volunteer or employee as is directed by diocesan policy.

- *Retired Deacons' Expenses*

For deacons that are active in a parish or other agency, the deacon's cost of the annual deacons retreat will be paid for by the parish or agency and the wife's share will be paid for by the Diocese. For deacons that are completely inactive within their parish or other agency, the Diocese will cover all of the annual deacons' retreat expenses.

The Diocese is responsible for costs of the annual Diocesan Convocation for retired clergy.

- *Deacons Employed by the Parish, Diocese or Other Agency*

A deacon that is employed in full time ministry or part time ministry by either the Diocese or the parish is to be treated the same as any other employee. He is to be provided the same benefits as all other employees. Deacons employed by the parish or the Diocese will be subject to employee evaluations the same as the other employees and may be subject to dismissal, if they do not live up to the standards of their particular job description. The parish and the Diocese accept no responsibility in securing future employment for those who leave or are terminated.

- *Stipends and/or Stole Fees*

In exercising liturgical ministry, deacons are governed by the Diocesan Policy Manual. "Stipends for baptisms and marriages go to the parish." Stipends for funerals go to the deacon celebrating the funeral, or are divided among the clergy ministering in the parish.

- *Donations and Gifts*

In exercising Diaconal Pastoral Ministry, any donation offered by the faithful is presumed intended for the parish. If it is obvious that the donation is intended for the priest or deacon, he is entitled to keep it (canon 531).

### **Attendance at Retreats, Convocations and Vicariate Meetings**

The deacon is required to attend both the Annual Deacons' Retreat and the Annual Clergy Convocation. He should prioritize his schedule so that he will be free to attend.

The deacons' wives are invited and urged to attend the Annual Deacons' Retreat to build fraternity and support among themselves. The annual convocation for clergy is a time for fellowship and fraternity among the clergy to aid in developing an atmosphere of collegiality. Because it is a clergy event, the wives will not attend.

The deacons are expected to attend the local vicariate meetings to help coordinate and be involved in the vicariate or inter-parish activities.

### **Requirements for Continuing Education of Permanent Deacons**

All permanent deacons that are actively involved in part time or full time parish or diocesan ministry are required to have 30 hours of continuing education for the first three (3) years after ordination, and 20 hours of continuing education thereafter. This may be done within or outside the Diocese at accepted or accredited instruction programs. Within the Diocese there are the following resources to aid in achieving the required hours: the Annual Convocation for Clergy when instruction is included, the Annual Ministries Day for the Diocese, special workshops, continuing education presentations, days of recollection, and college or university classes that will help the deacon in his ministry roles. Other programs or classes may be acceptable for the hours of credit with the approval of the Director of the Diaconate prior to attendance. However, attendance at Deacons' & Wives Retreat does not count toward the continuing education requirement. **This requirement does not apply to deacons who have formally retired from active ministry.**

A leave of absence from ministry may be obtained for the purpose of continuing education with the approval of the bishop.

### **Spiritual Direction**

Spiritual direction is vital to the ongoing spiritual formation of the permanent deacon. Each deacon should meet with a spiritual director at least once every two months. The spiritual director may not be the deacon's supervisor to allow for a more objective and comfortable relationship.

### **Parish or Diocesan Property**

Educational materials, liturgical vestments, etc., paid for by the parish or other agency to assist the deacon in his ministry, are considered the property of the parish or agency and should remain there in the event the deacon moves.

## **Office Space**

If available, office space should be provided the deacon for office work and counseling. Secretarial assistance should be provided as necessary.

## **Pastor / Permanent Deacon Agreement**

All Permanent Deacons serving in the Diocese must have a “Pastor / Permanent Deacon Agreement” signed by the pastor, the deacon, the deacon's wife (if married), and the bishop. This agreement will outline the hours of service and the ministries in which the deacon will serve. It will be revised when there are significant changes to the deacon’s assignment.

Recently ordained deacons, with their wives, will meet with the pastor to prepare the first agreement for their ministry shortly before or shortly after ordination. The agreement will be signed by the deacon, the wife, and the pastor for submission to the bishop for approval.

Deacons, who transfer into the Diocese of Fresno from another diocese, and request faculties and a parish assignment, must also complete a “Pastor/Permanent Deacon Agreement,” within 60 days of the granting of faculties. This agreement is in addition to other documents which may be required for transferring deacons.

Deacons who have requested and been approved by the bishop for re-assignment to another parish, must also complete a new Pastor/Permanent Deacon Agreement,” within 60 days of the effective date of their re-assignment.

A copy of the “Pastor/Permanent Deacon Agreement” form is attached as an Appendix to this section of the Clergy Handbook.

## **Sabbatical Leave**

Permanent Deacons may request to take a sabbatical leave from their ministry. Any deacon that desires to do so should first write the bishop and request that permission be given, including a timeframe and basis for the need for leave. When a deacon is returning from sabbatical leave he should first notify the bishop in writing for approval before resuming his normal ministry. The pastor should also be advised in writing of the return to service.

Within 60 days after return to active ministry, a new Pastor and Permanent Deacon Agreement shall be developed in accordance with the criteria listed in the foregoing section titled “Pastor / Permanent Deacon Agreement,” and submitted to the Director of the Permanent Diaconate.

## **Assignment of Permanent Deacons**

Ordained deacons entering the Diocese who have valid faculties to serve in another diocese, must request temporary faculties in writing, directly from the bishop. Permanent assignments are made only by the bishop after a completed and signed “Pastor / Permanent Deacon Agreement” has been received by the Director of the Permanent Diaconate.

Assignment of Permanent Deacons in the Diocese of Fresno depends upon a number of factors. The deacon's marriage and his family are his primary vocation and must be considered first

when assigning the deacon to ministry. Any assignment must make the necessary allowances to protect the sanctity of the marriage and the family. The deacons' secular job is second in importance, and consideration must be given to protecting the time constraints needed for the deacon's employment. Ideally, the deacon should be assigned to his home parish. The location and time spent in ministry must fit with the prior mentioned requirements. With this in mind, the bishop may assign deacons to:

- The local parish from which the deacon is called to ordination
- A neighboring parish when conditions are such that it is advisable to do so.
- Ministry for specific institutions such as jails, prisons, hospitals, and other facilities that the bishop deems of importance.
- Work in diocesan ministry where there is a need and the ministry talents of the deacon can meet those needs.
- Any other ministry that may be approved by the bishop.

### **Request for Reassignment**

From time to time, it may be appropriate for a deacon to request a change in his assigned parish. This change may be prompted by many factors, such as personal or family situations, change in occupation or residence, reconfiguration of the parish, or change in his ministry assignment.

Deacons who wish to change to a new parish should initially discuss their intentions with their current pastor, and the pastor of the parish to which they are requesting a new assignment. Following these conversations, the deacon shall contact the Director of the Permanent Diaconate, and submit a formal request to the Bishop, in writing, with a copy to the Director of the Permanent Diaconate, detailing the reasons for the reassignment. The Director shall review the request with the deacon, as well as his current pastor and the pastor of the parish he is requesting reassignment to. Such inquiries and conversations shall be handled in a confidential manner.

Following these conversations, the Director of the Permanent Diaconate shall submit his recommendation to the Bishop regarding the reassignment request. Formal notification of approval of transfer or denial of the request to transfer will be sent by the bishop to the parties involved. A new "Pastor/Permanent Deacon Agreement" shall be submitted in accordance with the previous section regarding "Pastor/Permanent Deacon Agreements."

Requests for reassignment due to conflicts within the work environment should initially be handled in accordance with the diaconate grievance procedures.

### **Service of the Deacon in the Absence of a Priest**

In the absence of a priest, the first person to preside over Liturgy of the Word or Liturgy of the Hours services with Holy Communion should be the parish deacon. Permanent deacons should be prepared to preside in the absence of a priest at communion services, funerals, gravesides, weddings, baptisms, and quinceañeras, and in extraordinary situations, to preside at a Sunday

Celebration in the Absence of a Priest.

## **Priests' Retreat**

Permanent Deacons are not invited to attend the priests' retreat, except when asked to assist at the daily Masses by the bishop or his representative.

## **Policy for Retirement from Formal Assignment**

Consistent with the retirement policy for priests, the Diocese of Fresno establishes a retirement policy for Permanent Deacons. The normal retirement age is established at seventy-five (75) years of age. Because the deacon is called and ordained for the Church of the Diocese of Fresno, efforts will be made to permit the deacon to continue in some form of ministry as long as his health, the support of his family, ministerial effectiveness, continued willingness to serve the People of God, and approval of the Bishop of the Diocese of Fresno, continue. Such continuation in ministry beyond the normal retirement age will need to be in accord with the deacon's individual gifts and circumstances, the situation of his family, and the needs and opportunities available in the Diocese of Fresno.

### *Retirement Status for a Permanent Deacon*

- Definition: The retirement of a Permanent Deacon in the Diocese of Fresno is the cessation of his normal assignment to parish or other assigned ministry in the Diocese due to having reached retirement age, or due to other constraining personal situations which compromise or inhibit his ability to effectively carry out his proper diaconal ministry or assignment on a long-term basis. Unless otherwise indicated by the bishop, he retains the diaconal faculties of the Diocese as long as he retains domicile in the Diocese.
- Subsequent to a Permanent Deacon's retirement from assignment, he may volunteer for or be requested by a pastor to perform on an "ad hoc" basis specific services or ministries which are appropriate to the Office of Deacon and his particular charisma. No further permission is needed for such service. But when such service or ministry is volunteered or requested on an on-going basis, that service shall be approved in advance by the Director of the Permanent Diaconate and shall be monitored and evaluated by his office.
- As an ordained person, the Permanent Deacon retains in retirement a special bond with his parish, place of ministry, the body of the clergy, the diaconate community, and the Diocese of Fresno. Thus, he continues to receive the information services provided to actively assigned deacons and to have available to him all spiritual and continuing education opportunities offered by the Permanent Diaconate Program. In order that the retired deacon be enabled to continue participating in such opportunities for the sake of his own growth and also for the sake of providing a motivating example to the entire diaconate community, the parish or agency of his informal assignment shall make available to him the allowances provided for retreat and continuing education. Exceptions

- should be directed to the Director of the Permanent Diaconate.
- No retirement benefits or remuneration accrue to a deacon under the provisions of this retirement policy. Exception to this would only be in the case of full time employment of the deacon with the Diocese, parish or agency from which he would be eligible to any and all benefits that are available to all other employees of the same job classification.

### **Conditions for Retirement**

At age seventy-five (75), the Permanent Deacon shall retire from formal and assigned ministry. He may request earlier retirement for reasons of health or for long-term inhibiting family responsibilities. He may also request, in writing, that the bishop allow him to continue in ministry after age seventy-five (75).

If, because of health or for long term inhibiting family responsibilities the Permanent Deacon is discerned to be incapable of performing his diaconal duties, the bishop may direct the deacon to serve in retirement status. Health is understood in the fullest sense, that is, in its spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical dimensions.

The bishop may also direct the deacon to retire for other reasons to be decided at the discretion of the bishop.

### **Retirement Process**

At age seventy-five (75), the Permanent Deacon's request for retirement shall be addressed in writing to the Bishop of the Diocese of Fresno through the Director of the Permanent Diaconate.

Upon acceptance of the deacon's request for retirement, the bishop will notify, in writing, the Permanent Deacon of his retirement from active service and assignment. Copies of the bishop's letter will be sent to the Director of the Permanent Diaconate, to the place of the deacon's formal assignment, and to the Vicar Forane (V. F.).

### **Funerals and Burials**

When a deacon dies, his family, relatives, pastor, or the funeral director in charge of the arrangements for the deacon, shall promptly notify the Bishop's Office, or if he is not available, the Vicar General, and/or Chancellor of the diocese. Timely notification should also include the Director of the Permanent Diaconate so that proper notification can be quickly distributed to the diocesan diaconate family.

Using usual channels, the Bishop's office will notify the clerical community (bishops, priests, deacons, and candidates in diaconal formation) of the death of their consecrated brother, and advise them of the arrangements for the time and place of the vigil, funeral, committal services, and any planned reception.

Funeral services should be conducted with due regard to the expressed wishes of the deacon and/or his family, considering any previous written instructions or directives on file with the

Diocese. Unless the family insists on other funeral inclusions, a deacon's funeral liturgy shall be conducted in accord with liturgical norms.

The deacon should be viewed and buried in accord with the clerical state he enjoys, which is characterized by full diaconal vesture of alb, white stole, and dalmatic, in a casket fully opened all the way down. If the family opts for the deacon to be laid out in secular clothes, a diaconal stole is to be displayed prominently in the casket for the vigil, funeral, and burial.

When the deacon's remains are brought to the church for the funeral Mass, the deacon's body is to be placed in the aisle with his feet toward the entrance, reflecting the fact that in all ways and at all times and in all circumstances, the deacon is an ordained cleric of the Church, and even at his funeral service, he remains in a position facing the People of God whom he has served in his diaconal ministry. As part of the vigil or funeral rite, the family may request the Office of the Dead be recited.

The bishop of the diocese is the usual celebrant for a diaconal funeral. If he is unable to preside, the family of the deacon may request a specific priest to assume the role of celebrant, and he may be assisted by other priests invited by either the family, or whose inclusion was expressed in the directives of the deceased deacon. At the beginning of the Mass of Christian Burial for a deacon, the Book of Gospels should be placed on the casket, on top of the pall, in accord with liturgical practices.

It is appropriate for deacons to be invited by the family to serve as pallbearers for the funeral. In this role, the deacons as pallbearers should be vested in alb and white stole. Deacons who gather for the funeral of a brother deacon are to be vested in alb and white stole, and seated as "the college of deacons."

The diocese of Fresno has no policy or provision for financial participation in the funeral or burial of a deacon. Deacons of the Diocese of Fresno may request burial in St. Peter's Catholic Cemetery in Fresno at a reduced rate for clergy.

It is customary for the priests of the diocese to offer one Mass for the deceased deacon.

### **Acceptance of a Permanent Deacon for Ministry in the Diocese**

The following are the procedures and requirements for the acceptance of a permanent deacon into the ministry of the diocese:

- » Each deacon must submit a letter from his diocese of incardination signed by the ordinary of that diocese indicating that he is in good standing in that diocese.
- » Must be cleared by a standard Department of Justice and FBI fingerprint record check.
- » Must submit a full resume and a letter of recommendation from his last assignment supervisor.
- » Must fill out the "Transferring Deacon Information Form".
- » If he is from a foreign country, must be able to fulfill all immigration requirements and commit to obtaining an acceptable proficiency in the English language.

Incardination of a permanent deacon coming from another diocese:

- » After having served in an official diocesan assignment for a period of three (3) years, a permanent deacon may apply for incardination into the Diocese. **The application must be submitted to the bishop in writing.** After consultation with the Director of the Permanent Diaconate, the bishop will give his decision in writing to the applicant.
- » The applicant must have served acceptably in a diocesan assignment.
- » The applicant must be in good physical health as established by a medical examination.
- » If from a foreign country, the applicant must prove his proficiency in the English language and be able to supply the Diocese with his legal residency documentation.
- » The applicant must obtain from his previous diocesan bishop a letter of excardination signed by the same bishop. Excardination thus granted does not take effect until the letter of incardination in this Diocese has been obtained.

### **Policy for Specially Assigned Deacons**

The policy for Permanent Deacons who are specially assigned by the bishop should be the same as for deacons in parish ministry with the following exceptions:

- » Faculties will be granted at the discretion of the bishop for use in a local parish and at the place of ministerial assignment. Employment as a chaplain is contingent on the granting of faculties by the bishop. Application for temporary faculties must be done immediately on accepting employment. Deacons who serve as chaplains without receiving faculties from the bishop will be subject to the withdrawal of approval from the bishop. The faculties allowed to be used in the place of ministerial assignment will have the following restrictions;

For Detention Chaplains;

- » Other than in the case of emergency, baptism should only be celebrated in special circumstances and this should be referred to the bishop.
- » Marriages are expressly discouraged in jail and delegation for marriage will be received from the bishop with explanation of the special circumstances.

For All Diocesan Special Assignments;

- » Any and all sacraments administered in the place of special ministerial assignment must be promptly recorded in the local parish sacramental books. Obtaining any documents required by the Code of Canon Law or the diocesan bishop will be the responsibility of the deacon in ministry. Certificates to be given the recipients will be provided by the local parish.

### **Policy for Resolution of Diaconal Complaints and Disputes**

In the course of human interactions, it is unfortunate that there will always be issues of disagreement and conflict between persons. As clergy of the Catholic Church, we are expected to reflect Christ's instruction to "love one another." When personal disputes do arise, we are called to exemplify a pastoral process of applying the gospel values toward resolving issues in a fair and productive manner.

Towards achieving that aspiration, deacons are encouraged and expected to make every effort to achieve resolution at the lowest possible level, avoiding any aspect of public scandal. The best resources for deacons at this conflict level are either the pastor or their spiritual advisor. In circumstances where there is a conflict regarding the resolution of an issue, either the pastor or the deacon may ask for the assistance of the Director of the Permanent Diaconate to collaborate or facilitate in the resolution of the complaint.

From time to time, complaints about deacons will be received, either orally or in writing. Utilizing a Christian resolution model from scriptural resources, as well as Canon Law, the following guidelines for complaint management are to be applied:

- A respect for the human person and all parties' right to their good name and reputation (Canon 220).
- Every effort is to be made for the common good of the Catholic Church and her faithful.
- To respect the rights of a deacon as an ordained member of the Catholic clergy to receive objective information, especially policies and procedures of the universal and diocesan Church, as they affect and apply to him.
- To respect and protect the right of persons employed by, or engaged in the services of the Catholic Church, to working conditions consonant with human dignity, as well as their right to expect and enjoy professional practices comparable to those in society at large. (Canon 1286)
- To expect the well-founded possibility of facilitating reconciliation (Canons 1713-1716).
- The right of due process for all parties.

Every complaint against a deacon will be considered, even those of an anonymous nature. Specific anonymous complaints will be evaluated as to the potential and practical credibility of the complaint, and may be followed up with inquiries towards that end. Non-anonymous complaints will be investigated, and the appropriate procedure will be determined by the particular situation. All investigations will be handled professionally and confidentially, respecting a deacon's clerical right, and not expressing a judgment or opinion concerning the validity of the complaint until the deacon and all witnesses have been interviewed. The Director of the Permanent Diaconate should be advised of any and all allegations involving deacons, and may participate in the investigative process as appropriate.

Allegations of sexual misconduct with a minor are subject to a separate diocesan process, and such matters are immediately reported to the appropriate law enforcement and child protective agencies.

The Assistant Director of Formation handles and responds to complaints and concerns about deacon applicants and deacon candidates. Otherwise, the complaint management process follows the same protocols in place for ordained deacons.

Complaints about a deacon within a parish ministry or diocesan agency are initially referred to the pastor/program supervisor for resolution. For complaints involving inappropriate sexual behavior, or non-sexual criminal activity, in addition to the preceding, the Director of Human Resources and the Director of the Permanent Diaconate shall also be notified. For non-criminal

matters, the pastor/supervisor or deacon may ask the Director of Human Resources to serve as an additional resource to mediate any conflict resolution process.

### **Ecclesial Expectations of Deacons**

The parish provides an ecclesial context for a deacon's ministry, and is a reminder and illustration that a deacon's labors are not carried out in isolation, but in communion with the bishop, other clergy, and all who share in the public ministry of the Church. While the deacon has the obligation to respect his pastor and the office of the bishop and priests, and to cooperate conscientiously and generously with them and other staff, the deacon also has a right to be accepted and fully recognized by all, as an ordained minister of the word, the altar, and charity.

Deacons make a promise of obedience and respect to the diocesan Ordinary and his successors at their ordination. This is expected to be further reflected to also demonstrate fidelity and respect to a deacon's pastor or other ministerial supervisor, to comply with their directives. Failure to show proper respect and obedience may lead to disciplinary processes.

Deacons are expected to abide by all polices and directives established and issued by the Bishop of Fresno, the Director of the Permanent Diaconate, or other competent authority. Deacons agree to fulfill the obligations and carry out the duties specified in their *Letter of Assignment* issued by the Bishop or his designee, and all terms and conditions of the Pastor/Permanent Deacon Agreement.

Deacons are expected to live a lifestyle reflecting that of an ordained Catholic cleric, and to maintain the good name and reputation of the diaconate community, parish community, and the diocesan Church. Failure to comply with diaconal promises, diocesan directives and policies, assignments contained in their *Letter of Assignment*, terms and conditions of the Pastor/Permanent Deacon Agreement, or to live a lifestyle proper to a cleric of the Catholic Church, may be grounds for removal from a deacon's pastoral assignment and/or to be deprived of the faculties to minister in the Diocese of Fresno, until the circumstances which provoke the removal of faculties are cleared.

### **Removal of a Deacon from The Clerical State**

Petitions for dispensation of a deacon from all obligations of his ecclesial office incumbent by his reception of Holy Orders, may be requested by the deacon in writing to the bishop, subject to current canonical norms and procedures. Petitions initiated by the diocesan bishop to dismiss a deacon from the clerical state will require a complete judicial process.

### **Married Deacons**

Deacons are expected to live their lives reflecting the sacramental vows of Holy Orders, and to likewise live their lives in accordance with their sacramental vows of Holy Matrimony. Such expectations recognize that there needs to be a delicate balance between public ministry and private life, especially in terms of the deacon in a public role as a witness of the meaning of a Christian marriage.

Stable, enduring marriages are important to the mission of the diaconate. Therefore, when a married deacon or his spouse begins to sense that their marriage is experiencing difficulties which are affecting routine responsibilities to ministry, family, and/or occupation, the diaconate community should stand ready to offer practical assistance to those experiencing marital difficulties.

Upon notification to the Director of the Permanent Diaconate by the deacon, his spouse, or his pastor, of a marriage that is experiencing difficulty, the Director will ascertain the most appropriate response for assistance, either through a private discussion with the requesting party, or referral to a chaplain/counselor, or to more advanced professional counseling.

All discussions regarding situations of marriage difficulties will be treated confidentially. If the situation cannot be resolved in a timely and satisfactory manner for the well-being of the married deacon, his wife, and family members, the Director of the Permanent Diaconate may recommend to the bishop consideration of placing the deacon on a leave of absence, curtailment of major ministerial duties, being placed on inactive status, or other appropriate action. However, should the situation deteriorate to the point of scandal or embarrassment that could have serious repercussions on the parish/agency where the deacon is assigned, on the diocese, or on the Universal Church, the Director will confer with the bishop to recommend further appropriate action.

When a civil divorce is finalized, the deacon must immediately notify the Director of the Permanent Diaconate. The deacon is expected to fulfill all financial and paternal responsibilities as required by the civil court of jurisdiction, and must live a life in accordance with his sacramental vows to marriage and the diaconate.

### **Death of a Deacon's Wife**

The death of the wife of a married deacon introduces a new reality into the daily routine of his family and ministry. The fraternal closeness of the bishop, the priests with whom he ministers, and the diaconal community should offer comfort and reassurance to him in this time of grief, and charity should be extended to him as he assesses and accepts his new personal circumstances. Within this transitional period, widowed deacons will need to face issues involved with celibacy upon the death of their wives, and the deacon should be encouraged in seeking professional counsel and spiritual direction as he encounters and integrates the many aspects he will face in the bereavement process.

### **Deacons Participating In Public Devotions and Blessings**

Popular devotions of the Christian people are to be highly endorsed, provided they are in accordance with the laws and norms of the Church. Deacons may act as leaders in devotions, but should be duly cautious concerning devotions which may become superstitious, or which have not received the proper ecclesial approval.

Deacons should also be familiar with the Book of Blessings. Deacons may preside at those rites of blessing as indicated to be appropriate to their ecclesial office, as indicated in the Book of

Blessings. However, when a priest is present, it is more fitting that the office of presiding at a rite of blessing be assigned to him, and that the deacon assist by carrying out those functions which are proper to the diaconate, according to the “General Introduction” of the Book of Blessings.

**Pastor and Permanent Deacon Agreement**

**PERMANENT DIACONATE PROGRAM**

**DIOCESE OF FRESNO**

1550 N. Fresno Street

Fresno, California 93703-3788

**PASTOR / PERMANENT DEACON AGREEMENT**

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

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

*The Deacon and his wife should meet with the Pastor and fill out this form, sign it, and send it to the Permanent Diaconate Office WITHIN 30 DAYS. Retired Deacons do not have to fill out this form.*

Hours/Week

**MINISTRY OF SERVICE**

Main Ministry:

Other Ministries:

**MINISTRY OF THE WORD**

Preaching:

Teaching:

Other:

**LITURGICAL MINISTRY**

Sunday Liturgy:

Other Liturgical Roles:

Other Tasks/Roles:

**AREAS OF NEEDED COOPERATION:** (Meetings with Pastor, staff, parish council, etc.)

**PARISH FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES:** (List all that apply below)

1. Reimbursement of expenses for parish ministries associated with performance of assigned duties.

2. Annual retreat for Deacon and wife. (The parish pays for the Deacon and the Diocese pays for the wife.)
3. On-going education expenses (up to \$300)
4. Clergy Convocation (parish or Diocesan agency is responsible for costs.)
5. In addition to the above, the parish will cover the costs or provide reimbursement for expenses not included in any of the above, which are required or mandated by the Diocese, or authorized to be incurred by the Deacon on behalf of the parish.
6. Other reimbursements deemed appropriate by the Pastor.
7. **Other additional responsibilities/assignments not included in the above:**

*Requests for reimbursement of all ministry-related expenses must be accompanied by receipts, and approved by the Pastor.*

The Pastor and the Permanent Deacon have discussed and agreed to all the above items. The Deacon and Pastor have reviewed this document, and will forward a signed original to the Bishop or his representative for approval. This document remains in effect until terminated, or a successor document is negotiated.

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

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

WIFE OF DEACON \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

BISHOP OR HIS DELEGATE \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Cc: Pastor, Deacon, Bishop

Revised 12/15/2014

**PERMANENT DIACONATE PROGRAM  
DIOCESE OF FRESNO**

**MINISTRY REVIEW & PLANNING**

(Complete and return to the Diaconate Office by June 30<sup>th</sup> every even-numbered year.)

**I. Describe Your Primary Assignment:**

Deacon's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Contact Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parish / Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Pastor/Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Total Hours of Ministry/Week Per Deacon-Pastor Agreement: \_\_\_\_\_

Describe your primary assignment(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How long has your current Deacon-Pastor Agreement been in effect? \_\_\_\_\_ yrs.

Has there been any *SIGNIFICANT* changes in your ministry assignments since 20\_\_?  Yes  No

If "Yes," please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of years you have been assigned to this parish: \_\_\_\_\_ yrs.

Do you have a Spiritual Director?  Yes  No

How often have you met with him? (June 30, 20\_\_ to June 30, 20\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Who initiates these meetings?  You  Your Spiritual Director  Mutual

Are you currently in a **diaconate support group**?  Yes  No

**How many times** has your support group met in the last 12 months? \_\_\_\_\_ Don't Know

**How many of these** support group meetings have you attended? \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Review By The Deacon**

1. Please enter an overall rating of your diaconal ministry for the past two-year period, using a numerical scale of **1 to 5**, with "5" indicating, "**Excellent, I am very satisfied with this parish assignment,**" and "1" indicating "**I find it very difficult to fulfill my diaconal ministry in this parish.**"

5      4      3      2      1

2. What areas of your assignment have been most satisfying these last two years?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Please Continue On Back of Page)

3. Do you have any concerns about your current placement in this parish/agency? Are there issues that need to be raised or problems that need to be talked about?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are there areas of ministry that you would like to be involved with in the future?  Yes  No

What are they? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you feel comfortable talking to your pastor/supervisor about these or other concerns you have?

Yes  No

4. What are your recommendations for the next two years? Do you want any changes in your duties, ministries, or place of assignment? Do you have any continuing education needs?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### III. Wife's Assessment

5. Do you feel your husband is satisfied in his diaconal ministry in this assignment?  Yes  No

If "No," why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. What do you feel is the most important need for your husband in order to continue to be an effective deacon in the parish? \_\_\_\_\_

Other comments?: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you have a spiritual director?  Yes  No

### IV. Review by Your Pastor / Supervisor

Please enter an overall rating of this deacon's ministry for the past two-year period, using a numerical scale of **1 to 5**, with "5" indicating, "**Excellent, I am very satisfied with this deacon's performance,**" and "1" indicating "**This deacon is not currently meeting my expectations,**" and circling the appropriate numerical value:

5      4      3      2      1

Please indicate your basis if you have assigned a numerical rating value of "**2**" or less:

- Does not fulfill all the terms of the current Deacon/Pastor agreement.
- Does not take initiative to help in other parish areas, or refuses when asked.
- Provides only a minimal presence in the parish outside of assigned duties.
- Does not have a good working relationship with other parish staff/ministers.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you talked to your deacon about these or other concerns you have?  Yes  No

**(Go On To Next Page)**

8. How often do you schedule a meeting with your Deacon?  Weekly  Monthly  
 Less than 6 times/year  7-10 times/year
9. In what areas does this Deacon show special **strengths**? (Check all that apply)
- Homiletics  Pastoral Care Ministries  Organization & Leadership Skills  
 Justice & Charity Ministries  Liturgical Competence  Catechetical Instruction  
 Program Administration  Other \_\_\_\_\_
10. How many times per month does this Deacon preach on Sundays? \_\_\_\_\_ Weekdays? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Is he able to communicate in at least one language other than English?  Yes  No
12. Can you schedule him for: Baptisms?  Yes  No Gravesides?  Yes  No  
Weddings?  Yes  No Other Special Liturgies?  Yes  No
13. Is this Deacon involved in other **parish** ministries (*i.e.* Finance Committee, Parish Council, RCIA, chaplain to a parish organization, etc.)?  Yes  No  Don't Know
14. Is this Deacon involved in other **community** ministries (*i.e.* homeless resources, hospital or detention ministries, etc.)?  Yes  No  Don't Know
15. What one area of improvement/growth would you suggest for his diaconal ministry?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**V. Pastor/Supervisor and Deacon Conference.**

The undersigned certify that they have met and conferred to review the past two years of diaconal ministry and each party has had an opportunity to respond to the other's comments.

Signature of Pastor/Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Deacon \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Wife \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewed by the Director on \_\_\_\_\_ Director's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Revised 3/16

PERMANENT DIACONATE PROGRAM

DIOCESE OF FRESNO

**Permanent Deacon's Funeral Information**

(Please print or type)

1. NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

2. NAME OF RELATIVE TO BE CONTACTED:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
(area code) (number)

3. LOCATION OF LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT:

My Last Will is in the possession of:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE: \_\_\_\_\_  
(area code) (number)

A copy is on file at the Chancery Office:  Yes  No

MY EXECUTOR IS: \_\_\_\_\_

4. FUNERAL DIRECTOR DESIRED (if you have a preference)

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

5. CEMETERY DESIRED:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_

I have already arranged for a plot in this cemetery:  Yes  No

6. MASS INSTRUCTIONS:

I desire that the Mass of Christian Burial be held in:

NAME OF CHURCH: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

CONCELEBRANTS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

DEACON OF THE MASS: \_\_\_\_\_

DEACON OF THE WORD: \_\_\_\_\_

HOMILIST: \_\_\_\_\_

MUSIC SELECTIONS:

ENTRANCE HYMN: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMUNION HYMN: \_\_\_\_\_

RECESSIONAL HYMN: \_\_\_\_\_

7. ANY OTHER SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SERVICES OR AFTER:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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



## DIOCESAN PERMANENT DEACON PURCHASE POLICY

### POST IN A CONSPICUOUS PLACE

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ALL

## DIOCESAN PERMANENT DEACONS

### FRESNO CATHOLIC CEMETERIES

“After one (1) year of full time service, current incardinated permanent deacons of the Roman Catholic Bishop of Fresno, a Corporation Sole, who are serving in good standing are entitled to receive a forty percent (40%) discount on the purchase of products and services for use at Fresno Catholic Cemeteries. This discount will apply to the purchase of all products and services, except for Cemetery Care. **The discount is limited exclusively to the deacon, the deacon’s spouse, and the deacon’s minor children, and is not available to any other members of the deacon’s family.**”

Pre-need contracts can be written for qualified deacons based on the criteria stated above, subject to the same terms and conditions as other contracts written on non-deacons.

Products and services purchased at the deacon discount can only be used for individuals who meet the above criteria.”

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For more information regarding this policy, please contact the Director of Cemeteries, the cemetery Office Manager, or a cemetery Family Service Counselor at the address or phone number below.



### **Fresno Catholic Cemeteries**

St. Peter’s † Holy Cross † Calvary

264 N Blythe Avenue, Fresno, CA 93706 (559) 488-7449 Fax: (559) 488-7485

E-mail: [cemeteries@dioceseoffresno.org](mailto:cemeteries@dioceseoffresno.org)

<http://www.dioceseoffresno.org/cemeteries>