



# DIACONATE PERSONNEL MANUAL

“Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach.”

*Rite of Ordination of Deacons*

UPDATED JULY 1, 2019



July 1, 2019

Dear Brother Deacons:

Just over fifty years ago, the Second Vatican Council called for the restoration of the Diaconate as a permanent order within the Latin Church. In so doing, the Council Fathers noted, “It would help those men who carry out the ministry of a deacon – preaching the Word of God as catechists, governing scattered Christian communities in the name of the bishop or parish priest, or exercising charity in the performance of social or charitable works – if they were to be strengthened by the imposition of hands which has come down from the apostles. They would be more closely bound to the altar and their ministry would be made more fruitful through the sacramental grace of the diaconate.” (*Ad gentes*, n.16)

In the Diocese of Orlando, the ministry of the permanent deacons has indeed been fruitful. I am grateful to our deacons for the many ways in which they have assisted and strengthened our faith communities. At the same time, the vocation of the deacon also requires a certain commitment on the part of his family, and I want to take this occasion to acknowledge and thank the families of our deacons for the support and encouragement they have offered.

Shortly after the Second Vatican Council, Pope Saint Paul VI, noted the need for precise norms “to determine the proper conditions under which not only the ministry of the diaconate will be more advantageously regulated, but the training also of the candidates will be better suited to their different kinds of life, their common obligations and their sacred dignity.” (*Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*).

It is in that spirit in which this Diaconate Personnel Manual has been updated and promulgated for the Diocese of Orlando. As our understanding of the Order of Deacon unfolds and matures with the times there will be periodical revisions to this manual to reflect the important decisions and recommendations based upon our lived experiences in ministry. In so doing, it is our prayer that the ministry of the permanent deacon becomes ever more fruitful.

With renewed expressions of gratitude for your ministry and prayerful best wishes to you and your family, I am looking forward to serving with you in the vineyard of our Lord.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

John Noonan  
Bishop, Diocese of Orlando

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## PERSONNEL PHILOSOPHY AND ADMINISTRATION

1. Personnel policies are dynamic and fluid. This policy statement is a baseline for a functional permanent diaconate. From this baseline, the Order of Deacons, interacting with our bishop, the director of the permanent diaconate, and the respective Deanery Lead Deacons (DLD), can foster the continuing evolution and maturation of Diocesan policy. The evolving growth of this policy must meet the needs of the bishop, Order of Deacons, and the faithful of our Diocese. All deacons, men in formation, wives, and staff personnel should make known to the director of the permanent diaconate those areas or items of this policy that require examination or revision.
2. You will notice throughout this document reference will be made to Diocesan policy. These policies were developed by the Diocesan Policy Review Board. Therefore, if one has concerns with any of these policies, they must identify and document the specific issue(s) in writing to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate. The Office of the Permanent Diaconate will coordinate with the Human Resources Secretariat to address those concerns.

## IDENTITY, VOCATION, MISSION

### The Deacon's Identity

3. The deacon is the Sacramental Sign of Jesus Christ, the Servant, who lived totally at the service of His Father for the good of every person. To live their ministry to the fullest, deacons must know Christ intimately. As the *Didascalia Apostolorum* recommends to the deacons of the first century: As our Savior and Master said in the Gospel: *“whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; whoever wishes to be first among you will be the slave of all. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mk 10:43-45)*. Deacons must do the same, even if that means giving your life for your brothers and sisters, because of the service you are bound to fulfill. This invitation is most appropriate today urging deacons to prepare with great dedication and live their vocation.

Remembering the circumstances that led the 12 apostles to appoint the seven deacons (Acts 6:1-6), and the specific accounts of Stephen (Acts 6:8-7-60) and Phillip (Acts 8:4-39), we see that the spiritual power of the latter (the Seven) flowed from the former (the Twelve). In a like way, the *munera* (gifts) of the deacon flow from the bishop.

4. The deacon is primarily a Christian man in his usual employment and lifestyle, trained and formed by study and prayer for a special ministry of Word, Liturgy and Charity to the community in which he lives and works. His diaconal service of Word, Liturgy and Charity is an important ministry that extends the mission of the Church far beyond its liturgical communities.

### Family Life

5. Deacons, as well as their wives and families, are encouraged to appreciate the mutual relationship between his first vocation of marriage and his second vocation of the diaconate. A stable marriage and loving family life are positive factors contributing to a fruitful diaconal vocation. The married deacon or candidate must focus on the practical order of priorities: his

first vocation of marriage and his second vocation in the diaconate. After the deacon's Ordination, his wife is encouraged to share in her husband's continual growth and formation by taking advantage of the retreat and educational opportunities provided by the Diocese. Both are encouraged to make use of a spiritual director.

6. The deacon's wife has no formal ministerial role connected to her husband's second vocation other than giving permission for him to be ordained, and annually giving permission for his continued service in the Church.

### Vocation

7. The deacon in the Diocese of Orlando is one who always shares in the ministry of Jesus Christ. He continues to make his livelihood by his usual employment/profession. He then voluntarily offers his diaconal service. He freely exercises his ministry, at times not in conflict with the demands of his profession and family. It is understood, the deacon will be available for diaconate ministry.

### Mission

8. Parish Life: The deacon's tasks include promoting and sustaining the apostolic activities of the laity. To the extent that he is more present and more involved in secular environments and structures, he should feel encouraged to foster closeness between the ordained ministry and lay activities, in common service to the Kingdom of God. In particular, he has a formidable presence in the community via family, work, school, etc., as well as in pastoral settings and activity. Deacons, both married and celibate, serve God's people by their witness to the Gospel value of sacrificial love, a quality of life too easily dismissed in today's society. (National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of the Permanent Deacon in the United States [ND], 30)
9. Community Life: The deacon, as St. Pope John Paul II said, "is the Church's service sacramentalized." Therefore, the deacon's service in the Church's ministry of Word and liturgy would be severely deficient if not accompanied by his exemplary witness and assistance in the Church's ministry of charity and justice. Thus, St. Pope John Paul II affirmed 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. That these two dimensions are inseparably joined together in one reality shows the important nature of the ministry which is yours by Ordination." (ND, 36) Therefore, "the diaconal ministries of the Word, Liturgy, and Charity, 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." (ND, 39)

### **RELATIONSHIP WITH**

10. Bishop: Deacons are ordained for service in the Diocese of Orlando. The deacon is in direct relationship with the bishop with whom he is in communion and under whose authority he exercises his ministry.

11. Directly or indirectly, the bishop is involved in each man's diaconate formation as well as his diaconal ministry from the moment a man first applies to be considered for Ordination. It is the Bishop who appoints the director of the permanent diaconate and the association for diaconate formation for his territory. The bishop approves the formation program in all its dimensions, and the defined components of each deacon's ministry in his designated parish or other assignment. Once a man enters formation, he is no longer a member of his home parish in the way he was before; rather, he is now responsible to the association for diaconate formation as the representative of the bishop. This relationship continues throughout formation until Ordination, at which point the deacon is responsible to the Bishop through the director of the permanent diaconate.
12. The regency of the bishop over his Diocese is a canonical pastoral authority. He has the responsibility over the temporal goods of the local Church, and authority over his priests and deacons, to whom he delegates their own proper *munera*. Of course, both bishop and priest are responsible for lay and religious workers in their respective diocese and parishes. The deacon has virtually no temporal authority intrinsic to his office. Rather, he ministers in his threefold manner, without attachment to any physical resources, except the limits of his parish, and to an extent, the diocese. Some deacons may in addition to their assigned ministry, serve as employees of parishes, the diocese, or other agency of the Church ([paragraph 40](#)).
13. The bishop appoints the deacon to a specific parish assignment and may appoint a deacon to a specific ministry. The principal criteria for the assignment are the pastoral needs of the diocesan Church, and the personal qualifications and talents of the deacon. Assignments will consider the deacon's family and occupational responsibilities.
14. It is important that the ministry assigned to a deacon by the bishop be very clearly spelled out in the Pastor-Deacon Ministerial Covenant. The covenant should contain a clear delineation of responsibilities as well as the expectations of the Diocese, parish, or community in which the deacon serves. Faithful documentation of the covenant will go far to prevent any misunderstanding or disappointments arising from the deacon himself, or confusion by other members of the Church.
15. [Pastors and Priests](#): Deacons of the Diocese of Orlando exercise their distinct ministry in communion not only with their bishop but, also with their priests. The priesthood and the diaconate are neither identical nor competitive, but rather, complementary ministries. The diaconate is a separate, distinct, and full order within the hierarchy. Both priests and deacons should therefore understand the diaconate is not to be thought of nor exercised on the model of the priesthood. Deacons and priests should have a strong genuine respect for each other and for the integrity of the two distinct ministries. For the good of the Church the two ministries must be exercised in communion with one another.
16. [Laity](#): By their Ordination, deacons are members of the clergy, with the rights and responsibilities that follow from Ordination. They are unique since most are married, have secular occupations, and do not engage in the Church's ministry as their sole activity. This combination of ordained ministry with marriage and secular occupation is a great strength to

their ministry, and a great gift to the Church as a whole. Deacons of the Diocese are thus unusually qualified to represent the presence of the Church to the world and the needs and challenges of the world to the Church.

## ORDER OF DEACONS

### Organization and Staff

17. Fiscal Year: The Diocese of Orlando's fiscal year runs from July 1 to June 30.
18. Deanery: The Diocese of Orlando is divided into six deaneries (Central North, Central South, Eastern, Northern, Southern, Western). Each deanery has an appointed priest as the Dean and a Deacon appointed as the Deanery Lead Deacon. Deanery Lead Deacons are listed on the Diocesan deacon's webpage. [Appendix A](#) is a Map of Parishes by Deanery.
19. Diocesan Status: Deacons are bound by all the policies and procedures of an employee of the Diocese of Orlando. As such they are to be familiar, at a minimum, with the following Diocesan policies which can be found on the Diocesan website, Safe Environment Certification page ([English](#) / [Spanish](#)) or using the embedded links:
  - a. Safe Environment [Policy](#)
  - b. Social Communications Policy ([English](#) / [Spanish](#))
  - c. [Standards of Conduct](#)
20. The diocese also maintains an "Intranet" (<https://intranet.orlandodiocese.org>) that hosts all diocesan policies. Deacons are encouraged to visit the Intranet regularly as all employees, including clergy, are required to follow the policies and guidelines maintained on this platform. If you need assistance accessing the Intranet, contact the [Office of Communications](#) or the [Office of Information Technology](#).
21. Organization. The [Office of the Permanent Diaconate](#) is an office of the Leadership and Parish Life Secretariat. The office is committed to serving the diverse needs of the Diocese, local parishes, and their surrounding communities. The primary purpose of this office is to provide support to the deacon's ministerial life and the proper formation of permanent deacons.
22. Support: The Office of the Permanent Diaconate offers guidance to permanent deacons in their ministry of the Word, Liturgy and Charity, facilitates parish assignments and appointments, aids and guides the continuing formation and spiritual growth, supports individual deacons and their families, and encourages and promotes unity of the diaconate community and the priests. The diaconate office further provides an approval process for deacons moving into the Diocese who apply for faculties and parish assignment.
23. Formation: The Office of the Permanent Diaconate plans and supervises the diaconate formation program by assisting parish communities in recruiting potential candidates, screening and processing applications, making recommendations to the bishop for applicant acceptance, monitoring aspirant/candidate formation, and presenting candidates to the bishop for Ordination.



24. [Staff](#): The director of the permanent diaconate is the principle representative and advisor to the bishop and chancery staff on matters concerning the permanent diaconate. He is directly responsible for the coordination, assignments, appointments, administration, and formation of the permanent deacons serving within the diocese. He is responsible for the recruitment and training of volunteers (priest, deacon, and laity) to assist with the many responsibilities and functions administered by the Office of the Permanent Diaconate.
25. [Associate Director for Administration and Externs \(ADA-E\)](#): The ADA-E is a volunteer appointed by the director of the permanent diaconate. The ADA-E assists with the administration of deacons serving in the Diocese of Orlando. Areas in which he assists include the following:
  - a. Assists the Office of the Permanent Diaconate with maintenance and collection of the permanent records of all deacons serving within the Diocese of Orlando, and incardinated deacons approved to serve outside of the Diocese.
  - b. Assists in the application, vetting, interviewing, orientation, and making of assignment recommendations, for deacons requesting faculties to exercise their diaconal ministries within the Diocese of Orlando either as a permanent resident or seasonal basis.
  - c. Assists in the processing of deacon requests for incardination and excardination.
26. [Associate Director for Formation \(ADF\)](#): The ADF is a volunteer appointed by the director of the permanent diaconate. The ADF assists in the formation of deacon inquirers, applicants, aspirants, and candidates. He assists in the continuing formation of deacons by recommending retreat and educational programs to include leading committees and teams as requested by the Director.

## [Personnel Types](#)

27. [Classifications](#): Permanent deacons are classified as two types, incardinated and externs.
  - a. Incardinated deacons are deacons who have been ordained in and for the Diocese of Orlando. They retain this personnel type even when relocating out of the Diocese's service area, unless a formal request is made and approved for Excardination from the Diocese of Orlando, and the deacon is incardinated into the receiving (arch)diocese.
  - b. Externs are deacons who were formed and ordained for another (arch)diocese, relocated (permanently or seasonally) and have requested and been granted faculties to exercise their diaconal ministry within the Diocese of Orlando. (See [Appendix B](#) for the Policy for the Application, Acceptance, Assignment, and Orientation of Extern Deacons).
  - c. Even though he has moved, the deacon remains incardinated in his (arch)diocese of first incardination unless a formal or *ipso iure* process of excardination and incardination has been followed. It is important for Dioceses to maintain accurate records of the location of their deacons, even though outside the Diocese, and for deacons to maintain communication with the Diocese of their incardination.
28. [Incardination of Externs](#): The Diocese of Orlando does not incardinate deacons formed in another Diocese. However, [Appendix C](#) contains the policy and procedure for requesting incardination should the policy be changed in the future.

## Diaconal Status

29. Active: Deacons who are fully engaged in parish and community life in the ministry of Word, Liturgy, and Charity. They are eligible for parish transfers by request or needs of the Bishop. They are eligible for bishop appointments to serve in other leadership positions. They must maintain themselves as a deacon in “good standing”.
30. Senior (Retired Active): Deacons who have reached the mandatory retirement age of 75 yet remain fully “active” in diaconal ministries. They are not normally eligible for transfers and serve at the prerogative of their assigned pastor. They must maintain the same “good standing” obligations as an active deacon. “Senior deacon” is not a title.
31. Seasonal: Extern deacons who serve within the Diocese of Orlando for less than six months in a calendar year. Faculties must be renewed annually with a Letter of Good Standing from their home (arch)diocese. They must complete the Diocese of Orlando Safe Environment Certification and maintain a locally cleared background check.
32. Inactive: A deacon who for whatever reason has or is no longer able to exercise his normal diaconal ministry(ies) at his assigned parish for at least six months. Inactive deacons will be requested to discuss their status with the director of the permanent diaconate. Inactive deacons are still deacons and thus may occasionally exercise their faculties with the permission of their pastors for a special event or need (*e.g. Baptism, funeral, marriage, communion service*). They are released from all “good standing” obligations except Safe Environment Certification and background check to exercise their limited faculties. They are encouraged to participate in deanery and diocesan events, to include vesting for Diocesan liturgical events such as Ordinations, funerals, Chrism Mass, etc.
33. Removed: Deacons whose faculties have been removed are no longer allowed to perform their diaconal ministries. Faculties may be removed by the Bishop on a temporary or permanent basis. Reasons for removal include, but are not limited to allowing his background check to expire, not maintaining a status as a deacon in “good standing” for two consecutive years without requesting a leave of absence, certain marital/family matters, or a violation of the civil law.
34. Deacon in Good Standing: To maintain the status of a deacon in “good standing” a deacon must meet the following obligations:
  - a. Background Clearance: Every deacon with faculties to serve in the diocese must complete the Diocesan Safe Environment Certification, be fingerprinted, and receive a background clearance as a deacon which is renewed every five years. Should a deacon’s background clearance expire, the deacon and his pastor will be notified of the immediate suspension of his faculties.
  - b. Annual Overnight Retreat: Deacons are canonically required to attend a retreat annually. The Diocese of Orlando prescribes this be at minimum a two-day, overnight retreat. The Office of the Permanent Diaconate schedules and hosts annual retreat opportunities for deacons and their wives. Retreat expenses are covered by the annual

parish assessment for each deacon. Deacons have the right to seek overnight retreats outside the Diocese the cost of which is reimbursable up to \$300 if the parish paid the annual assessment. This retreat must be documented on the Continuing Formation Worksheet. Deacons who are unable to meet this requirement for any reason must make their request in writing.

- c. Continuing Formation: Each deacon in active ministry is expected to complete and report a minimum of thirty (30) Continuing Formation credits annually. An explanation of how to earn Continuing Formation credits are included on the Continuing Formation Worksheet form.
- d. Annual Diaconate Convocation: Every active deacon (including senior and seasonal deacons) is expected to participate in the annual convocation. Excused absences must be requested in writing.
- e. Pastor's Assessment and Needs: Annually pastors are asked to complete the Pastor's Assessment of the Deacon for each deacon assigned to their parish. ([Appendix D](#))
- f. Deacon's Annual Self-Assessment: As part of the deacon's self and pastor assessment, each deacon will communicate with their pastor about the needs of the parish and local community for the coming year. ([Appendix E](#) is the instruction for completing the annual self-assessment.)
- g. Funeral Arrangements: Each deacon must have his funeral arrangements on file with the Office of the Permanent Diaconate. This document should be reviewed annually forwarding any changes to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate.
- h. Extern deacons: are expected to maintain "good standing" obligations with their home (arch)diocese. Failure to do so may result in their home (arch)diocese suspending or removing their faculties. In this case, faculties will be removed in the Diocese of Orlando.

## Policies

35. Clerical Title: The title for permanent deacons in the Diocese of Orlando is "Deacon". The title of Deacon is appropriate for use in all oral and written communication, including signature lines in physical or electronic communication. All other titles are to be discontinued.
36. Forms: [Appendix G](#) is a list of all forms referred to in this manual. The most current version of all forms can be found on the Diocesan website [Forms](#).
37. Faculties: In the Diocese of Orlando, deacons are granted faculties by the bishop and are to be exercised in cooperation with and under the direction of the pastor of the parish to which the deacon is assigned. Every deacon granted faculties in the Diocese of Orlando must properly execute a "Pastor – Deacon Ministerial Covenant" prior to assignment by the bishop. A copy of the approved Ministerial Covenant must be retained by the deacon, parish and the Office of the Permanent Diaconate.
38. Clerical Attire: Acknowledging a deacon is an ordained cleric, the Roman collar is not normally the appropriate dress. The deacon is to continue to dress as a layman, except when assisting or presiding in a liturgical role. His dress should be in good taste and appropriate to his

occupation. In the rare event where a deacon is requested to wear a Roman collar for the performance of a specific ministry (*e.g. hospital chaplain, hospice, ecumenical convocation, etc.*), the deacon may make a request to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate to seek the approval of the bishop.

39. Liturgy: The [Liturgical Norms and Guidelines](#) for Deacons along with other liturgical norms can be found on the Diocesan website/[Liturgy and Music](#).
40. Parish Employment: Neither a deacon nor his wife may be employed at the same parish where the deacon is assigned to serve. It is strictly prohibited for a deacon and his wife to be employed at the same parish no matter where the deacon is assigned to serve.
41. In cases where a parish desires to hire a deacon or his wife, the deacon has the responsibility to inform the hiring authority of this policy. Should the parish begin the hiring process of the deacon or his wife, the deacon will be reassigned to another parish within established guidelines as identified in [paragraph 69](#). All such employment opportunities will be reviewed by the diocesan senior director of human resources, the Office of the Permanent Diaconate and the bishop prior to finalizing the employment.
42. A deacon or wife of a deacon seeking employment in the diocese must meet the same qualification and certification requirements as any other eligible candidate seeking to be hired for the same position and must compete for the posted position with the other qualified candidates.
43. Compensation for Deacons:
  - a. Deacons are to take care of their own and their family's needs using income derived from their employment or other personal revenue source(s). Every deacon is obliged to satisfy their legal requirements for Social Security Administration benefits or a comparable program.
  - b. It is understood that the sacred service of the deacon's ministry of Word, Liturgy and Charity extends the mission of the Church far beyond its liturgical communities. Therefore, when a deacon exercises his diaconal ministries, within his assigned parish and/or engages in ministries of charity and justice "outside the walls" of the church, they are to be done without charge or expectation of remuneration of any kind.
  - c. Deacons employed by the Diocese or parish are to receive remuneration commensurate with the salaries and benefits provided to lay person on staff, for the occupation, as defined by Diocesan policy and adherence to the most current Diocesan Employee Handbook.
  - d. Honorariums/Stipends: Deacons may receive honorariums/stipends (weddings, baptisms, funerals, or as a presenter/retreat leader outside their assigned parish). Honorariums/Stipends paid to the deacon by, or through, the parish are considered taxable income and must be reported in accordance with Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations.
  - e. Mileage and Ministry Expenses Reimbursement: Deacons are eligible for mileage and ministerial expense reimbursement incurred on the church's behalf. Such

reimbursements are to be based on an accountable expense reimbursement plan for actual expenses with mileage reimbursements being made at the current IRS Standard Mileage Rate. Deacons may seek reimbursement in two ways:

1. Request reimbursement from the deacon's assigned parish. If the assigned parish does not have a reimbursement policy or plan in place the deacon may use the second method.
2. Mileage & Ministerial Expenses may be reported on the deacon's IRS Tax Filing as volunteer mileage and non-reimbursed expenses for the Diocese of Orlando. Consult a tax professional to maximize these reimbursable items.

44. For deacons employed by the Diocese or parish, normal commuting miles to/from home to the place of work is not eligible for reimbursement.

45. Transfers: Active deacons are eligible to request a transfer of assignment. The bishop must approve all transfer requests prior to the deacon relocating. To request a transfer the following is required:

- a. Within the Diocese of Orlando: Deacons who wish to be transferred to another parish or seek a change in assignment should follow the procedures outlined in the Transfer Request Form which can be found on the Diocesan webpage [Diaconate Forms](#). It is a requirement to discuss the desire to transfer with the assigned pastor and receiving pastor, be a deacon in "good standing" and not take any action until the bishop decides on the request. Notification of approval will be done via official correspondence from the bishop, to the deacon and both pastors.
- b. To Serve Outside the Diocese of Orlando: From time to time a deacon may need to relocate outside of the Diocese due to a job relocation or other family needs.
  1. Prior to his transfer from the Diocese of Orlando to another diocese, a Deacon must notify the Bishop of the Diocese of Orlando, in writing, of his wish to move to another diocese.
  2. Upon the bishop's approval of the deacon's request to serve outside the Diocese the bishop will send a letter of introduction and recommendation to the Bishop of the receiving (arch)diocese including a Letter of Good Standing from the chancellor. The deacon should then contact the Office of the Permanent Diaconate of the receiving Diocese to request permission to serve in that Diocese and an assignment.
  3. The transferred deacon is responsible for notifying the Office of the Permanent Diaconate of his new assignment in the receiving Diocese. This information will be shared with the Bishop for his review and a copy of the appointment by the bishop of the receiving diocese will be placed in the deacon's personal file.
  4. The transferred deacon remains incardinated in the Diocese of Orlando. His status remains active with all rights and obligations of an active deacon in the Diocese of Orlando.
  5. The deacon serving outside the Diocese of Orlando must communicate changes in contact information, as well as changes in status and assignment.
- c. Every effort will be made by the Office of the Permanent Diaconate to assist with a smooth transition of diaconal ministry to a new parish and new Diocese.

46. [Leaves of Absence/Sabbaticals](#): A leave of absence or sabbatical may be requested by the deacon or be directed by the bishop. The period of the sabbatical will be decided by the bishop. Requests for a voluntary sabbatical is normally for no more than six months. While on sabbatical, the deacon does not have faculties to exercise their diaconal ministry(ies).
47. [Retirement](#): Normal retirement age for deacons is seventy-five (75). Within thirty (30) days after his 75th birthday, the bishop will inform the deacon by letter of his status change to a senior deacon (see a sample letter in [Appendix G](#)). The deacon may remain in an active status so long as his health, pastor, and wife allow continued service even on a limited basis. Senior deacon is not a title. Deacon's with the status of "senior" must maintain all "good standing" requirements to continue to exercise their diaconal ministry(ies).
48. [Loss of Clerical State](#): After validly conferred, sacred Ordination never becomes invalid. A cleric however, can be deprived of the clerical state:
- By means of a juridical sentence or administrative decree that declares invalidity of sacred Ordination.
  - By means of the legitimate infliction of the penalty of dismissal.
  - By means of a rescript of the Apostolic See, a deacon can be returned to the lay state.
  - A cleric cannot again become an active member of the clergy without seeking a subsequent rescript from the Holy See.
49. [Death of a Deacon](#): Upon the death of a deacon, the entire diaconal community will be notified through established communication systems. The family or the pastor is asked to notify the Office of the Permanent Diaconate or DLD who, in turn, will notify the director of the permanent diaconate to activate the coordination process to ensure the entire community is notified and gain access to the Bishop's schedule. ([Appendix H](#) contains the Instructions for a Deacon's Funeral.)

## [Appointments](#)

50. [Deanery Lead Deacons \(DLD\)](#): The purpose of the deacon deanery region is to ensure that all permanent deacons and men in formation can develop community relationships within the Order of Deacons. At present, there are six deaneries within the diocese. The deaneries have been formed geographically and demographically to hopefully provide for more cohesive grouping. These are called "Deacon Regions". The deaneries should be the medium through which concerns of deacons can be voiced to the director of the permanent diaconate and the bishop when necessary. The Deacon Regions may also sponsor programs for deacons, wives, and families that are spiritual, educational, and social in nature. Deanery gatherings provide the camaraderie and support that is needed for all involved in ministry. Gatherings should be structured to be positive and helpful for all concerned ([Appendix I](#) covers the Expectations of the Deanery Lead Deacon).
51. [Advisor Wives and Widows](#): This person is the liaison for the wives and widows of deacons to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate in an advisory capacity. She liaisons with the DLD

assisting in insuring that contact information is current, especially for the widows, and that retreats, and convocations have context and programing to enhance the wives and widows' relationships within the diaconal community. The widows of deacons continue to hold all the rights and privileges extended to the wives of the diaconate community. The appointed advisor may develop a volunteer committee to assist in their tasks.

52. Advisor for Cultural Sensitivity: This person is a deacon appointed as the liaison for the multicultural community of deacons to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate in an advisory capacity. He liaisons with the director of the permanent diaconate insuring that specific needs unique to our culturally diverse diaconate community are met. Their advice should be consulted when planning continuing formation programs and retreat opportunities. They are to be a resource to assist in developing plans to assist parishes, deaneries, and the diocese to unite segregated communities into the one body of Christ in liturgy and community action, especially in the relationships within diaconate community. Further, they may be called upon to assist with translations during diaconate application process, receiving new deacon externs, and document translations. The appointed advisor is encouraged to develop a volunteer committee to assist in the accomplishment of their tasks.
  
53. Diaconate Personnel Committee: This committee is made up of the following staff and appointed personnel: director of the permanent diaconate, who is the chairperson of the committee; each associate director; each DLD; the advisor of cultural sensitivity; the advisor for wives and widows of deacons. Past deacon directors and the Secretary for Leadership and Parish Life are *ex officio* members of the committee. The committee's primary purpose is the unity of the diaconate community in the Diocese of Orlando. They will be consulted for the recruitment, application review, interview and selection of men applying to the Order of Deacons. They may further be consulted on the reassignment and appointment of deacons.
  
54. Formation Selection Committee: This is an ad hoc committee establish for the recruitment and processing of new diaconate inquirers. The committee is chaired by the associate for diaconate formation. The committee membership includes the Secretary of Leadership and Parish Life, the appointed cohort facilitating deacon couples and other deacons in "good standing", along with their wives, to accomplish the following tasks:
  - a. Plan and execute Diaconate Information Nights
  - b. Review and assess all completed applications
  - c. Conduct interviews
  - d. Prepare a recommendation list for acceptance into the discernment year
  - e. Prepare a recommendation list for acceptance into diaconate formation
  - f. Prepare a recommendation list for acceptance as a deacon candidate
  - g. Consult on cases of academic probation, formation suspensions, and formation dismissals

## MINISTRY AND LIFE AFTER ORDINATION

### Continuing Formation

55. Continuing Spiritual Formation: The emphasis on spiritual formation and development that begins in the initial formation program must continue throughout the deacon's life. The deacon's primary vocation to holiness demands he be open to, and actively engage in, a variety of prayerful and spiritual experiences.
- a. Spiritual Direction: Deacons are expected to have a spiritual director and meet with them regularly.
  - b. Retreats: Deacons are encouraged to continually seek retreat opportunities, beyond their Canonical mandate, to maintain a deep spiritual awareness of their vocation. Deacons are strongly encouraged to participate in a marriage renewal retreat to maintain the strength and witness of their first vocation of marriage.
  - c. Liturgy of the Hours: Deacons are expected to know the nature and structure of the Liturgy of the Hours and be able to lead it publicly. Deacons are obligated to at least recite morning and evening prayer daily.
  - d. Other suggestions: [The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops](#) (USCCB) include daily or frequent participation in the Eucharist, regular reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, shared prayer with family, meditative prayer on the holy Scriptures: *lectio divina*, devotion to Mary, the Mother of God, prayerful preparation for ministries, theological reflection, and the authentic living of one's state in life.

### Marriage

56. Most deacons in the Diocese of Orlando are married. These men bring to the Sacrament of Holy Orders the gifts already received and still being nurtured through their participation in the Sacrament of Matrimony. This Sacrament sanctifies the love of husband and wife, making their love an efficacious sign of the love of Christ for his Church. Lived in faith, this ministry within the domestic Church is a sign to the entire Church of the love of Christ. It forms the basis of the married deacon's unique gift within the Church. The deacon and his wife must be a living example of fidelity and indissolubility in Christian marriage before a world which is in dire need of such signs. A married deacon with his wife and family, gives witness to the sanctity of marriage. The married deacon must always remember that through his sacramental participation in both the Sacraments of Matrimony and Holy Orders he is challenged to be faithful to both.
57. Marriage Difficulties: When a deacon or his wife begins to sense their marriage is having trouble, or when tensions become such that routine responsibilities to family, occupation, and ministry are affected, the following procedures are to be followed:
- a. The deacon has the responsibility to contact the director of the permanent diaconate to discuss the matter. The wife of the deacon, who recognizes a problem exists, should exercise her right to bring the problem to the attention of the director. The pastor or supervisor where the deacon is assigned should notify the director when becoming aware of a marriage problem. The Director will initiate discussion with the individual deacon. A determination will be made whether the deacon should remain in active



ministry at this time. Counseling will be made available.

- b. If following an appropriate amount of time, it is determined the situation has not been resolved, the director will recommend to the bishop a course of action that will allow the couple to focus exclusively on the resolution and reconciliation of their marriage. This may result in a leave of absence, curtailment of major ministerial activities, or inactive status.
- c. Should the situation deteriorate to the point of scandal or embarrassment due to abuse, infidelity, criminality, substance abuse, pathology, etc., the Director in consultation with the bishop will recommend appropriate actions.

58. Separations: When a separation occurs, the following procedures will be followed:

- a. The deacon must notify the director of the permanent diaconate immediately. The wife has the right, and is encouraged, to bring this situation to the attention of the director.
- b. The director of the permanent diaconate will communicate with the pastor or supervisor to make certain all are informed.
- c. The Diaconate Director will initiate a meeting with the deacon at which time a determination will be made to what extent he should remain in active ministry. Resources for counseling will be made available for the deacon, his wife, and his children.
- d. During the time of separation, behavior appropriate to his marital and diaconal commitments is as expected of the deacon.
- e. If the deacon is adjudged as responsible for severely grave marital problems such as abuse, infidelity, criminality, substance abuse, pathology, etc., the director of the permanent diaconate will recommend to the bishop curtailment of all pastoral responsibilities, and either suspension or laicization.

59. Divorce: When a divorce occurs:

- a. The deacon must contact the director of the permanent diaconate as soon as divorce proceedings are filed. The wife has the right and is encouraged to notify the director.
- b. The director of the permanent diaconate will communicate with the pastor or supervisor to make certain all are informed.
- c. Resources for counseling will be made available for the deacon, his wife, and his children.
- d. Ordinarily, a six month leave of absence is required.
- e. Should the deacon, after consultation with the director of the permanent diaconate and bishop, return to ministry, he will be reassigned to a different parish or institutional ministry.
- f. In the event the deacon is adjudged as responsible for grave marital difficulties such as abuse, infidelity, criminality, substance abuse, pathology, etc., or if scandal has been caused, the director will recommend to the bishop inactive status or laicization.
- g. The deacon must fulfill all financial and parental responsibilities as required by civil authorities and live a life in accordance with his sacramental vows of the marriage.
- h. A deacon who is separated, divorced, or widowed, must follow a lifestyle in accord with the Church's rules on celibacy as it applies to deacons.

## FORMATION

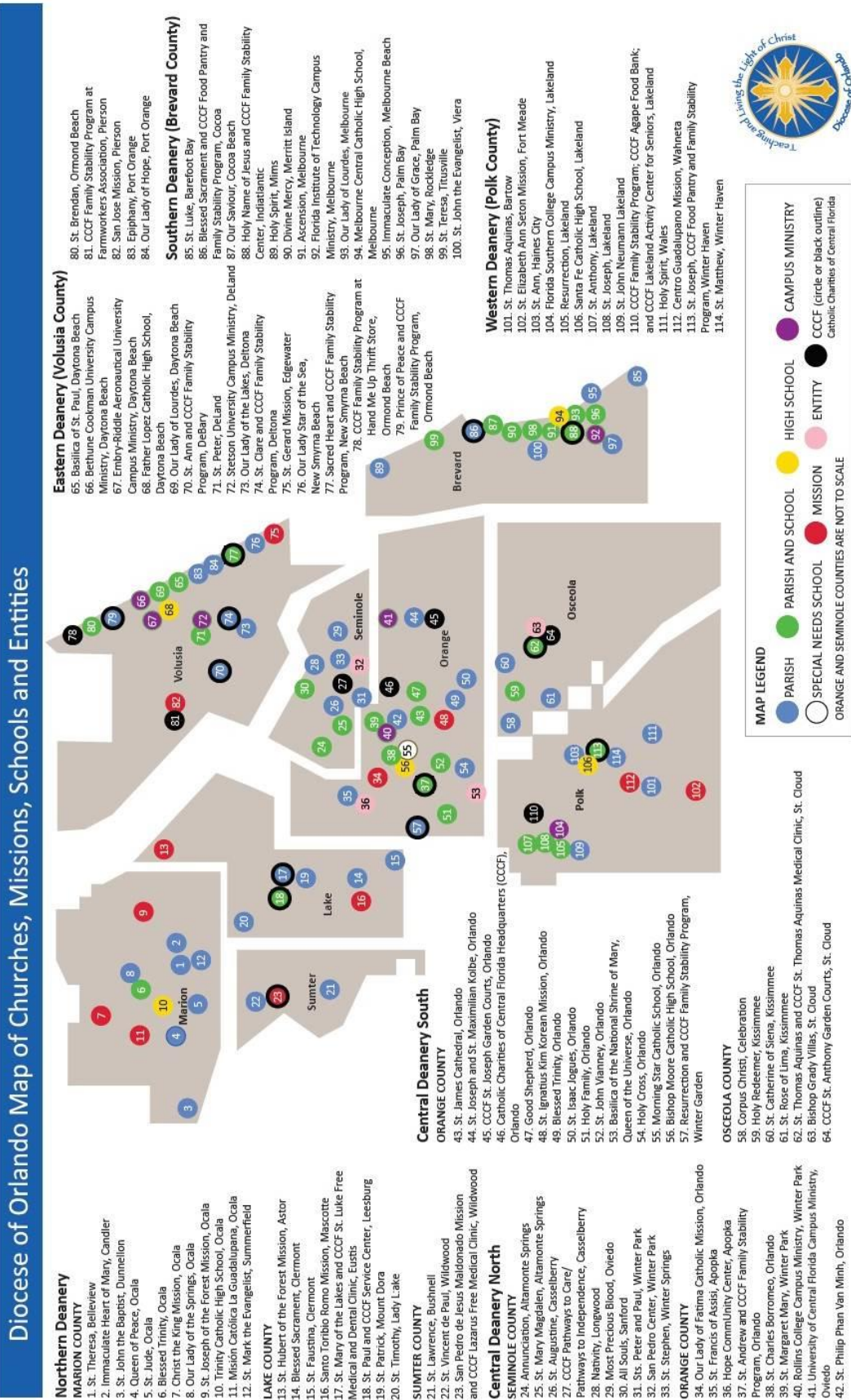
60. **Program**: The diocesan formation program is designed in full compliance with the current National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of the Permanent Deacon in the United States. A complete outline of the Diocese's six-year formation program can be found in the Diaconate Formation Program and Syllabus ([Appendix J](#)).
61. **Standards**: In accordance with Canon Law, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Diocesan Policy establishes the standards for acceptance into diaconal formation and Ordination to the Permanent Diaconate. Diaconate Application Standards can be found in [Appendix K](#).
62. **Applications for the Order of Deacon**: Men seeking Ordination to the Order of Deacon navigate through a four-phase application and discernment process.
- a. **Inquirer**: All inquirers are first directed to the Diocesan webpage, "Deacons/Diaconate Discernment" where they can review the minimum standard, complete the online form, and review discernment essentials. In November of the odd numbered years, the Office of the Permanent Diaconate will sponsor Diaconate Information Nights, one in each deanery. All inquirers are highly encouraged to attend at least one of these sessions.
  - b. **Applicant**: To receive an application to enter formation the inquirer must request the application with the permission of his wife, if married, through his pastor. A pastor is the only one who may request the application. The application has two parts: Pastor Recommendation and the Inquirer's Application (includes a wife's section). Application submission deadline is April 30th. Applications not fully completed or missing required documents will not be reviewed. The applicant phase includes:
    1. **Application Review**: The inquirer's pastor submitting his recommendation and the inquirer's completed application which is reviewed by the diaconate selection team.
    2. **Interview**: Once all applications have been accepted and reviewed the inquirer and his wife will be scheduled for an interview with the diaconate selection team.
    3. **Psychological Evaluation**: The inquirer and his wife will then be schedule for evaluation by a licensed professional.
    4. **Discernment Year**: Inquirer's meeting the criteria for selection will be invited by the bishop into a yearlong formal discernment process. The inquirer and his wife must attend all discernment sessions conducted by the diaconate discernment team.
    5. **Enrollment into Saint Leo University**: Each inquirer must be able to enroll into Saint Leo by the completion of their discernment year.
  - c. **Aspirant**: Once the inquirer successfully completes the discernment year he may be invited by the bishop into the diaconate formation program as an aspirant. At the end of the two years of aspirancy, with the permission of his wife and the recommendation of his pastor the aspirant may petition the bishop to be received into candidacy.
  - d. **Candidate**: This is a three-year continuation of the inquirer and his wife's discernment. At the appropriate times the candidate, with the permission of his wife and recommendation by his pastor and deacon mentor, may petition the bishop to be

installed as a Lector, an Acolyte and eventually for Ordination to the Order of Deacon.

63. Deacon Aspirants/Candidates: In some cases, men find it challenging to maintain a stable life balance between formation, family, professional, and ministerial obligations. The wife of the aspirant/candidate, who recognizes a problem exists, should exercise her right to bring this to the attention of the formation team. Aspirants/candidates are encouraged to speak freely of these balance issues with their family, pastor, mentor, and formation team before they cause serious concerns and challenges. The following situations may result in a suspension or dismissal from the formation program if the aspirant/candidate:
- a. Changes his parish at any time during the formation program
  - b. Receives an unsatisfactory recommendation from the pastor or deacon mentor
  - c. Has serious marital problems while in the formation program must take a leave of absence for a period to be determined by the director of the permanent diaconate
  - d. Experiences a separation or divorce; will be required to take a leave of absence, as stated above
  - e. Is responsible for grave actions such as abuse, infidelity, criminality, substance abuse, pathology, or causing scandal, etc., requiring withdrawal from the program
64. Parish Employment and Contract Service Providers: There are cases where men applying to the diaconate are currently, themselves and/or their wives, are employed by the Diocese/parish or are engaged in contractual service agreements with the Diocese/parish. All such employment and contracts will be reviewed by the discernment team in consultation with the Diocesan senior director of human resources on a case by case basis to assess potential employment and/or conflict of interest concerns.
65. Formation Expense Budget: The Diocese, parish, and individual share the cost of the formation expenses (Diocese 1/3<sup>rd</sup>, Parish 1/3<sup>rd</sup>, Individual 1/3<sup>rd</sup>). The parish will be billed annually, in January, for the combined expenses of the parish and aspirant/candidate portions. The aspirant/candidate is responsible for their own book expenses. Costs will vary based on the aspirant/candidate's degree program and the regular fee adjustments from our partner agencies.
66. Each parish has its own way of determining how it will choose to work payment plans with the aspirant/candidate they are sponsoring. The following are the most common examples:
- a. The parish fully sponsors the participant's formation expense
  - b. The parish invoices the aspirant/candidate for their 1/3<sup>rd</sup> portion
  - c. The parish invoices based on the aspirant/candidate's financial ability, which may include full repayment of the formation expenses
67. Post Ordination: Newly ordained deacons are expected to commit themselves to a minimum of five years of service to the Diocese. Their first assignment *will normally be* for two to three years within the parish that supported them through formation at which point they are eligible for reassignment based on the needs of the Diocese.

## APPENDICES

- Appendix A Diocesan Map of Parishes by deanery
- Appendix B Policy for the Application, Acceptance, Assignment, and Orientation of Extern Deacons
- Appendix C Policy and Procedure for Requesting Incardination to the Diocese of Orlando
- Appendix D Sample of the Annual Pastor Assessment Form
- Appendix E Instructions for Completing the Deacon's Annual Self-Assessment
- Appendix F List of Forms
- Appendix G Sample Senior Deacon Correspondence
- Appendix H Instructions for a Deacon's Funeral
- Appendix I Expectations of the Deanery Lead Deacon
- Appendix J Diaconate Formation Program and Syllabus
- Appendix K Diaconate Application Standards



## Appendix B

### *Policy for the Application, Acceptance, Assignment, and Orientation of Extern Deacons*

Deacons are bound by the obligations and enjoy the rights that come with incardination, the same as any other clergy. They are exempted from some of the obligations (Code of Canon Law, Canon 288), but they are obliged to reverence and obey their ordinary of incardination (Canon 273), to accept a duty entrusted to them by their ordinary unless excused by a legitimate impediment (Canon 274, Paragraph 2), not to be absent from their diocese of incardination for a notable period of time without at least the presumed permission of their ordinary (Canon 283, Paragraph 1).

An Extern deacon intending to relocate into the Diocese of Orlando, whether on a permanent or seasonal basis must follow the following process for requesting faculties to exercise their diaconal ministry within the diocese:

1. When the decision has been made to move to a new diocese, the deacon will inform the diocesan director of deacon personnel or the vicar for clergy, or the diocesan bishop of the impending move. In like manner, the deacon will write to the Bishop of Orlando to inform the bishop of his pending arrival, stating his intention to call on the bishop or the Diaconate Director in person after his arrival ([Sample Letter 1](#)).
2. The deacon will request that the director of deacon personnel or vicar for clergy forward to the director of the permanent diaconate or Bishop of Orlando a letter from the previous bishop providing information regarding the new move together with appropriate letters of recommendation and evaluation ([Sample Letter 2](#)).
3. The diocesan bishop will send or cause to have sent to the receiving bishop and/or his diaconate director the following:
  - a. A letter informing the receiving bishop of the impending move with a statement of the just cause of the deacon's move (e.g., employment, retirement or health conditions).
  - b. A resume of the deacon's personal history, which will be the basis for a character reference together with the recently adopted protocol between bishops and religious superiors testifying to the deacon's record of conduct and moral integrity.
  - c. A written record of the deacon's academic, spiritual and pastoral formation, to include notation of academic degrees awarded or citations earned.
  - d. An evaluation of the deacon's ministry ([Sample Letter 3](#)).
4. Upon arrival in the new diocese, the deacon will call upon the director of the permanent diaconate to make his presence known as well as his desire for diaconal faculties. At this point he will be asked to complete the Extern Application for Deacon Faculties and provide other required documents.
5. The bishop, or his director for deacon personnel or vicar for clergy will evaluate the deacon's resume and examine the needs of the diocese. After favorable review, the bishop will give the deacon faculties and a temporary assignment. The bishop would appoint a supervisor to the deacon and indicate that evaluations will take place at least annually ([Sample Letter 4](#)).

**LETTER 1: *Letter from deacon to new bishop of diocese to which he is moving***

Most Reverend <Bishop's Name>  
Bishop of Orlando

Your Excellency:

I am a deacon of the Diocese of <Diocese> in good standing. By reason of (employment for reasons of health and on the recommendation of my doctor), I shall be relocating into your diocese after the beginning of <month, year>.

Following my arrival in the Diocese of Orlando, I shall call your office to request an appointment to call on the Office of the Permanent Diaconate. I have requested of my bishop that a letter of introduction be sent to you.

Sincerely,  
Deacon <full name>

cc: Vicar for Clergy  
Director for Deacon Personnel

**LETTER 2: *Letter from deacon to his bishop informing of impending move from diocese***

Most Reverend <Bishop's Name>  
Bishop of <Diocese>

Your Excellency:

By reason of (transfer of employment; reason of condition of health and recommendation of change in climate by doctor) it is my intention to leave the Diocese of <Diocese> and resettle in the Diocese of Orlando, effective <month, day, year>.

It is requested that a letter be sent to the Bishop of Orlando providing information of this move with appropriate letters of recommendation and evaluation.

Sincerely,  
Deacon <full name>

cc: Vicar for Clergy  
Director of the Permanent Diaconate

**LETTER 3: *Letter of Recommendation and Evaluation from deacon's ordinary to receiving bishop***

Most Reverend <Bishop's Name>  
Bishop of Orlando

Your Excellency:

Deacon <deacon's full name>, a deacon in good standing in his diocese, by reason (of transfer in employment / for reasons of health and on the recommendation of his doctor) will be relocating into your diocese after the beginning of <month, year>.

Enclosed is a resumé of Deacon <last name> personal history, a written record of his academic, spiritual and pastoral formation, and an evaluation of his ministry.

It is requested that favorable consideration be given to providing Deacon <last name> with a suitable ministerial assignment.

Your assistance in this matter is deeply appreciated.

Sincerely yours,  
<Bishop's Name>  
Bishop of <Diocese>

**LETTER 4: *Letter from receiving bishop to deacon informing of temporary assignment***

Deacon <Name>  
<Address>

Dear Deacon <Name>,

In accordance with the request of the Bishop of <home diocese>, your own expressed desire for a ministerial assignment, following a review of your resumé and appropriate consultation, in response to ministerial needs, you are hereby assigned on a temporary basis to <Parish, City> of which the Reverend <Pastor's Name> is Pastor, effective immediately.

You are accorded the following faculties of the Diocese of Orlando (attached). These faculties are valid until withdrawn.

Father <Pastor> will also serve as your supervisor and he will conduct evaluations of your ministry on an annual basis.

Sincerely,  
<Bishop>  
Bishop of Orlando



## APPENDIX C

### *Policy and Procedure for Requesting Incardination to the Diocese of Orlando*

Canonically the term incardination refers both to one's Diocesan Church of Ordination as well as the practice of transferring one's allegiance from one diocesan Church to another, and hence from one bishop to another. The ordained priest or deacon may thus be excardinated from one diocesan Church and incardinated into another but only at the judgment of the local ordinaries.

Special issues arise for deacons who have secular employment which may lead to their transfer outside the Diocese. The National Catholic Conference of Bishops (NCCB) *1984 Guidelines*, paragraph 120, address this situation as follows:

Should a deacon, after his Ordination, move to another Diocese, the procedure for excardination and incardination are the same as those for priests. A deacon who moves from one Diocese to another will ordinarily be admitted by the bishop into the diaconal ministry of his new Diocese, at least after a period of time sufficient for the new Diocese to become acquainted with the deacon and for him to become acquainted with the new Diocese and with the Order of Deacons already at work there.

1. After due and prayerful consideration, the deacon will write to his diocesan bishop to advise him of his intent to seek incardination in the Diocese in which he is now resident and excardination from his Diocese of incardination ([Sample Letter 1](#)).
2. After the deacon has served in the new Diocese for a time, usually for a minimum of two years, and after suitable evaluations, the deacon may petition the bishop for incardination assuming it is his intent to remain permanently within the diocese ([Sample Letter 2](#)).
3. After receiving letters of suitable evaluation and the recommendation of this director for deacon personnel, or vicar for clergy and having weighed the relative merits of the deacon's petition and the needs of the Diocese, the bishop will respond to the petition and indicate his willingness regarding incardination ([Sample Letter 3](#)).
4. If the bishop expresses a willingness to incardinate the deacon, the deacon will write to his bishop of incardination for a letter of excardination which will include an explanation of the just cause(s) for the request ([Sample Letter 4](#)).
5. The excardinating bishop executes a document to the effect that the deacon is granted a permanent and unconditional excardination. In accord with Canon 267, the letter must be signed by the diocesan bishop and in view of Canon 270, include the declaration that the excardination is being given for just cause ([Sample letter 5](#)).
6. After receiving the legitimately executed document of excardination, the new diocesan bishop issues a decree of incardination within one month and notifies the Diocese of excardination of the incardination of the deacon. Incardination to the receiving Diocese is not completed until both documents have been executed and the bishops (*a quo and ad quem*) have been duly notified ([Sample Letter 6](#)).

**LETTER 1: *Deacon's letter to his diocesan bishop stating his intention to seek incardination elsewhere***

Most Reverend <Bishop's Name>  
Bishop of <Diocese>

Your Excellency:

I have been a resident in the Diocese of Orlando for <##> years. It appears that I shall be living here indefinitely. During this time, I have been given faculties to minister in the Diocese of Orlando.

After prayerful reflection, it is my intention, God willing, to seek incardination in the Diocese of Orlando and excardination from the Diocese of <diocese>.

Sincerely,  
Deacon <Full Name>

cc: Vicar for Clergy  
Director of the Permanent Diaconate

**LETTER 2: *Letter from deacon to receiving bishop requesting incardination***

Most Reverend <Bishop's name>  
Bishop of Orlando

Your Excellency:

Having served the Diocese of Orlando for <##> years with favorable evaluations of my ministry, because of the pastoral need of the Diocese, my own interest and pastoral formation, I desire to continue to provide pastoral ministry.

I have therefore requested excardination from my diocese of incardination, Diocese of <Diocese> and Bishop <Bishop's name> has indicated his willingness to grant this. I now hereby request incardination in the Diocese of Orlando and declare that I wish to be dedicated to the service of the Diocese of Orlando in accord with the norm of law.

Sincerely,  
Deacon <full name>

**LETTER 3: *Letter of incardinating bishop to deacon***

Deacon <full name>  
<Address Block>

Deacon <last name>,

After consulting with the personnel board of this diocese, I am pleased to inform you that I am willing to incardinate you in the Diocese of Orlando. Please write to the Bishop of the Diocese of <Diocese> requesting a letter of excardination.

After I have received a letter from the Bishop of <Diocese>, I will issue a formal incardination into this diocese.

Asking God's continued blessings upon your ministry among us, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
<Bishop's Name>  
Bishop of Orlando

**LETTER 4: *Letter from deacon requesting excardination***

Most Reverend <Bishop's name>  
Bishop of <Diocese>

Your Excellency:

Because of the pastoral needs of the Diocese of Orlando and because of my own interest and pastoral formation, I desire to continue to provide pastoral ministry in the Diocese of Orlando.

My relocation to the Diocese of Orlando was occasioned by reason of temporary employment. I have now been assured by my employers this will be on a more stable basis. The prospect of long-term residence is now assured, and the Bishop of Orlando has expressed willingness to incardinate me.

In the light of the above, I am therefore requesting excardination from the Diocese of <Diocese> in order that I might incardinate in the Diocese of Orlando.

Sincerely,  
Deacon <full name>

**LETTER 5: *Letter of excardinating bishop to deacon***

Deacon <Full Name>  
<Address Block>

Dear Deacon <Last name>,

In response to your letter requesting excardination, I am writing to grant you excardination from the Diocese of <Diocese>. This letter does not take effect until you receive a letter from a bishop who will incardinate you. If there should be any changes in your plans, please notify me.

With my prayers and best wishes for your continued ministry, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
<Bishop's Name>  
Bishop of <Diocese>

**LETTER 6: *Notification of incardination to diocese of excardination***

Most Reverend <Bishop's Name>  
Bishop of <Diocese>

Your Excellency:

I am writing to confirm that I have consented to the incardination of Deacon <Full Name>, and I have issued today the necessary letters for this purpose. Enclosed is a copy.

Your assistance in this matter has been deeply appreciated.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
<Bishop's Name>  
Bishop of Orlando

Enclosure

**APPENDIX D**

*Sample of the Annual Pastor Assessment and Parish Needs Form*

Please Type/Print Names:

<i>Deacon</i>	<i>Pastor</i>	<i>Parish</i>
---------------	---------------	---------------

The Diocese of Orlando believes in the accountability and affirmation that occurs in the context of an annual assessment of performance. This serves not only for the needs of the Diocese to evaluate its own effectiveness, but also as an aid for the development of the deacon’s individual contribution to the mission of the Church and his assigned parish.

The deacon’s annual assessment is an assessment of his ministry and professional qualities encompassing the entire fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). The assessment is the responsibility of the pastor and is based on the deacon’s previous year’s expectations, the deacon’s self-assessment and self-development plan. Each deacon’s active participation in the process of the assessment is critical to its success and purpose. Past accomplishments, affirmations, recommendations, new requirements, and action plans and goals are all essential ingredients of this assessment.

For the deacon’s part, he should provide you with the following documents to assist you in your assessment of his performance:

- his Annual Self-Evaluation which includes his Self-Development plan for the coming year and
- his completed Continuing Formation Worksheet documenting a minimum of 30 continuing formation credits.

**Please check the choice that best responds to the statements below:**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree*	Don’t Know
<b>THE DEACON...</b>					
1. ...is a man of prayer.					
2. ...demonstrates the importance of his family life.					
3. ...is compassionate/caring.					
4. ...relates well with fellow ministers and parishioners.					
5. ...accepts and responds well to feedback.					
6. ...is able to perform in stressful situations and conflict.					
7. ...maintains reasonable balance and control under the most difficult circumstances.					
8. ...is dependable, trustworthy and maintains appropriate confidentiality.					
9. ...relates well with you, as pastor, and other assigned priests.					

What are the strengths and challenges of the Deacon’s personal and professional qualities?



## APPENDIX E

### *Instructions for Completing the Deacon's Annual Self-Assessment*

The Annual Self-Evaluation is the primary source of information along with their Continuing Formation Worksheet regarding the involvement of the deacon in his ministerial assignment and is necessary for a variety of purposes, e.g. recruitment of new candidates, studies in the utilization of deacons, and assessing the needs of the local Church to name a few. Please be concrete, complete and descriptive using additional pages if necessary.

The bishop will grant faculties, make assignment decisions and appointments based on the self-assessment, development plan, the deacon's continuing formation worksheet and the pastor's assessment of the deacon. In each self-assessment, the bishop requires that the deacon identify at least one major area of parish and outside community engagement is specified. The identified areas of ministry should be assumed as an ongoing service rather than as the result of a call from the rectory or as needed.

Generally, the deacon can provide only part-time service to his ministry if he is still employed full time in a secular profession. His priorities must be according to the order of family, occupation, and ministry. It is not the intent to have the deacon in charge of the various ministries. The deacon is charged with being the witness, guide and teacher as the baptized faithful are called forward to actively participate in parish life. The deacon is called to continue his formation in the various aspects of parish ministry so that he can guide others, oversee parish ministries and step in to help support where and when necessary.

#### **MINISTRY ENGAGEMENT:**

The deacon's service in the Church's ministry of charity and justice is integral to his service in the Church's ministry of word and liturgy. "The three contexts of the diaconal ministry ... represent a unity in service at the level of divine Revelation: the ministry of the Word leads to ministry at the altar, which in turn prompts the transformation of life by the liturgy, resulting in charity." The ancient tradition appears to indicate that because the deacon was the servant at the table of the poor, he had his distinctive liturgical roles at the Table of the Lord. (ND, 37)

It would be impossible to list the wide range of ministries deacons are engaged with throughout the Diocese of Orlando. Therefore, the Self-Assessment uses the three-fold ministries of the deacon of Word, Liturgy, and Charity, along with the subcategories utilized by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) reports to provide the baseline for this data collection. The remainder of this document will provide definitions to identify the most appropriate category for the particular ministry in which the deacon is engaged.

#### **IDENTIFICATION OF MINISTRIES:**

Each parish and surrounding community has unique needs. It is the responsibility of the pastor and the deacon to develop appropriate ministries to meet those needs.

1. **Ministry of Charity and Justice, Deacon as Witness and Guide:** The deacon's ministry as St. Pope John Paul II said, "is the Church's service sacramentalized." At the very heart of the diaconate is the calling to be a servant of the mysteries of Christ and of our brothers and sisters. The deacon's ministry of charity and justice is integral to his service in the Church's

Ministry of Word and Liturgy. The three-fold diaconate ministry represents a unity in service: the ministry of the word leads to the ministry of the altar, which in turn prompts the transformation of life by the liturgy, resulting in charity. As a participant in the one ecclesiastical ministry, the deacon is a specific sacramental sign in the Church of Christ the servant. The role of the deacon is to express the needs and desires of the Christian Community and to be a driving force for service, or *diakonia*, which is an essential part of the mission of the Church.

**TASK:** Check the categories that you feel the specific ministries you are engaged in best fit. Some examples for each category are below:

- **Outreach to the Poor:** St. Vincent de Paul, Coalition for the Homeless, Christian Service Center, Rescue Mission, Daily Bread, Interdenominational commission on Hunger, Catholic Relief Services, Catholic Charities, Goodwill, Idignity, etc.
- **Ministry to the Incarcerated:** Conduct Communion/Prayer services, Bible studies, Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) instruction, deliver Bibles, rosaries and prayer cards, Kairos Retreat Team, serving the families of those incarcerated, etc.
- **Advocacy Programs:** Candlelighters, Tallahassee/National Catholic Days, Human Trafficking Programs, all governmental advocacy activities, etc.
- **Missions outside the U.S.** (not related to Catholic Relief Services (CRS) international work): Orphanages, Medical Missions, Clean Water, International Aid, Education, Disaster Relief, etc.

2. **Ministry of the Word, Deacon as Evangelizer and Teacher:** The deacon is the herald of the Word. Because the deacon sacramentalizes service, he should proclaim the Word in such a way that he first witnesses its empowerment in his own life. Then he can effectively challenge others to practice the Church's ministry of charity and justice in the social environments in which people live their own baptismal vocation.

Ministry of the Word includes catechetical instruction, religious formation of candidates and sacramental preparation; leadership roles in retreats, and spiritual direction; proclaiming and preaching the Word. The deacon also strives to "transmit the Word in [his] professional [life] either explicitly or merely by [his] active presence in places where public opinion is formed, and ethical norms are applied." (National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, 26)

The deacon should be involved in the life of his assigned parish by supporting its catechetical and sacramental preparation functions in a variety of ministries

**TASK:** **First** check the categories for the ministries in which you are engaged and **second** check the roles you fill in your ministerial engagement(s). You need not connect the specific roles to the ministry categories.

3. **Ministry of Liturgy, Deacon as Sanctifier:** In the deacon's liturgical ministry, the Church sees a reflection of her own diaconal character and is reminded to serve as Jesus did. The ministry of the deacon is a visible, grace-filled sign of the integral connection between sharing at the Lord's Eucharistic table and serving the many hungers felt so keenly by all God's children. In his liturgical ministry, the Deacon becomes a mirror for which the Church sees a reflection of her own diaconal character and is reminded of her mission to serve as Jesus did. The deacon should be proficient in all aspects of his liturgical ministry.



Deacons in the Diocese of Orlando, by their Ordination and in accordance with Canon 764 have the faculty to preach and should be encouraged to preach on an occasional basis. A deacon who feels less than proficient in his preaching skill should seek additional formation and document this as part of their “Self-Development Plan”.

**TASK:** Check the categories in which you regularly participate in the liturgical life of your assigned parish or as a guest in other parish communities.

4. **Diocesan / Diaconal Ministry:** Although the deacon’s primary ministry is lived out in the world, he primarily serves as neither a lay person nor a priest, but as a cleric.
  - a) **Common understanding of the Deacon as Cleric:** The Deacon is configured to Christ’s consecration and mission – “a sacred minister and a member of the hierarchy”. The deacon is called to distinct identity and integrity in the Church - a cleric who is ordained to *diakonia*, namely, a service to God’s People in communion with the bishop and his body of priests.
  - b) **Unity with the Bishop and His Priests:** The principal function of the deacon is to collaborate with the bishop and the priests in the exercise of a ministry which is not of their own wisdom but of the Word of God, calling all to conversion and holiness.
  - c) **Agent of the Church:** Deacon’s ministry is defined as a “service to the bishop”. The principal function of the deacon, therefore, is to collaborate with the bishop and the priests in the exercise of a ministry which is not of their own wisdom, but of the Word of God, calling all to conversion and holiness in communion with the bishop and his priest.
  - d) **Promoting and Sustaining the Apostolic Activities of the Laity:** To the extent he is more present and more involved than the priest in secular environments and structures, he should feel encouraged to foster closeness between the ordained ministry and lay activities, in common service to the kingdom of God.

As such, deacons are often called upon to serve the bishop in a variety of other ministerial assignments.

**TASK:** Check the ministerial categories in which you participate on a diocesan level and identify specific bishop appointments.

5. **Deacon in Good Standing:** A deacon in “good standing” is clearly defined within this Diaconate Manual, page 9, paragraph 34.

**TASK:** Check the requirements you have successfully completed.

**NOTES:**

- A deacon who has not maintained the status of a deacon in “good standing” for two consecutive years runs the risk of having their faculties suspended until he complies with all requirements.
- Externs must maintain a status of “good standing” with their home (arch)diocese. Failure to do so would mean the loss of faculties in the Diocese of Orlando.

6. **Self-Development Plan.** We can all be better deacons by strengthening the dimensions introduced to us during our formation (Human, Intellectual, Spiritual, Pastoral). As one serving as a deacon, it is critical that we are continually being formed and conformed to Christ by our

continuing formation in each of the above-mentioned dimensions as well as in our ministry of Word, Liturgy and Charity.

**TASK:** Within each area of personal and parish life, document any goals, programs, or activities which would assist in your self-development as a deacon.

**NOTE:** Information shared in your Self-Development Plan will be compiled to assist the Office of the Permanent Diaconate develop/advertise continuing formation opportunities, plan/advertise annual retreat opportunities, and invite keynote speakers to the Diocese to assist deacons in meeting their diaconal and developmental goals.

### **CONCLUSION**

All annual documents are due to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate by June 1. Be sure to attach your Continuing Formation Worksheet to this assessment prior to sending or meeting with your pastor.

## APPENDIX F

### *List of Forms and Documents*

1. The most current version of all required diaconate forms can be found on the Diocesan webpage using the following link: [Diaconate Forms](#). Below is a listing of forms and documents available.

#### **FORMS:**

- Application, Deacon Mentor
- Continuing Formation Worksheet
- Deacon's Annual Self-Assessment
- Funeral Arrangements
- Pastor - Deacon's Ministerial Covenant
- Pastor's Assessment and Expectations of the Deacon
- Transfer Request, Deacon

#### **DOCUMENTS:**

- Extern Processing Checklist
  - Instructions – Funeral Announcement
  - Instructions – Deacon's Annual Self-Assessment (Appendix E)
2. Applications for entry into diaconate formation are available at the request of the pastor only during the recruitment cycles.
  3. Applications for externs requesting faculties for the Diocese of Orlando will be sent to the individual deacon in accordance with this Diaconate Manual, page 9, paragraph 28 and [Appendix B](#).

## APPENDIX G

### *Sample Senior Deacon Correspondence*

Deacon <Name>:

Grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Thank you for your unwavering service to the Church and God's people. I am ever grateful as you have labored in the Lord's name for <##> years as a deacon.

In the past, the Diocese of Orlando Retirement Policy for the Permanent Diaconate required deacons reaching the age of 75 to submit a request to retire to the Ordinary of the Diocese. This request is no longer necessary. I recognize your desire to continue to serve as a deacon while balancing family and health issues arising as we age. I will rely on your wisdom and experience, and God willing, I pray you will be able to continue this service until either you choose, or your body tells you it has made the choice for you to step back from active ministry.

In addition, your service as a deacon in the Diocese of Orlando is governed by your assignment to a particular parish and the Statement of Mutual Expectations which you coordinate with your pastor and submit to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate. The effect of turning 75 does not change this arrangement – you are being granted the ability to continue to serve in your current parish assignment with the consent of the assigned pastor in the ministries you are physically capable of performing, both within the parish and the surrounding community. The difference is that you, your wife, <Wife's Name>, and your pastor must discern the needs that may accompany you as you age.

From this point forward, your status will be classified as a senior deacon. This means you will retain your faculties in the Diocese of Orlando and will be considered permanently assigned to your current parish or institution. You may continue to function as a deacon in your parish or institution with the approval of the pastor; however, your ministry should not exceed the limitations of health and family responsibility.

As a senior deacon with faculties and active in diaconal ministry, you are required to:

1. Keep your background check up to date - renewing every 5 years;
2. Participate in an annual overnight retreat;
3. Participate in the annual diaconate convocation,
4. Annually submit an Annual Self-Assessment, and
5. Annually accrue and report 30 credits of continuing formation requirements.

I recognize the challenges associated with aging and know, because of your dedication, it is often difficult to decide to step back or away from ministry. I ask you to rely on the council of your spouse, your pastor and the Office of the Permanent Diaconate in making decisions related to your active ministry. Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI is a shining example of understanding the need for ministry and physical limitations. His humility led him to decide to retire, and his service to God remains even though the form of service changes.

I pray that God will grant you the wisdom of understanding as you offer your service to His Church.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend John Noonan  
Bishop of Orlando

cc: Pastor  
Home Diocese  
Deanery Lead Deacon  
Office of the Permanent Diaconate (File Copy)

## **APPENDIX H**

### *Instructions for a deacon's Funeral*

The funeral rites for a deacon, as ordained minister of the Church, should be celebrated with the decorum and propriety befitting a member of the clergy. This is to be done with sensitivity to the wishes of the family as well as of the deceased. The following guidelines are offered to assist the appropriate individuals with steps to be taken in order that the Diocese of Orlando community may respect the memory of one of its good servants. As clergy, it is important for all deacons, serving in the Diocese of Orlando, to provide a copy of their funeral arrangements to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENT**

Upon the death of a deacon, the entire diaconal community should be notified through established communication systems. The family (or if need be the local pastor) is asked to notify the Office of the Permanent Diaconate or DLD who will then notify the appropriate person to activate the coordination process that will ensure the entire community is notified and so the director of the permanent diaconate may gain access to the bishop's schedule.

#### **GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

The family, in coordination with the Office of the Permanent Diaconate, should make funeral arrangements conscious of the desire of the Bishop of the Diocese of Orlando to preside at the funeral liturgy. Vigil services can be planned with the local pastor with additional assistance from the Consolation Ministry of the parish. It is fitting for deacons to be invited to participate in the liturgy, observing the appropriate norms.

Because of the numbers of deacons/priests who may attend a funeral liturgy, it is suggested prior thought be given to the arrangements for the procession of clergy, reception of communion and other details to accommodate a large number of clergy.

If desired, the family may indicate a deacon whom they wish to serve as the Deacon(s) of the Mass for Christian burial (i.e. Deacon of the Word and Deacon of the Table). The Office of the Permanent Diaconate should be notified, and the deacon(s) should work closely with the pastor and/or bereavement team in planning the liturgy.

It will be the responsibility of the director of the permanent diaconate to arrange for the presence of the bishop, or in his absence his designated representative. As soon as firm arrangements are made for the general liturgy, those details should be communicated to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate.

The vigil service is often held in a funeral home. If desired and with the approval of the pastor, the body may lie in state at the parish of assignment the evening prior to the funeral liturgy. Specific visiting hours comparable to those at the funeral home are suggested.

The body of a deceased deacon is normally vested in his alb and white stole, but may be clothed according to the wishes of the family. If lay clothes are chosen, a symbol of his office [i.e. stole, book of Gospels...] may be placed near or on the bier.

## **CELEBRATION OF THE FUNERAL LITURGY**

In planning the funeral liturgy, the family will want to consult with the parish staff. The Office of the Permanent Diaconate will serve, as a resource to the staff. Options for an evening funeral with burial the following morning may be used.

When a deacon's body is brought into the church, it should be so arranged that his head rest nearest the altar with his feet towards the congregation. This is the appropriate position for one who has been ordained.

The liturgy of Christian burial should reflect that it is being celebrated for a permanent deacon who, if married has a dual vocation of Christian marriage and Holy Orders. Care should be taken that only appropriate liturgical music is chosen. Deacons who attend are invited to vest and assemble as a body for the procession. They should be seated as a body in an appropriate place in the congregation, so they can kneel for the Eucharistic prayer.

Should the burial service be separated from the funeral liturgy, deacons are also invited to vest for the burial service.

It is customary for the attending bishop to conduct the prayers of Final Commendation at the end of the Funeral Mass.

## **SERVICE AT THE GRAVE**

The family, relatives and invited guests always have precedence. The grave site service may be led by a deacon depending on the wishes of the family and the appropriate ritual must be used.

## **DEATH OF THE SPOUSE OR WIDOW OF A DEACON**

The death of a deacon's wife is also of great concern to the diaconate community. The Office of the Permanent Diaconate will provide any assistance the family may desire in planning the liturgy, notification to the diaconate community, and advising the ordinary of the loss of a deacon's wife.

Unless the family otherwise desires, it is most appropriate for the deacons to vest and sit as a body at the funeral liturgy of the deacon's wife.

In all the suggestions above, the guiding concern is the wishes of the deacon's family. It would be a great help to the family if the deacon takes time to explain the suggestions above with their family and to indicate those areas where the family needs to make decisions. It is hoped each deacon has given thought to both providing a will for his family and his desires for the funeral liturgy. This is particularly important, as the family is responsible for all funeral expenses.

## APPENDIX I

### *Expectations of the Deanery Lead Deacon (DLD)*

#### OVERVIEW

A DLD is responsible for relationship building with the deacons, and where appropriate and practical other clergy/religious, living within their assigned deanery. DLDs represent the deacons and men in formation of their assigned deanery and act as an essential link between the deacons and the Diocesan Office of the Permanent Diaconate.

The DLD is appointed by the bishop for a term of three (3) years. This appointment may be renewed upon request and review of the deacon's status of "good standing".

[The Diocese of Orlando website](#) will contain the DLDs name, photo, deanery assignment, term of assignment and contact information (email and/or phone), as they provide relevant information on matters including: deacon contact information, status, health issues, recruitment efforts, and suggestions for annual retreats and formation needs.

#### GUIDELINES

To be assigned as a DLD a deacon must be in "good standing", which includes:

- Faculties within the Diocese of Orlando
- Current fingerprinting and security clearance
- Access to a telephone and computer with a valid email account
- Availability to invest approximately 2-3 hours per month
- A helpful, understanding, communicative and organized nature

#### EXPECTATIONS

There are a range of possible activities DLDs can perform and promote, depending on the proactive nature of the individual and the nature of their deanery, its geography, and the distribution & number of deacons. These tasks include:

- **Primary** point of contact for local deacons
- **Interaction** with local deacons and, as able, the deanery dean (priest)
- **Promoting** the permanent diaconate to locally qualified candidates
- **Proactively** seeking out and helping local deacons
- **Maintain** contact information and status of deanery deacons via Google Drive
- **Coordinate**, at a minimum, quarterly deanery gathering (*which may include deanery attendance at diocese sponsored deacon retreats & convocation*)
- **Consultation** with diaconate personnel committee
- **Reporting** deanery activities to the diocese and diocesan activities to local deacons
- **Attending** deanery lead meetings when called by the director of the permanent diaconate



## APPENDIX J

### *Diaconate Formation Program and Syllabus*

#### INTRODUCTION

“There are three separate but integral paths that constitute a unified diocesan formation program for deacons: aspirant, candidate, and post-ordination. They are ‘one sole organic journey’ in diaconal formation. In each path, the four dimensions or specific areas in formation – human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral – are always essential.” (ND, 104)

#### DIMENSIONS IN THE FORMATION OF DEACONS

“One who will serve as a deacon requires a formation that promotes the development of the whole person. Therefore, the four dimensions in formation should be so interrelated as to achieve a continual integration of the objectives in the life of each participant and in his exercise of ministry.” (ND, 105)

##### 1. Human Dimension

*“Formation for ministry begins with human formation and development.”* (ND, 106)

A participant comes to formation with a history of interrelationships with other people. Formation of ministry begins with human formation and development. Participants “should therefore cultivate a series of human qualities, not only out of proper and due growth and realization of self, but also with a view to the ministry.”

##### 2. Spiritual Dimension

*“A man should not be admitted to diaconal formation unless it is demonstrated that he is already living a life of mature Christian spirituality.”* (ND, 111)

The deacon is configured sacramentally to Christ the Servant, so the deacon must be able to serve with the mind of Christ. A deacon’s spirituality must therefore be grounded in the attitudes of Christ and be marked by openness to God’s word, to the Church, and to the world.

##### 3. Intellectual Dimension

*“An increasingly educated society and the new roles of leadership in diaconal ministry require that a deacon be a knowledgeable and reliable witness to the faith and a spokesman for the Church’s teaching.”* (ND, 118)

The academic dimension of the formation program is provided by [Saint Leo University](#). The program provides participants an opportunity to earn Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies or an undergraduate certificate. Participants must meet the university’s academic standards in order to continue in the formation program.

##### 4. Pastoral Dimension

*“An integral formation must relate the human, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions to pastoral practice. “The whole formation imparted to [the participants]...aims at preparing them to enter into communion with the charity of Christ...Hence their formation in its different aspects must have a fundamentally pastoral character.”* (ND, 126)

Since the men in formation have been called forth from the parish, they are being formed for parish sacramental and other ministerial functions, a series of supervised internships are included in the formation program that will require the participant to be engaged with their supporting parish’s pastor, staff, and lay ministry leadership in the focused areas of the Church’s Ministry of Word, Liturgy, and Charity.

**The Church's Ministry of the Word:** Proclamation of the Word in the varied contexts of ministerial service: reader at Mass, catechesis of children and adults, sacramental preparation, practice of homiletics, and evangelization.

**The Church's Ministry of Liturgy:** Focuses on liturgical practice including the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism, weddings, and Christian funeral rites, and service at the altar.

**The Church's Ministry of Charity and Justice:** Focus on the Church's ministry of outreach to the local community; educating the Christian community on Catholic social teaching, the social dimensions in the joy of the Gospel, and to foster facilitation, motivation, and organizational leadership in the community.

## **FORMATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

Spiritual Direction, Supervised Internship, Deacon Mentoring: Mentoring and spiritual direction are integral parts of the formation program which helps shape the aspirant and candidate in an effective and mature spirituality and awareness of the unique charism of their diaconal vocation and relationship with God and His Church.

**Spiritual Direction:** The aspirant must choose a spiritual director. It is recommended the director be a priest or a trained director who can be a deacon, a vowed religious, or layperson. The aspirant/candidate is expected to meet, at least monthly, with their spiritual director beginning in the discernment year or sooner.

**Deacon Mentor:** Each aspirant is expected to select a deacon mentor at the beginning of their candidacy years. The mentor must be approved by the director of the permanent diaconate. Mentors are trained and vetted on the basis of the formation needs of the candidate identified during their self-assessment and development plan during their aspirancy years. Both the candidate and mentor are expected to meet monthly.

**Supervised Internships:** Throughout the formation years, both aspirants and candidates are required to complete supervised internships. The internship consists of focused areas with specific objectives in the areas of Proclamation of the Word, Baptismal Preparation, Marriage Preparation, and Bereavement Ministry (Christian Funerals).

Each aspirant/candidate should be actively engaged in an outside ministry of charity (i.e. social service agency, hospital/hospice aid, prison ministry, etc.). If the aspirant/candidate fail to maintain an outside ministry one will be assigned by the Diaconate Director.

## **PARTICIPATION OF THE WIFE**

Wives are required to participate in the formation program and workshops. Just as the man and woman became one in their first vocation of married life, the pursuit of this second vocation is strengthened by their shared learning and individual human development in the different dimensions of the formation program.

It is acknowledged that the participation of a wife may be challenging at times due to other family commitments, especially in the case of the needs of dependent children. Every effort will be made by

the formation team to pastorally respond to these challenges while maintaining the importance of the oneness of this truly family vocation. The need to have a family support plan is stressed during the inquiry, application and first year of formal discernment so the couple may be full participants in the formation program.

The wife’s participation in the formation program strengthens an awareness of the husband’s vocation and helps the husband and wife accept the challenges and changes, should Ordination take place. It also provides an opportunity for those responsible for diaconal formation to assess whether together, they exhibit “the Christian moral character and attributes which will neither hinder nor be out of keeping with the call to the vocation of deacon. (ND, 139)

**REPORTS AND ASSESSMENTS**

“To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit” (1 Cor 12:7). Any discernment of gifts and charisms must involve the ecclesial community. Since the charisms are ecclesial, any discernment process must also be ecclesial in nature. It is the Church who mediate—confirms—the aspirant/candidate’s vocation. Therefore, the following assessment tools are utilized throughout the formation program.

**Monthly Reports:**

- Activity Report: Completed and submitted by the aspirant/candidate.
- Mentor Report: Completed and submitted by the deacon mentor.

**Annual Assessments/Recommendations:**

- Supervised Intern Assessment: Completed and submitted by the intern supervisor.
- Self-Assessment: Completed and submitted by the aspirant/candidate.
- Peer Assessment: Completed and submitted by each aspirant/candidate.
- Mentor Recommendation: Completed and submitted by candidate’s mentor.
- Pastor Recommendation: Completed and submitted by candidate’s pastor.

**SYLLABUS FOR THE FORMATION PROGRAM**

The Diocese of Orlando’s Permanent Diaconate Formation Program is a 6-year program.

YEAR	DIMENSIONAL WORKSHOPS	
1 Discernment	Session I	Diaconate Overview: Who is the deacon? Overview formation program cycle, participation, expectations, university enrollment, security clearance and liturgical training
	Session II	Proclaimer of the Word
	Session III	Human Dimension: Overview of the human dimension
	Session IV	Spiritual Dimension: Spiritual Disciplines and Directors, Religious Literacy Indicator
	Session V	Pastoral Dimension: Fully Engaged Assessment, Engagement in Ministry (Parish and Community)
2 (Aspirancy 1)	August: Retreat	
	History, Theology, and Spirituality of the Diaconate	SDA1-01 Liturgy of the Hours
		HDA1-01 Self-Identity
	HDA1-02 Myers-Briggs Indicator	

	<i>(Fall Semester)</i>	SDA1-03 Christian Identity
	Christian History <i>(Spring Semester)</i>	HDA1-03 Marriage and Sexuality HDA1-04 Family Life (Part I) PDA1-01 Catholic Social Justice Discernment Check-up
	May: Day of Reflection	
<b>3 (Aspirancy 2)</b>	August: Retreat	
	Philosophical Foundations of Theology <i>(Fall Semester)</i>	PDA2-02 Baptismal Preparation HDA2-04 Communication in Ministry HDA2-05 Listening HDA2-06 Cross-Cultural Communication
	Hebrew Scriptures <i>(Spring Semester)</i>	SDA2-04 Sacramental Language of the Mass SDA2-05 Liturgical Music and Chant HDA2-07 Outside the Walls Discernment Check-up
	May: Day of Reflection	
	Christian Scriptures <i>(Summer Semester)</i>	
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>SAINT LEO UNIVERSITY</b>	<b>DIMENSIONAL WORKSHOPS</b>
<b>4 (Candidacy 1)</b>	August: Retreat <b><i>(Rite of Candidacy)</i></b>	
	Christology <i>(Fall Semester)</i>	PDC1-03 Marriage Preparation PCD1-04 Family Life (Part II) HDC1-08 Boundaries HDC1-09 Dealing with Conflict in Ministry
	Ecclesiology <i>(Spring Semester)</i>	SDC1-06 Mary, the Model Disciple PDC1-05 Servant Leadership SDC1-07 The Deacon at Mass Discernment Check-up
	May: Day of Reflection	
	Homiletics <i>(Summer Semester)</i>	
<b>5 (Candidacy 2)</b>	August: Retreat <b><i>(Rite of Lector)</i></b>	
	Christian Spirituality <i>(Fall Semester)</i>	PDC2-06 Christian Funerals PDC2-07 Stewardship PDC2-08 What's My Preaching Style PDC2-09 Canon Law
	Ethics 1: Foundations <i>(Spring Semester)</i>	PDC2-10 Parish Life SDC2-09 The Married Deacon and Celibacy Vow HDC2-10 Ministerial Collaboration and Balance HDC2-11 Giftedness
	May: Day of Reflection	
	Theology and Spirituality of Ministry <i>(Summer Semester)</i>	
<b>6 (Candidacy 3)</b>	August: Retreat <b><i>(Rite of Acolyte)</i></b>	
	Worship, Sacraments and Liturgy <i>(Fall Semester)</i>	PDC3-11 Communion Services, Exposition, Adoration, Benediction PDC3-12 Liturgy of the Eucharist (Part I)

		PDC3-13 Funeral Rite PDC3-15 Marriage Rite PDC3-14 Baptism Rite PDC3-12 Liturgy of the Eucharist (Part II) PDC3-16 Serving with the Bishop PDC3-17 Moving Toward Ordination
	May: Day of Reflection	
	June: Canonical Retreat ( <b><i>Ordination</i></b> )	

**APPENDIX K**

Diaconate Application Standards

IMPEDIMENT	STANDARD	REQUIRED DOCUMENT(S)	COMMENTS / RECOMMENDATIONS
<b>Age</b>	Minimum age at Ordination: Unmarried - 25; Married - 35 (Canon 1031, paragraphs 2-3). Diocesan policy requires Ordination prior to the completion of the 65 <sup>th</sup> birthdate.	Birth Certificate Valid Passport	<p><b>RECOMMENDATIONS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum age to enter formation - 29</li> <li>• Maximum age to enter formation - 59</li> </ul>
<b>Ecclesiastical Status</b>	Husband and wife must be fully initiated Catholics for at least 5 years.	Original Baptismal Certificate with annotations	Canon Law requires Confirmation (Canon 1033)
<b>Health</b>	Be in good physical and emotional health, free of any substance dependency or other addictions.	Physicians Physical Report ( <i>Current within the last 12 months</i> )	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b> Conduct a psychological evaluation after inquirer’s application is accepted.</p> <p><b>CONSIDERATION</b> Accept an applicant who is a recovering addict after assessing the underling history and has been free of their addiction for at least 5 years, to be considered on a case by case basis.</p>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Preferred:</b> Some college academic history. <b>Minimum:</b> High school diploma or equivalency.	Provide transcripts from all educational institutions.	<p><b>RECOMMENDATION</b> Preferably the applicant should have some academic history at the college level and be capable of undertaking graduate studies in English.</p>
<b>Citizenship</b>	Documented resident of the United States. Resident of the Diocese of Orlando for a minimum of 5 years.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Valid Social Security Card</li> <li>• Valid U.S. Passport</li> <li>• Valid Driver’s License</li> <li>• Current Residency Card</li> </ul>	<p><b>REASON</b> There is a significant investment being spent on the applicant’s formation. They must intend on being a part of the diocesan community.</p> <p><b>CONSIDERATION</b> Accept applicants whose residency cards will be valid for a minimum of 5 years after Ordination.</p>

<b>Economic Stability</b>	Family has a sustained source of income with debt ratios not to exceed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing debt ratio 33%.</li> <li>• Long-term debt ratio 45%.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment verification</li> <li>• Income verification</li> <li>• Credit Report</li> </ul>	<b>RECOMMENDATION</b> The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends no more than 30% of a family's gross income go for housing. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Handbook recommends no more than a 43% long-term debt ratio.
<b>Criminal Record</b>	Clean criminal background in accordance with Diocesan policy: "Creating and Maintaining a Safe Environment" ( <a href="#">Appendix A</a> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diocesan fingerprinting and background check</li> <li>• Certificate of Completion - Diocese Safe Environment Training</li> </ul>	<b>CONSIDERATION</b> Diocesan policy has a provision for working with restrictions, <a href="#">see Safe environment policy</a> : page 7, "Clearance with Past Transgressions."
<b>Parish Involvement</b>	Proven leadership in Christian service and mission ministries for a minimum of 5 years. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parish "service" - inside the walls</li> <li>• Parish "mission" - outside the walls</li> </ul>	Recommendation letters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pastor and deacon(s)</li> <li>• Service</li> <li>• Supervisor/peer</li> <li>• Missions</li> <li>• Supervisor/peer</li> </ul>	
<b>Marital Status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Married once in Catholic tradition (5 years)</li> <li>• Widowed living celibate lifestyle (3 years)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marriage Certificate</li> <li>• Refocus</li> <li>• Annulment decree</li> <li>• Wife's statement of agreement</li> </ul>	<b>CONSIDERATIONS</b> The following circumstances may be considered after assessing the underlying history: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil marriage - convalidated (5 years)</li> <li>• Widowed, remarried Catholic (5 years)</li> <li>• Divorced once, properly annulled, living a celibate lifestyle (5 years)</li> <li>• Never married, living celibate lifestyle</li> </ul>
<b>Living Fully the Catholic State</b>	Applicant, wife and family live the Gospel message and values in their everyday lives (Canon	Letters of recommendation ( <i>Employer, co-worker, and 2 personal</i> )	Contraceptives, vasectomy, abortion, death penalty, forgiveness, mercy and love

	1029)	Social Media Search	
<b>Knowledge of Catholic Faith</b>	Have at least a basic knowledge of the Catholic faith and its Sacramental nature.	Score 65% on Religious Literacy Indicator	Administered during Discernment Session IV
<b>Balance Lifestyle</b>	Be properly motivated and give evidence of an overall personal balance and moral character.	Application, Spiritual Autobiography, and Interview	
<b>Canonical Impediments (Canon 1041)</b>	<p>The following are irregular for receiving orders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A person who labors under some form of amentia or other psychic illness.</li> <li>• A person who has committed the delict of apostasy, heresy, or schism</li> <li>• A person who has attempted marriage, even a civil one, while impeded personally from entering marriage</li> <li>• A person who has committed voluntary homicide or procured a completed abortion and all those who positively cooperated in either</li> <li>• A person who has mutilated himself or another gravely and maliciously or who has attempted suicide</li> <li>• A person who has placed an Act of Orders reserved to those in the order of episcopate or presbyterate while either lacking that order or prohibited from its exercise by some</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Application and spiritual autobiography</li> <li>• Psychological evaluation</li> </ul>	<p>Dispensation from the following irregularities and impediments rests with the Apostolic See 2, 3 and 4. (Canon 1047, paragraphs 2 and 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determination made after experts have been consulted.</li> <li>• i.e. Seeks formal admission into a non-Catholic or non-Christian denomination after Catholic Baptism or reception into the Catholic Church.</li> <li>• By a matrimonial bond, sacred orders, or a public perpetual vow of chastity, or with a woman bound by a valid marriage or restricted by the same type of vow.</li> </ul> <p><i>This would include an applicant's wife.</i></p> <p><b>CONSIDERATION</b> Modest tattoos not visible when appropriately clothed.</p>



	declared or imposed canonical penalty.		
<b>Canonical Impediments (Canon 1042)</b>	The following are impeded from receiving orders: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A person who exercises an office or administration forbidden to clerics</li> </ul>	Application and Spiritual Autobiography	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes things unbecoming their state; things which, although not unbecoming foreign to their clerical state such as holding public office. (Canon 285)</li> <li>• Dispensation of these irregularities rest with the Apostolic See (Canon 1047, paragraph 2)</li> </ul>

**References:**

- 1989 Code of Canon Law
- 1998 Congregation for Clergy - Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons
- Diocese of Orlando Policies
- Diocese of Orlando Employment Manual

**Qualifications of Various Ministers.** <sup>1</sup>This saying is trustworthy: whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task. <sup>2</sup>Therefore, a bishop must be irreproachable, married only once, temperate, self-controlled, decent, hospitable, able to teach, <sup>3</sup>not a drunkard, not aggressive, but gentle, not contentious, not a lover of money. <sup>4</sup>He must manage his own household well, keeping his children under control with perfect dignity; <sup>5</sup>for if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how can he take care of the church of God? <sup>6</sup>He should not be a recent convert, so that he may not become conceited and thus incur the devil’s punishment. <sup>7</sup>He must also have a good reputation among outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, the devil’s trap.

<sup>8</sup>Similarly, deacons must be dignified, not deceitful, not addicted to drink, not greedy for sordid gain, <sup>9</sup>holding fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. <sup>10</sup>Moreover, they should be tested first; then, if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. <sup>11</sup>Women, similarly, should be dignified, not slanderers, but temperate and faithful in everything. <sup>12</sup>Deacons may be married only once and must manage their children and their households well. <sup>13</sup>Thus those who serve well as deacons gain good standing and much confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus ([1 Timothy 3](#)).