

December
2011

DFP Journal



WHAT'S INSIDE

From the Director
Feature - Authentic Christian Life
What is Faith Sharing?
Vatican and National Directory
Thoughts on Vocation

Briefs, Releases & Reminders
What the Candidates Are Doing...
Appeal 2011
One for the Road
Ask a Deacon...



**DEACON
FORMATION**

UNIVERSITY of SAINT MARY of THE LAKE

DIRECTOR OF FORMATION

DEACON BOB PUHALA

J

JOEL OSTEEEN IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE PREACHERS. His consistent message of God's blessing and favor on His people is a reminder that God wants all of us to become all that he created us to be. But Osteen notes that while God will do His part, we must do our part, too. How do we cooperate in God's plan for us? Lots of ways, but we can start very personally and practically – with words. A few weeks ago I listened to Osteen preach about words. It struck home quite powerfully (maybe because words are the tools of my profession as a journalist). I moved to the internet, started googling, and came across Bishop Arthur Serratelli's essay on the unity of words and love.

This led to all kinds of questions – for me and, maybe, everyone: How do you speak about yourself, others, your ministry? What kind of comments do you make about Church, the archdiocese, its mission? What words do you use when engaging others, encouraging or correcting? These are important questions to pray over because words have real power. They can influence, change behavior, move to action. Words can persuade and dissuade, inflict injury and ease pain, affirm and destroy.

Words can bring comfort and fear. So what do your words say about you? For me, listening to Osteen was a graced moment. It gave me an opportunity to prayerfully look at myself to determine if I needed to not only to change my words but my heart as well. And I am going to put time aside this week and take preacher Osteen's advice by meditating on some of his suggestions that may lead to a greater self-discovery about my relationship with God and my gratitude for all He's done for me. Specifically, I'll try to become more aware of the words that I use; I'll try to be more deliberate about using only those words that best convey, with generosity and humility, what I'm trying to say; and I'll try to cast away negative mind-sets that tear down so I can more fully build up, both myself and others, and better embrace the life of blessings that God intends for me to enjoy.

How about you?



Feature ...	3
Evangelization...	4
Four Dimensions	5
Vatican...	6
USCCB...	7
News ...	8
Student Activity	9
A Lighter Side...	10
Appeal 2011...	11
One for the Road	12
Questions ...	14

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Feature

Authentic Christian Life

Rev. Msgr. Dennis J. Lyle

"One

of my favorite quotations that I have been using in the last few months is from Pope Paul VI.

"...the first means of evangelization is the witness of an authentically Christian life, given over to God in a communion that nothing should destroy and at the same time given to one's neighbor with limitless zeal. As we said recently to a group of lay people,

"Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses" (Evangeli nuntiandi, 41).

This captures the necessity for us to witness to our faith by the life we lead. It is true that many people are interested in hearing what the Gospel says to them; and yet, we also know that our credibility is weakened by

scandals. Recently, a number of popular priests on television have been removed from their duties because what they say does not match the way they live. We might be wonderful teachers and capable of explaining difficult theological concepts to parishioners, but the teaching has no weight if it is not backed up by an authentic Christian life.

This is especially important for those in public roles of service.

How many people see what we do and hear what we say? Will their encounter with us promote the gospel or become another obstacle to embracing the message of Jesus? We do not want to become like the Pharisees of old, who had the authority to teach but fell short by their bad example.

Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples, saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses. Therefore, do and observe all things whatsoever they tell you, but do not follow their example. For they preach but they do not practice." (Mt 23:1-3)

As a priest, there has been nothing more surprising than what people remember me saying or doing. Overall, they are good things; but, as I look back, there are some moments that I would like to repeat and hopefully do better. The words of a wise priest often prevent me from doing something that I will regret later: Few people remember what you wear, some

people remember what you say, but everyone remembers how you made them feel. I do not believe that our goal in life is to make people feel good. But I know that the more charitable we are towards our neighbor offers a better chance for the seeds of the Gospel to take root in their lives.

The lives of people like Teresa of Calcutta have made a difference in the world, because they taught and witnessed by their life. This is what Pope Paul VI meant and it is what the Lord calls each of us to do.

Monsignor Lyle is Rector / President of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Illinois.



Few people remember what you wear, some people remember what you say, but everyone remembers how you made them feel.



Mystic Monk “E”

**Pearls on effective
preaching ...**

*Listening comes
first: Give 100%
attention.*

*You are not the
originator – only an
illuminator.*

Check it out:

Deacon at Mass (PDF)
on our website **INFO LINKS** –
www.usml.edu
Click *Ministry Formation*,
click *Deacon Formation*

A Diaconal Mandate

Evangelization

What is faith sharing?

Faith sharing refers to the way in which we communicate our personal experiences of and responses to Jesus Christ. I let others know what is happening in me at this deepest level of relationship. It is sharing some part of my faith journey with those I can trust and owning and valuing God's action in my life's journey. I am the only one who knows what is going on in me and I share it with another person or group. I choose to share this because of my conviction that we are called together in Christian relationship and community to share at this level of faith so that we can grow more fully in our relationship with God.

As a result of this sharing, we grow together in communion in Christ. Each of us lives a spiritual life from our own unique center as elevated by grace. What we feel, perceive, imagine, will or do, comes into being from the core of Our won uniqueness where we personally meet Christ as he reveals Himself in our daily lives. This is our spiritual world of meaning. In order to use this core faith experience, I have to look back over my life and raise the experience to a level of awareness so that I can use it consciously in living out my Christian life and ministry.

What is the “heart” of evangelization?

The heart of evangelization remains the clear, explicit proclamation that Jesus is Lord.

“...there is no separation or opposition between catechesis and evangelization...Instead, they have close links whereby they integrate and complement each other.”

(From *National Directory for Catechesis*, #22, p. 67.)

FAQ's

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Four Dimensions of Formation

...from the *National Directory*

Of particular importance for deacons, called to be men of communion and service, is the capacity to relate to others.

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

Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons
(Vatican) Nos. 67, 68.

HUMAN

106. **Growth in formation:** A participant comes to formation with a history of interrelationships with other people. Formation for 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 new ministry.”

SPIRITUAL

110. **Spiritual foundations for discipleship and ministry:** “Human formation leads to and finds its completion in the spiritual dimension of formation, which constitutes the heart and unifying center of every Christian formation. Its aim is to tend to the development of the new life received in Baptism.” Many directions lead to this goal, all of them fundamentally the work of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual life is, therefore, dynamic and never static. The first goal of spiritual formation is the establishment and nourishment of attitudes, habits, and practices that will set the foundation for a lifetime of ongoing spiritual discipline.

INTELLECTUAL

118. **Knowledge of faith and Church:** Intellectual formation offers the participant “substantial nourishment” for the pastoral, human, and spiritual dimensions of his life. Intellectual formation is a “precious instrument” for effective discernment and ministry. 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. Therefore, the intellectual dimension of formation must be designed to communicate a knowledge of the faith and church tradition that is “complete and serious,” so that each participant will be prepared to carry out his vital ministry.

PASTORAL

126. An integral formation must relate the human, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions into 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.

VATICAN – Basic Norms

Basic Norms for the Formation of Deacons (Vatican, 1998)

Chapter 3 The Spirituality of the Deacon

Vocation to Holiness

44. The universal call to holiness has its origin in the “baptism of faith” by which all are “truly made sons of God and sharers in the divine nature and thus are made holy.”

By the Sacrament of Holy Orders, deacons receive a “new consecration to God” through which they are “anointed by the Holy Spirit and sent by Christ” to serve God’s people and “build up the Body of Christ” (*Eph 4:12*).

From this stems the *diaconal spirituality* with its source in what the Second Vatican Council calls “the sacramental grace of the diaconate.” In addition to helping the deacon to fulfill his functions this also affects his deepest being, imbuing it with a willingness to give his entire self over to the service of the Kingdom of God in the Church. As is indicated by the term “diaconate” itself, what characterizes the inner feelings and desire of those who receive the sacrament, is the *spirit of service*. Through the diaconate, what Jesus said of his mission is continually realized: “The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for the many” (*Mt 20:28*). Thus, through his ministry, the deacon lives the virtue of obedience: in faithfully carrying out those duties assigned to him, the deacon serves the episcopate and the presbyterate in the *munera* of Christ’s mission and what he does is truly pastoral ministry, for the good of the faithful.

For deacons the call to holiness means
“following Jesus by an attitude of humble
service which finds expression not only in the
works of charity but also in imbuing and
forming thoughts and actions.” (47)

“...deacons should
strive to model
their lives on
Christ, who
redeemed mankind
by his obedience to
the Father, an
obedience “unto
death, death on a
cross” (*Phil 2:8*).

*Basic Norms for the
Formation of
Permanent Deacons,*
page 113, No. 47.

United States Catholic Conference,
Washington, DC, 1998

The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States (USCCB 2005)

Chapter 4 Vocation, Discernment and Selection

I. Promotion and recruitment

159. The First Letter of St. Paul to Timothy provides the first principle for the selection of deacons: “They should be tested first; then, if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.” St. Thomas Aquinas offers an additional insight: Grace builds on nature. Those who have worked closely with the reestablishment of the diaconate conclude that the diaconate is a particular vocation called forth by the Holy Spirit, that a successful process of training and development can only cooperate with fundamental preexisting traits and dispositions that point to a diaconal vocation and build upon them, and that the process of training and development can be successful only in supportive life circumstances.

160. The promotion and recruitment of qualified men for the diaconate should be a collaborative ministry between the staffs of the diocesan vocations office and the diaconate office, as well as the diocesan bishop and pastors. If the diocesan Church wishes to nominate appropriate men, it may be helpful for the diocesan diaconate office to prepare guidelines, approved by the bishop, that provide specific information about recruitment, as well as the selection and formation processes. If the reestablishment of the diaconate is made part of a coherent diocesan pastoral plan for ministry in which deacons will have an important role, then the diocese and parishes can more easily identify and recruit potential candidates, describe to them the challenges and opportunities of diaconal ministry in the diocese, and urge them to consider it as a service to which they can commit themselves.

161. The Church in the United States is enriched by the diversity of its cultural, racial, and ethnic communities. Since these communities share in the responsibility for promoting Church vocations, their leaders ought to be formally invited and included in the planning and implementation of vocation programs directed to their communities. Their support and encouragement will effectively assist in the recruitment of qualified nominees from their communities. Representatives of U.S. ethnic and cultural communities – such as Americans of African, Pacific Asian, Native American, and Hispanic heritage – who participate as consultants to the diaconate office, can provide significant insight on cultural subtleties and their effect upon discernment and formation programming, including pastoral placement.

“The history ...of every Christian vocation, is the history of an *inexpressible dialogue between God and human beings, between the love of God who calls and the freedom of individuals who respond lovingly to him.*”

National Directory
page 77

Congregation for Catholic Education, *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons (Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Diaconorum Permanentium)* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1998) no. 29, citing, Pope John II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *I Will Give You Shepherds (Pastores Dabo Vobis)* (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1992) no. 36.

NEWS

A candidate's thoughts...

I think the DePaul site is terrific. It is in a location that is easy for me to get to. I work in Northlake and it takes me only 20 minutes to get there. I do like the way all of the men gather to pray the LOTH, and to get to know each other. It is also nice to speak with the other men (and wives) about their journey; especially the year 3 candidates. It was fun seeing the excitement on their faces when they were wrapping things up. It is a clean facility, and the employees there are always friendly. It is central to the highways and various eateries. I think this location is great.

Tom Imbordino, *Cohort 2014*
Roselle, Il – St. John Vianney, Northlake

...for the newly ordained**Helpful reminders
From the General Instruction
on the Roman Missal**

178. After the Universal Prayer, while the priest remains at the chair, the Deacon prepares the altar, assisted by the acolyte, but it is the Deacon's place to take care of the sacred vessels himself. He also assists the Priest in receiving the people's gifts. After this, he hands the priest the paten with the bread to be consecrated (the paten is not placed on the altar by the deacon), (then) pours wine and a little water into the chalice, saying quietly, By the mystery of this water, etc., and after this presents the chalice to the Priest. He may also carry out the preparation of the chalice at the credence table. If incense is being used, the Deacon assists the Priest during the incensation of the offerings, the cross, and the altar; and after this the Deacon himself or the acolyte incenses the Priest and the people.

December Brief

The winter quarter has begun and all aspirants and candidates ask for prayers as they begin a new round of academic and formation activity. Check out what they are accomplishing on page 9.

Prayer

The praise of Christ expressed by the liturgy is effective in so far as it continues to inform the humblest of tasks.

Roger Schutz

Mary, teacher of prayer, who through your maternal intercession have supported and helped the Church from her beginnings, make deacons always attentive to the needs of the faithful by teaching them to come to know the value of prayer.

CANDIDATE ACTIVITY

FROM THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

Anne Chrzan



WAKE UP! The time is now. I heard this message at 11pm on Thanksgiving night when my son wanted to go to Best Buy to get a deal on a new lap top. I also heard this message at Mass on Sunday when we celebrated the new Advent Season. My prayer this Advent is for all of us to focus our attention on the "Reason for the Season" rather than getting caught in the consumerism of Christmas.

The Aspirants and Candidates are welcoming a new quarter starting this month. The year one candidates will begin the *New Testament* course, the year two candidates will be taking a *Presiding at Rites and Rituals Intensive* course and the year three candidates will be taking *Homiletics IV*. There are also other formation sessions taking place on Saturdays during this month. Presiding at Rites and Rituals IV (year three), Homiletics III (year two), Leadership of Prayer (year one) and Spirituality of the Early Church (aspirants). Candidates in year one will also be attending Mass at Most Blessed Trinity in Waukegan for an Advent liturgy in Spanish.

Merry Christmas to All!

What are the aspirants and candidates accomplishing in December?

ASPIRANCY (15 aspirants)

- Spirituality of the Early Church
- Theological Reflection I

CANDIDACY YEAR 1 (10 candidates)

- Introduction to New Testament
- Cross-cultural pastoral perspectives
- Leadership of Prayer II
- (Ongoing) Service to the Word Field Education

CANDIDACY YEAR 2 (18 candidates)

- Presiding at Rites & Rituals Intensive
- Homiletics III
- (Ongoing) Service to Liturgy Internship

CANDIDACY YEAR 3 (10 candidates)

- Homiletics IV
- Presiding at Rites & Rituals IV
- Admission & Scrutinies Board
- Ordination Prep Meeting

CARDINAL STITCH RETREAT HOUSE

An atmosphere of prayer in a beautiful wooded setting. Stitch is *the* retreat house for your private retreats - during and after formation. Call Deacon Richard Hudzik 847-566-6060 to arrange your time for prayer.

MUNDELEIN, ILLINOIS

Deacon Formation encourages all deacons and pastors of the Archdiocese of Chicago to invite interested inquirers to attend an "Exploring the Permanent Diaconate" session at the Cardinal Stitch Retreat House in Mundelein, Illinois (*attendance at one session is only required*).

Sunday, February 19, 2012 – 12:00 P.M. (Mass)

A LIGHTER SIDE

Story Telling

*... is good evangelization
... is good preaching*

As clergy, I witness some very wonderful family situations. Some are funny, some are deliciously educational and many simply touch the heart. I recall one mother mentioning that she was brought to tears one Christmas morning. As the story goes her son arose very early one Christmas morning and then awoke his sister. He was all in favor of a special present for his mom but his sister was uncertain and used the 'dumb' word.

"She's going to love it," he said as he prepared a big empty box. He then began to print little signs that he would hold up as he jumped out of the box. His sister placed the box at the front door, shook her head and rang the doorbell.

When the door was opened, mom and dad said in unison, "What do we have here?"

With that the little boy jumped out of the box and quickly displayed his signs: "I'll clean the garage." "I'll do all of my chores." "I'll run all of your errands."

Expressive joy and endless thanksgiving: The greatest of gifts - the gift of oneself.

Padre Dionisio



Didimus, the deacon candidate, offered this informative pearl – At income tax time, did you ever notice: When you put the two words "The' and 'IRS' together it spells ...THEIRS? (*rim shot!*)!

2011 DJStafford



*It's a great
time of year
to pray over
charitable
giving!*



But seriously folks – pray over this thought...

My sidekick Grace has it right! And Scripture tells us to give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.

Please know that we candidates in formation for the permanent diaconate are extremely grateful to individuals, pastors and parishes that financially support our education and formation. God bless you for praying over making a charitable donation to Deacon Formation.



APPEAL 2011

INDIVIDUAL & GROUP / PARISH STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

Memorials and Honorariums are available for a **\$300 donation**
Name engraved on plaque at USML
(In Memory of...) (In Honor of...)

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USML; Monthly Newsletter recipient; Inclusion in monthly
Newsletter; personal plaque for individual or parish usage

Deacon Formation encourages deacon ordination classes and
parish organizations to pray over the potential of a group gift
or scholarship.

Contact Deacon Bob Puhala at Deacon Formation:
847-837-4564 and learn about the many ways you can become
a DFP steward.

Rev. Dennis Stafford



Padre
Dionisio

Expressing a Living Reality

Why words and visible expressions matter

MOST OF US KNOW the formula for praying the rosary and the inclusive prayers. Imagine my surprise when in the midst of praying the rosary with my family (something we did on a regular basis during elementary school) I hear the words, “Hail Mary full of water...!”

It was my mother’s turn to lead a decade and these words tumbled out of her mouth. To say the least, there was a slight pause and then uncontrollable laughter from my brother, father and myself. My mother had one of those “What?” looks on her face and then it dawned on her. “I guess I’m pretty thirsty,” she said.

I used to get a ride to school from a friend with a new blue 1967 Camaro. My mother didn’t like this individual too much and one day she caught me getting into his car. The look on her face was quite different from the rosary experience.

And then there was the time I got my first apartment. I was leaving the nest. I believe I will categorize my mother’s facial expression as the “quiet” look. I think you know what I mean.

Three extraordinarily different faces: Yet, faces of love.

We are confronted with many faces of God. Sometimes we can define these faces as peace, love, truth, justice. Sometimes we can feel God so close the hairs on the back of our necks stand up. Many times God seems so distant and abstract that doubt creeps into our lives.

Scripture shows us many of the faces and personalities expressive



of God: “I Am Who Am” (Exodus 3:14); God is called “Abba” (daddy); Jesus literally means “Yahweh is salvation.” And in a significant portion of the

world God is called “Allah” (One supreme God). Each one utilizes language to express a living reality.

A high school religion teacher once asked her students “Which person of the Trinity do you relate to best?” She had just concluded a lesson on this mystery of our faith and there were quizzical looks on the faces of the teenagers.

One student wrote, “My father and I have zero relationship. I need a father right now. I sometimes

talk to God the Father about my problems.”

A girl wrote: “My brother lives with my father, and I live with my mother. Since their divorce we hardly see each other anymore. I never thought I’d miss my brother, but I do. I’ve adopted Jesus as a brother.”

Another boy wrote: “I’m going to college next year and I don’t have a clue what to expect. I need the Spirit of God for guidance.”

Having taught at the secondary education level I can imagine how pleased this particular teacher must have been. Here is a God of many faces and expressions that had become clear and distinct in the minds and lives of teenagers. That indeed is faith, a lived reality to be seen and heard and touched. What a valuable lesson for all of us.

In our Tradition (Catholic Christian) God is a Trinity. God gave us life and the visible Jesus. Jesus was human like us, yet, divine, so that we might become like God – faithful in our mission as the Body of Christ.

Recognizing that our Creator God is ever-present and recognizable is a remarkable experience.

If you have ever nurtured and sustained life: you have experienced the Father.

If you have ever leaned on and relied on a friend or spouse – you have experienced the Son.

If you find it difficult to explain the Mystery of God but find yourself continuously searching and returning to a sacred space – you have experienced the Spirit.

We do know the faces and names of the one true God. Blessed be the Trinity and undivided unity.

**Those who are called by
the Holy Spirit to
consider becoming a
candidate for the
permanent diaconate
sometimes need a little
help from a friend!**



**Deacon Formation asks all deacons, pastors and parish leaders to
encourage all who may be discerning a vocation
to join the "Inquiry Path."**

Our next "Exploring the Permanent Diaconate" session:

**Sunday, February 19, 2012 - 12:00 (noon) Mass
Cardinal Stritch Retreat House, Mundelein, Illinois**

Ask a deacon ...

Ordained in 2002, Deacon Jim Cozzo, Jr. has been administrative assistant for Deacon Formation for 10 years

What is your favorite memory of being a candidate for the permanent diaconate?

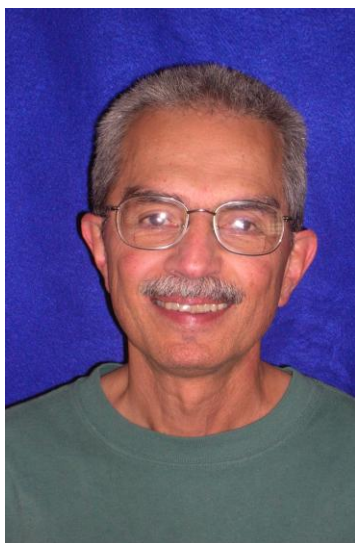
I actually have two. The first was the feeling of being unworthy to be ordained a deacon and then finding out that the other 20 candidates felt the same. The second was the special ceremony at the end of our January 2001 retreat when the retreat master (Deacon Bill Ditewig) and all of my classmates and their wives laid hands upon my wife Mirna and me as a special prayer/blessing as I prepared to undergo surgery for bladder/prostate cancer a few weeks later.

Did you ever wish you could be a candidate today to experience the untold wealth of theology being taught to contemporary candidates?

Yes, definitely. I mention that very fact to every new aspirant I meet.

What brought you to working for Deacon Formation?

After working 17 years in the offices of a Teamsters Local, I finally had my fill of all the politics and back-stabbing. I gave them a one-week notice and began to hand out resumes to anyone who knew me. Fr. David Dowdle (then Deacon Formation Spiritual Director) took one of the resumes since he knew the program was looking for a second administrative assistant. I interviewed with Deacon John Pistone (then Director of Deacon Formation) and the rest is history. I truly feel this is God's plan for me.



What is the impact on your family of being a permanent deacon?

On the negative side it has meant not being with my family as much as I'd like to be. But the positive far outweighs the negative. They all know where I'm coming from when it comes to our relationship with Jesus, the Catholic Church and all of God's people.

What is your most memorable diaconal experience?

Being the celebrant at my granddaughter Ava's baptism this past June has been the greatest highlight of my diaconal life so far although there have been many other great experiences.

How can deacons engage the diaconal obligation of Word, Liturgy and Charity?

The deacon should be as involved as possible in such ministries as Sacramental Preparation, RCIA and/or Scripture study. He should be present at (at least one) Mass every Sunday/Holy Day to exercise his liturgical ministry. And he should be actively involved in service to Charity and Justice by ministering to the poor, the sick, the marginalized, and/or bereavement or hunger ministry or ministry to those alienated by society.

What words of wisdom do you wish to pass to current candidates?

People don't think much of a deacon candidate who feels he knows it all and nobody likes an arrogant deacon. Make humility your signature virtue.

Some FAQ's



How old do you need to be to apply?

An applicant has to be at least 31 years of age at time of application. The program is a minimum of four years in length and Canon law of the Catholic Church stipulates that a man must be at least 35 at the time of ordination to the permanent diaconate.

I think I will wait until I retire and then become a deacon. Is that OK?

In the Archdiocese of Chicago a man can be no older than 62 years of age at the time of application. A minimum of four years of ordained service to the archdiocese after ordination is required (deacons may retire at 70). Also, remember, a man must be financially self-sufficient to be a participant in the program. The average age of current participants in formation is approximately 50 (81% of current participants are under 60; 31% are under 50).

Do I need a college degree to apply?

An applicant to the program needs, minimally, a GED. A college degree is not required. All formation and academics in the program are taught at the undergraduate college level.

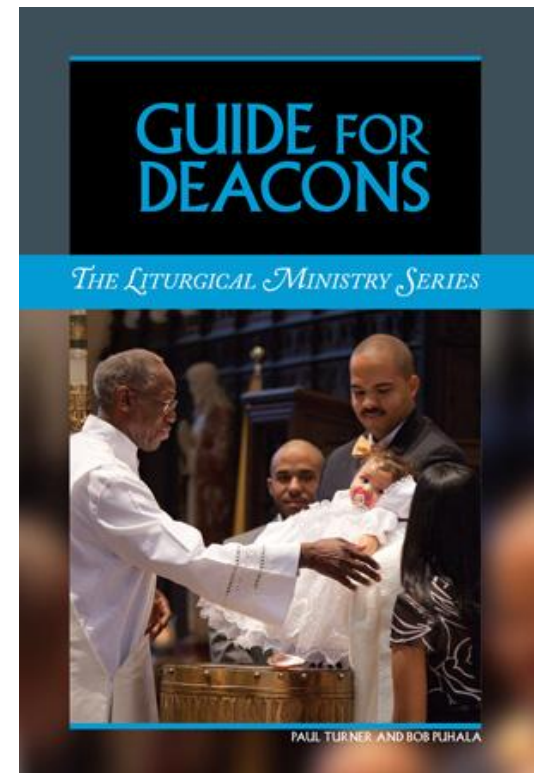
Discernment of a vocation is a life-long process and receives particular attention during the formation journey.

CONSTITUTIVE ELEMENTS OF A CANDIDATE IN DEACON FORMATION

- Firm Catholic Christian foundation
- Solid prayer, devotional and sacramental life
- Transparent moral lifestyle in compliance to all Catholic teaching
- Passionate about learning and serving in all three diaconal ministries – Word, Liturgy & Charity
- Immersed in the four dimensions – Human, Intellectual, Pastoral & Spiritual
- Deeply engaged in theological reflection and spiritual direction
- Openness to vocation discernment and objective feedback
- Committed and humble personality
- Open to and accepting of objective evaluation and suggestions for growth
- Understands that ordination is to the Archdiocese and not a particular parish

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