

THE DEACON AS WITNESS AND GUIDE

The deacon's ministry, as Pope John Paul II has 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 his exemplary witness and assistance in the Church's ministry of charity and justice did not accompany it. Thus, Pope John Paul II affirms both; "This is at the very heart of the diaconate to which you have been called: to be a servant of the mysteries of Christ and, at one and the same time, 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."
(National Directory #36)

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THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

OFFICE of THE PERMANENT DIACONATE



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WHO IS A PERMANENT DEACON?

It is more accurate to ask who a deacon is, rather than to list what a deacon does. As an ordained-minister in the Catholic Church, deacons are the first grade/level in the hierarchy of sacred orders.

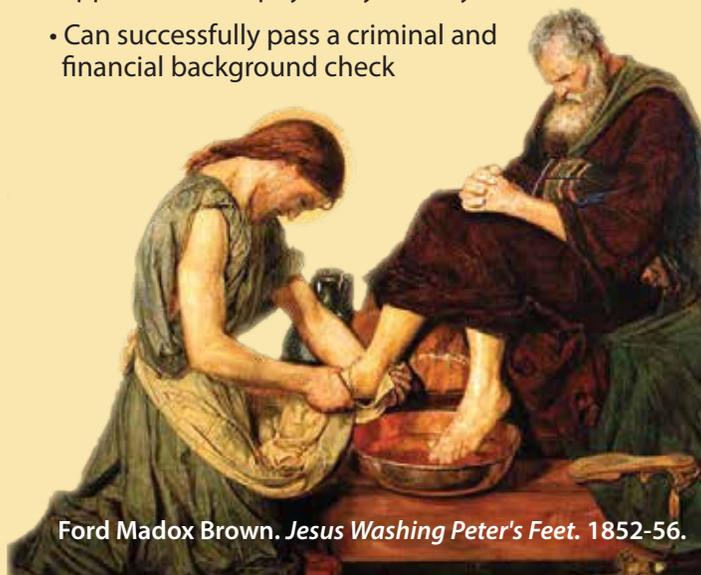
As married or single men, deacons respond to God's call in their lives by embracing active ministry in the Church through liturgy, word and charity. By doing so, deacons provide an official and sacramental presence of the Church to the faithful in both urban and rural communities.

The deacon's role is to follow the example of Jesus the Deacon, who came not to be served, but to serve.

GENERAL CRITERIA FOR DEACON APPLICANTS

- Can articulate his sense of call to the diaconate primarily because of the needs of the Church and for personal growth
- Can witness to Gospel values that are life-giving and is faithful to Church teachings
- Able to convey examples of God's presence in his life and is docile to the Holy Spirit
- Able to balance and prioritize his commitments to family, work, and ministry
- Is already active in parish ministry such as reader, extraordinary minister of Communion, or serves on committees
- Is a man of prayer, participates regularly in the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation
- Is self-disciplined and shows interest in helping others

- Can be flexible in attitude and behavior, and be open to change in his life
- If married, is in a valid and stable marriage for at least five years and his wife and children support him in pursuing the diaconate
- If not married, is willing to commit to celibacy
- Has demonstrated 5 years of stability in his parish, community, and employment, and lives in the Archdiocese of Dubuque
- Has at minimum a high school diploma or a GED, and is capable of advanced levels of theological studies
- Is, along with his wife, if married, a citizen or permanent resident of the U.S.
- If married, his wife is strongly encouraged to participate in formation sessions, assignments and activities; however, some sessions will be identified as optional
- An application can be received from a man who has received one declaration of matrimonial nullity
- Is between the ages of 32 and 58 at the time of application and physically healthy
- Can successfully pass a criminal and financial background check



Ford Madox Brown. *Jesus Washing Peter's Feet*. 1852-56.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK GOD IS CALLING ME?

Spend time in prayer and reflection about your call to the Diaconate. Talk to your family and one or two close friends, and then to your pastor. If your family and pastor agree, ask your pastor to write to the Office of the Permanent Diaconate recommending you as a possible applicant for diaconal formation.

Send me more information . . .

Complete this card, detach it, place a first class stamp on it and place it in the mail.

Please send me more information about what it means to be a Permanent Deacon.

(Name)

(Address)

(City, State, Zip)

(Phone number where you can be reached)

(Parish)

(Wife's name)

(Date of marriage)

Who encouraged you to explore a vocation to the diaconate? _____

Briefly describe your ministry involvement:

(Signature)

(Date)