Brothers in the Service of the Lord
Hermanos al Servicio del Señor

Jesus washing Peter's feet at the Last Supper / Jesús lavando los pies a Pedro en la Última Cena
by / por Ford Madox Brown

➢ A Formation Program for Aspirants and Candidates for the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Yakima.

Programa de Formación para Aspirantes y Candidatos al Diaconado Permanente en la Diócesis de Yakima.

➢ Guidelines and Norms for the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Yakima.
Normas y Directrices del Diaconado Permanente en la Diócesis de Yakima.

November/ Noviembre 2008

---

1 Pope John Paul II, Papal Address to the Permanent Deacons, Detroit, September 19, 1987
2 Juan Pablo II, Discurso Pontificio a los Diáconos Permanentes, Detroit, 19 Septiembre, 1987
3 Permanent Deacon in contrast to Transitional Deacon who will become a priest.
4 Se llama Diácono Permanente por contraste con el Diácono temporal que luego se ordenará de Sacerdote.
Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

*Brothers in the Service of the Lord* is a handbook which, after the presentation in Chapter I of some important considerations related to the identity and mission of permanent deacons in the Latin Church, continues, as its main purpose in the rest of its text, to provide a description of the process by which a man becomes a permanent deacon in the Diocese of Yakima.

The text was approved by me on February 20, 2006 after its review, during the various stages of its development over a period of several years, by the Diocesan Pastoral Council, the Diaconate Community and the Diocesan Council of Priests.

This handbook presents the basic information that men who are interested in the Deacon Formation program of the Diocese of Yakima need to know as they consider beginning what is usually a six-year journey to ordination. It should also be useful for our diocese’s clergy, religious, and lay leaders, helping them to become acquainted with our entire diaconate program. Robert Fontana, former director of our diocesan evangelization office, who also guided the formation program for deacon candidates, saw the need for a text of this kind and is responsible for the initial stages of its development. Thanks to the very generous and helpful assistance of Deacon Robert Schrom, this text of *Brothers in the Service of the Lord* is now ready for publication. I am also greatly indebted to Father Virgilio Zea, S.J. for the many hours spent forming the Spanish text.

In February 2005, the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* was published in our country after its approval by the Vatican. With three exceptions, the formation program described in this handbook complies with the text of the *National Directory*. Those exceptions are: (1) our timing of the aspirant’s reception as a candidate for ordination, (2) our decision to introduce the term *pre-candidacy*, and (3) the use of the terms “Bishop’s Deacon Liaison” and “Deacon Formation Committee” substitute for the terms “Director of Deacon Personnel” and “The Office of the Permanent Diaconate”. The functions of the “Diocesan Committee of Evaluation and Scrutinies” are carried out by the Deacon Formation Committee.

Let us give thanks for the permanent deacons in our diocese who, together with their wives, have been and continue to be a very significant and powerful sign of Jesus’ loving service in our midst.

Sincerely,

*Carlos A. Sevilla, S.J.*

Bishop of Yakima

CAS:cf
# Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter I</th>
<th>The Diaconate: &quot;Brothers in the Service of the Lord&quot;</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. A Theology of the Diaconate</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. A History of the Diaconate</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Ordination as a Deacon: Holy Orders</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. The Ministry of Deacon</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. The Vocation of the Permanent Deacon</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F. Wives as Collaborators of Permanent Deacons</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter II</td>
<td>The Aspirant and Pre-Candidate</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. Requirements for Acceptance as an Aspirant</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. The Aspirancy Year</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Acceptance as a Pre-candidate to the Deacon Formation Program</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter III</td>
<td>The Deacon Formation Program</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. Characteristics of the Deacon Formation Program</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. The Three Phases of the Deacon Formation Program</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phase I: Minister of the Word</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phase II: Minister of Charity</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Phase III: Minister of the Altar</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Time Commitment</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Cost</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Pre-Candidate/Candidate Monthly Small Groups</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F. Pre-Candidate/Candidate Education Days</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G. The Diocese Evaluates the Pre-Candidate</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>H. The Pre-Candidate Evaluates the Diocese</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter IV</td>
<td>Formal Steps Before Ordination as a Permanent Deacon</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. The Ministries of Reader and Acolyte/ Acceptance as a Candidate</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. The Deacon Community</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. Ministry Appointment</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>D. Ministry Agreement</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>E. Ordination Retreat and Ordination</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A:</td>
<td>Permanent Diaconate Applicant Information</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B:</td>
<td>Permanent Diaconate Spouse Information</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix C:</td>
<td>Deacon Pre-Candidate Formation Agreement</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix D:</td>
<td>Readings for the Three Phases of the Deacon Pre-Candidate Formation Program</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix E:</td>
<td>Permanent Diaconate Guidelines &amp; Norms, (February, 2001)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix F:</td>
<td>Permanent Deacon Ministry Agreement</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter I

The Diaconate: "Brothers in the Service of the Lord"

A. A Theology of the Diaconate

Pope John Paul II, in addressing the permanent deacons and their wives during a visit to the United States in 1989, greeted his audience with, "Dear Brothers in the Service of the Lord," and "Dear Wives and Collaborators of these men ordained to the Permanent Diaconate."

In doing so, the Holy Father was expressing his heartfelt gratitude and respect for permanent deacons (and their spouses) because of their faithful service to the Church which, in fact, stretches across two thousand years of Christianity. From the apostolic times when deacons first begin to appear in the Scriptures (Philippians 1:1) to our present day, countless numbers of men, some of them married and lovingly supported by their spouses, have placed their lives in diaconal service to the Church.

These men are both "servants of the mysteries of Christ" and servants of the sisters and brothers of the Church\(^4\) and indeed of all of society, especially those who are most at risk of being neglected.\(^5\) As servants of the mysteries of Christ, deacons together with bishops and priests are members of the clergy. They are custodians of the redemptive plan of God to unite all things on heaven and earth through the Paschal Mystery of Jesus and the sending forth of the Holy Spirit.\(^6\) They effectively make known this plan of God to the faithful of the Church and humanity at large through three fundamental ministries: Ministry of the Altar, Ministry of Charity, and Ministry of the Word. Furthermore, because they are "dispensers of God's mysteries in the service of His people... they (deacons) are to nourish their spiritual lives from the two-fold table of Sacred Scripture and the Eucharist.\(^7\)

In this same address, Pope John Paul II went on to speak of the joy that it was for him to meet with permanent deacons and their wives. They represent, he said, a "great and visible sign of the working of the Holy Spirit in the way of the Second Vatican Council, which provided for the restoration of the permanent diaconate in the Church.\(^8\)

Permanent deacons, supported by their spouses, if they are married, are co-workers with bishops and priests in the Church's mission to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. In this spirit Pope John Paul II calls them "Brothers in the Service of the Lord" since they effectively imitate Jesus the Lord who came "to serve and not be served." (Mk 10:45)


Jesus, The Washes the Feet of His Disciples, an Example of Service in the Kingdom

Only the Gospel of John tells us that, during the last supper, Jesus removed his outer garment, took a basin and towel, and washed the feet of His disciples. Yet, this memory of what Jesus did is so important to the Church’s understanding of Jesus’ life and mission, that re-enacting it on Holy Thursday has been a fixture in the Church for centuries.

"Jesus -- fully aware that he had come from God and was going to God, the Father who had handed everything over to him -- rose from the meal and took off his cloak. He picked up a towel and tied it around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet and dry them with the towel he had around him."

"After he washed their feet, he put his cloak back on and reclined at the table once more. He said to them, ‘You address me as Teacher and Lord and fittingly enough for that is what I am. But if I washed your feet -- I, who am Teacher and Lord -- then you must wash each other's feet. What I just did was to give you an example: as I have done, so you must do.”

(John 13:1-17)

This event captures the essence of how Jesus saw himself and those who would be His followers. He and, therefore, they, were to always keep the good of others at the center of their work and humbly attend to them as a servant attends to his or her master or mistress.

"As the eyes of servants are on the hands of their masters, as the eyes of a maid are on the hands of her mistress, so are our eyes on the Lord, our God, till he have pity on us.”

(Psalm 123:2)

Every Jew in ancient Palestine knew that those who had status and power, whether Jew or Roman, often made their authority felt by lording it over others. It was not to be this way for the followers of Jesus.

"Anyone who aspires to greatness must serve the rest; whoever wants to rank first among you must serve the needs of all. The Son of Man has come not to be served but to serve -- to give his life in ransom for the many.”

(Mk 10:43-45)

Jesus’ desire in all that He did was to establish the Kingdom of God.

"I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God, because for this purpose I have been sent.”

(Lk 4:43)

Jesus preached, healed, gathered disciples, confronted hypocrites, fed the hungry, ate with sinners, taught in parables, forgave sinners, washed the feet of his disciples, instituted the Eucharist, and gave his life on the cross to make present in the world the Kingdom of God. Jesus was the Sacrament of the Kingdom, the outward and visible sign which made the love, justice, and truth of God present in the world.

A Servant Church, the Sacrament of Jesus in the World

All of God’s people who have been born again in Christ in the waters of Baptism, empowered by the Holy Spirit in Confirmation, and transformed even more into the image of Christ through the Eucharist are called to imitate Jesus.
the servant. Together, laity and clergy alike are a Servant Church! This Servant Church is to humbly "wash the feet" of its fellow members and of the human community in witness to the Risen Christ. Jesus is made visible and present in the world through this servant Church which the Vatican Council called a "Sacrament of Human Salvation."

"Since the Church, in Christ, is a sacrament- a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of the unity of the entire human race..." (Lumen Gentium, article 1)

"Christ was sent by the Father 'to bring good news to the poor...to heal the brokenhearted' (Luke 4:18), 'to seek and to save what was lost' (Luke 19:10). Similarly, the Church encompasses with its love all those who are afflicted by human infirmity and it recognizes in those who are poor and who suffer, the likeness of its poor and suffering founder. It does all in its power to relieve their need and in them it endeavors to serve Christ..." (Lumen Gentium, article 8).

B. A History of the Diaconate

Very early on in the life of the Church, some community members emerged as extraordinary assistants to the Apostles. The name deacon was given to those assistants, which in Greek means minister or servant. Their invaluable mission earned them profound respect from bishops in the spreading of the Gospel. Ignatius of Antioch in the early part of the second century writes of deacons as "servants of the Bishop as Christ is the servant of the Father." 9

Over the centuries deacons have participated in a wide variety of ministries, as theologians, administrators of Church offices and charitable works, as well as catechists preparing men and women for Baptism. However, overtime, the unique gift of the deaconate as a distinctive rank within the hierarchy became lost to the Church in the West and was absorbed into the stages of priestly ordination. The Council of Trent discussed restoring the diaconate to its ancient and distinctive role as a helper to bishops.10 It was not until the Second Vatican Council that the bishops of the Church recognized the need "to restore the diaconate as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy." (Lumen Gentium, article 29)

During the years following the council, Pope Paul VI implemented the wishes of the council fathers regarding the permanent diaconate. He did so in three important stages. He first established canonical norms for the permanent diaconate in his Apostolic Letter Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem in June of 1967. Then, in June of 1968, Pope Paul VI authorized new rites for the conferral of all three of the ordained ministers, deacon, priest and bishop, in the Apostolic Constitution Pontificalis Romani Recognitum. Finally, on the Feast of the Assumption, August 15, 1972, the pope published new norms for the diaconate in the Apostolic Letter Ad Pascendum.11

In May of 1968, the bishops of the United States wrote to Pope Paul VI requesting permission to restore the diaconate in this country. Their reasons are summarized below:

- "To complete the hierarchy of sacred orders and to enrich and strengthen the many and various diaconal ministries at work in this country with the sacramental grace of the diaconate;
- To enlist a new group of devout and competent men in the active ministry of the Church;
- To aid in extending needed liturgical and charitable services to the faithful in both large urban and small rural communities;
- To provide an official and sacramental presence of the Church in many areas of secular life, as well as in communities within large cities and sparsely settled regions where few or no priests are available;
- To provide an impetus and source for creative adaptations of diaconal ministries to the rapidly changing needs of our society."12

C. Ordination as a Deacon: Holy Orders

All in the Church are called to serve in the manner of Jesus who washed the feet of His Disciples. The service that deacons offer is the Church's service sacramentalized.13 Sacraments are visible actions and signs of the Church which make present the invisible and hidden works of Jesus through the Holy Spirit. The diaconate belongs to the essential ministries of leadership to which Jesus entrusted the fundamental task of "assuring that the Church become and remain the authentic sacrament of salvation. In an ordination, a Christian blessed with the ability to minister is chosen from among the members of Christ to occupy an office and to fulfill a role representative of both Christ and the Church. In this sacrament, a bishop lays hands upon a man and, in the name of the Church, prays God to empower him with the gifts of the Spirit that will enable him to fulfill his particular role."14

The deacon, through the sacrament of ordination, becomes for the Church a visible sign, a sacrament of the servant Jesus. He represents in his person and ministry who Jesus is to the Church and who the Church is to be for the world, a servant.15 This identity pervades every relationship and activity of a deacon's life.16 Wives of deacons, because of their intimate association with their spouses and often their close collaboration in ministry, are drawn into this identity as well. In their lives, in their very being, deacons are visible reminders, to the Church and to society, of Jesus, the washer of feet, who gave His life as a ransom for others. (Mark 10:35) Bishops, and by extension, priests, are visible signs to the Church of Jesus, the head of His body, the Church. Deacons are their helpers and assistants in service to the Gospel, a relationship that is made most evident in the liturgy of the Church where the bishop or priest presides and the deacon assists. Deacons are public ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. In the ordination rite of deacons, the

12 Ibid., pp. 1-2
15 Ibid., p 13, article 22.
bishop presents a copy of the Gospels to each of the ordained with these words:

"Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach."17

As public ministers, deacons, together with bishops and priests, are entrusted with a unique vocation to be servants of the Mysteries of Christ. (Colossians 1:26) Because of that, the faithful have a rightful claim on the time and gifts of deacons as they do with all the ordained, with due respect, in the case of deacons, for example, for their marriages and work commitments.

With this vision of the diaconate in mind, Pope John Paul II calls Permanent Deacons "Dear Brothers in the Service of the Lord."

D. The Ministry of Deacon

Deacons are assistants to the bishop. They are "governed by canon law, liturgical norms, and current guidelines of the diocese. The power to proclaim the Gospel and preach at Mass and other liturgical rites, as well as to baptize and to administer sacramentals derives from ordination. The deacon's exercise of these ministries is governed by his pastoral assignment. His permission to witness marriages and conduct funerals is normally delegated by the Bishop."18

Deacons are usually assigned to work in a parish or other ecclesial settings in close partnership with priests. They also work alongside the laity who, in many instances, may oversee them in the ministry at hand. Though they may be doing the same work as lay persons or even working under their skilled direction, deacons serve under a unique relationship that comes from ordination. The grace of the sacrament molds and shapes them into Jesus the servant, enabling them to be a visible sign of the servant Christ to all.

Deacons can serve within the Church in many of the ways in which lay persons serve. They work with youth; instruct catechumens; visit the sick and the infirmed; teach religious education; prepare young couples for marriage; organize and teach classes for the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation; work on retreats; distribute food for St. Vincent de Paul; train altar servers and organize Eucharistic ministers; administer parishes and/or retreat centers; assist with the annulment process; reach out to inactive Catholics and evangelize unchurched people; build unity and friendship with Christians from other faith communities; serve as Natural Family Planning instructors; advise the pastor on pastoral councils; teach adult education; and participate in small church communities.

Deacons are the ordinary ministers to lead any form of public prayer in the absence of a priest. Because of their close association with the liturgy of the Church, permanent deacons are to shape their spirituality through frequent participation in the Eucharist and are required to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, especially Morning and Evening Prayer.

---

Underlying these ministries is a diaconal character of helpfulness and service that must be present prior to ordination. Indeed, part of the discernment of the permanent deacon vocation is the challenge to identify within the candidates this diaconal character of prophetic service.

The sacramental identity and the ministry of a deacon are intimately connected. Diaconal ministry flows from an identity rooted in the Servant Christ, which in turn deepens and expands the identity. Because of the unity that must exist between the identity and ministry of a deacon, all aspirants to the permanent diaconate must demonstrate an aptitude for ministry before they can be accepted as pre-candidates. Furthermore, no man interested in the permanent diaconate will be ordained in the diocese of Yakima unless he has a clear and defined ministry in which he serves prior to ordination.

E. The Vocation of the Permanent Deacon

Single men or married men are encouraged to consider a vocation as a permanent deacon. This vocation is distinct from that of a bishop or a priest. All ministries in the Church are ministries of service. A bishop exercises a shepherding kind of service, in which a priest shares, as pastor of a community, a role that is most clearly reflected in his presiding at the Church's liturgy. A bishop exercises a sanctifying kind of service, in which a priest shares by absolving people's sins, offering the Eucharist. A bishop exercises a prophetic kind of service by his witnessing to the presence of Christ in the world in which a deacon shares by connecting people to Christ in the details of their daily living. For example, the deacon at the Eucharist calls all to conversion, proclaims the Gospel, and missions all present to witness to Christ in service to one another. Sacramentally, the three orders represent to the Church the headship of Christ over his body the Church.

The deacon brings to the Church a kenosis role of service, in other words, an identity of assistant and helper which allows him to focus energy on specific tasks in competent and effective ways. Through the grace of the sacrament, the deacon represents to the Church Jesus the servant who washes the feet of others. Again, all three modes of ordained ministry are a "service" to the Church, but each requires distinct charisms and gifts.

Single men may come to see that, although they are eligible for the priesthood, they might discern a vocation to the permanent diaconate rather than the priesthood because their qualities and charisms are not suited for priestly ministry.

Conversely, there may be married men who, having the qualities and gifts that would make them good priests and presiders over a faith community, are ineligible to receive priestly ordination because of the Latin Church's discipline of celibacy, except in extraordinary circumstances.

A study undertaken at the request of the bishops of the United States, has identified the specific gifts that deacons, if they are to be effective, must bring to their ministry. They are:

1. Relator - One who likes to work with others and desires warm, personal, true relationships that instill confidence.
2. Helping — One who is observing, favorably accepting of others, sensitive to their needs and problems and psychologically and materially attuned to assisting others.

3. Teaming — One who builds cohesion by constructing a positive atmosphere of support for the other members of his group effecting successful work and minimal conflict.

4. Spirituality — One who can draw on a deep sense of God within and with confident faith elicit transformation in others thinking toward a sense of trust and peace.

5. Accommodating — One who is generous with time and energy and highly flexible to quietly defer to the needs and desires of others.

6. Kinesthetic (energy) — One who has a high level of energy, both physically and mentally, who can be on the go with little sleep, not afraid of physical or hardworking activity.

7. Positive Other’s Perception — One who receives positive affirmation from others. From early on in life this person is seen as a “good” person, kind with little dissatisfaction from others.

8. Family — One who places a high value on family and the covenant promise of marriage. This person has had close relationships with family members and includes them in work and ministry experiences.

9. Purpose — One who acts from a strong system of belief. This person sees focused diaconal service as a major aspect of life.  

Each applicant to the Deacon Formation Program must undergo an extensive interview that will help determine if he has these qualities. Furthermore, he is asked to obtain references who will be asked to identify which of the above qualities the applicant has and to what degree.

"The Identity and ministry of the permanent deacon is rooted in relationships...For a married permanent deacon, family life, as he and his wife live out the sacrament of Matrimony, is a fundamental expression of their relationship with Christ...When the deacon and his wife exchanged consent in the sacrament of Matrimony, their life together, with its mutual responsibilities, assumed precedence over all subsequent commitments, including diaconal service. The preservation and enhancement of the marriage and family life of the married deacon and his wife is of utmost importance to all concerned with the permanent diaconate."  

The permanent deacon is always a deacon in identity, but his first commitment of time, if he is married, is to his wife and family. His second commitment is related. It is to his job where he serves still with the identity of a deacon. A few permanent deacons work within the structures of the institutional church. Most permanent deacons either work within secular life and culture or are retired. There they have the same mandate as do all faithful lay people: to transform the workplace with the power of the Gospel.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Deacon Perceiver, Selection Research, Inc. Lincoln, Nebraska, 1980</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent Diaconate Guidelines and Norms, Diocese of Yakima, 1994, p. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Evangelization in the Modern World, Pope Paul VI, Rome, 1975, p. 46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
families and takes precedence over specific diaconal duties for the Catholic institution to which they have been assigned.22

Permanent deacons are men who bridge the experience between clergy and laity with a foot in each world. Because of their baptism in the Father, Son, and Spirit and their ordination in that same Triune God, permanent deacons are called to be sign and sacrament of the servant Christ in all circumstances, both secular and religious.

Therefore, a most effective and powerful service that a deacon and his spouse render to the Church and society, is the witness of their mutual love, friendship, and unity in marriage. This relationship provides the cornerstone for effective diaconal service, individually and as a couple. This relationship as husband and wife shapes and forms the spirituality of a deacon and spouse through the demanding vows of the Christian marriage to love, honor, and be true to one another:

I, N., take you, N., to be my wife (husband). I promise to be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.23

A diaconal spirituality, a generous response to the love of God in service to another, begins in the home. A deacon and his wife are first servants to one another and to their children. The marriage and family life of a permanent deacon are the central relationships within his life and, therefore, take priority in nurture, development, and growth.

In the sad event that a deacon’s wife should die before he or that they should divorce, the discipline of celibacy connected to the Sacrament of Orders takes hold. Though a deacon still maintains his relationships as father and even grandfather, etc., he is obliged to live now as a single person in service to the Church. (Canon 1037) All couples in the Deacon Formation Program will be asked to make a married couple retreat independent of the program such as Marriage Encounter or Retrouvaille.

F. Wives as Collaborators of Deacons

Pope John Paul II recognized the very important role that wives of deacons play in both the formation of their husbands’ vocation and in their service as a couple.24 The wives of deacons are first and foremost seen as unique persons made in God’s image and likeness. They, too, have been wounded by sin, but through the sacraments have become God’s beloved daughters, sisters and followers of Jesus and Temples of the Holy Spirit. To all whom God calls, God also missions. Through the Sacraments of Initiation, the wives of deacons are called and gifted to witness to the Risen Christ through word and deed by the events and relationships of their lives.

Through the Sacrament of Marriage, the wives of deacons witness to the love God has for all humanity through the love and unity they share with their spouses. With their spouses, they generously welcome children into their homes, raise them in the virtues of faith, hope, and love, and instruct them regarding their dignity in Christ and inspire them to live and love as Jesus did.

24 Refer to footnote #1
Before they became the wives of deacons, they were collaborators with their husbands in creating a "domestic church" where the Holy Spirit empowers the practice of a gospel of service at its most basic level. Skilled in the art of home-making and collaborators with their spouses in the formation and education of their children, the wives of deacons are also fully active in their communities as professionals, workers, and citizens. They are highly effective in bringing the Gospel message to bear in their neighborhoods and cities. The wives of deacons, called and gifted, have much to offer the Church from whom they are as persons and what they know and do in secular life.

Pope John Paul II, in honoring the gift of women to the Church, writes:

"The Church gives thanks for all the manifestations of the feminine "genius" which have appeared in the course of history, in the midst of all peoples and nations, she gives thanks for all the charisms which the Holy Spirit distributes to women in the history of the People of God, for all the victories which she owes to their faith, hope, and charity: she gives thanks for all the fruits of feminine holiness."  

A woman who supports her husband's ordination as deacon does so with the same freedom and consent that she gave to becoming a couple on their wedding day. This is so important to the discernment of her husband's vocation to the diaconate that, if this free consent is not present, her husband will not be ordained.

With regard to the diaconate, the first and most important way that a wife of a married deacon aspirant and pre-candidate is asked to collaborate is in assisting her husband in discerning his vocation. A spouse, because of the intimate life which she shares with her husband, has a unique insight to his gifts and has a sense of what God is asking, not only of him, but of them.

The wife of a permanent deacon aspirant and pre-candidate must understand that although she is not the one to be ordained, she will also enter into a new and permanent relationship with the Church through her husband's vocation. A wife must be free to seek God's will, not just for her husband, but also for their marriage and family. She properly questions her husband's vocation if, in all sincerity, she does not see in their marriage vocation his call to the diaconate.

Wives of deacon aspirants and pre-candidates are expected to participate only in those aspects of the program that are essential for them to understand the vocation of a permanent deacon, the role of a deacon's wife, and the discernment necessary to complete this process. However, they are encouraged to participate in the entire formation process if they so choose. Personally gaining from the formation program, they learn more about themselves, develop effective tools for strengthening their marriages, deepen their understanding of the Church and its mission, and grow in their life and union with God through Jesus in the gift of the Holy Spirit. Events to which wives are expected to be present will be clearly identified beforehand.

---

Permanent Deacons are essential to the identity and mission of the Church. Pope John Paul II called them "Brothers in the Service of the Lord" and addresses their wives as "Collaborators" in the ministry of their husbands. Through their identity and mission they remind all of the baptized of the service Jesus renders the Church and of the service the Church is to render the world!

26 Refer to footnote #1
Chapter II
The Aspirant and Pre-Candidate

A. Requirements for Acceptance of an Aspirant

Permanent deacons are present and serve in the vast majority of Latin Rite dioceses of the Church in the United States and in very many of the parishes here in the Diocese of Yakima. The first ordination of a permanent deacon in the Diocese of Yakima took place on June 28, 1980, and was celebrated by the then bishop of Yakima, William Skylstad. At this writing in 2008, there are 21 permanent deacons actively serving the Catholic community in the Diocese of Yakima.

Today most men are inspired to consider a vocation to the diaconate because they see deacons who assist at the liturgy and participate in parish ministry in a multitude of effective and creative ways.

Becoming a deacon is different from the decision to join a social club, learn a hobby, or participate in a political party. It involves identifying one’s spiritual gifts and discerning with the Church how to place these gifts at the service of the community. Every baptized person is gifted with the Holy Spirit and called to use these gifts within the Church and society. A man seriously interested in becoming a permanent deacon (and his wife, if he is married) may request that the bishop accept him as an aspirant to the permanent diaconate.

This following biblical text clearly presents the qualities and characteristics that today’s permanent deacons are to have.

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

In the Diocese of Yakima, if a man is to be accepted as an aspirant, he must:

1. Be a practicing Roman Catholic.
2. Provide documentation for reception of all the sacraments available to him.
3. Be of sound moral character.
4. If married, provide a letter of (enthusiastic) support from spouse. The support of children may also be important.
5. Have the support of a sponsoring pastor or institution that would welcome his ministry.
6. Be at least 32 years of age at the time of entrance into the Deacon Formation Program (minimum age for ordination is 35). [Applicants may be no older than 65 at the time of their projected ordination date without a written exemption by the bishop.]
7. Demonstrate prayerfulness and openness to formation.
8. Have at least a high school diploma (or its equivalent).
9. Be of sound physical and mental health.
10. Be attuned to the ministry and mission of the Church today.
11. Have demonstrated active service, apostolic involvement, and leadership among the People of God.
12. Have demonstrated financial stability with the long range material and financial care of the family being managed.
13. Have completed the diocesan program for lay formation (or have completed comparable course-work through other means).
14. Have a good grasp of English or Spanish. The presentations of the Deacon Formation Program (DFP) will be in both languages. Wives of husbands who are applying need not be fluent in both English and Spanish, but this would certainly be helpful.
15. Be willing and able to represent the Church with intelligence, dignity, and unselfish service.
16. Show proof of being a U.S. citizen or have legal resident status.
17. Meet for an in-depth interview with the director of the Deacon Formation Program.
18. Sign a release form authorizing a police background check.
19. Meet with the bishop of the diocese. If married, this meeting includes the spouse of the aspirant.
20. Complete a Deacon Perceiver Survey.
21. Complete the application for pre-candidacy.
22. Obtain five reference letters from friends, co-workers, and clergy, especially from the sponsoring parish. Copy Release Forms on Pp. 29-30 and give to those from whom references will be requested.
23. Take and pass the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) for psychological fitness.

B. The Aspirancy Year

The Aspirancy class of the Deacon Formation Program meets monthly over a one-year period to study aspects of diaconal theology, ministry and spirituality to give participants the information needed to discern whether they want to apply for acceptance into the Deacon Formation Program as a pre-candidate.

C. Acceptance as a Pre-Candidate to the Deacon Formation Program

The Deacon Formation Committee (DFC) consists of the bishop, a priest, the Deacon Formation Director, deacons of the diocese and their wives. This committee receives all applications. After applications have been reviewed, the DFC makes a recommendation to the Bishop regarding the acceptance or non-acceptance of an aspirant as a pre-candidate. Each applicant will be contacted by the program director regarding his status. Those invited into the program are accepted on a phase-by-phase basis. This means that after each phase (year) of the program an assessment of the applicant will be conducted by the DFC who will recommend to the bishop which pre-candidates ought to be invited to continue in the formation process.
Chapter III
The Deacon Formation Program

A. Characteristics of the Deacon Formation Program

Aspirants accepted into the Deacon Formation Program are referred to as “pre-candidates” for the first two years of the program. In the third year they become candidates for ordination to the Permanent Diaconate. The Deacon Formation Program integrates the vocational dimensions of life into the discernment of a call to the diaconate over a three-year time frame.

There are five basic dimensions of the Deacon Formation Program:

1. **Human Dimension:** Throughout the Deacon Formation Program attention is given to human development, maturity and those skills essential for effective collaboration with others: self-awareness, listening, accommodating, relating, helping, caring, and communicating. Most of all, attention will be given to the spousal and familial relationships of the pre-candidate.

2. **Spiritual Dimension:** The very words “spiritual dimension” clearly refer to the action of the Holy Spirit that is at the heart of any Christian formation. It is the Holy Spirit who transforms someone into a servant in the way that Jesus was a servant. Ordination conforms a person to Christ by establishing a profoundly new relationship between the deacon and Christ through his Church. Conforming one’s life to the life of Jesus the Servant is a daily task of spiritual discipline. Consequently, a spiritual dimension of prayer and surrender, of service and of simplicity, of docility to the Word and to the work of the Church will be fostered in every aspect of the formation program.

3. **Intellectual Dimension:** The intellectual dimension involves the study of diaconate ministry as this is understood in Scripture, Tradition, and contemporary theology and practice. It shapes the other dimensions of formation. At times it can seem to dominate the others, but it is meant to enhance and to serve the other dimensions. This aspect of diaconal formation assists greatly in the very process of discernment. Also, the society in which the deacon serves is increasingly reliant on education as a means of developing the skills for effective service. As always, in order to be able to preach God’s Word more effectively, it is important to study that Word with both head and heart.

4. **Pastoral Dimension:** Because the goal of diaconal formation is to embody the servant Jesus, to manifest His compassion and mercy, the pastoral dimension of such formation importantly underlies every aspect of the program: the deacon is meant to be an effective minister. Servant-leadership is a hallmark of the deacon. Since the deacon pre-candidate/candidate is already involved in active service in the Church, pastoral formation is meant to assist him in coming to recognition of the gifts he brings to such service and to enhance them so that they might become ever more fruitful in collaborative ministry and in pastoral service.
If possible, opportunities for supervised ministry in settings that in particular serve people who are poor, neglected, sick, and imprisoned will be offered.

5. **Vocational Dimension**: Integrated throughout the formation process are times for reflection and discernment of a person's call to the diaconate. Each pre-candidate will be asked to search out a spiritual director who will assist him in determining if God is calling him to the diaconate. Vocational discernment in the name of the Church is ultimately the responsibility of the bishop. The bishop, working with the pre-candidate and the DFC, submitted by the pre-candidate, his gifts and limitations, family life, comments by his pastor, and the various needs for diaconal ministry in his parish and in the diocese, and determines if the pre-candidate is called to the diaconate.

B. **The Three Phases of the Deacon Formation Program**

The Deacon Formation Program is divided into three phases, Minister of the Word, Minister of Charity, and Minister of the Altar. Following are the phases with the specific topics that will be covered during the education days.

**Phase I: Minister of the Word**  
Readings: (See Appendix D)

1. Introduction to the Deacon Formation Program: Theology of the Diaconate  
2. Retreat for Married Couples  
3. Minister of the Word (Canon Law)  
4. Divine Revelation/Old Testament  
5. Divine Revelation/New Testament  
6. Christology  
7. First Five Centuries – Review of the Fathers of the Church and the Great Councils that shaped Christianity  
8. Theology of Proclamation  
9. Art of Proclamation  
10. Homily Practice and Critique  
11. Homily Practice and Critique  
12. Day of Prayer

**Phase II: Minister of Charity**  
Readings: (See Appendix D)

1. Enneagram Workshop (A weekend of Self-awareness and Personal Growth)  
2. The Art of Human Relationships: Skills in listening, communication, conflict resolution, group dynamics.  
3. Introduction to Pastoral Care, Supervised Ministry: Group Reflection I  
4. Pastoral Care, Supervised Ministry: Group Reflection II  
5. Pastoral Care, Supervised Ministry: Group Reflection III  
6. Pastoral Care, Supervised Ministry: Group Reflection IV  
7. Pastoral Care, Supervised Ministry: Group Reflection V  
8. Catholic Social Teaching, Supervised Ministry: Group Reflection VI  
9. Day of Prayer  
10. Pastoral Care, Supervised Ministry: Group Reflection VII  
11. Pastoral Care, Supervised Ministry: Group Reflection VIII  
12. Pastoral Care, Supervised Ministry: Group Reflection IX
Phase III: Minister of the Altar  Readings: (See Appendix D)

1. Theology of Orders
2. Sacraments & Ritual
3. Sacraments of Christian Initiation & The Rite of Baptism for Infants
4. Baptismal Rite Practicum
5. Theology of Matrimony & The Rite of Marriage
6. Retreat with Deacon Community
7. Death of the Christian & The Rite of Christian Burial
8. Liturgy and Preaching Practicum
9. Liturgy and Preaching Practicum
10. Liturgy and Preaching Practicum
11. The Deacon in the Parish
12. Preparation Retreat for Ordination

C. The Time Commitment

Ordinarily, deacon pre-candidates/candidates will meet twice monthly. They will meet over one weekend for extended education, prayer, and formation. They will also meet monthly in small groups for integration of topics studied, preparation for upcoming study days, prayer, mutual support, and mentoring by a deacon couple.

D. Cost

Travel costs to the sessions, as well as most other costs like meals, books, materials and lodging, are borne by the pre-candidate/candidate, unless otherwise indicated by the Director of the Formation Program.

E. Pre-Candidate/Candidate Monthly Small Groups

Participants in the small groups gather every month with the assistance of the mentor couple who is present. A Mentor Couple is composed of a deacon and his wife who are, with their prior consent, appointed to this important service by the Director of the Formation Program. The time and date of the meetings are decided upon by the participants. These meetings occur by region and will normally be near where the participants live. The purposes of these gatherings are:

1. to pray with one another and offer each other mutual support and friendship;
2. to befriend a deacon couple who will serve as mentors throughout the formation process;
3. to prepare for upcoming formation days; and
4. to reflect on the most recent formation day for the purpose of clarification and understanding of the topic at hand.

F. Pre-Candidate/Candidate Education Days

Pre-candidates/Candidates and their spouses will meet throughout the year generally on the third Saturday of the month

The purposes of the Education Days are the following:
1. foster within pre-candidates/candidates and their wives a deacon spirituality rooted in service. Thus, supervised ministry followed by personal and group reflection to assist candidates in becoming effective caregivers will be aspects of the deacon formation education days.

2. broaden the pre-candidates/candidates' understanding of the diaconate with a sound theological investigation into the nature of the Church as Servant, a theology of orders, a study of the rites, rituals, and symbols of the liturgy, a theology of and practice in preaching, and specific training in all the rites and rituals which a deacon is expected to carry out.

3. prepare pre-candidates/candidates to preach and teach the Scriptures from a more focused study of individual texts in both the Old and New Testaments, of the lectionary, and of the complex relationship between the two testaments of Scripture.

4. draw on the spiritual gifts that the pre-candidates/candidates and their wives have already demonstrated in their personal lives and assist them in integrating these gifts within the life and ministry of the Church.

5. deepen the life of faith, hope, and love that participants enjoy in the Trinity through small group prayer and reflections, retreat days, and praying the Liturgy of the Hours.

G. The Diocese Evaluates the Pre-Candidate

Before the second and third phases of the three phase DFP there will be a visit to the pre-candidate and spouse, and the host parish by a member(s) of the DFC. Informal interviews will be conducted with the couple, parish clergy and leaders to determine the pre-candidate's current status in the program.

A report will be made to the DFC which will meet to determine which of all of the pre-candidates will be invited to continue into the next phase. Pre-candidates and wives continuing their own discernment use this time to also question the diocese and assess their status within the program to determine if they wish to continue.

Assisting the bishop in discerning a vocation to the permanent diaconate is the Deacon Formation Committee (DFC). The DFC reviews all applicants and consults with pastors and representatives from the applicant's parish. DFC members personally track specific applicants throughout the formation program so as to assist the bishop in vocational discernment. The DFC also reviews and critiques, with recommendations, the Deacon Formation Program itself. The diocese is taking a hard look at each pre-candidate to see if this person has:

1. a servant or deacon character;
2. demonstrated ministerial commitment and effectiveness;
3. a liturgical presence;
4. good understanding of Catholic teaching and Scripture;
5. a strong marriage and healthy family life;
6. skills in self-awareness, communication, and pastoral care;
7. a personal foundation for prayer and spiritual growth;
8. skills in public speaking and reading;
9. a commitment to continuing education and formation.
In identifying these nine basic skills and foundational aspects of diaconate life within the pre-candidate, the Bishop, with the aid of the DFC, will be able to discern the most important question regarding the pre-candidate: Is God calling him to the order of deacon?

H. The Pre-Candidate Evaluates the Diocese

The pre-candidate and his wife also take a "hard look" at the diocese by asking the following or similar questions:

Does this diocesan community, with its community of priests, deacons, wives of deacons, and bishop, embody the spirit of Gospel service to which we want to belong?

Is the life of the Trinity (an intimate communion of persons, distinctly unique and profoundly one) manifested in the way this particular community of the ordained respects and appreciates one another in the different roles of bishop, priest and deacon?

Can this community of the ordained welcome us with our particular gifts, challenges, life experiences, hopes, and cultural uniqueness?

Does this community of the ordained offer the type of commitment and support of one another that can empower us to be effective ministers to God's people?

Is this a community of the ordained that communicates honestly with one another, works out conflicts, and forgives one another with the tenderness and mercy of Jesus?

These are some of the essential questions that pre-candidates and spouses must continue to ask throughout the formation period so as to discern the all important question; "Is God calling me (my spouse) to a vocation as a permanent deacon in the Diocese of Yakima?"
Chapter IV

Formal Steps Before Ordination as a Permanent Deacon

A. The Ministries of Reader and Acolyte/ Acceptance as a Candidate

In the first phase, the pre-candidate writes to the bishop asking to be installed as lector. In the second phase, the pre-candidate writes to the bishop asking to be installed as Acolyte. During the third phase of the program, those pre-candidates who are invited to continue in the DFP will petition the bishop by letter to be formally accepted as candidates for the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Yakima.

To each petition the bishop will respond in kind with dates set, by mutual agreement of all concerned, for the Rites of Installation as Lector and Acolyte and the Rite of Candidacy. The site of these ceremonies is also determined by mutual agreement of all concerned.

Finally, candidates will petition the bishop to ordain them as Permanent Deacons for the Diocese of Yakima. He will respond in kind and ask them to sign an Oath of Fidelity and make a Declaration of Freedom.

The Oath of Fidelity affirms that the deacon will faithfully preach, teach, and serve in communion with the Roman Catholic Church. The Declaration of Freedom confirms that the candidate is asking to be ordained in complete freedom and without any reservation.

B. The Deacon Community

When the pre-candidate has taken part in the Rite of Candidacy, he, now officially a candidate (and spouse), will be invited to participate in all events of the diaconate community. Most important of these events is the annual retreat for deacon couples, usually in February or March.

C. Ministry Appointment

Prior to ordination the bishop will meet with the deacon candidate (and spouse) to finalize his ministry assignment upon ordination. "The principal criteria for the assignment are the pastoral needs of the diocesan Church and the personal qualifications of the deacon, as these have been discerned in his previous experience and the course of his formation. The assignment also acknowledges the deacon's family and occupational responsibilities." The bishop will then issue a formal letter of appointment.

D. Ministry Agreement

After receiving the letter of appointment from the bishop, the deacon candidate (and spouse) and pastor (for parish assignments) or supervisor (for institutional assignments) meet to enter into a formal ministry agreement.

37 National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States - USCCB, 2005
The agreement will outline the time and resource commitment of the deacon, his expected ministry duties, and the resources the parish or institution will provide the deacon, including compensation, if any.

The agreement will also address diocesan expectations that the deacon will participate in continuing education opportunities and that the parish or institution will support him in his continuing education and training. This support will cover, at minimum, attendance of the bishop/deacon day, deacon education day and deacon retreat held each year, any diocesan required training updates, and the availability of a $100 annual book allowance for personal continuing education and spiritual growth. If specific training is needed for ongoing ministry, the ministry agreement is to make clear to what extent the parish or institution will pay for obtaining the needed training.

The ministry agreement is to be signed by the pastor or institutional supervisor, the deacon candidate, and (if married) his wife, and the bishop or his designee. Three copies are to be signed, one for the diocesan file, one for the parish or institution file, and one for the deacon’s file. The ministry agreement is to be reviewed each year near the anniversary of its signing by the pastor or supervisor and the deacon and spouse, if married. The agreement is to be amended if needed and resigned and dated. If significant changes are made in light of the current review, they will await concurrence by the bishop with his signature. This ministry agreement is required and is in addition to any employment agreement or other contractual agreement that might already be in place.

The Pastoral Center’s Chief of Staff (Moderator of the Curia) will collaborate with the Deacon Liaison to ensure that Ministry Agreements are current in parishes served by permanent deacons.

The text of the Ministry Agreement is found on pages 42 - 44 as Appendix F.

E. Ordination Retreat & Ordination
Prior to the diaconate ordination, the candidate (and spouse) will make a retreat, taking time away for a weekend of prayer and reflection to prepare for ordination. The ordination date will be set according to the bishop’s schedule and the schedule of each candidate (and spouse).
APPENDIX A

DIOCESE OF YAKIMA
PERMANENT DIACONATE

APPLICATION TO ENTER FORMATION PROGRAM

[Please do not remove this form from the document. Make a copy.]

In completing this application, we understand that:

1. This is the first step of the interview and evaluation process that screens, selects, and recommends candidates (and involves spouses) for the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program.
2. The interviews, evaluations, and group development process are an integral part of the Formation Program.
3. The personal growth, evaluation, and accountability process continues after ordination.
4. Acceptance into the Formation Program does not guarantee eventual ordination as a permanent deacon.
5. We may withdraw from the Program without prejudice any time before ordination as a permanent deacon.
6. Ordination as a permanent deacon entails a particular commitment to the diocese and the Bishop.
7. We offer our time and services as a gift to the Church. We take full responsibility for the financial and other resource needs of our family now and in the future in case of our incapacity, disability, or death.
8. We and our family cannot obligate the Diocese of Yakima or any of its agents in any way because of our involvement in the Permanent Diaconate.
9. The Ministry and Education Office, the Diaconate Community, and the Deacon Formation Committee are available to us for community, guidance, direction, and evaluation.

A. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION:

1. Name __________________________ Age __________________________
2. Place of Birth __________________________ Birthdate __________________________
3. Address __________________________
4. Phone: (Work) __________________________ (Home) __________________________
5. Your ethnic group:  ____ Native American  ____ Asian  ____ European
   (check one)  ____ African  ____ Hispanic  ____ Other

B. FAMILY:

1. Marital Status:  ____ Never Married  ____ Married
   (check all that apply)  ____ Separated  ____ Widowed
   ____ Divorced  ____ Remarried

If married, is this a first marriage for you?  ____ Yes  ____ No
If you have been married more than one time, were your previous marriages canonically resolved?  ____ Yes  ____ No

If so, please provide us with a copy of the papers which show your freedom from previous marriage bonds. If former spouse is deceased, provide a copy of the death certificate.

If never married or if widowed or divorced, have you discerned a lifelong commitment to a celibate lifestyle?  ____ Yes  ____ No

Comment: ____________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

If married, in the event of your spouse’s death after ordination, you will be asked to live a celibate lifestyle. This is a discipline of the Church that will be required of you. What are your thoughts about this?

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

2. Age at marriage _______ Years married _______ Marriage Date ______________

3. Names and ages of children (mention the schools they attend or their marital status/occupation - include other dependents as well. Use a separate sheet if necessary).
   a. ________________________________________________________________
   b. ________________________________________________________________
   c. ________________________________________________________________
   d. ________________________________________________________________
   e. ________________________________________________________________
   f. ________________________________________________________________

4. Are you now or have you ever been a foster parent?  ____ Yes  ____ No

5. About how many hours a week do you spend away from your home either through work and/or volunteer commitments?

   __________________________________________________________________

6. How many hours per week can you see yourself giving to the work of a deacon?

   __________________________________________________________________

7. How do you (and your spouse) work (together) in your Church and other volunteer commitments?

   __________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________
8. Describe how you (and your spouse) work (together) within the home.


9. If married, what are aspects of your marriage that unite you and your spouse? Explain.


10. If married, what are aspects of your marriage that have been divisive? Explain.


C. CHRISTIAN LIFE:

1. Home Parish (where you attend and financially support)


2. Were you a candidate for the priesthood or in training for religious life?
   _____ Yes   _____ No

   Did you take vows?   _____ Yes   _____ No

   Were you ordained?   _____ Yes   _____ No

   (Attach a copy of the indult and/or dispensation.)

   If you answer "yes" explain why you left religious life and/or ordained ministry.


3. Have you become a Catholic from another faith tradition (denomination)?
   _____ Yes   _____ No
4. If yes, When? __________________ From what? __________________

5. What are your work responsibilities and how do you bring a Catholic Christian perspective there?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

6. List the activities that you are involved with in your parish, diocese, and other Catholic institutions?

a. __________________

b. __________________

c. __________________

d. __________________

e. __________________

f. __________________

7. What are some aspects of Catholic life that you find positive and like?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

8. What are some aspects of Catholic life that you find negative and don’t like?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

9. Check off any of the following leadership programs in which you have participated. Please give an approximate year and date.

Cursillo __________________
Parish Retreats ________________
Ignatian Retreat ________________
Substitute Magnificat ___________
Other ________________________

Marriage Encounter ____________
Charismatic Prayer _____________
Parish Leadership _____________

Any comments?

________________________________________________________________________
D. FINANCIAL AND LEGAL POSITION:

1. Indicate past and pending legal actions involving you or your family.

2. Under most circumstances a deacon does not receive a salary or stipend. In general terms describe how you will be able to manage the financial responsibilities for yourself and your family.

3. Do you provide for other financial contingencies such as retirement, disability/hospitalization insurance, etc.? Yes No

4. Have you ever been convicted of a gross misdemeanor or felony? Yes No
If so, please explain.

5. Will you agree to a Washington State Patrol background check? Yes No

6. Have you ever been accused and/or convicted of sexual abuse of children and minors? Yes No
If yes, please explain.

E. EDUCATION:

1. List all the schools attended (including vocational schools) with graduation or certificate dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
<th>Degree/Certificate/Diploma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Special training and education:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

3. Government and Church volunteer experience (e.g. Jesuit Volunteer Corp, Peace Corp)

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

4. Other fields of academic interest:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

5. Special achievements/awards:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

6. Foreign language skills:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Speak</th>
<th>Read</th>
<th>Write</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
<td>Yes / No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F. RECREATION AND HOBBIES:

1. What do you generally do during your leisure hours? Include sports and hobbies.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2. What organizations do you actively participate in?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

G. MEDICAL:

1. Describe your general health and list any medical problems (for serious physical, emotional, or psychiatric care, list doctor and dates). If there are any other concerns about your health or well-being that you believe should be mentioned, please mention them at this time.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Brothers in the Service of the Lord

25

11-04-08
2. When did you have your last physical examination? ______________________

3. Do you have any past history of substance abuse (drugs or alcohol)? ___ Yes ___ No
   If so, please explain, particularly treatment programs and your sobriety.
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

H. OCCUPATIONAL:

1. Please list your last four employments beginning with your present:
   Dates (from-to) Employer Job Title
   a. ______________________ ______________________ ______________________
   b. ______________________ ______________________ ______________________
   c. ______________________ ______________________ ______________________
   d. ______________________ ______________________ ______________________

2. Does your job require extensive travel? ___ Yes ___ No

3. Are you likely to be transferred out of the Diocese? ___ Yes ___ No

I. TIME DEMANDS:

1. Diaconate formation will demand meeting in small groups, study days, interviews, ministry training, and travel. You may need to withdraw from present ministry and other volunteer commitments to make time for diaconate preparation. Please comment:
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________
   ____________________________________________________________________________

J. REFERENCES:

1. List below the names of the five persons you have asked to be personal references. None of the five are to be family members (by blood or marriage) or former employers. At least two of the five are to have worked with you in a Church or civic volunteer activity. (Provide each one with a reference form found on pp. 29 and 30 and an addressed, stamped envelope.)

   Name ______________________ Phone ______________________
   Name ______________________ Phone ______________________
   Name ______________________ Phone ______________________

Brothers In the Service of the Lord 26

11-04-08
2. Give the names of your current parish pastor, a former pastor, another priest or deacon who know you and your family and who have had significant influence on your faith. Provide a reference form and an addressed, stamped envelope to each. See pp 29 and 30.

Name ___________________________ Phone ________

Name ___________________________ Phone ________

Name ___________________________ Phone ________

3. Give the name of your employer and/or immediate supervisor and a former employer/supervisor. Provide a reference form and an addressed, stamped envelope for your employer.

Employer/Supervisor ___________________________ Phone ________

Employer/Supervisor ___________________________ Phone ________

K. OTHER PERTINENT INFORMATION:

Add any information or comments you feel might be important for the Ministry Formation Committee in assessing your application to the Permanent Diaconate of the Diocese of Yakima.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

L. COMMITMENT STATEMENT:

1. To aspire to diaconate requires in some way an obligation to be a public minister. This will be a “gift” to your family as well as an occasion for difficulty and stress. Describe both the gift and difficulty you foresee in serving in public ministry as a deacon.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
2. Why is it important for you to prepare for diaconate ministry at this time?

   
   
   

M. COMMITMENT AWARENESS AND APPLICATION SIGNATURE

I (we) have read and understood the statements (listed on page 20 of this application), involved in commitments made to the Deacon Formation Program. All statements and personal information in this application are true and correct to the best of my (our) ability.

Signature (Applicant)

Date

Signature (Spouse)

Mail this completed application form to the Deacon Formation Program Director.
LETTER OF REFERENCE
DEACON FORMATION PROGRAM
DIOCESE OF YAKIMA

[Please do not remove this form from the document. Make a copy.]

(Please print or type the following information)

Name of Applicant: ____________________________

Name of Reference: __________________________

Relationship of Reference to Applicant: _________

How long has reference known applicant? ________

STATEMENT OF RELEASE

I waive my right to any information provided by the reference named above. I agree that this information will be held in strictest confidence by the Deacon Formation Program.

Signature of Applicant: ________________________

To the Reference:

Thank you for taking the time to serve as a reference for the Applicant who is applying for the Deacon Formation Program of the Diocese of Yakima. This program lasts for three years and consists of three components: academic preparation (on one weekend per month); supervision in a pastoral or service related setting; counseling for spiritual development and participation in retreats and workshops.

As a deacon, the Applicant will serve in a parish or faith community of the Diocese of Yakima as a public minister of the church. Applicants should demonstrate the following:

- They should be knowledgeable about current Roman Catholic teachings and practices.

- They should express their spirituality as an integral part of themselves and nurture their relationship with God through regular prayer.

- They should speak and act in ways congruent with the Church’s faith, beliefs, moral and social teachings.
• They should respect all individuals and demonstrate sensitivity to the rich ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of parishioners; they should celebrate and integrate the individual uniqueness of all persons.

• They should maintain respect for the dignity, worth and potential for growth of individuals and communities and for alternative points of view.

• They should take responsibility for themselves, make decisions, and deal with the consequences.

• They should set goals, articulate personal values, and make decisions in light of personal values and without undue influence from others. At the same time, they should be able to follow goals set by those responsible for the common good and act according to established procedures.

• They should identify their personal strengths and weaknesses, remain open to feedback from others and be able to change behaviors, attitudes, and needs.

Your reference is an important part of the admissions process. The Admissions Committee is especially interested in any specific information you have about the following areas:

• How would you assess the character of the applicant?

• What strengths does the Applicant have for serving as a deacon? How has the Applicant already demonstrated these strengths?

• How would you assess the marriage and family life of the Applicant?

• What competencies or qualities will the Applicant need to develop in order to serve as a deacon?

• Do you have any reservations about the Applicant's ability to complete this formation program successfully or to serve as a deacon?

PLEASE ATTACH THIS RELEASE FORM TO YOUR LETTER OF REFERENCE AND MAIL TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:

Deacon Formation Program
Robert Schrom, Director
7240 Rd 17 SW
Royal City, WA 99357
APPENDIX B

DIOCESE OF YAKIMA
PERMANENT DIACONATE
SPouse INFORMATION

[Please do not remove this form from the document. Make a copy.]

A. IDENTIFYING INFORMATION:

1. Name__________________________ Age________________________

2. Place of Birth________________________ Birthdate________________________

3. Primary Responsibilities
   a. Family Life and Care of Children _____________________________
   b. Work Outside of the Home __________________ Occupation ________________

4. Ethnic Group (circle one) Asian____ European____ African____
   Native American____ Hispanic____ Other____

B. FAMILY:

Married men serving in diaconate ministry invariably involve their spouses in their ministry. “Deacon Couples” which experience the most unity in this ministry are those whose wives have fully participated in the Deacon Formation Program. You are encouraged but not obligated to attend all education and training days and read all related material (unless otherwise stated.)

1. Have you received all of the following sacraments (if not, circle the ones you have not received)? Yes No
   Baptism   Penance   First Communion   Confirmation   Marriage

2. Have you been divorced in the past? Yes No

3. If so, are you canonically married in the Church today? Yes No

   If so, please return with this form documentation of present marriage or annulment of previous marriage.

4. Describe a "good deacon."

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
5. Would your husband make a good deacon? Why? What are the gifts that your husband would bring to the ministry of a deacon?


6. Do you foresee any difficulties in your marriage or family life with you and your husband preparing for the diaconate and later serving as a “deacon couple”? Yes No
If Yes, please explain:


7. Do you support your husband’s application to the Deacon Formation Program? Why or why not?


8. The wives of the deacon candidates are expected to participate in the Deacon Formation Program along with their spouses. What are your thoughts about this? Would it be a burden for you?


9. What are some of the aspects of the Catholic Church that you enjoy and are proud of?


10. What are some aspects of the Catholic Church with which you have difficulty?


Please complete the Letter of Reference sheet. If you are a married man, ask your spouse to write a letter of support and mail them both together with this form to the Deacon Formation Program Director.

Signature ___________________________ Date ___________________________

Brothers in the Service of the Lord 32
DEACON PRE-CANDIDATE FORMATION AGREEMENT

[Please do not remove this form from the document. Make a copy.]

I(We) have studied the above document and understand fully its implications. The Diaconate is not a prerogative of any one individual or couple. It is a vocation given by God and discerned by the Church, a discernment that actively involves the bishop and the Deacon Formation Committee, the pastor and the discerning individual or couple.

I(We) commit myself to participate in the program on a year-to-year basis, reserving the right to withdraw at the end of each year or at any time when, in my personal discernment, I determine that I am not called to the diaconate. It is my desire to seek God's will for my life in regard to the ordained ministry and to seek the good of the Church. I fully understand that my participation in this deacon formation program does not constitute, either on my part or on the part of the diocese, a commitment to my ordination to the diaconate. In entering this program, I agree to join the diocese in pressing the question more directly, "Lord, are you calling me to serve you as a Deacon?"

I(We) also understand that the diocese will discern the question of my having a vocation to the diaconate at the end of each program year. I may or may not be invited to continue in my formation and discernment depending on these yearly evaluation and discernment procedures.

The criteria for discerning a vocation to the diaconate is clear to me (us). It is rooted in a person's natural gifts, this being the diaconal character as outlined on pages 6-10 of this document. Application requirements, as outlined on pages 11 and 12, is essential to the discernment of a diaconate vocation. Of particular importance are the general skills which are necessary for a deacon to function: pastoral care and listening; proclaiming the Word of God; serving at the altar; and explaining the Church's teachings in homilies and other catechetical settings.

Having met these criteria is not enough. I (we) understand that the most critical of the criteria listed is the one regarding call. Is God calling me to be a deacon? To determine this, there must be a consensus among the discerning individual or couple and the DFC which includes the bishop. Ultimately, the vocation or call of a candidate by God to ordained ministry becomes clear when it is confirmed by the bishop of the diocese.

The Deacon Formation Program will deepen my understanding of the diaconate as an embodiment of the Servant Christ through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. It will relate this identity to the functions of a deacon within the ministries of Charity, Word, and Altar.

The Deacon Formation Program will slowly introduce me to the diaconate community and the clergy community at large, thereby giving me a chance to question, "Am I called to join these people in a covenant of ministry that is permanent, public, and oriented to service?"
The Deacon Formation Program also gives the clergy of the diocese a chance to meet me and address the same question from their perspective: "Is this brother a good candidate to join us in a vocation of ministry to God's people?"

Having reviewed this program and carefully considered its implications for my life, I (we) agree to participate wholeheartedly and to the best of my (our) ability, and to trust God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in its outcome.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Spouse's Signature

Date

Director of Deacon Formation

Date

Bishop's Signature

Date
READINGS
for the DEACON PRE-CANDIDATE/CANDIDATE FORMATION PROGRAM

Phase I: Minister of the Word

- *Dei Verbum*, *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*, Document of Vatican II.

- *Fulfilled In Your Hearing*, *The Homily in the Sunday Assembly*, Bishops' Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry, 1982 USCC, NCCB


Phase II: Minister of Charity


- *Service Ministry of the Deacon*, Bishop's Committee on the Permanent Diaconate, 1988 USCC


Phase III: Minister of the Altar

- *Introduction to the Sacramentary* and *General Introduction to the Roman Missal* (GIRM), 2003


- Various readings from the *Catechism of the Church*, An Image Book, 1994, Doubleday, New York

- *Lumen Gentium*, *Dogmatic Constitution of the Church*, Document of Vatican II

- *Humane Vitae*, Encyclical by Pope Paul VI, 1968
Diocese of Yakima

Permanent Diaconate Guidelines and Norms

(February, 2001)
(Revised February, 2009)

Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Identity of the Permanent Deacon</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Ministry of the Permanent Deacon</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Guidelines for Relationships in the Deacon's Ministry</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Life of the Diaconate Community</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: Since the preparation of this document, the “diaconate community council” referred to in Section IV A & B has become part of the Deacon Formation Committee.

The Deacon Formation Committee currently consists of three deacon couples and the priest spiritual director of the diaconate community.

There is no diocesan “Office of the Permanent Diaconate” and thus, no director. Functions of the “Director of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate” are carried out by the “Bishop’s Deacon Liaison”.

Brothers in the Service of the Lord 36 cf 2-23-09
I. Identity of the Permanent Deacon
The identity and ministry of the permanent deacon is rooted in relationships. First is his relationship with Christ, Son of God and servant of his people, out of which all other relationships grow. It is to Christ that the deacon is most deeply configured, along with all the faithful, through the Sacrament of Baptism, and then he is further and uniquely configured to Christ through the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

Second, if married, a permanent deacon's family life as he and his wife live out the Sacrament of Matrimony is a fundamental expression of their relationship with Christ. When the deacon and his wife exchanged consent in the Sacrament of Matrimony, their life together, with its mutual responsibilities, assumed precedence over all subsequent commitments, including diaconal service. The preservation and enhancement of the marriage and family life of the married deacon and his wife is of utmost importance to all concerned with the permanent diaconate.

Third, and closely related to the second, are the relationships that flow from the permanent deacon's activity in his workplace and his responsibilities as a citizen. Time and commitment to diaconal service need to be balanced with these realities. Care to provide for self and family as well as concern for the well-being of the whole human family are basic duties for all.

II. Ministry of the Permanent Deacon

Diaconal service comes about within the context of the above. At the heart of a permanent deacon's vocation is his relationship to the Bishop and the Church as servant by reason of the Sacrament of Orders. He is especially the servant of those whom the Church might otherwise neglect, e.g. the poor and the marginalized.

A. The deacon's ministry is called forth when he is ordained and given a mission by his Bishop.

B. The permanent deacon who has been ordained or incardinated in the Diocese of Yakima and has been assigned to a parish by the Bishop of Yakima, is a minister of the Church; his office and ministry are governed by canon law, liturgical norms, and current guidelines of the Diocese. The power to proclaim the Gospel, to preach at Mass and other liturgical rites, to baptize, and to administer sacramentals derive from ordination. The faculties to witness marriages and conduct funerals are normally delegated in writing by the Bishop. The deacon's exercise of these faculties is governed by his pastoral assignment.

C. The deacon usually ministers in a parish with the direction and support of the pastor.

D. Shared ministry requires having a collaborative relationship between a deacon and the pastor of the parish in which he serves. In the words of the Congregation for the Clergy "... it is a duty of deacons to respect the office of parish priest and to work in communion with all who share in his
pastoral care, they also have the right to be accepted and fully recognized by all.” (Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons no. 41)

E. The strength of a deacon’s service in a parish is rooted in his knowledge of the people of the parish and the broader community to which it is related. Integral to the deacon’s ministry is his bringing the needs of the people to the parish community for prayer and assistance and also bringing the concern of the parish to those in the broader community.

F. The deacon’s liturgical ministry is an important component of his call to serve. Through it, by the grace proper to his vocation, he makes visible Christ’s paschal mystery.

G. The deacon should be seen as a minister who is collaborative, compassionate, accountable, approachable, and flexible.

III. Guidelines for Relationships in the Deacon’s Ministry

A deacon’s assignment or change of status shall be done by letter from the bishop. His initial assignment after ordination will normally be to the parish (agency) which sponsored his candidacy and formation. This assignment will remain in effect until formally superseded by reassignment or a change in the status of the deacon, such as retirement or leave of absence. A copy of the letter of assignment will be sent to the pastor of the parish to which the deacon is assigned. Enclosed with the letter of assignment will be a blank copy of the Deacon Ministry Agreement document (see attached). The document should be completed and returned to the Bishop for his approval within two months of the date of the letter of assignment. The Ministry Agreement will describe the details of the service to be performed by the deacon as mutually agreed upon by the pastor, deacon, and his spouse.

A. The Ministry Agreement will describe what the parish or agency expects of the permanent deacon and the support it will provide to enable the deacon to function effectively in his ministry. The agreement will be signed by the pastor, the deacon and his spouse, and the bishop. Copies of the agreement will be provided to all those parties and to the bishop’s deacon liaison. The initiative for developing the Ministry Agreement is with the deacon and his pastor (or agency head).

B. When a new pastor is assigned to a parish in which a permanent deacon is present, the existing Ministry Agreement should be discussed by the pastor, deacon and his spouse. If necessary, the agreement should be modified in consultation with the bishop. Copies of any new Ministry Agreement should be made available according to the explanation already given.

C. Reassignment of a permanent deacon may be initiated by the bishop, the deacon, or the pastor or agency head involved. Reassignment will be decided upon through consultation with all the involved parties including the deacon’s wife. It will be formalized in writing by the bishop with due attention given to the issue of a new Ministry Agreement and with due regard to Canons 1748-1752 which describe the transfer of pastors.

D. A permanent deacon incardinated elsewhere who moves into and establishes residence within the Diocese of Yakima should contact the bishop if he wants to be active in ministry. References from the bishop of the diocese of last assignment and other background checks, according to
diocesan policy, will be required. The bishop, the deacon and spouse, and pastor or agency head will discuss the details of his possible ministry.

E. The removal of a permanent deacon from active ministry, if such action is judged necessary by the bishop after appropriate consultation with others, will be done with due regard to Canons 1740-1747, which describe the procedure for the removal and transfer of pastors. If laicization is sought, it will be approached in accordance with the instructions of the Sacred Congregation for Sacraments and with due regard to Canons 290-293, which describe the loss of the clerical state.

F. At least once every 12 months (perhaps most helpfully during October or November) a review of the ministry of the permanent deacon will be conducted through a meeting of the pastor (or agency head), the deacon, and the deacon’s spouse (if married). The purpose of the review is to discuss jointly all the provisions of the Deacon Ministry Agreement together with other questions, situations, or issues that are of concern to any of the parties. If there is a need for special assistance with this review the parties can inform the bishop separately and request his help. Related to the review, specific actions to be taken by the deacon and spouse and by the pastor or agency head will be incorporated into a revised Agreement and will form a part of the basis for the next review. The fact that a review has occurred will be reported in a letter by the deacon to the Office of the Bishop.

G. Wallet-size photo identification cards will be issued upon request to permanent deacons who have been granted faculties in the diocese. These will include the address and phone number of the diocese and should be stamped with the diocesan seal.

H. No distinctive non-liturgical form of dress (for example, a clerical shirt and collar) signifying that the deacon is a cleric in the Roman Catholic Church is encouraged or authorized except in extraordinary circumstances where distinctly clerical garb enhances the ministry of the deacon or is otherwise important. Such cases should have the approval of the bishop.

I. Reasonable expenses associated with the ministry of a permanent deacon will be borne by the parish or agency:

1. vestments for the use of the deacons, (minimally alb and stole(s) related to the various liturgical seasons; these remain the property of the parish.

2. annual retreat for deacons and wives:

3. mileage at the standard diocesan rate for the use of his personal automobile that is above normal and in direct support of the ministry of the deacon, including required travel to diocesan events.

4. cost of special training as well as fees related to the deacon’s ministry (help may be sought from the bishop if there is a need for financial assistance).

5. an annual book allowance of up to $100.

J. A permanent deacon who plans to transfer out of the diocese should notify the bishop, who can establish a contact for the deacon in his new diocese so that their requirements for getting established in ministry can be determined.
K. A leave of absence (i.e., permission to be relieved of ministerial responsibilities for a determined period) may be granted by the bishop. A written request must be submitted by the permanent deacon to the bishop after consultation with his pastor. A copy of the request is to be provided to his pastor. Leaves of absence may be granted for reasons of health, personal problems, family needs, temporary changes in occupation or transfer from the diocese. A leave of absence does not necessarily entail a suspension of faculties nor does the act of requesting a leave of absence have a negative impact on future assignments. However, the situation that led to the request may influence subsequent decisions regarding the ministry of the deacon. Each situation will be judged on its own merits, considering both the good of the Church and the good of the deacon and his family. A leave of absence will normally be for a specific period of time. Leaves of absence exceeding one year will be reviewed annually by the deacon with the bishop.

L. A deacon wishing to step down or retire from active ministry must meet with the bishop and his pastor to make arrangements for doing so. Faculties will normally continue in a retirement ministry agreement approved by the bishop so long as the deacon resides in the Yakima Diocese. Faculties expire if the deacon leaves the diocese with the intention of not returning within one year.

M. An inactive deacon is defined as one who has not functioned in his diaconal ministry for at least six months and has not requested a leave of absence or come to an agreement with his pastor regarding his inactivity. This is a canonically irregular situation, and when it becomes known the bishop and the bishop’s deacon liaison will be notified. The bishop will order an investigation and consultation with two active deacons. This action may include, but not be limited to, granting of leave of absence, transfer to another assignment, or suspension of faculties (Canon 1333 §1, n. 1,2,3 and §4.). Each situation will be judged on its own merits and the actions taken will be based on what is good for the Church and the deacon and his family.

N. From time-to-time permanent deacons or their wives may encounter difficulties in ministry, personal or family life and wish to receive counseling to help resolve these problems. The personnel resources of the diocese are available to deacons and their wives to assist in such situations. Should assistance be sought, the deacon or wife may contact the bishop who will direct him or her to a qualified advocate within the diocese who is capable of assisting with the particular problem. Each case will be judged by the advocate according to the needs of the individual, the potential duration of the problem, and the likelihood of its successful resolution. The advocate will be named by the bishop.

IV. Life of the Diaconate Community

Deacons and their wives form a diaconate community which enhances the diaconal presence and ministry in the diocese.

A. The diocese encourages the formation of a diaconate community council. Its members are the bishop’s deacon liaison, a priest, and at least five other members from the diaconate community who are selected to represent the various regions of the diocese. The membership of the
council is to be balanced so that the interests of both deacons and wives are fairly served. Terms will be staggered for continuity.

B. The role of the diaconate community council is to support and foster the spiritual, ministerial and social life of the deacons and their spouses. Through the bishop’s deacon liaison the council will work with the bishop, the pastoral center staff, and the presbyterate to establish guidelines and norms for the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Yakima. The council will plan the bishop/diaconate community day and the annual retreat. It will also encourage and support those preparing for ordination in the deacon formation program.

C. The spiritual director of the diaconate community, chosen in consultation with the bishop, supports its efforts toward spiritual renewal both by advising the community with regard to the preparation of its annual retreat and also in regard to identifying potential individual spiritual directors.

D. Deacons and their wives are encouraged to participate in regular social gatherings to strengthen and affirm one another in their love and service to the Church.

E. The diaconate community will participate in the formation of deacons through mentoring couples who will be companions and friends in discernment for the aspirant couples. Deacon candidates who are in their final period of formation will be invited together with their wives to diaconate community functions.

F. Deacons, along with their wives, are encouraged to participate as a community in major liturgical celebrations as well as in other major events. The bishop will join the entrance procession, except in the case of a deacon marriage where the bishop is married with their husbands. Reserved seating will be provided for the wives and families of the deacons both at those celebrations and other major diocesan events.

G. The permanent deacon is a lifelong learner. As such he has the right and obligation to devote time to continuing education: spiritual, pastoral, and academic. The diocese will provide general theological as well as in specific ministerial competence. When a guest speaker is in the area for a gathering such as the annual presbyterate convocation or continuing education for priests, arrangements will be made for the same speaker to also address the diaconate community, if appropriate.

H. Permanent deacons are expected to participate in continuing formation. The minimum expectation is that deacons will participate in the bishop-diaconate community meeting each fall, the meeting of the presbyterate, and the annual weekend retreat. If the deacon is habitually absent from most of these events he should explain to the bishop why he has been unable to attend.

I. Widows of deacons remain an integral part of the diaconate community and are invited to participate in all deacon gatherings.

####
PERMANENT DEACON MINISTRY AGREEMENT
(Copy pp. 42-44 for independent use)

[Please do not remove this form from the document. Make a copy.]

Deacon ___________________________ Date ________________
(Please Print)

Parish/Agency ___________________________
(Please Print)

Deacon Commitment:

- Ministry of Service

  Describe the specific ministries, including the level of responsibility for each, the expected hours per week or month, the connection with other ministries in the parish, as well as, to whom and how often reports regarding ministry will be made.

- Ministry of the Word

  Describe the frequency and conditions of proclaiming the gospel and preaching at Sunday Liturgy, role in catechesis, other occasions of proclaiming the word as at paraliturgies, retreats, etc.

- Ministry of the Liturgy

  Describe expectations regarding ministry at Mass, including frequency and role; baptisms, marriages, funerals, communion services and devotions.

Parish or Agency Commitment

General support that the deacon may expect including the following: opportunities to exercise his ministry of service, word and liturgy and to continue to grow as a minister; annual financial support for continuing education, annual retreat, book allowance; and conditions and basis for expense reimbursement, e.g. travel.

Commitment to an Annual Review

At least once every 12 months, most helpfully in Oct.-Nov. a review of the ministry of the deacon will be conducted in a meeting of the deacon and his spouse with the pastor (or agency head)

Term of the Agreement - Normally 3 years (reviewed annually)

Signatures - Pastor/agency head, deacon, spouse, bishop

Distribution - Signatories plus bishop's deacon liaison
PERMANENT DEACON MINISTRY AGREEMENT

DEACON ___________________________ (Please Print)

PARISH or ENTITY ___________________________ (Please Print)

DEACON COMMITMENT: Describe future commitment to activities, programs and other realities (in hours per week or month) to the following:

Ministry of Service, Charity, and Justice - (list primary activity first, then other activities)

Ministry of the Word - (include weekday/weekend preaching schedule expectation)

Ministry of Liturgy - (include assisting at Mass, baptisms, weddings, funerals, and public prayer expectations)
PARISH or ENTITY COMMITMENT: Describe resources made available to deacon including access to buildings, personnel, supplies, and program budgets. List availability, if any, of money for training, compensation, mileage or other cost reimbursement of the deacon. If applicable, please specify procedures for documenting information from sacramental liturgies as required by the diocese. Describe how regular pastor/supervisor consultation with deacon will take place.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THIS MINISTERIAL AGREEMENT ADDRESS EXPECTATIONS OF BOTH THE PARISH/ENTITY AND THE DEACON. The Pastor/Supervisor and the Deacon (and spouse, if married) will meet in November of each year to review this Deacon Ministry Agreement. Any changes will be made in writing and signed by all parties as an Addendum to this agreement.

The term of this Agreement is from ______, 20____ through ______, 20____.

Deacon (Signature)  Spouse (Signature)

Pastor (Signature)  Bishop Carlos A. Sevilla, S.J.

Date

Brothers in the Service of the Lord 44  cf

2-23-09