

Office for Diaconate Formation
Archdiocese of Milwaukee
Archbishop Cousins Catholic Center



The Servant

From Deacon John's Desk

Dear Friends of the Diaconate,

As I write my remarks here for this edition of *The Servant*, the ordination of the seven deacon-candidates featured inside has come and gone. It was a gloriously beautiful day, with Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKI presided along with Auxiliary Bishop Richard J. Sklba, a longtime faithful supporter of the diaconate, concelebrating. The celebration was enhanced by the amazing music ministry of the Archdiocesan Choir, a myriad of liturgical ministers, the presence of the Knights of Columbus and a packed cathedral of family, friends, priests, deacons and well-wishers.

No longer candidates, these "lucky seven" deacons as the Archbishop nick-named them, are the product of four long, intense and comprehensive years of theological, pastoral, spiritual and human formation. Called to ordination by Holy Mother Church, these men begin their ministry to the People of God as living witnesses to what the Eucharist is to look like when the Body of Christ is fully embraced and taken out into the world and lived (witnessed) with fidelity to Christ. They are the living sign and the symbol of the dismissal the deacon proclaims at the conclusion of each Mass — "Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord!"

Unique to this ordination, the new deacons courageously and with deep humility wore the clerical collar signifying publically in a new way their presence among us as those called to serve and to be a visible witness to the presence of the Church and of Christ the Servant when active in ministry. Ordination calls all deacons to be public witnesses to the presence of Christ and his Church when engaged in active ministry and not to hide invisibly behind "civilian" clothing. One would neither expect to walk into a hospital, firehouse or a police station and not be able to recognize the doctor or public-servant when in need nor should a child of God be prevented from recognizing Christ the Servant "who came not to be served but to serve" in the deacon!

Please join me in praying for these new "lucky seven" deacons.

Yours in Christ the Servant,
Deacon John A. Ebel,
Director



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John Paul II recalled "Deacons, both married and celibate, to serve God's People by their witness to the gospel value of sacrificial love, a quality of life too easily dismissed in today's society." For those whom the Lord calls and whose lives' give such a witness, the ODF is the place to continue your journey.

(NDPD, 30)

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Our Class of 2014 / Nuestra Clase del 2014

At the end of the formation path to become deacons, we asked our candidates to answer three questions for our Newsletter. The questions were:

1. How has your experience been in the program?
2. What does deacon mean to you?
3. Why do you want to be ordained as a deacon?

In a short paragraph, these are their answers.



“My experience in the program has been a time of formation leading to transformation. It’s astounding to discover how much the Holy Spirit will guide and nurture us if we only open our hearts and listen. Deacon means to be a quiet, humble, obedient servant of God, to empty ourselves so we can become that icon of Christ, to be filled with His joy and love. I want to be ordained as a deacon because that is what God is calling me to do. I must be loyal and obedient to my Father. It’s an act of love.”

Robert S. Derks

“My experience in Diaconate Formation has been a positive one. The formation gave me an opportunity to discern whether the call to the diaconate was what the Lord wanted with my life. The deacon’s ministry is a tri-fold witness to the Liturgy, the Word, and Charity to others. The deacon is to be a presence in the community that reflects his love of God and his fellow man. I believe that the Lord has called me to be servant to those who are sick, hurting, and in need of Christ’s witness. I am to be the eyes, hands, and ears of Christ to those I minister to.”



John J. Fritsch



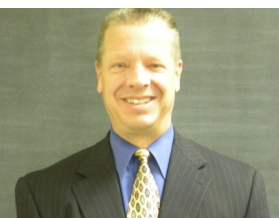
“The program has been very nurturing in walking with me on my faith journey. I have learned through self-reflection to better identify God’s presence in everyday life. Diaconal ministry is all about servant leadership; finding God through serving the poor, the elderly, the troubled, and the oppressed. God has given me many gifts in my life. I feel called now to use these gifts serving God’s Church in an ordained fashion.”

David W. Grambow

“The best way to describe my experience going through diaconal formation is transformational. When I was discerning applying for the diaconate I was reticent on the length of time that the formation would take, but now I see that the time was necessary to transform me into the man that would allow me to become the deacon God wants me to be. Deacon means service, service, service, whether it is in Charity, Word or Liturgy, my role is to serve the needs of God’s people, and to be open to wherever I am needed, even though it may be outside of my comfort zone. I feel I have had God’s call to the diaconate for the last twenty six years, but until now the time was not right for my family. God has blessed me with many gifts, talents and abilities, and I feel that I should put them to use in his service, because I feel most fulfilled in serving God.”



Patrick J. LaPointe



“My experience with the Diaconate Formation Program has been nothing short of amazing. I came into the program with a mindset that I thought I knew what lay ahead of me. I couldn’t have been more wrong (in a very positive sense). I have made the comment many times over that my knowledge of my faith has increased more in the past four years than in the previous fifty. It is no doubt hard work but it is also the most rewarding work that I have experienced. This may sound like a scripted answer but there is no doubt in my mind that deacon to me means “service”. That may be a very

broad answer but service to “everyone” is the key. I have met and assisted other (and they have assisted

Our Class of 2014 / Nuestra Clase del 2014

me) people in places that I never thought I would be going into. In many ways my life has come full circle and I have served others where earlier in my life "I had eyes but did not see." I want to be a deacon because I truly do want to serve others. Jesus told us a very simple commandment 'love thy neighbor...' There are so many individuals who need and want to be touched by the Church. I want them to experience that touch. I see the diaconate as a growing part of the Church, one that can hopefully reach out and bridge the gap between the Church and secular society. Being a deacon and having a foot in both worlds is something that I want to be a part of for many years to come."

John C. Mezydlo

"When I entered the program I was so sure that I knew everything and was ready to be ordained. I couldn't understand why it took four years. As my studies and internships progressed, I realized, as my grandson would say, "I don't know nothing"! Thank God for formation. The professors and site supervisors did their best to prepare me for what lies ahead. The deacon is the one with his foot in both worlds. He helps the congregation to pray, and then, through service to those who have needs, makes the faith come alive the rest of the week. Sometimes he does that just by being present to anyone he comes into contact with throughout the day. I want to be ordained as a deacon, because sometimes folks who have spiritual or physical needs just want someone who is ordained to be there for them. The holy priests we have in our cluster can't do it all. Throughout formation the Holy Spirit kept opening doors (and my eyes), and that made me think that perhaps I was being called to help bring God's presence to those folks in any small way that I could."



Gary J. Nosacek



"From the scary beginning, I wondered where my formation journey would take me and if I would have the will and skills to pursue becoming a true servant leader. I believe that with the graces and strengths endowed by the Holy Spirit I have not only weathered the journey but have come to love those I have encountered in my ministries, and desire with all my heart to continue spreading Christ's example of being a servant to others. I was blessed to be accompanied on this journey by the finest group of friends and peer mentors one could ever have. A deacon is one who empties himself in serving others. The welfare and concerns of others take precedence over his own ambitions and desire for personal accolades. By breaking open the Gospel for others to better understand its message, the deacon helps others grow in their faith and hopefully guides them on their path to salvation. I want to be ordained as a deacon to be able to continue to grow the ministries I have begun in Formation in serving the sick, homebound, and especially to be able to preach the Gospel in an effective and meaningful way to bring the faithful to Christ. I also greatly look forward to serving at the Table of Sacrifice at the Mass, and in being a part of sacramentally welcoming those I baptize into the Community of the Church."

Charles G. Schneider

New Ordained Permanent Deacons

Date: September 6, 2014
 By: Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKi
 Place: Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist
 812 N. Jackson St.
 Milwaukee, WI 53202-3807

Congratulation and Blessings



Other News / Otras Noticias

Inquiry for Discernment Program: The Office for Diaconate Formation works with a team of permanent Deacons and their wives to offer this program to those interested in knowing more about the Permanent Diaconate. This INQUIRY FOR DISCERNMENT PROGRAM is offered through the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in Fall of 2014, Spring 2015 and Fall 2015. These opportunities, before the admission process, are open to men (married or single) interested in knowing more about the Permanent Diaconate. The men interested in the diaconate need to take this six sessions program before starting the admission process. Married men need to participate with their wives. If you know of someone interested, they can contact our office at 414-758-2207. The schedule for Fall 2014 is ready, it is posted in our web-page.

Programa de Sesiones de Discernimiento: La Oficina para la Formación del Diaconado trabajando en conjunto con un equipo de diáconos permanentes y sus esposas ofrece este programa a los interesados en conocer más sobre el Diaconado Permanente. Este PROGRAMA DE DISCERNIMIENTO se ofrece a través de la Arquidiócesis de Milwaukee en el Otoño de 2014, Primavera 2015 y Otoño 2015. Estas oportunidades, antes de que el proceso de admisión, están abiertos a los hombres (casados o solteros) interesados en conocer más sobre el Diaconado Permanente. Los hombres interesados en el diaconado deben tomar este programa de seis sesiones antes de iniciar el proceso de admisión. Los hombres casados tienen que participar con sus esposas. Si usted sabe de alguien interesado, puede ponerse en contacto con nuestra oficina al 414-758-2207. El calendario para el Otoño de 2014 está listo, y está publicado en nuestra página web.



“Verticalidad y Horizontalidad del Diaconado: Un Ministerio de Servicio”

**Presentador: P. Claudio Diaz, Director Misión Juan Diego
Arquidiócesis de Chicago**

Octubre 4, 2014

Mañana de reflexión para diáconos ordenados, y esposas y los interesados en conocer más sobre el diaconado, solteros o casados.

Hora: de 8:30 AM a 12:00 medio día

Lugar: Cousins Center

**Oficina de Formación para el Diaconado en conjunto
Con la Oficina del Ministerio Hispano**

Más información 414-758-2207



“Deacons, going the distance to serve the People of God”

For more information about the Permanent Diaconate and our Formation Program in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee visit our page at:

<http://www.archmil.org/offices/Diaconate.htm>

