

THE *Deacon Servant*

OFFICES OF DEACON SERVICES | DIACONATE FORMATION | ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE



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DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Deacon Mike Chmielewski

Greetings Deacon Family and New Year Blessings to you all!

As we leave 2020 behind us and move into 2021, we all have many emotions about 2020 and many hopes for 2021. For everyone, 2020 will be

remembered as the year of the coronavirus. It was a year marked with fear, stress, challenges, pain, suffering, loneliness, isolation, sickness, and death. There are more words we could add to this list but we all get the picture. When we also consider the political environment, the racial injustice issues, the civil unrest, and the major financial issues; 2020 will not soon be forgotten.

But, as people of faith, as disciples of Jesus Christ, and as ones designated Christ Servant, we are called to be light in the darkness. With all the hardships and challenges and limitations of 2020, it was also a year of newfound blessings. Many of us found new ways to serve, developed new and positive relationships, grew in our bond with immediate family as well as many of our brothers and sisters, and hopefully found more opportunities to connect with our God. The importance of our relationship with God and bonding with our family was renewed for many of us. We were also invited

to ponder God's presence in our lives and our world.

I write this note to you after praying at morning Mass on January 6 and reflecting on today's Gospel (Mk 6: 45-52). Mark tells us the story of Jesus dismissing the crowds after feeding them, going alone to the mountain to pray, walking on the water to his disciples in a boat, and calming the storm. The disciples are terrified seeing Jesus walking on the water toward them but Jesus tells them, "It is I, do not be afraid." The wind dies down and the



disciples are astounded. The selection ends with, "They had not understood the incident of the loaves. On the contrary, their hearts were hardened."

This Gospel story has much for us to ponder. As we enter 2021, we will never understand the full extent of the challenges and sufferings of 2020. Jesus, however, reminds us that He is

present and we need not fear. He reminds us of the importance of placing ourselves in God's presence, especially in solitary moments. Jesus has and will continue to calm the storms of life, 2020 and beyond. We are invited to keep our hearts open to God's loving presence and to be messengers of hope to all our brothers and sisters.

Know of my prayers that 2021 will be a year of blessings and recognition of our God's immense love!

Deacon Mike Chmielewski

A NEW POSITION FOR DIACONATE FORMATION



Deacon Dale Nees

The Associate Director of Pastoral Formation is charged with implementing the pastoral dimension of ministry formation for aspirants and candidates here in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. The person occupying this role will ensure our ongoing conformity to the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (275) that

requires “an integral formation” that “must relate the human, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions to pastoral practice. “The whole formation imparted [to aspirants and candidates for the diaconate]...aims at preparing them to enter into communion with the charity of Christ. ...Hence their formation in its different aspects must have a fundamentally pastoral character.” This role will help assure all field experiences are multicultural and develop a greater appreciation for cultural diversity. Through courses, workshops, and field experiences, the Associate Director of Pastoral Formation will “systematically” introduce “the aspirants and candidates into suitable pastoral experiences, equipping them with practical skills for pastoral and, eventual, diaconal ministry (275).” This Associate will participate in the overall evaluation of the pastoral competence of aspirants and candidates engaged in pastoral training.

I am pleased to announce that Mrs. Maria I. Espino was hired and started on January 4, 2021. Maria, who prefers to go by Maritza, is bilingual and has over 19 years of experience in applying pastoral ministry skills at both the parish and diocesan levels. The team who interviewed her recognized the asset she would be in serving our diaconate formational community as a full-time staff person. Maritza’s prior ministerial leadership experiences have allowed her

to play a vital part in creating bridges among diverse communities. Her approach has concentrated on equipping them as missionary disciples in their respective faith communities.

Maritza’s most recent position was Associate Director of Catechesis and Faith Formation for the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Kansas City, MO. There she taught train-the-trainer sessions in content and methodology for catechists and catechetical leaders. Maritza also created discipleship group leaders through a small group discipleship process. She ongoingly provided mentorship to catechetical leaders empowering them to form and mentor other leaders.

Maritza has cultivated environments that motivate students to have ownership of their formation. Additionally, she brings a strong set of pastoral skills and experience for ministry in a parish setting (outside the parish) to the position. Maritza’s past performance demonstrates a background of teamwork along with the ability to effectively work independently. She is looking forward to learning whatever is required in achieving our mission of serving parishes and their communities by forming and equipping those in Diaconate Formation. The Formation Leadership Team, Manuel Maldonado-Villalobos, Charmaine Pfeifer, and I are excited to collaborate with her, shaping future Deacons here in the Milwaukee Archdiocese to serve God’s people. Please join us in welcoming Maritza to her new mission and ministry among us. Her office is located on the second floor of Mary Mother of the Church Pastoral Center within the Office of Diaconate Formation. She may be reached by her email: espinom@archmil.org or her office phone (414) 758-2205. Finally, we are grateful for all the support I received in the hiring of this vital position for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

Deacon Dale T. Nees

DEACON SENATE

The Deacon Senate met via Zoom on November 18, 2020. Deacons present were: Bowen, Starke, Wiese, Campbell, Gundlach, Petro, Paczkowski, Matthias, Jansen, Nees, Chmielewski. Excused: Schneider.

The meeting opened with prayer led by Dcn. Jansen. Two new members of the Senate were then introduced. Jim Matthias, replacing Jeff Copson (districts 4/5/12) and Doug Gundlach, replacing Greg Petro (districts 1/2/3). The minutes of the September meeting were approved without amendment.

Scott Campbell then explained the financial report and the budget plan he had submitted earlier. Our current balance is \$3528.49 and, overall, we are in solid financial shape. Deacon dues of \$3960 will be deposited into the account very soon. This is \$40 per fully covenanted deacon (99).

Dale Nees offered some highlights of his written Formation Report noting: 17 Candidates were recently instituted to the Ministry of

Acolyte and 17 Aspirants began the program in September. Dale also announced the addition of a new full-time formator in the office. She will begin her duties in early January. Her primary responsibilities will focus on the pastoral/societal aspect of formation.

Other meeting notes:

- Districts 6/10/13 still planning on Deacon Day 2021, scheduled for May 1, 2021, at St. Monica Parish in Whitefish Bay. Dr. Tom Thibodeau will be the main presenter.
- Districts 4/5/12 are still planning for Memorial Mass 2021 with details to be determined.
- Deacon Retreat is scheduled for 11/4-7/2021 at Redemptorist with Dcn. Steve Kramer as Director.

The next Senate meeting is scheduled for January 20, 2021, via Zoom.

Deacon Mike Chmielewski

GETTING TO KNOW MARITZA



Maritza Espino

My formal name is Maria Isabel Espino, but I prefer to go by Maritza. I have been happily married for 20 years, and I am proud to be the mother of a pre-teenager and a young adult. I was born in Bakersfield, CA, but raised in Zacatecas, Mexico until I was 15 years old. Most of my education and ministry formation was here in WI; this is home for me.

I am a graduate of Saint Francis de Sales Seminary Certificate Division for Lay Ministry Formation. Lay ministry students, along with the candidates to the Permanent Diaconate, took the same classes and did our societal ministry together. This four-year formation was and still is life-changing for all of us! We became quite close as the years passed. The intellectual, human, pastoral, and spiritual formation led me to a deep personal transformation. In fact, I decided to go for a MALM (Master of Arts in Lay Ministry) at Cardinal Stritch University. I know all of this was guided by the Holy Spirit; now I can recognize the fruits of a lot of hard work, but most importantly, my vocation to serve God's people as a laywoman.

In my 19 years of experience in ecclesial ministry, the pastoral

dimension of ecclesial ministry is one of my favorites, and I can't wait to lead and work with the Diaconate Aspirants and Candidates in this capacity. Part of my experience as a Pastoral Associate includes serving and coordinating a food pantry that served around 80 families; served and prepared meals for 150 homeless people through St. Vincent de Paul Society, and accompanied parishioners who were homebound and also took communion to them. I served as a volunteer in a Domestic Violence Shelter for a few years with women and children from different cultural backgrounds.

I hope to be able to share my pastoral experience helping to transform the hearts of those being formed to minister to God's people as Deacons along with their spouses if married.

This is called Discipleship, where we become images of Christ the Servant. To accompany God's people, we are called to served side by side, not only in our home parishes but also outside our parishes and especially to those less fortunate in our society. This is when we truly encounter Jesus through others!

I am very excited and grateful to be able to serve in the Archdiocese that helped me in my formation and guided me in my lay vocation.

Maritza Espino

JUST A LITTLE REMINDER: "TRUST THE PROCESS"



*Manuel
Maldonado-
Villalobos*

"Trust the process." Many, in the past, have heard these words and they continue to be heard today. For some people, they are challenging. For others, they serve as guidance and motivation. In our Formation Program, these words tell us that God is present in our life, formation, and discernment. On the other side, they are a call to trust and understanding that everything has a purpose, a goal, a reason, and the Holy Spirit leads everything.

In these times, we need to look at this phrase and make it our own. Out there in our world, we have to be safe from the pandemic. A sad reality that affects our way of living, families, work, faith, and ministry. We are living in times where faith and religion are being put to the side. Some are living in loneliness and hiding, afraid of the world outside. Others are living in the stressful schedule of work, home schoolings, Mass restrictions, absence of ministry, etc. In the middle of all is our vocation; our call to serve, our formation to become ordained servants for the Church; for the "last, the least and the lonely".

For the Formation Team, our Faculty, Aspirants, Candidates, and their wives, this has been a time of struggles, sacrifices, adaptations, and changes. It has been a time to "Trust the Process" even more. To remind ourselves that God is here, with us.

We, the Formation Team, have been working very hard to make it possible that the program continues without interruptions. It has not been easy. We have to adapt to the realities, using new ways of teaching, switching around classes and finding new approaches to pastoral experiences. Some of these approaches seem to be individualistic, with no personal interactions or community focus. It is a moment, a reality, where our docility, obedience, faith and trust are being put to the test. I think we all have been, in such moments, in this boat.

It depends on each one of us to, "just go with the flow", not becoming part of the ones who just see the bad. We can be those who take the helm of the boat and give a new route/direction to our lives, our faith and our vocation.

Our formation continues. This trimester, our Candidates

► See REMINDER (continued on page 4)

REST IN PEACE

Deacon Raymond J. Kaczmarek died on October 19, 2020.

Deacon Ray was born on January 7, 1944. He grew up on Milwaukee's southside and graduated from Don Bosco High School in 1962. He completed university studies at Marquette in 1969. His employment history included roles as teacher, IT consultant, and corporate pilot.

Ray married the love of his life, Sue Gissal, on June 22, 1968, at St. Anthony Church in Menomonee Falls. They have three children, Paul, Christine Dannemann, and Daniel (Julie). Ray is further survived by 7 grandchildren (Jacob, Alyssa, Grace, Samuel, Tommy, Charlie, Elena), brother Thomas, and multiple in-laws, nieces, and nephews.

Ray began his diaconate formation in 1988 at St. Francis Seminary. Ray was ordained a Permanent Deacon on April 28, 1990, by Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland, O.S.B. Ray was assigned to serve at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, West Allis.

In July of 1991, as he prepared to enter a second covenant with IHM, Ray suffered a severe stroke that left him permanently disabled. Ray was able to regain some functioning but was never able to return to secular employment or covenanted diaconal service.

Ray's focus over the last 30 years was maintaining a strong connection with his family. He never allowed his limitations to restrict his interactions with his family. He maintained a very strong relationship with his children and grandchildren participating in many routine activities. Ray lived life with great zeal with the assistance of his family and the ever-present dedication and love of Sue.

Ray died quietly at his home with Sue at his side. Christian Funeral Prayer for Ray was held on Monday, October 26, 2020, at St. James Catholic Church in Menomonee Falls. Because of the pandemic, only immediate family and close friends attended the Mass. Fr. Dennis Lewis presided and Fr. Jerry Herda, Vicar of Clergy, concelebrated and offered the Final Commendation on behalf of Archbishop ListECKI. Deacons Sandy Sites and Mike Chmielewski were the assisting deacons with Dcn. Chmielewski as the homilist. Ray was laid to rest the following morning at the family cemetery plot at St. Anthony Parish in Menomonee Falls.

May he Rest in Peace!

Deacon Leon J. Zalewski died on October 28, 2020. He was born in Milwaukee and graduated from St. Francis Minor Seminary High School in 1950. He attended multiple training and apprentice programs eventually becoming a sheet metal professional. He earned a BA in Theology from Marquette in 1996 and a Masters in Theology from Sacred Heart Seminary in 1999. Leon's employment history included service as a firefighter/inspector for West Milwaukee (1956-1981) as well as a master

sheet metal worker for various local companies.

Leon served his country in the US Navy on active duty 1951-55 and in the Naval Reserves 1962-1981. He re-entered the Navy in active duty in 1991 serving a one-year tour in the Persian Gulf War.

Leon married the love of his life, Joan, on July 18, 1953, at St. Mary's Church in Wanamie, PA. They had three children, Ralph, Mary Ellen (Sommers), and John. He is further survived by three grandchildren and numerous other relatives and friends.

Leon began his diaconate formation in 1978 at St. Francis Seminary and, after a short break in formation, he was ordained a Permanent Deacon on January 22, 1983, at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist by Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland, O.S.B. His initial diaconal assignment was with St. Roman Parish (Mil.) In 42 years of diaconal service, Leon had numerous assignments including St. Adalbert (So. Mil.), Holy Rosary (Kenosha), St. Maximilian Kolbe (Mil.), St. Stephen (airport), St. John the Evangelist (Greenfield), and finally Our Lady Queen of Peace (Mil.). In addition to serving at the altar, presiding at Baptisms and weddings, and teaching in the parish, Leon's passion was caring for the sick and dying. He was known to spend full days traveling to multiple nursing homes ministering to God's people. Leon was clearly a man of service; serving his family, country, profession, community, and our God.

Leon had numerous health issues over the years and in the last two years, it seemed that he was at the VA Hospital or a rehab placement more than he was at home. He died on October 28, 2020, making a final trip from home to the hospital. Because of the current pandemic issues and family wishes, any formal funeral prayer for Leon will occur at a later date.

May he Rest in Peace!

► TRUST THE PROCESS *(continued from page 3)*

are starting the preparation for preaching, counseling, liturgical practicum and more. Our Aspirants will experience the Catholic Social Teachings of the Church, continue to learn the process of Theological Reflection, how to understand the Spirituality of the Diaconate and the service at the Altar through their Liturgical Ministry placements. The wives will continue to grow in their own spirituality through the Wives Formation Program. And our team continues to be here, to lead, to guide, but most of all, we are here to serve the Church of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in walking with our students, and to remind them that in life, in formation and in ministry, we just have to "Trust the Process."

Manuel Maldonado-Villalobos

KNOW OUR DEACON

Deacon Tom Surges was ordained on June 11, 1978. He was one of 21 men ordained in Milwaukee's third class of Permanent Deacons. He remains the only one of his class still covenanted (as a Senior Deacon) to a parish for diaconal ministry. Tom has served the faithful in Port Washington since his ordination. He was originally assigned to St. Peter of Alcantra. The three parishes of Port Washington and Saukville eventually merged into one parish with three worship sites, now St. John XXIII Parish. Tom was very active in this long-term transition.



Deacon Tom Surges

Tom has been married to Jean for more than 55 years. They have three children and eight grandchildren. Tom and Jean have always prioritized their commitment to each other and family as their number one focus. Tom and Jean often served many of their ministries together. In recent years Jean has had some health issues which have limited her ministry but have heightened Tom's commitment to caring for her.

In 2016, Tom received the initial Vatican II Award for Service to the Diaconate. It was a recognition that was well deserved. In addition to Tom's extensive service to the parish faithful in Port Washington, Tom has served and continues to serve the deacon community. Tom was a member of the Deacon Personnel Board for more than ten years asking to be relieved of his service in 2016. Tom and Jean were also founding members of the deacon Ministers of Care group. This ministry offers prayers and support to deacons and wives who have lost their spouses. They have added deacons, wives, and widows to the group over the years assuring that every grieving spouse will be remembered in prayer and offered support and comfort in every corner of the Archdiocese.

Tom was also instrumental in creating the Deacon Necrology Book which now sits in a glass cabinet in the Deacon niche at St. John's Cathedral. The book contains the name and death date of every deacon and deacon's wife. Tom updates the book annually with the creative assistance of his daughter. The book is always present at our annual Memorial Mass. Tom and Jean continue to be very involved in planning this annual prayer.

Thank you, Tom and Jean, for all you have done and continue to do for God's people!

Deacon Mike Chmielewski

DEACON FAMILY 2020 VATICAN II AWARDS

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize members of our diaconate family who received an Archdiocesan Vatican II award in November 2020. The presentation of the Vatican II Awards is usually held at the Cathedral with a beautiful prayer ceremony and public recognition. However, 2020 was not a normal year, but our recipients deserve recognition and appreciation for their ministry and service.

Deacon Terry Maack received the "Service to the Diaconate" Vatican II Award. Terry was ordained in 1988 and has served the faithful at St. Peter Parish in Kenosha since then. After a long career in the auto industry, Terry was hired by St. Peter's as the parish administrative assistant in 2010, where he continues to serve. Terry was instrumental in beginning a jail ministry program at the Kenosha County Detention Center more than 25 years ago. You will often find Terry serving at the jail on Saturdays. Terry has also been the leader of the Kenosha/Racine deacons, serving as the district representative. He was a Deacon Senate member for more than a decade before stepping down in 2018.

Deacon Gary Nosacek and his wife Dr. Cindy Jones-Nosacek received the award for the "Service to the Missions" Vatican II Award. Gary was ordained in 2014 and he serves the faithful at Three Holy Women Parish in Milwaukee. After years of actively supporting the overseas missionary efforts of the parish from home, Gary and Cindy were able to serve in person with a 2010 trip to Mexico. In 2018, they made the first of multiple trips to Padibe, Uganda to their sister parish, Immaculate Heart of Mary. On their visits to Uganda, Cindy is very active in sharing her medical skills. She has been instrumental in providing medical equipment, has actively trained staff, and has offered direct patient care. Gary does what Gary does best (follows directions from Cindy), and he regularly participates in community prayer and connects with the parish, sharing his insights on God's loving presence as well as bringing rain...which seems to be his gift to Padibe.

Thank you Dcn. Terry, Dcn. Gary, and Dr. Cindy for your service, ministry, example and commitment. You are a true reflection of Christ Servant.

Deacon Mike Chmielewski

Prayer Requests

Deacon Richard Hiller `75	Kathy Marx, wife of Dcn. Keith `07
Jeri Petro, wife of Dcn. Greg `12	Deacon Mike Bowen `12
Deacon Dan Zozakiewicz `94	
Deacon Dick Govek `92	
Deacon Sy Regan `75	Dcn. Raymond J. Kaczmarek `90, October 19, 2020
Deacon Steve Hayes `04 and wife Karen	Dcn. Leon J. Zalewski `83, October 28, 2020
Deacon Ron Lesjak `79	Dorothy Govek, wife of Dcn. Dick `92, December 7, 2020
Deacon Troy Major `02	Leona Maack, wife of Dcn. Terry, January 2, 2021
Sue Kaczmarek, widow of Dcn. Ray `90	Fr. Steve Malkiewicz, January 7, 2021
Joan Zalewski, widow of Dcn. Leon `83	
Deacon Terry Maack `88	

RECENTLY DECEASED AND THEIR FAMILIES



DATES TO REMEMBER

May 1, 2021

Deacon Day 2021, St. Monica, Whitefish Bay
Dr. Tom Thibodeau, "Servant Leadership"

May 22, 2021

Post Ordination Formation
Session 3 Class of 2018 (Site TBD)

June 12, 2021

Post Ordination Formation
Session 1 Class of 2020 (Site TBD)

September 11, 2021

Ordination
10 a.m.
Cathedral Class of 2021

November 4-7, 2021

Deacon Retreat
Redemptorist
Dcn. Steve Kramer Director



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