

THE Deacon Servant

OFFICES OF DEACON SERVICES | DIACONATE FORMATION | ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE



ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE
DIACONATE
Where love becomes service.

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DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Deacon Mike Chmielewski

A few weeks back, a deacon exclaimed to me, "I feel abandoned by my deacon brothers." This deacon was in the midst of a very difficult time. Both he and his wife were struggling with serious health issues that required extensive medical care. He was also addressing issues and challenges in his parish, including new leadership. After an extended discussion, the deacon apologized to me for his earlier statement, claiming it was just frustration.

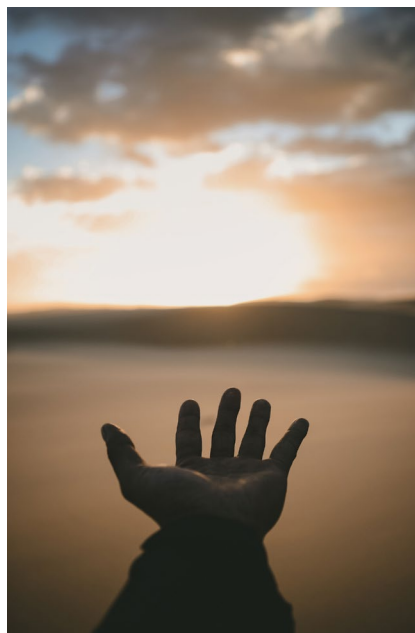
As I reflected on my conversation with that deacon, I focused more on his feeling of abandonment than on his life challenges. As ministers of faith and believers in God's omnipresence, we are expected to offer assurances of God's loving presence for others and ourselves. We preach and proclaim a God of love, hope, comfort, light, mercy, and eternal life.

We all journey through times of darkness, pain, and challenge. It is our God who walks with us and offers hope and light. It is often in our role as "Christ Servant" that we represent God's loving presence; sometimes through our words and actions but very often

just through our presence.

I would invite you, the Deacon Family, to make a conscious effort to be aware of the special needs in our family. Whether it is a classmate, a retired deacon from your parish, a friend, a widow, a member of your district, or a new deacon looking for assurances, I ask that you make an intentional effort to offer Christ's light. A phone call, a text, a card, a visit are some of the ways we can say, "I care."

As you read on in this newsletter, you will see four "Rest in Peace" articles about deacons who have died in the last three months and our prayer list includes many with serious health issues, the death of a deacon's wife, another deacon's mother, and yet another a son. I invite you to take this opportunity to offer a ray of light to someone's dark journey, hoping we never have to hear someone exclaim, "I feel abandoned!"



For anyone hurting, please reach out; reach out to your classmates, fellow deacons, or this office. It is said that "Charity begins at home," so let us all make the effort to care for our own.

It is so good to begin seeing each other in events like Deacon Day and Memorial Mass. Be well and stay safe. Blessings to all!

Deacon Michael Chmielewski '09

THE CANDIDATE STAGE OF INITIAL FORMATION



Deacon Dale Nees

On a beautiful sunny September 18th morning, our brothers pictured below were admitted as candidates for Holy Orders. Their family and children were able to be present at the Rite, as well as Pastors, an Associate Pastor, and a Spiritual Director.

Bishop Haines presided at the Eucharist during which he received their “resolve to complete” their “preparation so that in due time through Holy Orders” they “will be prepared to assume ministry within the Church...to prepare” themselves “in mind and spirit to give faithful service to Christ the Lord and his Body, the Church...” Their response, as you recall, was “I do” said with certain conviction. As well it should be since entering the “candidate stage of initial formation is the occasion to confirm a man’s diaconal vocation and prepare for ordination.” It is at this stage that “the candidate himself assumes the primary responsibility for his discernment and development” but not with “independence from formators, but responsibility and dynamism in responding with generosity to God’s call, valuing to the highest the people and tools which Providence puts at one’s disposition.”

Among the various formation environments including the candidate, parish, family, and marketplace communities, I would especially like to highlight you – the community of deacons. You are a “precious support in the discernment of vocation, in human growth, in initiation to the spiritual life, in theological study and pastoral experience.” Anytime

there are “opportunities for conversation and shared pastoral experiences between a candidate and a deacon, as well as meetings between the wife of a candidate and the wife of a deacon, can mutually sustain their enthusiasm and realism about the diaconate.” As a formation leadership team, we value your generosity in being a resource to all our candidates,

whether that be as faculty, committee members, mentors, or deacons at large. You are critically important “resources for discerning, supporting, and nurturing a diaconal vocation.” So you can feel positive about the difference you have made so far or will make in the future of these 13 new candidates, as well the 16 third year candidates who anticipate ordination in September 2022.

We hope that you will continue to identify any inquirers who may wish to be part of our aspirant class of 2022. They will need to complete the Discernment Sessions by Thanksgiving. This will be our last four-year class and they will need to be accepted as aspirants by the Archbishop prior to

June 9, 2022, the Feast of St. Ephrem the Syrian, Deacon and Doctor of the Church. This is the date when the Second Edition of the National Directory becomes effective. Lastly, we will be producing a new deacon formation poster by mid-November that will illustrate our 45% growth. We are hopeful that you will assist with the distribution and assure that it will be well displayed in a manner that continues to prompt discussion and raise awareness of diaconal vocations.

¹ The Roman Pontifical Rites of Ordination of a Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons. p. 223

² The National Directory for the Formation, ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States of America (DMLPD), no. 213.

³ DMLPD, no. 219.

⁴ DMLPD, no. 216



Deacon Dale Nees '09



Candidates and their wives left to right: Martin (Diane) Ryan, Alvin (Gail) Dompke, Thomas (Elizabeth) O'Brien, Robert (Mariza) Konzal, John (Kimberly) Schraufnagel, Eloy (Martha) Contreras, Aaron (Brittany) Jeske, Pedro (Gabriela) Delgado, Tien (Duyen) Pham, Peter (Sharon) Giersch, Kevin (Vicki) Kalnins, John (Melissa) Murray, and James (Erica) Zdroik.

NEW LOGO, ONE VISION



*Dcn. Manuel
Maldonado-
Villalobos*

As some may have already noticed, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee has a new “branded logo” for the Diaconate. This new logo refers to both Diaconate Formation and Deacon Services offices. God works in some exciting ways. I say this because He is always guiding and inspiring us to look forward to better serve our archdiocese and the Diaconate.

The diaconate in the Archdiocese of



Milwaukee has two offices: one for the formation of deacons and the other one for the ministry and life. They are two offices but one identity and vision for the permanent diaconate. We have always worked together with each other, “unifying” our collaboration, identity, and mission. To make this more visible, not only for our deacon family, but also for the whole archdiocese, we have been making some modifications in our mission. We started by combining our newsletters. “*Deacon Talk*” and “*The Servant*” became “*The Deacon Servant*.” Now we are moving forward to continue to create this awareness of one diaconate. We officially want to introduce you to our *NEW LOGO!*

The new edition of the National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of the Permanent Deacon in the United States

(NDFMLPD) mentions that: “The diocese should provide appropriate structures for the formation, ministry and life of deacon. Structures include and office...etc.” (Cfr. NDFMLPD #273). The structure in our archdiocese while operating as two offices, because of the size, we function as one. In continuous collaboration with the office of Deacon Services we agreed to change the former logo of Diaconate Formation to just Diaconate. Our structure identity is one deacon family. Formation, Ministry and Life is a whole and we want to reflect that to everyone we encounter and serve.

I mentioned at the beginning that God works in exciting ways. This new logo came to be not solely because of our desire to change it, but rather by a

combined effort with our Communication Department which is rebranding all the logos of the archdiocesan departments. All logos now include “Archdiocese of Milwaukee” on them. Our Deacon Services did not have a formal logo. Our “motto” in the former formation logo, “Where love become service” is really the guiding point of the whole diaconate. We are in production with our new candidate poster for 2022 and Dcn. Mike is properly included in the staff list, as he presents the post-ordination formation to the newly ordained. All of this and the idea of one identity, one vision, and one family led us to the creation of this new logo. From formation to the ministry and life of a deacon is “Where love becomes service.”

PERSONNEL BOARD

The Deacon Personnel Board met on Tuesday October 5, 2021 in person at MMCP. In attendance: Dcns. Gulig, Campbell, Stanula, Schneider, Chmielewski and Fr. Herda. Excused: Dcn. Nosacek. Schneider began the meeting with prayer followed by approval of the June 8, 2021 meeting minutes.

Our ongoing discussion of the National Directory was put on hold as the Second edition of the Directory was released in September thus opening a new discussion. The Board will soon receive copies of the new Directory so as to resume our formational discussions. One noted change in the new Directory is the expansion of required post ordination formation from 3 to 5 years as well as the addition of a second year to Aspirancy in formation.

We entered into discussion of deacon specific issues including: 20 covenant renewals, 2 retirements, 1 sick leave, 7 “special” cases, and 25 overdue covenants. 2 of the overdue covenants were the focus of extra discussion. The Board also stressed that all diaconal covenants must include commitments in all areas of

Service... Word, Worship, and Charity.

We then reviewed the upcoming ordination class for September of 2022. We previewed their likely home parish assignment. Seven of the men have no deacons currently serving at their parish while the other nine have at least one. There appears to be only one likely situation that may require a change of assignment for a current deacon. This process has actually already begun as the Director has initiated the discernment with the deacon.

The meeting concluded with Fr. Herda informing the Board that his term as the Vicar for Clergy will end in June of 2022. He anticipates a pastoral assignment but he will also remain in a part time role with the Priest Placement Office here at MMCP. Dcn. Gulig reminded the Board of our need maintain confidentiality and the importance of keeping in tune with deacon issues in our districts.

The meeting closed with prayer. The next meeting was not scheduled but will likely take place in late January via zoom.

Dcn. Mike Chmielewski

SOCIETAL MINISTRY 2021



Maritza Espino

Seven Candidates from Year III out of the 16 in the current diaconal class of 2022 had the opportunity to travel to La Sagrada Familia this past summer from August 10-17, 2021. This trip was postponed a few times due COVID-19. In fact, there was a lot of discernment on whether it was safe for us to go; however, we still traveled to La Sagrada Familia. This was a transformational experience!

I am still amazed by the courage of our Candidates. In their willingness to go to a country in which they do not speak the language, know the culture, or even know what to expect because they have never been there before. They decided to go regardless of their doubts and uncertainty of what it would be like.

This Societal Ministry Immersion experience is an integral part of their Pastoral Formation as they prepare to serve God's people as future Deacons.

As I read in a book we use in one of our formation classes called *Finding Mutuality in Ministry*, I rediscovered the beauty in ministry when those serving are willing to receive from those they are serving. On this book, Rev. William quotes a great theologian from all times — Karl Rahner — by saying, "Human beings seek nearness to one another. When they are in one another's direct physical presence and seek to love one another in these circumstances, they seek to exist not only in physiological contact of flesh on flesh, but to render such contact, when it is to be meaningful, the expression of real total personal, fully mutual and reciprocal exchange of love between them." He is describing quite well all of our (the Candidates and myself) encounters we each experienced with the different groups of people at different communities from La Sagrada Familia. We also had one-on-one encounters; the Candidates and I were open to listen to what they had to share with us: their stories, struggles, hopes and dreams.

Regardless of the language barriers, I felt the communion and/or mutuality that God demands of those who are working in



Candidates Year III & part of the staff at La Sagrada Familia Parish Center. From Left to right: Lance Tappa, Michael Reesman, Brian Witteman, Maya, Joe, Brent Enwright, Jeffrey Kucharski, Arnold Bryson, Michael Dunn, and Indhira.

ministry in God's name. The people were quite welcoming, willing not only to welcome us, but to offer us whatever food they had, even if they did not have much. The seasonal fruit they had in their backyards was a delight: mangos, dragon fruit, bananas, guavas, and avocados. Their charity towards us was reciprocal. In fact, I can share the increase in terms of gratitude for all we take for granted here in the United States. We take for granted our families, jobs, resources, parish life, education, even basic needs they lack in third world countries like the Dominican Republic (water, health systems, education, sustainable economic systems, etc.)

As a result of this great experience, our group of Candidates are looking for ways in which they are to practice solidarity with our brothers and sisters at La Sagrada Familia in the Dominican Republic, which is an important aspect of their formation.

¹ Rev. William T. Donovan, PH.D, *Finding Mutuality in Ministry* (National Association of Diaconate Directors 2001), P.4.

Maritza Espino

DEACON SENATE

The Deacon Senate met on 7/20/21 via Zoom. Deacons present: Starke, Wiese, Campbell, Petrie, Nees, Paczkowski, Gundlach, Schneider, Matthias, and Chmielewski. Excused: Jansen. President transitioned this meeting from Scott Wiese to Jim Starke.

Dcn. Chmielewski opened the meeting with prayer. Minutes from the May 19, 2021 meeting were reviewed and approved. Dcn. Campbell presented his financial report with an account

balance of \$6,436. Spending was down in 2020 due to Covid-19 canceled events. Campbell reports we are in good financial shape and he will put together a 21-22 budget plan that will likely include doubling up on Deacon Day.

Dcn. Nees offered comments on his written Formation report. Sadly, he reported the sudden death of Gary Brown, one of

► See DEACON SENATE (continued on page 5)

CLASS OF 1996

Congratulations to the Class of 1996 as they celebrate their 25th Anniversary of ordination to the Diaconate. The living members of the class are Gerald Buyck, John Ebel, Carl Mahnke, David Pollak, Wilson Shierk, and Randy Wells, all ordained June 1, 1996. Also congrats to Dcn. Ron Schneider, ordained September 7, 1996 in Washington, D.C. who served in West Bend from 2006 until his retirement in 2017.

Dcn. Mike Chmielewski

Pictured are Dcns. Wilson Shierk and John Ebel as they accept their 25th Anniversary stoles at Deacon Day.



► DEACON SENATE *(continued from page 4)*

the program's Aspirants. Nees also encouraging the Senate to continue inviting men to enter into the discernment process. Formal sessions are being planned with a focus on beginning the formal application process in January 2022.

Most districts met in June in a combination of Zoom and in-person. Reports were positive, as most are hopeful of moving away from Covid-19 restrictions. 6/10/13 continue to plan for Deacon Day set for 9/25/21 at St. Joseph, Grafton. Districts 1/2/3 are already talking Deacon Day 2022. 4/5/12 are planning Memorial Mass set for 10/24/21, 2 p.m. at Good Shepherd, Menomonee Falls.

Multiple other topics were discussed, including: Deacon Retreat (11/4-7/2021), continued changes in the Catholic Comeback, Ordination for Class of 2021 (9/11/2021), and other upcoming events.

The meeting ended with prayer and the next Senate meeting set for September 15, 2021.

The Deacon Senate met on September 15, 2021 via Zoom. Dcns present: Starke, Wiese, Paczkowski, Petrie, Gundlach, Matthias, Nees, Campbell, Schneider, Chmielewski. Excused: Jansen.

Matthias opened the meeting with prayer. Minutes from the July meeting were reviewed and approved. Campbell's financial report included a balance of \$5,547.93 and an anticipation of the annual deacon dues deposit of about \$4,500. The financial situation remains positive.

Nees' Formation report reminded us of the upcoming Rite of Candidacy for 13 men in the Class of 2024. 16 men continue in formation for the Class of 2022. The Second edition of the National Directory was published in September and includes the expectation that formation will now include two years of Aspirancy, making our program 5 years in length (beginning with the new admissions in 2024).

District reports included: 1/2/3 planning Deacon Day 2022, likely May 7, 2022; 4/5/12 working on Memorial Mass (10/24/21) 2 p.m. at Good Shepherd, Menomonee Falls; and 6/10/13 finalizing plans for Deacon Day 2021, 9/25/21 at St. Joseph, Grafton.

Old business discussion on the Deacon Retreat set for November 4-7, 2021 at Redemptorist Retreat Center. Invitations going out very soon and will also go to the Madison deacons. The retreat team (Petrie & Klingseisen) are in regular contact with the Retreat Director, Dcn. Steve Kramer, and the Retreat Center planning a safe and reflective weekend.

New business included Matthias introducing a proposal to establish an intentional Catholic presence in the 53206 Milwaukee zip code. This item will remain on the agenda as Matthias researches ways to make this a reality. Chmielewski reported he will schedule a Women's Day of Reflection in the Spring.

The meeting ended with prayer. The next Senate meeting is on for November 17, 2021, likely via Zoom.

Dcn. Mike Chmielewski

DEACON DAY

“Service is Love Made Visible.” That was one of the many themes Tom Thibodeau stressed in his 90-minute presentation to the gathered community at Deacon Day last month. It was a reminder to the group of the purpose of our diaconate calling. “God calls us to love one another in unique ways. The visible example of that love is when we serve each other.” The deacon is the icon of Christ the Servant. What better example of love is there than each of our ministries? While the message may seem somewhat obvious, more than one deacon who attended Deacon Day commented on how we needed to be reminded, to be re-energized, to refill the tanks that seemed to be drained over these last eighteen months.

It was also an opportunity to gather again, nearly two years since the last deacon community event. Approximately 80 people attended which was down slightly from years past. However, given the current circumstances, the organizers were very pleased with the turn out. When Mike Chmielewski was asked to make a short presentation on the state of the diaconate, he simply smiled, pointed to the audience, and exclaimed, “This is the state of the diaconate. We are back together once again.” It was a wonderful moment.



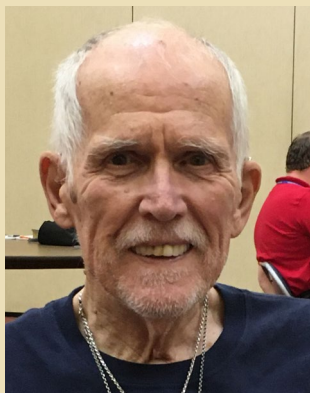
Deacon Jim Starke '16

Tom’s presentation was very life giving. It brought tears, laughter, moments of reflection, and a gold mine of homily one-liners. However, probably the largest gift from Deacon Day this year was the ability to once again gather as a community, to see old friends, and to share common experiences. It’s completely understandable that some were hesitant to attend because of concerns for health. Others could not attend because of family obligations, which take priority to maintain balance in our lives. However, there were many who could not attend because of other diaconal obligations. To this latter group, I urge you next time to reconsider. All of us have no shortage of opportunities to serve. The world will survive if we take the occasional day off to recharge the spirit. We need to remember that we can’t give what we don’t have. These Deacon Days, the annual Memorial Mass, and retreats are meant for just that. It’s our obligation to those we minister to. As Tom reminded us throughout his presentation, many times our most profound ministry is accomplished by simply showing up, to be present to others. As a community, we rely on each other’s presence in order to continue to serve others.

A special shout out to the members of Districts 6, 10, & 13 who made the morning possible. Scott Wiese and St. Joe’s Parish were wonderful hosts. Tom Hunt arranged for the coffee, juice, and meal. Tom Surges organized the attendance list. Joe Wenzler produced the name tags. And to all of those who showed up early to set up or stayed late to clean up. Thank you.

KNOW OUR DEACON

Deacon Walt Henry was ordained a permanent deacon in 1978, Milwaukee’s third Deacon Ordination class. Walt was initially assigned to serve at his home parish, Immaculate Heart of Mary, West Allis. He served at IHM (now Mother of Perpetual Help) until he formally retired from covenanted service in November 2012. He continues a diaconal presence at MPH when and how he is able.



Deacon Walt Henry

Over the years, Walt’s passion has been chaplaincy ministry. He has served as a volunteer chaplain at Froedtert, West Allis

Memorial, and the VA hospitals. He has regularly participated in chaplaincy training, including completing multiple units of CPE programming.

Walt served his country for three years (1954-1957) in the United States Marine Corps. In recent times, he has made a very intentional effort to serve the veterans community. He continues (non-Covid) to visit patients at the VA Hospital and has been very active as a volunteer at a food pantry program for veterans.

Professionally, Walt spent much of his time in the computer world as an IT specialist. He has also served various offices in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee as a computer consultant and volunteer.

Thank you, Deacon Walt, for all you have done and are still doing!

WOMEN OF THE DIACONATE

It was so good to see so many of you at Deacon Day on September 25th and I hope more of you will be in attendance at Memorial Mass on October 24th. Because of the pandemic limitations and some changes in leadership, the women of the diaconate have not formally gathered in a very long time. This is not a good thing!

I have scheduled a “Women of the Diaconate: Day of Reflection” for Saturday, March 26, 2022 to be held at the MMCPC. I have invited Maritza Espino, Associate Director in the Diaconate Formation Office, to help plan and lead a prayerful and reflective program. We will gather around 8 a.m. and conclude with lunch. The morning will include prayer, reflection, and small group discussion. We also hope to hear from you about what your needs are and how we can move forward in formational opportunities for the women.

Ladies, please mark your calendar and plan to join the women of the diaconate on March 26, 2022. We need to hear your voice. Also, if you would like to be part of the “leadership” team for this and future events, please let me know.

Dcn. Mike Chmielewski

VATICAN II 2021

The 2021 Vatican II Award for Service to the Diaconate was presented to Dcn. Tom Hunt on September 30, 2021 in a beautiful service at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Milwaukee. Tom was ordained a deacon in 2000 and originally assigned to Sts. Peter & Paul Parish. In 2008, Tom was assigned to serve at the Cathedral where he continues his ministry. In addition to his regular presence at prayer and liturgy services at the Cathedral, Tom has been involved in jail ministry at the Milwaukee County Jail, serving at St. Ben's Meal Program, Habitat for Humanity, and the Cathedral Open Door Café, as well as running a support group for the families of the incarcerated. Thank you, Tom, for all your ministry and service.

Dcn. Mike Chmielewski



Deacon Tom Hunt

REST IN PEACE

✠ **Deacon Steven L. Hayes, Sr.** died August 20, 2021. Deacon Steve was born in Milwaukee on March 29, 1946. Steve attended school at Immaculate Conception Parish and eventually attended two years of high school at Bay View High. In 1963 he enlisted in the U.S. Army where he was a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne. He was stationed in Vietnam (1965-1966) after which he was honorably discharged. Steve completed his GED while in the Army and upon returning to the states, attended Finger Lakes Community College in New York where he earned a degree in Accounting. He was employed for more than 30 years as an accountant with Libby Foods in both New York and back in Wisconsin. He eventually worked as a parish Administrative Assistant at his parish and also as a chaplain at Agrace Hospice both in Janesville.

Steve married the love of his life, Karen, on April 29, 1967 at St. Alexander Church in Milwaukee. Together they have three children: Steven Jr. (Kim), Michelle Dickson (Keith Bogk), and Nicole (Pete) Anderson. Steve is also survived by four grandchildren and four great grandchildren as well as five siblings and other relatives and friends.

Steve began his diaconate formation in 1999 in the Madison Diocese. He was ordained a Permanent Deacon for Madison on July 23, 2004 by Bishop Robert C. Morlino. Steve was assigned to his home parish, Nativity of Mary Parish in Janesville. Steve and Karen moved to Fox Lake, Wis. in May 2012. In July 2012, he was officially assigned to serve as deacon at Annunciation Parish in Fox Lake and St. Joseph Parish in Waupun. He was officially incardinated into the Archdiocese of Milwaukee on 12/26/2016. In addition to a regular presence at the altar, Steve was very active in visiting parishioners who were homebound, hospitalized, or in long term nursing care. Steve and Karen were a strong presence to the parish community which even included their moving into the Annunciation rectory after the retirement of the pastor. Steve was very active in the Knights of Columbus, the local VFW, and the parish St. Vincent DePaul Conference.

Funeral services for Deacon Steve began with a visitation at Koepsell Funeral Home in Beaver Dam on Sunday, August 29, 2021. Additional visitation took place at Annunciation Church in Fox Lake Monday, August 30, 2021, 10-10:50 AM followed by the Mass of Christian Burial at 11 AM. Fr. John Radetski, Annunciation Pastor, was the presider and preacher with Dcns. Ed Cody and Mike Burch assisting. Bishop James Schuerman offered the Final Commendation and the final blessing. Nineteen Deacons and wives prayed with the family, including 5 deacons and 3 wives from the Madison Diocese. Deacon Steve will be buried in the Annunciation Parish Cemetery in the town of Trenton.

Please continue to keep Dcn. Steve in your prayers, as well as his wife Karen and the family.

May he Rest in Peace!

✠ **Deacon M. Larry LaFond** died July 13, 2021. Deacon Larry was born in Milwaukee on September 3, 1940. He graduated from Pius XI High School in 1958. Larry began his professional career right after high school in the carpet and flooring business. He worked for multiple stores as a salesperson until 1973, at which time he bought into Kerns Carpet One and worked as a managing partner for 33 years until his retirement in 2006. Larry also served his country in the National Guard (1962-1968) discharged honorably as an E5.

Larry married the love of his life, Catherine, on August 8, 1964. They have two children, Mary Beth (Tom) Elberson, and the late Mark (Meg). They also have four grandchildren, Melissa (David) Hoffman, Matt LaFond, Katie and Christopher (Finley) Elberson.

Larry began diaconate formation in 1979 at St. Francis Seminary. He was ordained a Permanent Deacon on January 22, 1983 by Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland, O.S.B. at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Milwaukee. Larry was first assigned to serve at St. Margaret Mary Parish, Milwaukee. In 1995, Larry was assigned to serve at St. Dominic Parish, Brookfield. He retired from covenanted diaconal service in June of 2016. In addition to all the usual liturgical service of the deacon, Larry was very active in visiting the sick of the parish, cooking for the Human Concerns food program, and coordinating the parish FOCCUS program. Larry and Cathy were also the long-time hosts of the annual Waukesha Deacon Summer picnic.

Funeral services for Deacon Larry began with a visitation on Monday, July 19, 2021, 4-7 p.m. at Harder Funeral Home in Brookfield. On Tuesday, July 20, 2021, an additional visitation took place starting at 10 a.m. at St. Dominic Parish with the Mass of Christian Burial beginning at 11 a.m. Fr. Dennis Saran, Pastor of St. Dominic, was the presider with concelebrants that included Fr. David Reith and Fr. Curt Frederick, both former pastors, current Associate Fr. Tim Schumaker, former Associate Fr. Aaron Laskiewicz, Vicar for Clergy Fr. Jerry Herda, and Frs. Phil Bogacki and Kevin McManaman. Deacon Greg Diciula, from St. Dominic, and Deacon Jim Leggett, classmate, assisted at the altar.

Dcn. Leggett proclaimed the Gospel, a portion of Matthew 25, and Fr. Frederick offered a beautiful homily on Larry and the great practicality of falling in love. Larry fell in love with Cathy, his family, the Church, the Diaconate, and St. Dominic's. Larry

► **REST IN PEACE** (continued from page 8)

lived out those loves in all he did!

Bishop Schuerman offered the Final Commendation and expressed the appreciation of the Archdiocese of Milwaukee to the LaFond family for sharing Larry with the Church. This was the first fully open Deacon funeral prayer since May of 2019 because of the pandemic. 28 deacons, 11 wives, 1 widow, and 2 family assistants gathered with many of Larry's relatives and parish family to lift him up in prayer.

Keep Deacon Larry, Cathy, and the family in prayer. May he Rest in Peace!

✠ **Deacon Sylvester (Sy) R. Regan** died August 17, 2021. Deacon Sy was born in Fond du Lac on June 1, 1924. He graduated from Sheboygan Falls High in June of 1942. In March of 1943 he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps. He trained as an automatic rifleman and served in the Pacific theatre during World War II. He was the recipient of a Purple Heart and was honorably discharged as a Corporal in October 1945. Upon returning to Wisconsin, he worked at multiple laborer positions. He eventually pursued training and certification that led to working for the State of Wisconsin (DILHR) as an Occupational Safety Consultant for 23 years before retiring in 1989.

Sy married the love of his life, Eleanora, on August 3, 1946 at St. Mary's in Sheboygan Falls. Together they had 9 children, all sons. Eleanora died on September 3, 2019 after 73 years of marriage. Three of Sy's sons have also pre-deceased him: Patrick, Michael, and Thomas. Sy is survived by sons: Rev. Dennis, Rev. Timothy, Kevin, Jim (Debbie), Donel (Delinda), and Terrance, as well as 17 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren.

Sy began his diaconate formation in 1974 at St. Francis Seminary. He was ordained a Permanent Deacon on December 26, 1975 by Archbishop William E. Cousins at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist as part of Milwaukee's first class of Permanent Deacons. Sy was initially covenanted with St. Rose, Lima and had subsequent covenants with St. George, Immaculate Conception (Sheboygan), Kettle Moraine Correctional, and finally in 1990 with St. Mary's in Sheboygan Falls before officially retiring in June of 1993. Sy described his diaconal service as "10% at the altar and 90% on the road." He had a tremendous passion for chaplaincy service. He was a certified chaplain serving at St. Nicholas Hospital, Kettle Moraine Correctional, VNA Hospice, Blinded Veterans, and the Boy Scouts. Sy was a man of many talents, writing poetry and prayer and whittling, as well as being filled with energy to serve.

The Mass of Christian Burial for Deacon Sy took place on Saturday, August 21, 2021 at Blessed Trinity Parish in Sheboygan Falls. His son, Fr. Timothy Regan, a priest of the Diocese of Davenport, IA. was the celebrant and homilist. He was assisted

at the altar by Deacons Baleriano Gonzalez and John Gavin. Archbishop Jerome Listecky offered the Final Commendation and Blessing at the Service. 15 deacons, wives, and widows gathered to pray with the Regan family. The prayer closed with full military honors. Dcn. Sy will be cremated, and his ashes inurned next to his wife at St. Rose, Lima Cemetery. May He Rest in Peace.

✠ **Deacon Ralph Wisniewski** died July 22, 2021. Deacon Ralph was born in Milwaukee January 29, 1933. He graduated from Notre Dame High School in 1951. He entered the U.S. Air Force in January 1952. He trained as an aircraft mechanic and served in the Korean War. In January 1956 he was honorably discharged as an A/IC. Upon returning to Milwaukee, he attended engineering classes at Marquette for 2 years. His professional employment included positions at various local companies as a draftsman, engineer, and eventually led him to more than 25 years as a supervisor at Allen Bradley.

Ralph married the love of his life, Elizabeth (Liz) on June 7, 1958 at St. Augustine Church, West Allis. Ralph and Liz had 5 children: Mark (Dorothy), Kathy, John, Jeanne (Frank) Menon, and Christine (Lee) Vedbraaten. Ralph's beloved Liz died on September 26, 2012. Ralph is also survived by 12 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild, as well as many nieces, nephews, and friends.

Ralph began his diaconate formation in 1984 at St. Francis Seminary. He was ordained a Permanent Deacon on April 23, 1988 by Archbishop Rembert G. Weakland, O.S.B. at Mater Christi Chapel. Ralph's initial, and only, diaconal assignment was to St. Leonard Parish, Muskego. In addition to the usual liturgical roles, Ralph had two ministerial passions. He served more than 30 years in the St. Ben's jail ministry program serving inmates at the Milwaukee County Jail. Ralph was also the longtime coordinator of the St. Leonard Confirmation program, touching the lives of many youth. Deacon Ralph retired from covenanted diaconal ministry August 1, 2013 after more than 25 years of service.

Funeral services for Deacon Ralph were held on Monday, August 2, 2021. A visitation began at 4 – 6:45 p.m. followed by the Mass of Christian Burial at 7 p.m. All the services took place at St. Leonard Parish in Muskego.

Fr. Dan Janasik, Pastor of St. Leonard's, was the presider at the Mass of Christian Burial. Fr. John Cella, OFM, was a concelebrant and the homilist. Fr. Peter Drenzek also concelebrated. Deacon Larry Ramsey was the Deacon of the Word and Deacon Rick Wirsch the Deacon of the Altar, both are active deacons at St. Leonard's. Sixteen deacons and two wives represented the Deacon family and helped celebrate Dcn. Ralph's life. May he Rest in Peace.

Dcn. Mike Chmielewski

Prayer Requests

Deacon Richard Hiller`75	RECENTLY DECEASED AND THEIR FAMILIES
Deacon Dick Govek`92	Dcn. M. Larry LaFond`83, 7/13/2021
Kathy Marx, wife of Dcn. Keith`07	Dcn. Ralph Wisniewski`88, 7/22/2021
Deacon Dave Pollak`96	Dorothy Kempka, mother of Dcn. Gene`92, 8/4/2021
Deacon Al Lazaga`92	Dcn. Sylvester Regan, 8/17/2021
Barbara Zozakiewicz, widow of Dcn. Dan`94	Dcn. Steve Hayes, 8/20/2021
Cathy LaFond, widow of Dcn. Larry`83	Antoinette Borkowski, wife of Dcn. Don`81, 9/1/2021
Deacon Troy Major`02	Peter Olson, son of Dcn. Allen`12 & Ellen, 10/6/2021
Antoinette D'Alessio, wife of Dcn. John`98	
Dcn. Don Borkowski`81	DIGNITY BURIALS
Karen Hayes, widow of Dcn. Steve`04	Geraldine Mae Biddle, 7/22/2021
Deacon Allen`12 & Ellen Olson	



DATES TO REMEMBER

October 23, 2021

Archdiocesan Synod Renewal gathering
MMCPCC

October 24, 2021

2 p.m. Memorial Mass, Fr. Jerry Herda,
Good Shepherd, Menomonee Falls

November 4-7, 2021

Deacon Retreat, Dcn. Steve Kramer, Director,
Redemptorist Retreat Center

March 26, 2022

8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Women's Day of Reflection,
Maritza Espino, MMCPCC

May 7, 2022

8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Deacon Day 2022, Stephanie
Delmore, St. Thomas Aquinas, Waterford

May 14, 2022

8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Post Ordination Formation,
Session 2, Class of 2020, MMCPCC

September 10, 2022

10 a.m. Diaconate Ordination, Cathedral of
St. John the Evangelist, Milwaukee

October 2022

(Date TBD) Memorial Mass 2022, District
14/15/16 Planning



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Published by Deacon Services and Diaconate Formation

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Archdiocese of Milwaukee

*This ministry is funded by the
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