



THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

WHO IS THE DEACON?

“Let them be merciful and zealous, and let them walk according to the truth of the Lord who became servant to all.” (St. Polycarp’s admonition to deacons, *Lumen Gentium*, #29)

The Order of Deacons was restored as a permanent and public ministry in the Roman Church at the Second Vatican Council. The aims of the diaconate are to enrich and strengthen the works of service being performed by the Church, to enlist a new group of devout and competent married and single men in the active ministry of the Church, and to aid in extending needed charitable and liturgical service to the faithful. Wives of deacons assist in many of these areas. The number of deacons has continued to grow steadily, and there are now more than 19,000 permanent deacons ministering in the United States and 281 deacons in the Archdiocese of Boston.

A Deacon is ordained to the three-fold ministry of Word, Liturgy and Charity, working in obedience to his bishop and in close fraternal cooperation with priests. Through Holy Orders, the deacon acquires a special relationship to the bishop. While all Christians are called to serve others, the deacon is an icon of the Servant Christ in the Church. The deacon should be a creative leader, one who gradually initiates a meaningful response of loving service from the community to those who are in spiritual or material need.

The Deacon’s ministry of work, liturgy and charity may include:

- **Word:** proclaiming the gospel, preaching at Mass, catechesis, evangelization, and sacramental preparation
- **Liturgy:** serving at the Eucharistic table, solemnly baptizing, witnessing marriages, bringing viaticum to the dying, and presiding over funerals and burials
- **Charity:** serving the poor and marginalized, visiting the sick and imprisoned, ministering to the dying

WHAT ARE THE REQUIREMENTS?

The deacon is called to serve after the manner of Jesus. He is first and foremost a Christian man in his usual employment and lifestyle, trained and formed by additional study and prayer for a special ministry to the community as an ordained minister. Consideration is given to the following as to a man’s suitability for the Diaconate Formation Program:

Age: At least 35, and not older than 65, at time of ordination

Status: Roman Catholic in good standing, sacramentally married, or single, of sound moral character, mature faith and possessing a sense of vocation to service

Family: If married, a partner in a stable marriage for at least 10 years at time of ordination, who has expressed consent and support of his wife, and whose children are of such an age and adjustment so as not to be unduly affected by their father’s pursuit of a life that involves special apostolic commitments.

Please take note: The academic portion of the formation program integrates in-person learning and Online Distance Learning. This hybrid approach to the academic dimension decreases the

number of days a month that aspirants and candidates are required to travel to Braintree for classes.

INQUIRY PROGRAM DATES AND REGISTRATIONS

The formation office for the permanent diaconate will be holding of two inquiry sessions for men interested in becoming deacons.

Wives of Inquirers are strongly recommended to attend sessions 1 and 2.

Inquiry Session One: Who is the Deacon?

This session will be offered via “ZOOM”. For your convenience, please visit www.bostondiaconate.org or email Deacon Christopher Connelly at cconnelly@rcab.org to register and receive a link. Inquirers can choose one of the two options for session 1:

- October 6, 2022, at 7:00 PM
- October 20, 2022, at 7:00 PM

Inquiry Session Two: Morning of Recollection and Discernment

This session will be held in person at the Pastoral Center in Braintree (66 Brooks Drive).

- November 12, 2022, from 09:00 AM -NOON

Inquiry Session Three: Canonical Impediments and Issues

- November 29, 2022, at 7:00 PM
- December 6, 2022, at 7:00 PM

This session will be offered via “ZOOM”. Please visit www.bostondiaconate.org or email Deacon Christopher Connelly at cconnelly@rcab.org to register and receive a link. Inquirers can choose one of the two options for session 3.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

More information is available through the diaconate website: www.bostondiaconate.org, or by contacting us directly:

Deacon Christopher Connelly, Director
Office of the Permanent Diaconate

cconnelly@rcab.org • 617-746-5649