



ARCHDIOCESE OF WINNIPEG

Catholic Centre
Chancery Office

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I write to inform you about the Permanent Diaconate program in the Archdiocese of Winnipeg. For many years now, Permanent Deacons have served the People of God within the Archdiocese and people in need, in the wider community. The education and formation of Catholic Permanent Deacons in Manitoba has been possible through a Tri-Diocesan program sponsored by the Archdiocese of Winnipeg, the Archdiocese of St. Boniface and the Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas. Through these three sponsors a *Permanent Diaconate Formation Team* guides the process from the initial period of inquiry to ordination. To accompany this letter, there are brochures on the Permanent Diaconate available in your parish church which will provide valuable information on our Permanent Diaconate program.

If you are a man of 30 years or older, married or single, who has been discerning God's call on how to serve Him in the Church and to extend God's love and mercy to our neighbour in need, you may have a vocation to be a Permanent Deacon. Currently we have seven men, from all walks of life in formation and another two, desiring to begin the program in the fall of 2026.

At the heart of the Diaconate is the ministry of charity. This means that the deacon is ordained to be a witness to the Gospel through a life of service. He is a man who has a heart for the poor, the aged, the disadvantaged, prisoners, the sick and the marginalized. Our Permanent Deacons serve our brothers and sisters in many different ways, and they do so through person-to-person encounters. They bring change in the world through God's love. Permanent Deacons proclaim the Gospel at Mass, they participate in spreading God's word through preaching and teaching. Finally, they have a liturgical role to play during the liturgy, they preside over baptisms, witness the exchange of marriage vows, officiate at wakes or funerals and preside at a variety of para-liturgical celebrations.

We all have an important role to play in building a culture of vocations in our parish communities. This includes not only the pastor but members of the congregation as well. I invite all of you to be sensitive and aware of others in your community who might be open to discerning a call to the Permanent Diaconate. Possible signs to observe in a potential candidate are: A certain simplicity of heart; a self-giving individual who is interested in others; a humble

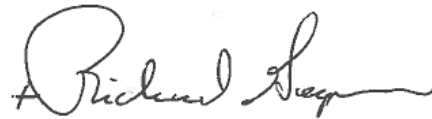
and helpful person; one who shows a love for others, especially those in need, including the suffering and the most needy; a personal lifestyle of moderation and sharing; a person of prayer and love of the Holy Eucharist.

If you notice such a man in your community, pray about this and ask the Holy Spirit to assist you in your contact with this person so that you may lovingly ask: *“Have you ever thought about the Permanent Diaconate?”*; or *“Have you ever thought of being a Permanent Deacon? I think you would be suited for that ministry?”*

There is further information on the Permanent Diaconate on our Archdiocesan Website under “Vocations”. I would encourage you to pick up the brochure which is available in your parish church.

Seeing with the eyes of Christ, I can give to others more than their outward necessities; I can give them the look of love which they crave-Deus Caritas Est #18

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Richard Gagnon', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Archbishop Richard Gagnon
Apostolic Administrator
of the Archdiocese of Winnipeg