

## PERMANENT DEACONS

**INTRODUCTION: Inquirants, Aspirants and Candidates who are judged suitable for the order of Deacon will be selected, trained and called to ordination to the Permanent Diaconate\*, insofar as that ministry is judged necessary for the good of the faithful of the Diocese of Lafayette. The following norms do not apply to transitional deacons, unless the universal law indicates otherwise.**

### PART I: ASSIGNMENT AND MINISTRY

#### 1. General

- a. All deacons are ordained to serve the Catholic Diocese of Lafayette, not a particular parish or institution.
- b. The Bishop of Lafayette makes the final determination for the appointment of each deacon, with the assistance of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate, in accordance with the needs of the Diocese and the gifts and abilities of the deacon.
- c. Deacons will carry out their assigned ministry under the direction of a pastor/supervisor.
- d. A deacon will not receive a diaconal appointment and be employed within the same parish assignment. (Deacons currently appointed and employed in the same parish will be grandfathered)
- e. A deacon, who is employed in a parish, must also have an appointment, to a different parish, from the Bishop.
- f. Prior to termination of a deacon's employment a consultation with the Bishop (or his designee) and the Director of Permanent Diaconate is required. After consultation the Office of Human Resources must be contacted as well.
- g. A deacon who has been assigned outside of a parish for his primary ministry (i.e. hospital, prison, diocesan office, etc.) is usually given a liturgical appointment to a parish, which allows the exercise of liturgical ministry when the deacon is available and with the consent of the pastor. The parish appointment is usually his parish of residence.
- h. A deacon may not present his name for election to any public office or any other general election and he may not accept a nomination or an appointment to public office, without otherwise first receiving written permission of the Bishop. In order to receive the Bishop's written permission he must complete the *Questionnaire for Elected Offices or Political Functions of Employment for Deacons/Candidates*.
- i. A deacon may not actively and publicly participate in another's political campaign without the written permission of the Bishop.

## **2. Title**

- a. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has determined that in all forms of address, including correspondence, *the appropriate title for permanent deacons is "Deacon". (National Directory, 88)*. These norms do not apply to transitional deacons, unless the universal law indicates otherwise.

## **3. Attire**

- a. The alb, stole and dalmatic are usual liturgical vestments for deacons.
  - i. When deacons are present as a body, for liturgical celebrations and not assisting in the sanctuary, they are expected to wear the alb and stole alone, without the dalmatic.
  - ii. The cassock, surplice and stole may only be used liturgically when serving as a master of ceremonies or when specifically foreseen by the rubrics (e.g. presiding at baptisms, Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Liturgy of the Hours, and funerals and weddings outside of Mass).
- b. Certain pastoral situations suggest that the permanent deacon be clearly identified as Catholic clergy. Therefore, a grey clerical shirt with a diaconal symbol (with or without the collar) may be worn only in the following situations:
  - i. Ministering to the incarcerated
  - ii. Ministering at a nursing home
  - iii. Ministering full-time in a hospital
  - iv. Presiding at a wake service, funeral liturgy outside of Mass or a committal.
  - v. In other settings only as directed by the Diocesan Bishop<sup>1</sup>
- c. Deacons may not wear a clerical shirt of any other color than grey.
- d. The clerical collar will not be worn under any other circumstance.

## **4. Faculties**

- a. Deacons must receive faculties from the Bishop of Lafayette, prior to exercising any regularly assigned ministry within the Diocese.

## **5. Appointment**

- a. The Letter of Appointment, issued by the Bishop, is used as the framework for the ministerial agreement between the deacon and pastor/supervisor.
- b. To exercise ministry in a stable manner, the deacon must receive permission from the Bishop (or his designee, the Director of Permanent Diaconate). The typical term of appointment is five (5) years.

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<sup>1</sup> Cf, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* Chapter 2, Section VI, Paragraph 89.



- c. To perform ministerial duties on specific occasions, outside of his stable assignment, the deacon must have the permission of the pastor/supervisor of the parish or entity in which the ministry is to be performed.


## 6. Retirement

- a. A deacon, three months prior to reaching the age of seventy-five (75) will submit a letter of resignation to the Bishop.
  - i. In the letter of resignation, the deacon can request an extension of his active ministry which the Bishop will consider on an individual basis.
  - ii. The Office of Permanent Diaconate will remind and assist the deacon in generating the resignation letter.

## PART II: SPIRITUAL LIFE

- a. In keeping with canon law and the USCCB norm, the deacon is obliged to recite daily, at least, *Lauds* (Morning Prayer) and *Vespers* (Evening Prayer) of the *Divine Office* (Complimentary Norm, can. 276, §2, 3°). Praying the full Liturgy of the Hours is encouraged.
- b. The deacon will devote himself to the daily reading and meditation on the Word of God and the frequent reception of the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist and the Sacrament of Penance.
- c. The deacon is to take part in an annual canonical retreat offered by or approved by the Office of Permanent Diaconate. (can. 276, §4)
- d. The deacon is expected to seek out and regularly meet with a spiritual director, who can assist him in his vocation to holiness, ongoing conversion, growth in the traits proper to the spirituality of the deacon, drawing on the writings of classical spirituality and the example of the saints, and a balanced synthesis of his state of life, his profession and the ministry.

Approved

  
Most Reverend J. Douglas Deshotel

Date





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