



Deacon Life Handbook Diocese of Crookston

Promulgated December 26, 2025

www.crookston.org/permanent-diaconate



“Select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom... They presented these men to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them” (Acts 6:3,6)

Peace in Christ be with you, my brother Deacon!

From the beginning of the Church worthy men like you have been chosen and, through the laying on of hands, given a special share in the Apostolic Ministry. This ministry has configured your soul, through the sacramental character of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, to the ministry of Christ the Servant. All are called to service in the Church. However, “in a special way, the deacon is to represent the specific diaconal dimension of all church ministry, the servant of Jesus Christ in the Church.” (*Lumen gentium*, 29) Deacons are “ordained not for priesthood but for service of the bishop, to carry out the tasks he gives them” (*Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus).

I hope that you will read and study this handbook carefully and seek to live it out. This ministry, to which you are called is not just a function in the Church, nor is it merely an extrinsic office; it is a way of living to which you are called to conform your whole life because you have been chosen and called to this special service. This is why you make solemn promises before God on the day of your ordination: to be consecrated for ministry, to discharge your office with humble charity, to hold fast to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience and to preach only what the Church teaches, to maintain and deepen a spirit of prayer and especially to pray daily the Liturgy of the Hours, to conform your life to Christ’s life, and to obey the bishop and his successors. These promises are signs of the sacred reverence with which the Church holds your diaconal ministry and the kind of man who you are called to be.

In a special way you are called to assist the order of priests and the bishop of the diocese. You exercise your ministry in hierarchical communion with me and my successors and with your pastor and the other priests of the diocese. It is important that your life witness to the unity of the Church and that we are united in ministry. Of course, you will bring special gifts and charisms to the ministry you have and we want those to flourish, but always in complementarity and collaboration with the ministry of the diocese organized by your Pastor and the Bishop. Always be careful to receive appropriate permissions and direction for your ministry, as this handbook states.

I want to highlight that as a deacon you are called to be a man of prayer. This includes your promise made on the day of your ordination to pray morning prayer and evening prayer every day. However, this is only the foundation of your prayer life. A deacon lives life close to the Eucharist, and, whenever possible, he should attend Holy Mass daily. He should also cultivate a deep personal relationship with the Lord by spending time every day in meditation and contemplation so as to grow in deep union with God through the years. This requires daily times of silent prayer, at least 30 minutes when possible. When praying the Liturgy of the Hours, in

addition to your particular intentions I ask that you pray one general intention each day: for the spiritual renewal of the Diocese of Crookston. We must join together praying for this renewal so we can be faithful to Christ's mission in our times.

You have been given a special ministry in the life of the Church. In the years to come I see the need for deacons expanding not contracting. We will need more men, united by an apostolic conviction to share the life-saving love of Jesus Christ, to assist the ministry of priests and bishops, and to animate through service the works of the laity. You have a special call to serve those on the margins, as the origin of the diaconate shows in Acts chapter six. May you be faithful to the Gospel in every aspect of your life and be living witnesses to the love of Christ, especially to those most in need. Inspired by the many saintly deacons who have served our Church over the centuries from St. Stephen the first Martyr, to St. Ephraim the theologian, to St. Francis of Assisi the lover of poverty, may you one day, by your daily self-gift in service, be counted among their number.

Fraternally in Christ,



The Most Reverend Andrew H. Cozzens, S.T.D., D.D.
Bishop of Crookston

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I. Vision Statement

**The following is an excerpt from the
National Directory For the Formation,
Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons
In the United States of America**

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2021, Paragraphs 28-30

“The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council, taking seriously the role of the deacon to which St. Paul refers in his First Letter to Timothy, remind us that ‘those who serve well as deacons gain good standing and much confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus.’ It was for serious pastoral and theological reasons that the Council decided to restore the Order of Deacons as a permanent rank in the hierarchy of the Church.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders marks deacons ‘with an *imprint* (‘character’) which cannot be removed and which configures them to Christ, who made himself the ‘deacon’ or servant of all.’ For this level of Holy Orders, Christ calls and the Church asks the bishop to ordain deacons to be a consecrated witness to service. In his post-synodal exhortation *The Church in America*, St. John Paul II makes his own the words of the bishops at that gathering: “We see with joy how deacons ‘sustained by the grace of the Sacrament, in the ministry (*diakonia*) of the liturgy, of the word and of charity are at the service of the People of God, in communion with the Bishop and his priests.”

Ordination confers an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It configures the deacon to Christ’s consecration and mission. It constitutes the deacon as ‘a sacred minister by the Sacrament of Holy Orders. He is “consecrated and deputed to serve the People of God by a new and specific title,” with a distinct identity and integrity in the Church that marks him as neither a lay person nor a priest; rather, the deacon is a cleric who is ordained to *diakonia*, namely, a service to God’s People in communion with the bishop and his body of priests. “The principle function of the deacon, therefore, is to collaborate with the bishop and priests in the exercise of a ministry which is not of their own wisdom but of the Word of God, calling all to conversion and holiness.”

Referring to the traditional description of the deacon’s *diakonia* to the Church and the diocesan bishop, St. John Paul II observes that in an ancient text, the deacon’s ministry is defined as a ‘service to the bishop.’ This observation highlights the Church’s constant understanding that the deacon enjoys a unique relationship with his diocesan bishop. St. John Paul II clearly has in view, therefore, the reason for not only the diaconate but the whole apostolic ministry: serving the discipleship of God’s people. He notes that the deacon’s tasks include that of “promoting and sustaining the apostolic activities of the laity.” To the extent that the deacon is more present and more involved than the priest in secular environments and structures, he should feel encouraged to foster closeness between the ordained ministry and lay activities, in common

service to the kingdom of God.

In particular, “a deeply felt need in the decision to reestablish the permanent diaconate,” St. John Paul II recalls, “was and is that of a greater and more direct presence of Church ministers in the various spheres of the family, work, school, etc., in addition to existing pastoral structures.” The deacon, because of his familiarity with the day-to-day realities and rhythms of the family, neighborhood, and workplace, can relate the rich tradition of Catholic teaching to the practical problems experienced by people. Deacons, both married and celibate, serve God’s People by their witness to the gospel value of sacrificial love, a quality of life too easily dismissed in today’s society. In their secular employment, deacons also make evident the dignity of human work. Contemporary society is in need of a “new evangelization which demands a greater and more generous effort on the part of [all] ordained ministers.” This is especially an opportunity and obligation for deacons in their secular professions to boldly proclaim and witness to the Gospel of life.

II. The Deacon Formation Program

A *Vocational Discernment and Admission Policies*

1 *Requirements*

- a. Any applicant for the deacon formation program in the Diocese of Crookston must be at least 35 years of age by the time of ordination. This requirement allows of few exceptions made by the Bishop or by the Holy See. He must also be sponsored by a parish within the Diocese. If he is a convert to the Catholic faith, he must be at least 5 years professed in the faith at the time of application and be actively involved in the parish. He must be no older than 60 at the beginning of the first year of aspirancy unless the Bishop has dispensed with this requirement.
- b. If married, the applicant must demonstrate evidence of a stable marriage. This requirement may be fulfilled through letters of recommendation submitted by those who have known the applicant for several years.
- c. The applicant shall be physically healthy, mentally healthy and free of any substance dependency. It is required that he submit a testimony to his physical health.
- d. Permanent deacons must be economically stable and self-sufficient. Therefore, each applicant must have a regular source of income for supporting self and family. The applicant must also have an active health insurance policy/coverage for himself and for his family. He also must be enrolled either in Social Security or in an equivalent program.
- e. The applicant must have pastoral involvement in the parish community. Evidence of such involvement should be found in the recommendations submitted and the applicant's questionnaire. Such involvement must demonstrate not only leadership skills and an ability to collaborate well with others, but also an evangelistic spirit.
- f. While a B.A. or equivalent degree is desirable, graduation from high school or its equivalent is required. The applicant must have an intellectual curiosity and ability to grasp abstract concepts; in addition, he must have mastered basic skills of reading comprehension and writing in English.

- g. Applicants are expected to complete the necessary studies during the formation period. Complete commitment to the assigned periods of formation throughout the program will be expected. Credit for theological studies previously completed will be given only after an evaluation by the Director of Formation and then only for courses pertinent to the diaconate.
- h. Each applicant should have an active spiritual and prayer life prior to entering into the Aspirancy period.
- i. The wife of the candidate must demonstrate her support and affirmation of her spouse's decision to begin formation for the diaconate through her active participation and attendance in the human growth component of the program and the annual retreat. She must give explicit consent to each step along the formation path.
- j. The Bishop may waive any of the above requirements for legitimate and compelling reasons.

2 *Procedures for Admission*

- a. Applicants will contact the Director of Formation indicating an interest in the program. It is desirable that the applicant has had a conversation about his interest in the diaconate with his pastor before contacting the Director of Formation.
- b. Application forms will be given to the one inquiring and, if married, to his wife. These are to be completed in a timely fashion. The applicants will need to provide, with these forms, the following documents:
 - Baptismal Certificate
 - Record of Confirmation
 - Educational Declaration (diplomas and/or transcripts if requested)
 - Authorization for Criminal Background Check
 - Marriage Certificate (if applicable)
 - Decree of Nullity (if applicable)
 - Completion of Safe Environment Certification (Aspirants and Candidates must complete Safe Environment certification every year to be good standing in the

program)
Declaration of Impediments (submitted during first year of
Aspirancy)

- c. After the application forms have been submitted to the Director of Formation, he will in turn submit a form of recommendation to the pastor of the applicant's parish.
- d. The Director of Formation will then review all of the above when submitted. If the materials warrant continued support of the applicant's desire to enter the formation program, a personal interview (preferably in the home) will be arranged.
- e. The Director will interview the applicant's wife (without the applicant present) and seek her initial consent and support for her husband's participation in the formation process.
- f. Each applicant will be interviewed by an ordained deacon and his wife, who will submit their written report of the interview to the formation director.
- g. A screening committee will review the documents of application, and, if desired, conduct an interview with the applicant (and wife). They will forward their written evaluation to the formation director.
- h. After careful review of all application materials, the Director will present his recommendation to the Bishop who will make a final determination. It is then that the Director of Formation will notify applicants of a final decision for or against admission to the Aspirancy Year.

B *The Path of Aspirancy*

1 *Purpose:*

- a. To deepen the Spiritual Life of an aspirant within the context of Ecclesial life and prayer;
- b. To begin a spiritual direction relationship and understand it as a critical instrument of the spiritual life in general and vocational discernment in particular;
- c. To grow in knowledge of the nature and mission of an ordained deacon.

- d. To encounter the Formation Program and its current candidates personally as an aid in discernment;
- e. To introduce the aspirants to the discernment process.
- f. To assist the Diocese in its proper discernment of the Aspirancy class in anticipation of beginning the Theological Formation Period;
- g. At the end of Aspirancy and with the Bishop's approval, the process to complete psychological testing will begin; and is to be completed before entrance into Candidacy.

2 *Length and Curriculum*

- a. The length of Aspirancy program will be for a period of two years typically beginning in the Fall.
- b. The program of studies for the aspirancy component of the Diaconate Formation Program is as follows (subject to revisions as needed)

Aspirancy Year I:

Introduction to discernment
The spirituality and theology of the diaconate
The Liturgy of the Hours and Spiritual Direction
Discernment of missionary discipleship
Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church

Aspirancy Year II:

Spiritual growth: Orientation to the Spiritual Life
Introduction to Prayer
Human growth: Theological anthropology (wives required to attend)
Philosophy for Understanding Theology (PCJ)
Fundamental Theology (PCJ)
Pentateuch (PCJ)
Pastoral Ministry: Ministry of Charity with specific service to the poor

3 *Evaluation and Admission to the Candidate Path of Formation*

- a. In order to make a proper determination about admission to the Rite of Candidacy a number of steps will be taken during the second year of the Aspirancy program.

The aspirant will complete an application into the Rite of Candidacy and the Deacon Candidate portion of the formation program.

The aspirant will be given a full psychological screening;
The aspirant's participation in the aspirancy sessions and the coursework will be evaluated by the DLC;
The aspirant's pastor/administrator & pastoral council will be consulted for their approval;
The aspirant's wife will be asked to give her approval for entrance into candidacy;
The aspirant will provide the name of five references, (no more than one can be family members) and they will be asked to supply their recommendation.

- b. The Director of Formation will submit the findings to the Deacon Life Committee for their review and vote. Upon their affirmative vote the recommendations will be given to the Bishop (and those whom the Bishop deems appropriate to consult further) about the appropriateness of each Aspirant's continuation in the diaconate formation program. The Bishop will then communicate the decision to each aspirant as soon as possible.
- c. Those accepted for continuation in the program will be formally admitted to Candidacy through the Rite of Candidacy.

C. Candidacy

1 *Spiritual Formation*

The Spiritual Formation of the Deacon Formation Program presumes that spiritual formation is a process of growth in which an individual comes to see, realize, and allows to be brought to deeper fruition the fullness of one's inner life of grace. It is a process centered upon growth in one's faith, hope and love through an ever closer union with Christ in and through the life of the Church. Vocational discernment finds its source in understanding, appreciating and living this inner life. Therefore, candidates will participate in the following aspects of the Spiritual Formation component of the Deacon Formation Program:

- a. Continuation of the development of personal prayer and authentic private devotion as well as frequent and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church (e.g., Sunday Eucharist - and daily

when possible, Sacramental Reconciliation, Liturgy of the Hours, etc.) are expected of those continuing in formation.

- b. Active participation in all discernment seminars sponsored by the Office of the Diaconate and required of those in formation; and times of prayer scheduled during formation weekends is expected of all those in formation.
- c. Participation (wives required as well) in the annual Diaconal Community retreat (typically a weekend in the fall) is an expectation of those in formation along with their wives. In the event of an inability to participate in the scheduled retreat due to reasons deemed justified by the Director, a retreat on another occasion in the given year may be made.
- d. Ongoing involvement with a personal spiritual director, typically in at least monthly sessions, is expected of all those in formation. Due to the nature and confidentiality of spiritual direction, evaluation of those in formation does not extend into the matter of this relationship. Directors will not be requested or required to submit any evaluation of those with whom they are directing. However, the Director does reserve the right to inquire of the frequency of their meetings with their directees. Pastors or future supervisors should not act as the spiritual director. The spiritual director must be a priest who is approved by the director of formation (Exceptions for reasons of necessity must be approved by the Formation Director). Costs related to spiritual direction are the responsibility of the candidate.
- e. Active participation in the Spirituality Course(s) is expected of all candidates.

2 *Intellectual Formation*

Many of those in formation for the diaconate are married men with primary responsibilities to their families and jobs. The academic program seeks to prepare deacons to share in the apostolic ministry of the Bishop, with its three-fold focus set forth by the National Directory; namely: (I) public presiders of the Church's prayer; (II) ministers of the Word, with a special emphasis on outreach and evangelization to the un-churched and alienated; (III) ministers of service,

justice, and charity to the poor. To attain a competent level of understanding and skill for these ministries, the intellectual component of the Deacon Formation Program will be provided by the Pontifical College Josephinum's (PCJ) On-Line theological diaconate formation program. In addition, the Office of the Diaconate will sponsor any additional courses beyond the core curriculum of the PCJ in order to meet the unique needs of the diaconal ministry. These additional courses will also be required of all those preparing for diaconate ordination. Some of the academic performance expectations of candidates are:

- a. Those in theological formation must maintain the equivalent of an overall grade point average of "B" to expect recommendation for continued study as well as for the reception of the ministries of Lector, Acolyte, and finally Ordination. Failure to maintain a "B" average is grounds for termination from the Formation Program.
- b. Anyone in formation is expected to take and complete (with a passing grade – C or above) all the academic course offerings when offered so as to assure completion of the program within the established cycle of the PCJ and Formation curriculum.

3 *Human Formation*

The National Directory for the diaconate in the United States indicates that during the candidacy stage for formation of deacon candidates should continue in their formation in areas of personal awareness and the development of virtue as well as growth in their understanding of marital life (for the married candidate) and celibacy (for all candidates but especially for the single candidate). The Human Growth formation will focus on four modules: personal reflection and growth, marriage and family life, Pastoral ministry, and Missionary Discipleship.

4 *Pastoral Formation*

During this phase of formation the candidate will be involved pastoral placements on a limited basis to help the candidate understand the needs of not only their parish but also in the diocese. He should be participating in the proclamation of the word as a Lector, assisting with the preparation of Mass as an Acolyte, and learning about the

various ministries at the parish and diocesan level. He should be learning about how to exercise leadership in a parish in collaboration with and assistance to the Pastor. Special grounding will occur in the social justice teaching of the Church and in, “the study of the role of culture in human and spiritual formation.” **National Directory #135, USCCB - 2021**

For the final year of theological formation, the candidates will begin to shape the threefold ministry of word, sacrament & charity as it will be lived out after ordination. During the summer before the fourth year begins, a proposed first-year ministry agreement will be worked out between the candidate, the pastor/supervisor and the Director of Formation and will inform the focus of ministry for the final year of formation. While the Bishop will determine the candidate’s assignment upon ordination, the intention of this projected agreement and subsequent formation will allow for the future deacon and the pastor/administrator, as well as the parish, to have a clear vision of how the threefold ministry could be enacted within that particular parish community.

Candidacy Year I:

Rite of Candidacy at beginning of Year 1
Spiritual Growth: Prayer and the Spiritual Life
Human growth: Marriage and family life (wives required to attend)
Prophets (PCJ)
Ecclesiology (PCJ)
Presiding Practica: Proclamation, Baptism, Holy Matrimony
Summer Service Ministry

Candidacy Year II:

Rite of Lector at beginning of Year 2
Spiritual growth: Growth in the Interior Life
Human growth: Pastoral relationships – (wives required to attend)
Christology (PCJ)
Church Fathers (PCJ)
Sacramental Theology (PCJ)
Presiding Practica: Wake and Funeral Liturgy and Homiletics
Parish and Diocesan Ministry Orientation

Candidacy Year III:

Rite of Acolyte at beginning of Year 3
Spiritual growth: Spirituality of Worship and the Devotional Life

Human growth: Becoming a Missionary Disciple (wives required to attend)
Synoptic Gospels and John (PCJ)
Acts & Pauline Text (PCJ)
Death and Dying Ministry (PCJ)
Presiding Practica: Mass, Communion Service, Adoration Exposition and Benediction
and Homiletics
Final Year Comprehensive Seminar

Additional Requirements

This program of studies is subject to minor revisions by the Director of Formation. Candidates will be expected to abide by any programmatic revisions.

This includes the participation of the Deacon Candidates in a directed silent retreat at some point during the three years of candidacy to be determined by the Director of Deacon Formation.

D *Financial Matters*

The Office of the Diaconate arranges to pay for tuition for the classes and seminars; the individual is responsible for textbooks, overnight lodging and meals (as needed), travel and expenses for required formation weekends as well as for the required annual retreat.

The Director of Formation will invite/encourage the sponsoring parish of each participant to consider assisting in the personal expenses incurred. Anyone who would not apply to the Formation Program because of financial concerns is encouraged to visit with the Director and inquire about special arrangements.

E *The Participant's Wife*

The Permanent Diaconate is a modern-day experience of married Roman Catholic clergy. The husband who takes upon himself the lifestyle and commitment of a deacon also involves his wife and family. Not only during the formation program, but also after ordination, the wife will oftentimes be required to share her husband's gifts and talents with the larger and diocesan community. This is not always easy and demands sacrifices, understanding and generosity on her part.

To assist the formation of the future deacon and his wife, the following policies

are in place for the wives of future deacons in the Formation Program:

- 1 Wives are required to attend with their husbands those aspects of the Human growth dimension of the program which are specified.
- 2 Wives are strongly encouraged to have their own personal spiritual directors.
- 3 Wives are required to attend the annual retreat with their husbands.
- 4 Wives may audit any and all academic course and seminars which their husbands are required to take.
- 5 Wives must grant their consent to their husband's application to and continued involvement in the Formation Program.
- 6 Wives will be required to give their consent before the Church ordains their husbands to the Order of Deacons.

F *Evaluation, Recommendation, Promotion-Termination-Withdrawal*

Evaluation is an integral part of vocational discernment. A vocation is first of all a call from God, but it must be validated by the Church. The Church has the responsibility to determine the authenticity of the call through the various means made available to her through the Formation Program. Therefore:

1 *Evaluation & Recommendation*

During April of the first two years of the candidacy component, the Director will solicit input from the following people for evaluation of those in formation:

Instructor of Human Growth;
Instructor of Spirituality
All other Instructors as appropriate;
Pastors/Administrators/and-or Pastoral Council;
Deacon Life Committee
Any other whom the Director deems appropriate.

The areas of evaluation will be: personal character, prayerfulness, ability to think with the Church, collaborative sensitivities and academic ability, a sense of service and a love of the Church.

Each year, after the Director has gathered the information from those mentioned above, he will convene the Deacon Life Committee for their review and recommendation. The Director will present these results to the Bishop for his final decisions. They will then receive notice from the Director of their status within the Formation Program. The Bishop will also meet with the candidates on a yearly basis.

2 *Promotion, Termination, Withdrawal*

The reception of a positive recommendation means a reception of the following at a time appropriate to the bishop's schedule:

Rite of Candidacy: at the beginning of Candidacy Year I
Ministry of Lector: after successful completion of Candidacy Year I
Ministry of Acolyte: after successful completion of Candidacy Year II

The Scrutinies outlined in the National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons published by the USCCB will be followed before the admission of anyone to the above mentioned ministries or rites. The Scrutinies will be completed by aspirants during the first year of aspirancy.

The reception of a negative decision from the Bishop will end the person's participation in the program for the following year of formation and he will not receive the ministry to be given to those continuing. He will have the opportunity to sit with the Director and discuss the reasons for such a negative recommendation.

3 *Voluntary Withdrawal*

Viewing each year of formation as a year of graced discernment for those in formation as well as for the Diocesan Church, one may well determine

for legitimate reasons to terminate his involvement in the formation program at any point. Voluntary withdrawal by the Candidate must be via a signed letter sent to the Director of Formation who will inform the Bishop. The Director will send a confirmatory letter to the candidate and inform the candidate if he has withdrawn in good standing or not in good standing. Should he later desire to return to the program, and if he has left the program in good standing, he may later re-apply for admission to the Deacon Formation Program and credit will be considered for that time already spent in formation. If a candidate does not provide a letter withdrawing from the program, no longer participates in formation up to ordination, or fails to inform the Bishop about the reasons he is no longer participating, he will be considered to be withdrawn. Such persons will not be allowed to re-apply to the Deacon Formation Program.

G Guiding Documents

In all matters, the Program of Deacon Formation in the Diocese of Crookston seeks to implement the vision and norms articulated in: *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons* of the Congregation for Catholic Education/Clergy; *The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* of the USCCB, and the directives found in the *Code of Canon Law*.

III. Post Ordination Period

Policies: Assignments

- 1 All deacons will participate in the annual Safe Environment certification as designated by the Diocese. No deacon may participate in their assigned ministry if their Safe Environment certification is not current. All deacons from outside of the diocese who wish to minister within the Diocese of Crookston must also be Safe Environment certified.
- 2 All diaconal assignments and/or reassignments made in the Diocese are by the Bishop of the Diocese and are confirmed in a letter sent by him to the deacon.

- 3 Assignments of deacons transferring into the Diocese are coordinated with the pastor/institution and the Bishop. A deacon wishing to enter the Diocese is to formally apply via letter to the Bishop for consideration of appointment to ministry. All canonical procedures and requirements will be observed and a deacon may begin serving in ministry only after he receives a letter of appointment. The Diocese will complete a full review of the applicant's personnel file from their incardinated diocese and/or the most recent diocese in which he has served.
- 4 A deacon may request from the Bishop a transfer from his assignment for the following reasons: (I) a deacon's residence changes from the boundaries of the parish or if the distance becomes too great from the location of the agency or institution served; (II) a deacon and his supervisor are in agreement that a change of assignment is in the best interest of the deacon and/or the parish, agency or institution that he has been serving. In either case, the deacon must request a reconsideration of assignment from the Bishop in written form, explaining the reasons for the request. This letter must be submitted before the deacon ends his ministry in his assigned parish. No deacon should vacate his ministry assignment without first seeking the Bishop's permission.
- 5 Deacons may neither resign from the assignment or stop his ministry nor may pastors dismiss them from their assignment without prior approval of the Bishop.
- 6 All assignments within the diocese are to take into consideration the Bishop's expressed vision for and direction of diaconal service within the Diocese of Crookston, namely: (I) presiders of the Church's public prayer; (II) ministers of the Word, including outreach to alienated Catholics and to the un-churched; (III) ministry of justice to the poor (e.g., Corporal works of Mercy); and assist in building up marriage and family life; (IV) a diocesan ministry in an area designated by the Bishop.
- 7 Until the decree of appointment is signed by the bishop and publically announced by the bishop's office, all parties are bound to confidentiality.

- 8 Although the wife of a married deacon has already given her approval for her husband's ordination, nevertheless, she should be kept duly informed of her husband's activities in order to arrive at a harmonious balance between family, professional and ecclesial responsibilities.
- 9 In general, a permanent deacon's weekly ministry time should range from five to ten hours per week. This may vary across weeks, months and liturgical seasons (e.g. may be less in the summer given pastor expectations). This range is offered to provide deacons, their wives and supervising pastors a guideline of the diocesan expectation for ministry.

Policies: Ministry Agreements/Contracts

Job Descriptions

Annual Evaluations

Pastoral Care of Deacons

- 1 All deacons in active ministry, ever mindful of their appointed mission by the Bishop, will have a 'Ministry Agreement' form which will spell out in greater detail the assignment given him by the Bishop as it will be lived out within the context in which the deacon ministers. The Ministry Agreement form is provided by the Office of the Permanent Diaconate to pastors who should meet with the deacon and complete a yearly form as part of a yearly review of the deacon's ministry. This form should be completed and a copy sent annually to the Director of Deacon Personnel by the date determined by the Director.
- 2 Those deacons who are employed in a salaried, full-time/part-time capacity, are to have Job Descriptions and Contracts as Diocesan Policy specifies.
- 3 A Deacon's Ministry Agreement Form/ Job Descriptions and/or Contracts (whatever is applicable) shall be reviewed on an annual basis by the Deacon's supervising pastor and be adjusted to reflect the reality of the ministry engaged. The pastor and deacon shall have, at least on a yearly basis, a meeting reviewing the deacon's ministry as well as a review of the Ministry Agreement Form/Job Descriptions and/or Contract.

- 4 The pastoral care of deacons will be coordinated by the Director of Deacon Personnel with the Bishop. This should include opportunities for ongoing formation, ensuring that all deacons have a spiritual director, offering an annual spiritual retreat sponsored by the diocese, and other areas of pastoral care that may arise.

Policies: Pastoral Care of Newly Ordained Deacons

The USCCB, in its National Directory on the Diaconate, states that every diocese should have a five-year post-ordination plan for continuing formation of new Deacons. The post ordination plan for the Diocese of Crookston contains the following elements:

1. As with all men who have received Holy Orders, new deacons shall continue with one-on-one spiritual direction with their spiritual advisor.
2. A newly ordained deacon will be assigned a deacon mentor with whom he should be in communication with at least on a monthly basis over the course of the first three years. This relationship is meant to be for fraternal support and no specific agenda is attached to this relationship. The deacon mentor will be assigned by the Director of Deacon Personnel in consultation with the Deacon.
3. The newly ordained deacons shall use their continuing education account for additional on-line or other forms of formation. This must include formation in leadership as designated by the Director of Deacon Personnel (via an on-line provider). Another area of formation should be related to evangelization. As with all deacons, newly ordained deacons will engage in yearly continuing education over the course of their first five-years post ordination and this plan is to be submitted to the Director of Deacon Personnel.
4. Newly ordained Deacons should meet with their assigned Pastor on a regular basis over the course of the first three years. These meetings should take place at least every 3 months and will provide an opportunity for the Pastor to provide feedback to the deacon, allow for the deacon to raise questions or ask for guidance, and should address an area of continuing education related to ministry for the deacon. After the first three years, the deacon and pastor must meet at least on a yearly basis as described for all deacons.

5. New deacons (and wives if applicable) should participate in the annual diocesan deacon retreat and engage in other opportunities provided by the Deacon Life Committee for gathering and fellowship with the deacon community. If a newly ordained deacon will miss the annual diocesan deacon retreat he is to inform the Director of Deacon Personnel and another appropriate retreat is to be identified.

Policies: Change of Status

Retirement, Leaves of Absence, Sabbatical, Suspension

Retirement

- 1 Deacons may request retirement from active ministry at the age of 70. For legitimate reasons a deacon may request retirement at an earlier age as well. The deacon is responsible for notifying the Bishop of his desire for this in writing.
- 2 Deacons who have reached their 75th birthday are required to submit their resignation from active ministry in writing to the Bishop. The Bishop will choose either to accept this resignation or delay his acceptance of it. In either event, the Bishop will communicate his decision in a letter to the deacon.
- 3 Once retirement status has been granted, deacons are limited in ministry to participation at the Eucharistic liturgies and offer occasional ministry as requested and approved by the Bishop.
- 4 Retired deacons are entitled to full access to and communication with the Director of Deacon Personnel as well as full participation in all of the diaconal community business and events.

Leaves of Absence / Sabbaticals

- 1 An authorized leave of absence from active ministry may be requested of the Bishop in writing.
- 2 Temporary leaves of absence are granted for serious reasons: e.g., health, personal problems, family commitments, occupational disruptions, temporary dislocation from the diocese, etc.

- 3 Leaves will be granted by the Bishop for a period of time agreed to by the deacon and the Bishop. This period of time will be subject to periodic review by the Bishop.
- 4 An extension beyond the agreed upon time for a leave must be requested of the Bishop in writing. The reasons for the extension must be clear and compelling.
- 5 Canonical faculties will be withdrawn for the period of the leave granted.
- 6 Deacons may request a sabbatical from their diaconal ministry for study and development. The deacon should submit a request in writing and propose a course of study to be undertaken during the sabbatical. The Bishop may also assign areas of study or formation to a Deacon on sabbatical. Canonical faculties may or may not be withdrawn for the period of the sabbatical or they may be modified to some degree.

Suspension

- 1 Canonical suspension affects only clerics. Suspensions forbid:
 - Either all or some acts of power of orders;
 - Either all or some acts of the power of governance;
 - the exercise of either all or some rights of functions which are attached to an office.
- 2 Suspensions would occur only for very grave reasons.

Policies: Compensation and Benefits

As noted in the National Directory “Permanent deacons are to take care of their own and their family’s financial needs (e.g., housing, health insurance, retirement) using income derived from their full-time employment by the diocese, parish, or secular profession.” **National Directory #100, USCCB - 2021**

Without distinction, deacons in active ministry to a parish or institution shall be compensated for at least the following:

Annual Continuing Education:	\$ 900.00 (note: increase from \$750)
Annual Retreats:	\$ 500.00
Mileage Allowance for Parish Work:	Per Diocesan Rate

It is the responsibility of the pastor and finance council of the parish to see that at least these basic compensations are annually budgeted for each deacon assigned to service in that parish.

Policies: Continuing Education

- 1 Every deacon with an assignment to active ministry in the Diocese of Crookston is required to conscientiously participate in ongoing, formal continuing education each year.
- 2 The Director of Deacon Personnel, on behalf of the Bishop, has the responsibility of calling for an accountability from each deacon as to his commitment to this requirement. Deacons are expected to submit a yearly review of their continuing education to the Director of Deacon Personnel when their annual ministry agreement form is submitted to the Director of Deacon Personnel. This review should also include what the deacon's plans are for continuing education for the next year. This plan should be discussed with his pastor so that the pastor can provide feedback before it is submitted.
- 3 The Director of Deacon Personnel, with the Bishop's approval, has the discretion of determining what constitutes appropriate material for submission of recognition of continuing education hours. Deacons should participate in 10 to 20 hours of continuing education per year. This may consist of on-line classes, workshops/conferences, or study of materials related to his ministry. One hour of formal continuing education consists in one clock hour of active learning, e.g.,

attendance at a lecture, demonstration, presentation or study of material.

- 4 Appropriate educational opportunities are those which in some way will advance a deacon's ability to serve in the mission and ministry of the Church assigned to him.
- 5 It is a moral, as well as a professional, failure not to take these minimal requirements of continuing education seriously. If a deacon persists in a pattern of disregard for these requirements, the Director of Deacon Personnel will alert the Bishop for appropriate action.
- 6 An annual retreat is required of deacons. It is an expectation that deacons (with their wives) will make the regularly schedule Diocesan Retreat for Deacons. If attendance at the Diocesan Retreat is simply not possible, a deacon will arrange for an appropriate time and place for a retreat at another time. The deacon will have the responsibility of informing the Director of Deacon Personnel of his compliance.

Policies: Faculties

Faculties are granted by the bishop to the deacon upon ordination or incardination. The faculties which the deacon will exercise within his parish, agency or institution may be all or only some of those granted by the bishop. The pastor/supervisor, in consultation with the deacon decides which of the permissible faculties will in fact be exercised in the parish, agency or institution of his/her charge.

PRELIMINARY NORM

The sacraments may not be refused to those who ask for them at appropriate times, are properly disposed and are not prohibited by law from receiving them. (c. 843)

1. To assist the bishop and the priest during liturgical actions according to the prescripts of the liturgical norms.

BAPTISM

2. To administer the sacrament of Baptism to children (under 7 years of age since after that the child is to be fully initiated). You may also supply the ceremonies which may have been omitted when the full ritual was unable to be used, such as when it was administered in an emergency. In such cases, the Rite of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church is to be used.

a) Outside a case of necessity, baptism is to be celebrated in a church or oratory (c. 857.1). Outside of danger of death, Baptism is not to be conferred in private homes, unless the local ordinary has permitted it for a grave cause (c. 860).

b) The record of the baptism is to be made in the parish of the territory where the baptism takes place (c. 877).

c) In danger of death, the deacon may baptize one, regardless of age, who desires to be baptized or is presented for baptism, using the shorter form.

EUCCHARIST

4. To distribute Holy Communion at Mass. Usually, a deacon distributes the Precious Blood.

5. To reserve the Eucharist in an authorized tabernacle, and, in accordance with the norms and relevant rituals, to distribute it.

6. To conduct the Rite of the Administration of Holy Communion outside of Mass, to bring Viaticum to the dying and to impart Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament to the people.

7. To conduct the Rite for the Administration of Viaticum and Holy Communion to the sick (N.B. Deacons cannot validly administer the Sacraments of Anointing nor Penance. Deacons must take care that in administering Viaticum and Holy Communion to the sick, the sick are given the opportunity to receive the Sacraments of Penance and Anointing from a priest if they so desire).

8. Observing the conditions of canon 844, §4, to administer Holy Communion to baptized non-Catholics who are in danger of death. (N.B. C. 844, §4: "If the danger of death is present or if, in the judgment of the diocesan bishop or conference of bishops, some other grave necessity urges it, Catholic ministers administer these same sacraments licitly also to other Christians not having full communion with the Catholic Church, who cannot approach a minister of their own community and who seek such on their own accord, provided that they manifest Catholic faith in respect to these sacraments and are properly disposed.")

9. To preside at Exposition and give benediction with the reserved Eucharist (c. 943).

THE WORD

10. To proclaim the Gospel at Mass and, at the direction of the principal celebrant, offer the homily (GIRM 175, 171c.).

11. When a presbyter is unavailable, to preside at the liturgy of the hours, celebrations of the word, and Sunday celebrations in the absence of priests where this is permitted; you may preach at the liturgies at which you preside (GILH 254; SDO 22, nn. 7-8, DSCAP 29; c. 764).

12. To preach with the consent of the local pastor (c. 764).

MATRIMONY

13. To assist at weddings in the name of the Church outside of Mass with proper delegation.

a) When a wedding takes place during Mass, the deacon is not to witness the consent nor give the Nuptial Blessing. (*Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*: “In the absence of a priest, to assist at and bless marriages...” *Rite of Marriage*, #53: “The rite described above should be used by a deacon who, when a priest cannot be present, has been delegated by the bishop or pastor to assist at the celebration of marriage and give the Church’s blessing.”)

b) A wedding between a Catholic and a non-Catholic is ordinarily to be celebrated in a Church or oratory. With the permission of the local ordinary, it may occur in another suitable place (c. 1118 §§1-3).

c) For validity, A deacon who officiates at a wedding between a Catholic and a non-Catholic must personally ask for and receive the consent (cf. c. 1108 §2). Visiting non-Catholic clergy are not to be part of receiving the vows along with the deacon. (N.B. When a deacon is invited to participate in a ceremony with a dispensation of form, he may not personally witness the exchange of vows of the couple or ask and receive the vows.)

d) When properly delegated to assist at a wedding outside of Mass when a priest cannot be present, the deacon may administer the Nuptial Blessing.

e) For validity, a deacon cannot witness a marriage where even one party is a member of an Eastern Catholic or Eastern Orthodox Church (c. 1108 §3).

f) The witnesses for marriages must meet the requirements of state law. In Minnesota, the minimum age for a witness at a wedding is 16.

14. In urgent danger of death, you may dispense from canonical form and from all impediments of ecclesiastical law except the impediment arising from ordination to the priesthood (c. 1079). If

a dispensation is granted, notice is to be sent to the Pastoral Center and the fact is to be entered in the marriage register of the parish. The promises are to be made if one of the parties is not Catholic.

15. When all preparations have been made for a wedding, including a “validation”, if an impediment is discovered and there is not time to consult the Pastoral Center or the Pastor without probable danger of grave harm, you may dispense from occult impediments of ecclesiastical law, except for the following: Sacred Orders, Public Vow of Chastity in a Religious Institute of Pontifical Right, Crime, Consanguinity in the Direct Line or Second Degree of the Collateral Line (cf. c. 1080). It is never possible to dispense from the natural or divine law. When a dispensation is granted, the Pastoral Center is to be notified and the wedding is to be recorded in the marriage register along with the fact that a dispensation has been granted.

16. To administer the promises and complete the Premarital Investigation. The Premarital Inventory or an equivalent instrument is recommended for all marriages. It is required when 1) one of the parties is under the age of 20; 2) when one of the spouses was in a previous putative marriage declared invalid by the Church.

17. To assist a party in the process for the validation or convalidation of marriage, for declarations of nullity and/or for dissolutions of the bond.

18. After suitable preparation, and within the limits of your jurisdiction, you may witness the wedding before the Church of a couple who, while bound by canonical form, nevertheless attempted marriage without it (sometimes referred to as a “validation”). This may be done even though the parties live in another parish or diocese.

OTHER SACRAMENTALS

19. To administer sacramentals, to bless medals and other religious articles in accord with the Book of Blessings and the Rites of the Catholic Church.

20. To distribute blessed ashes in the church and bring them to the homes of shut-ins (c. 1168).

a) Sacramentals such as blessings, blessed ashes, palms and the like may be given to those who are not in communion with the Catholic Church if they ask for these sacramentals. Catholics can share in the invocations and benedictions of ministers of a different religious community (c. 1170).

21. To celebrate the minor exorcisms and blessings of catechumens (RCIA 91, 96; OICA 109, 119).

DEATH AND BURIAL

22. To officiate at funerals and burial services in the church.

a) The Funeral Service for a deceased Catholic is typically to be celebrated in a parish church. Funeral rites for a non-Catholic may be celebrated, provided the deceased's intention was not manifestly contrary and that the deceased's own minister is unavailable (c. 1183 §3). Such services for a non-Catholic may take place in a Catholic church or a funeral home.

Funeral Services, i.e. the celebration of the Word with the Rite of Farewell, without Mass or Communion, may be held on Sundays, other Holy Days of Obligation, Holy Thursday, and the Easter Triduum when there is a positive pastoral need.

c) Catholics, by general law, are permitted to choose their place of burial. If no determination is made, their funerals will ordinarily take place in the parish church (c. 1177).

Concerning Faculties Outside a Deacon's Assignment

In those instances where a deacon may wish to administer the Sacraments of Baptism and/or Matrimony in a parish or institution other than his own, he must first obtain the proper delegation from the pastor or administrator of the parish in which the liturgy is to be celebrated. A deacon temporarily away from the Diocese and who wishes to function as a deacon in another diocese must obtain permission from his own Bishop and then the Bishop of the Diocese in which he is temporarily located, as well as from the pastor of the parish in which he wishes to function. The deacon must secure a letter of good standing from the diocese and present it to appropriate authorities when ministering outside of the Diocese of Crookston.

It is to be noted that a deacon must register his credentials to preside at weddings with the proper state institutions, before presiding at weddings. Regulations vary from state to state. Presiding at out-of-state weddings requires fulfilling the obligations of that state (e.g. possibly registering in another state with the proper secular authority, even if only for the purposes of presiding at one wedding).

Policies: Clerical Address & Attire

Clerical Title

“Although various forms of address have emerged with regard to deacons, the Congregation for the Clergy has determined that in all forms of address for permanent deacons, the appropriate title is: ‘Deacon.’” **National Directory #93, USCCB - 2021**

Concerning Attire

- 1 “The Code of Canon Law does not oblige permanent deacons to wear an ecclesiastical garb. Further, because they are prominent and active in the secular professions and society, the USCCB specifies that permanent deacons should resemble the lay faithful in dress and matters of lifestyle. Each diocesan bishop should, however, determine and promulgate any exceptions to the law, as well as specify the appropriate clerical attire that is to be worn.” **National Directory #94, USCCB - 2021**

Deacon Clerical Attire – Roman Collar

- In the Diocese of Crookston, the normal attire for permanent deacons is secular dress.
- However, when formally engaged in ministry, the deacon has the *option* to wear clerical garb.
 - As referred to in the above statement, ministry includes such things as diaconal activity outside of the parish such as:
 - visits to hospitals, prisons/jails, hospices and nursing homes
 - presiding at funeral homes home wake or funeral services
 - visible participation in charitable outreach
 - when the deacon is leading the faithful in prayer outside of the parish setting

- As referred to in the above statement, ministry also includes such things as diaconal activity inside of the parish such as:
 - OCIA or other religious instruction
 - school classroom visits
 - while assisting at Mass or other liturgies
 - or other special Parish or School events
 - Clerical garb for a permanent deacon engaged in ministry is a gray clerical shirt with Roman collar. The wearing of a black clerical shirt with Roman collar is not permitted. When wearing a Roman collar, the deacon should not wear a deacon cross hanging around his neck. He may wear a deacon pin on his coat lapel.
 - A permanent deacon shall not wear clerical attire while engaged in the pursuit of his secular profession or when involved in personal or leisure activities, either when alone or with his family.
- 2 “The dalmatic, in appropriate liturgical colors, together with the alb, cincture and stole, constitutes the liturgical dress proper to deacons.” **DMLPD #30 as cited in the National Directory #89, USCCB - 2021**

Policies: Times for Liturgical Vesting &

Seating/Processing for Deacon’s Families

- 1 It is required that deacons wear appropriate liturgical vesture whenever they serve in their assigned liturgical ministries proper to a deacon or whenever they preside at a Liturgy.
- 2 Deacons should vest for a liturgy in which there is a specified role for deacons within the given liturgy, this would include helping with the distribution of Holy Communion. As ordinary ministers of Holy Communion, deacons should assist before extra-ordinary ministers are used. Deacons assisting with Holy Communion should vest in an alb and stole.

- 3 In the Diocese of Crookston, deacons will be invited to vest and process at all major diocesan liturgies, including but not limited to: ordinations, Chrism Mass, funerals of bishops, priests, deacons or deacon's spouses. The Bishop may also name other liturgical events which he deems appropriate to have the deacons vested. If there is confusion about any one event and diaconal vesting, the Director Deacon Personnel is to be consulted and he will consult the Bishop.
- 4 When deacons are vested for liturgy and are seated as one, accommodations will be made for a special section to be set aside for deacons' wives and their family members. This, however, is dependent upon the circumstances of space and time. It is the responsibility of the Director of Deacon Personnel to contact the appropriate people to make these arrangements, if possible. Also, wives and family members of deacons who will receive Holy Communion will do so at the Communion Rite with the rest of the worshipping assembly.

Policies: Public Witness and Political Involvement

Concerning Public Witness

"Deacons are obliged to submit to their local ordinary for permission to publish any written materials concerning faith and morals. The permission of the local ordinary is required before writings are submitted to newspapers, magazines or periodicals. Deacons are required to adhere to the norms established by the USCCB when participating in radio or television broadcasts and must adhere to diocesan policies when participating in public media and in discourse on the Internet." **National Directory #87, USCCB - 2021**

Participation in Political Office

"A deacon may not present his name for election to any public office or in any other general election, or accept a nomination or an appointment to public office, without the

prior written permission of the diocesan bishop. A permanent deacon may not actively and publicly participate in another's political campaign without the prior written permission of the diocesan bishop." **National Directory #96**

Policies: Death and Funerals

- 1 On the occasion of the death of a deacon or a deacon's wife, the pastor or the family should notify the Chancery of the Diocese and the Director of Deacon Personnel as soon as it is convenient.
- 2 The Bishop or his delegate will then communicate the relevant information regarding funeral arrangements to priests, pastoral administrators, and all deacons.
- 3 The wishes of the family must always be respected in the planning of the funeral liturgy, to the degree that they are in accord with the universal and particular norms of the Church. In making preparations, the family is asked to remember the sacred dignity of the deacon's ordination and make fitting choices in accord with that dignity.
- 4 Deacons are entitled to be buried in the traditional liturgical vesture of deacons (i.e., alb, stole/dalmatic). If a family prefers a suit rather than the diaconal attire, this request is to be respected.
- 5 Deacons are required to maintain current funeral and burial instructions. A copy of this plan is to be kept in the deacon's file at the Chancery.
- 6 Families of deceased deacons are encouraged to consider incorporating other deacons of the Diocese into the ministries of the funeral liturgy, e.g., readers, Eucharistic Ministers, Deacon of the Word, Deacon of the Altar, etc.
- 7 The Diocese/parish does not accept responsibility for any financial burden incurred with the funeral and/or burial of deacons.

- 8 In matters which need resolving or mediation concerning the funeral of a deacon, the family is urged to communicate with the Director of Deacon Personnel.

IV. Various Advisory Bodies

Diaconal Life Committee (DLC) **Mission Statement and By-Laws**

Mission Statement

The Diaconal Life Committee, which serves at the discretion of the Bishop through the work of his Director of Deacon Personnel, seeks to: (i) support marriage and family life within the diaconate; (ii) promote the personal and ministerial well being of the deacons; (iii) provide an organizational structure that supports the diaconal community within the Diocese of Crookston. The DLC Committee serves the Bishop and his Director of Deacon Personnel and Director of Deacon Formation in an advisory capacity to shape diaconate formation policies and to serve as advisors to the admission of candidates to Aspirancy and Candidacy as well as each step of the candidates' continued formation until a final recommendation is given before ordination to the diaconate.

By-Laws of the DLC

Purpose

- 1 **Support Marriage and Family Life**
The DLC will develop strategies that will support marriage and family life within the diaconal community.

- 2 **Promote the Personal and Ministerial well-being of the deacons**
The DLC will function as an informational resource for the deacon community regarding continuing education opportunities;
The DLC will be asked periodically to review the mission of the diaconate as articulated by the Bishop and associated policies as affects the life and ministry of deacons;
The DLC will commit a portion of each meeting to formational study and discussion among its members;
The DLC will assist the Director of Deacon Personnel with the Bishop in providing an Annual Retreat for the diaconal community;
The DLC may make suggestions to the Director of Deacon Formation regarding the curriculum of the Deacon Formation program.

- 3 **Provide a Supportive Organizational Structure**

The DLC will welcome the presence and input of all members of the Crookston diaconal community at its meetings;
The DLC will actively seek the counsel and thoughts of the members of the diaconal community before its scheduled meetings;
The DLC will seek creative ways to be of service to the needs of the diaconate community.

Membership, Terms and Elections

1 Membership:

The Bishop of the Diocese of Crookston;
The Director of Deacon Personnel and the Director of Deacon Formation
(these two positions may be held by the same individual and, in this case, only this person would be a member of the DLC).
Four elected ordained deacons of the Diocese of Crookston;
Two elected wives of ordained deacons from the Diocese of Crookston.

2 Terms:

Terms of Office for elected members shall be for a period of three years;
No member shall serve more than two full consecutive terms.

3 Elections:

The rules of the election shall be established by the DLC and announced to the diaconal community;
The voting members of the diaconal community shall be clarified by the DLC when there is a question. Voting members, however, shall always include: (i) incardinated deacons of the Diocese of Crookston; (ii) the wives of deacons (living or deceased); (iii) any deacons ministering within the Diocese of Crookston with the benefit of faculties from the Bishop of Crookston.
Elections will be held annually on the DLC.
The manner in which regular elections take place shall be by the determination of the DLC. The DLC must see to it that every voting member has an opportunity to vote and that the time and place of the elections be clearly announced to all voting members.
Notification of election results must be given to the Bishop as soon as is reasonably possible. The Bishop must approve each candidate elected and appoint them to the DLC.

Leadership within the DLC

The DLC shall be led and convened by a chairperson to be chosen among the elected members.

The DLC shall choose one of their members to keep minutes and send out summaries of each meeting to the members of the diaconal community.

The manner of selection of the leadership positions of the DLC is to be determined by the whole of the committee.

Meetings

The DLC will meet not less than twice a year.

Agendas for each meeting will be sent by the chairperson of the DLC.

Minutes of the meetings will be diligently kept and summaries of the contents of the meetings sent to the voting members of the diaconal community.

The manner of conducting the business of a meeting will be at the discretion of the chairperson.

No meeting of the DLC may occur without the knowledge and permission of either the Bishop or the Director of Deacon Personnel and Director of Deacon Formation

Role in Deacon Candidate Formation

The Committee serves in this capacity under the authority of the Bishop of Crookston. The Committee serves by seeking the compliance of the Diaconate Formation Program of The Diocese of Crookston with the Congregation for Catholic Education & the Congregation for the Clergy's *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons* [BNFPD] and *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons*; as well as the USCCB's *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*; as well any particular law established for the Diocese of Crookston.

Each year the Committee will be invited by the Director of Deacon Formation to review relevant formational data (established by the formation program itself) in order to formulate a recommendation for the continuation or termination of each candidate in the program. The Committee will seek to formulate a recommendation through prayer, dialogue and consensus. When consensus is not clearly established, the chairperson or the Director may require a vote of the members. The final recommendation for each candidate must be certified by the

chairperson in writing. The Director will then share the recommendations with the Bishop who will make a final determination for each candidate.

V. Form for Impediments to Holy Orders Review

The approved form used for the review of the impediments to Holy Orders for the permanent diaconate is available from the Director of Deacon Formation.