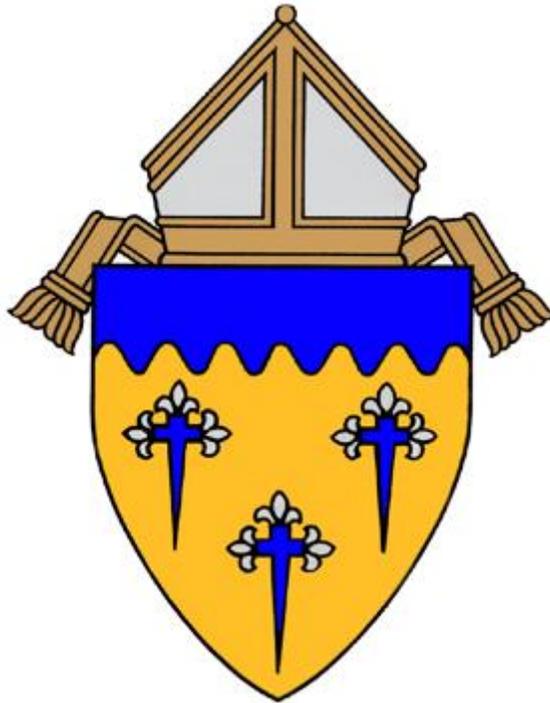


DIOCESE OF SUPERIOR



HANDBOOK

for

Permanent Deacons

February 2026

Version 3.7

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Introduction

Authority and Applicability

1. The *Handbook for Permanent Deacons* is issued under the authority of the Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Superior.
2. The guidelines found in this handbook apply to all Permanent Deacons who are incardinated in the Catholic Diocese of Superior. It also applies to any Permanent Deacon who is incardinated in another diocese, maintains a seasonal or permanent residence in this diocese, and is engaged in any ongoing ministry in this diocese.
3. This handbook was developed as a reference for Permanent Deacons ordained and/or ministering in the Diocese of Superior. The guidelines contained herein have been approved by Bishop Peter Christensen and they adhere to the directives included in the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*.
4. This handbook should be viewed as a living document, one that will continue to be revised as the diaconate continues to evolve in the Diocese of Superior and in the Universal Church.
5. For information on the selection of candidates and the deacon formation process, please contact the *Director of Deacon Formation*.

History of the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Superior

6. The Permanent Diaconate was established in the Diocese of Superior by the Most Reverend George A. Hammes in 1978. The formation program, after preliminary approval by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on the Permanent Diaconate on November 28, 1979, was officially approved by Most Rev. George A. Hammes, on January 22, 1980. The first Permanent Deacons in the Diocese of Superior were ordained in 1986.

Office of the Permanent Diaconate

Office Responsibilities

7. The responsibilities of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate are shared by the Director of Diaconal Life and the Director of Deacon Formation. The office assists the Bishop by explaining the definition and role of the Order of the Permanent Diaconate to the faithful in the diocese, by identifying and encouraging men of the diocese to discern whether they might have a calling to serve God and Church as a member of the permanent diaconate, by providing input in the selection and formation of men for the permanent diaconate, and by providing support and pastoral care for ordained Deacons and their families as directed by the Bishop and in compliance with the guidelines provided in the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of the Permanent Deacon in the United States*.

Director of Deacon Formation

8. Men from the Diocese of Superior who have completed the application process and have been admitted into the deacon formation program will participate in the Diocese of La Crosse Deacon Formation Program.
9. The Director of Deacon Formation is also responsible for developing and overseeing the following activities and programs within the Diocese of Superior: to disseminate general information about the Order of the Permanent Diaconate and to recruit men who may have a calling to ordination into the permanent diaconate; to administer the pre-Application questionnaire to men who might be interested in applying to the deacon formation program and to interview their families; to work with the bishop to determine the prerequisites that men must meet before they begin the application process; to maintain communications and to collaborate with the Diocese of La Crosse Office of Deacon Formation as appropriate during the application and formation of men from our diocese; to oversee the implementation of the pastoral service contracts of men in formation and assist their pastors in this process and to establish and implement those procedures and interviews necessary to evaluate aspirants' readiness for reception of the Rite of Candidacy and candidates' readiness for ordination to the Order of the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Superior.

Director of Diaconal Life

10. The role of the Director of Diaconal Life is to assist the Bishop in his supervision of the spiritual and personal welfare of ordained Deacons, their spouses and their families, especially Deacons or members of their families who are ill, and Deacons who are on a ministerial leave of absence. He shall assist the Bishop by offering support to "retired" Deacons, Deacons who are widowed, widows of deceased Deacons, and their families. The director will support the married Deacon and his spouse as needed for the sustenance of their marriage.

11. The director will design and implement a support system and continuing education program for Permanent Deacons. The director will also design and implement a Deacon Mentor program for all newly ordained Deacons during their first three years post-ordination.
12. The director will provide opportunities for the continued formation of ordained Permanent Deacons and their wives. The director will collaborate with members of the diocesan staff and members of the diaconate community as appropriate to plan, develop, and coordinate programs that meet the needs and interests of the diaconate community. Care should be taken that the topics are interesting, timely and pertinent for Deacons ministering in the Diocese of Superior.
13. The director will prepare budgets and determine allocation of funds for programs, staff, supplies, equipment, and other expenses in a manner that assures that the Office of Diaconal Life will operate in an efficient and cost-effective manner.
14. The director will plan an annual spiritual retreat for all ordained Deacons in the diocese. This retreat will be designed to include Deacons' wives and Deacon's widows.
15. The director will assist the Bishop in his preparation of a *Letter of Appointment* to identify the parish or institution where each "active" Deacon will serve in the diocese. The director will meet with each Deacon and his wife, if married, and that Deacon's Priest Supervisor to draft a *Pastoral Service Agreement* which will outline the Deacon's volunteer ministry both in the parish-institution and in the community at large. This agreement will be presented to the Bishop for his approval. The director will minister to Deacons in their assigned ministries by conducting regularly scheduled correspondence between the Office of Diaconal Life and the Deacons and their families, by visiting with Deacons and their families as requested or deemed necessary and appropriate, by reviewing and evaluating diaconal assessments, and by making appropriate recommendations to the Bishop regarding Deacons' ministries and assignments. The *Pastoral Service Agreement* should be rewritten at least every five years or sooner if the Deacon wishes to make a significant change in his ministry or when his Pastor or Priest Supervisor is changed.
16. The director will develop, draft, and update the *Diocese of Superior Deacon Handbook* and distribute it to all Deacons in the diocese.
17. The director will maintain those channels of communication necessary to share information about events and happenings that impact the diaconate community, be available to answer questions and address concerns from the diaconate community, and seek comments, advice and consultation from Deacons and/or their wives.
18. The director will collaborate with diocesan Administrative Services Coordinator of Catholic Formation to verify that all men in deacon formation and all Deacons with active ministries in the Diocese of Superior are in compliance with the Bishops' *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.

19. The director will assist the Bishop as requested in the Incardination, Excardination, Suspension, Reinstatement and Laicization of Deacons in the diocese. The director will review and make recommendations to the bishop regarding requests made by Deacons for a Leave of Absence and for their return to active ministry.
20. The director assures that the Personnel Files for all ordained Deacons incardinated or serving in the diocese are properly maintained.
21. The Director of Diaconal Life participates in the interview and evaluation process for men in deacon formation as requested.

Deacon Boards

22. The Admissions Interview Board shall serve as requested by the Director of Deacon Formation to interview and evaluate men who are seeking entrance into or advancement within the Permanent Deacon Formation Program, especially prior to admission to the Rite of Candidacy and ordination.

Deacon Committees

23. Temporary committees may be formed as deemed necessary by the Director of Deacon Formation and/or the Director of Diaconal Life.

Diaconal Ministry

The Deacon in Church Ministry – A General Overview

24. At the very center of his diaconal ministry, the Deacon acts as a witness and guide in the Church's ministry of charity and social justice. As examples of this ministry, the Deacon may participate in an outreach ministry by serving in a charitable or social justice organization or by serving as a member or leader of a parish social justice committee. He may provide pastoral care to the homebound or may participate in hospital, nursing home or prison ministries.
25. The Deacon acts as a sanctifier in the Church's ministry of liturgy and sacrament. In this ministry, he functions as Deacon at weekend, holy day, and other special liturgies. Other liturgies for which the Deacon is authorized include presiding at solemn baptisms, witnessing marriages, and taking viaticum to the dying. He may preside at vigil services, funerals outside Mass and committals. He may also preside at prayer services with communion and at Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and at special prayer services including, but not limited to, Liturgy of the Hours, prayers for the sick and dying, and public rites of blessing.
26. The Deacon acts as an evangelizer and teacher in the Church's Ministry of the Word. In this ministry, the Deacon proclaims the Gospel during the Mass and at other liturgies where he is presiding. He may welcome new members of the faithful by leading or assisting in their formation in the OCIA program. He may serve as a catechist or may provide religious formation for those preparing for the reception of the sacraments. He may serve in a leadership role in retreats, evangelization and renewal programs, and in outreach programs directed toward alienated Catholics. He may also serve as a counselor or spiritual director to the extent that he has been properly trained. Because the Deacon represents Christ the Servant, he is especially called to proclaim the Word by living his life in a way that witnesses to the Gospel's empowerment in his own life. By doing so, he challenges those around him to also participate more fully in the Church's Sacraments and ministries of charity and social justice.

Diaconal Ministry in the Diocese of Superior

27. All Deacons who are ordained in the Diocese of Superior will serve in the diocese at the pleasure of the diocesan Bishop. Deacons will carry out their assigned ministry under the oversight and direction of a Priest Supervisor.
28. The Bishop makes the final determination for the assignment of each Deacon and issues a *Letter of Appointment*. Although most Deacons will be assigned to a particular parish or cluster, assignments to

other institutions may be made as deemed appropriate. Deacons serving on other institutions may also be assigned to parish ministry if requested or approved by the local Pastor.¹

29. After the *Letter of Appointment* has been issued, the Director of Diaconal Life will meet with the Deacon and his wife, if married, and the Deacon's Supervising Priest to draft a *Pastoral Service Agreement*. This agreement provides a general overview of the Deacon's volunteer ministry in the assigned parish or institution and the local community.²
30. All Deacons incardinated in the Diocese of Superior who provide any type of ministry are required to be in compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. Deacons incardinated in another diocese who provide any type of ongoing ministry in the Diocese of Superior are also required to be in compliance with the Diocese of Superior *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*.³
31. Deacons may be employed by a local parish or cluster. Consultation by the Pastor with the Bishop or Director of Diaconal Life is required prior to this employment. Similar consultation is also required prior to the termination of a Deacon's employment at a parish.

Letter of Appointment

32. A *Letter of Appointment* is issued by the Bishop to all *active* Deacons in the Diocese of Superior. This document identifies the parish or other institution in which and from which the Deacon will provide his diaconal ministry. Several factors are considered in the selection of the site where the Deacon's ministry will be based. The appointment will be within reasonable proximity to the Deacon's residence. The talents and abilities of the Deacon are compared to the needs of the Pastor, parish and community. The appointment must offer flexibility so that the Deacon can meet his family, work and personal needs. Input will be gathered from the Deacon and his wife if married, the Pastor of his parish, the Priest who would be his Priest Supervisor if the appointment were to be at a parish other than his home parish or a non-parish institution, the Director of Diaconal Life, and the Director of Deacon Formation if appropriate.
33. A copy of each Deacon's current *Letter of Appointment* will be maintained in his personal file. A new *Letter of Appointment* will be drafted if the parishes included in the cluster where the Deacon is serving are changed or if the Bishop reassigns the Deacon to a different parish or institution within the Diocese of Superior.⁴
34. A *Letter of Appointment* may be granted by the Bishop to a Deacon who is incardinated and in good standing in another diocese, who has established either a primary or seasonal residence in the Diocese of Superior and who wishes to provide ongoing diaconal ministry within the Diocese of Superior. The Deacon requests a *Letter of Appointment* by contacting the Director of Diaconal Life. Upon receiving a *Letter of*

¹See *Letter of Appointment*, ¶32-35.

²See *Pastoral Service Agreement*, ¶41-47.

³See *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*, ¶62-69.

⁴See *Reassignment to another Parish or Institution within the Diocese*, ¶48-50.

Appointment, this Deacon receives the same rights and is subject to the same obligations as an *active* Deacon incardinated in the Diocese of Superior.⁵

35. A Deacon is not to begin his diaconal ministry or begin serving in a particular assignment until he has personally received a *Letter of Appointment* from the Bishop. There should be no public announcement or discussion of a Deacon's assignment until the assignment letter is received.

Faculties

Overview

36. The Bishop of Superior grants faculties to each Deacon individually. The faculties that have been granted by the Bishop will be named in the Deacon's *Letter of Appointment*.
37. It is understood that the Deacon will exercise the Ministry of the Order of Permanent Deacon in accord with the directives and rituals given in approved liturgical books.
38. These faculties will be exercised under the direction and supervision of the Priest Supervisor with whom the Deacon has his *Pastoral Service Agreement*. With the approval of the Deacon's Priest Supervisor and the Pastor of the local parish, the Deacon may participate in a rite or liturgy in another parish within the Diocese of Superior.
39. These faculties remain in effect until revocation or the Deacon's departure from the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Superior.

Individual Faculties Granted by the Bishop

40. The Bishop, at his discretion, may grant the Deacon any or all the following faculties:
 - To carry out, with the bishop and priests, those roles in liturgical rites which are ascribed to Deacons.
 - To do charitable, administrative and welfare work in the name of the Church.
 - To conduct the rite of the administration of Viaticum and Holy Communion to the sick and to share in the pastoral obligation to care for the sick.
 - To function as Deacon at Mass.⁶
 - To preside at Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.
 - To preside at weekday or Sunday communion services outside of Mass where a priest is not present in a manner consistent with diocesan guidelines.
 - To administer solemn baptism.
 - To witness marriages outside of Mass with the pastor's approval.

⁵See *Transfer to or from Another Diocese*, ¶51-56.

⁶See Appendix A: The Deacon at Mass.

- To preside over religious worship, prayer and Bible studies where there is not a Priest present as permitted by diocesan guidelines.
- To preside at Vigil Services, Funeral Liturgies outside Mass, and Burial Services.
- To administer the sacramentals of the Church in the prescribed form and as permitted.
- To impart those blessings expressly conceded to the Deacon by rite and/or by canon law.
- To present homilies at Mass and to preach when presiding at other rites.

Pastoral Service Agreement (PSA)

41. In addition to the *Letter of Appointment*, all Deacons providing any ongoing service or ministry in the Diocese of Superior are required to have a current *Pastoral Service Agreement (PSA)*.
42. The PSA provides a general, but reasonably accurate, overview of the Deacon's volunteer ministries. If he is employed by his parish or cluster, those ministries that he provides as part of his job description are not included on his PSA. These diaconal ministries vary from serving at his local parish to serving the international community. The PSA lists the Deacon's areas of service in each of the following Church's Ministries: Charity and Social Justice; Liturgy and Sacrament; and Word and Evangelization.
43. This document identifies the parish or institution where the Deacon has been assigned and names his Priest Supervisor.
44. A new *Pastoral Service Agreement* is to be drafted upon the Deacon's ordination and following his *Letter of Appointment* from the Bishop. A PSA will also be drafted for any Deacon transferring into the Diocese of Superior and wishing to serve as an *active* Deacon in this diocese. The PSA is drafted after the Bishop has granted a *Letter of Appointment*. A new PSA will be drafted whenever a Deacon has been reassigned to a different parish or institution and after the Bishop has issued a new *Letter of Appointment*. If a new Priest is assigned to the Deacon's parish as the Pastor or Parochial Administrator or if a different Priest has been assigned to be the Deacon's Priest Supervisor, a new PSA will be drafted to reflect that change. A new PSA will be drafted to reflect any significant changes in the Deacon's ministry; the request for this change may come from the Deacon, his wife or the Priest Supervisor.
45. The *Pastoral Service Agreement* is drafted by the Director of Diaconal Life after consultation with the Deacon and his wife if married, the Parish Director or Parish Life Coordinator if applicable, and the Deacon's Supervising Priest. It is important that the PSA contains only those ministerial activities that will allow the Deacon to meet his primary responsibility to his wife and family, his personal needs and his occupation or profession.

46. The *Pastoral Service Agreement* must be approved by the Deacon and his wife if married, the Deacon's Priest Supervisor, the Parish Director or Parish Life Coordinator if applicable, and the Director of Diaconal Life before being sent to the Bishop for his review and approval. After the PSA is signed by the Bishop, the original copy is placed in the Deacon's personal file.
47. The *Pastoral Service Agreement* should be reviewed and the Deacon's ministry reevaluated at regular intervals, preferably at least every three years. In addition, a review of the PSA may be initiated at any time at the request of the Deacon, his wife, his Supervising Priest, the Parish Director or Parish Life Coordinator if applicable, or the Director of Diaconal Life. This review is meant to identify significant changes in the ministry that the Deacon is offering or adjustments in the Deacon's ministry that are necessary because of changes in his personal life. The review and evaluation process should include input from the Deacon and his spouse, the Priest Supervisor, the Parish Director or Parish Life Coordinator if applicable, the Deacon Mentor if the Deacon has one, and the Director of Diaconal Life. This process is to be completed before a new *Pastoral Service Agreement* is drafted.

Reassignment to another Parish or Institution within the Diocese

48. A Deacon's request for reassignment to another parish or institution within the diocese is initiated when he submits a letter to the Director of Diaconal Life stating his request and identifying the desired destination parish or institution. The letter should also explain the need or desire for reassignment. This letter should also verify that both the Deacon's current Priest Supervisor and the Priest in charge of the destination parish or institution have been consulted and approve this request.
49. Upon receipt of the letter requesting a transfer, the Director of Diaconal Life will gather the necessary information regarding this potential reassignment. This process will include an interview with the Deacon and his wife, if married, and the Priests who would be affected by the reassignment. Other people who would be affected by this transfer may also be interviewed. The director will present all pertinent information to the Bishop and make his recommendation. All reassignments must be approved by the diocesan Bishop.
50. The Deacon and affected Priests will be notified in writing of the Bishop's decision. If the reassignment is approved, the Bishop will issue a *Letter of Appointment* identifying the Deacon's newly assigned parish or institution. A new *Pastoral Service Agreement* will also be drafted to reflect the Deacon's new Priest Supervisor and to outline his diaconal ministry in his new setting.

Transfer To or From Another Diocese

51. Any transfer by a Deacon from the Diocese of Superior to another diocese must be approved by the Bishops of both dioceses. Any transfer into the Diocese of Superior by a Deacon who is incardinated in another

diocese must be approved by the Bishop of the Diocese of Superior and the Bishop of the diocese where that Deacon is incardinated.

52. Prior to his transfer from the Diocese of Superior to another diocese, a Deacon must notify the Bishop of the Diocese of Superior of his wish to move to another diocese. The Deacon should also request a letter of introduction and recommendation from the Bishop of Superior addressed to the Bishop of the receiving diocese and a *Letter of Good Standing* from the chancellor. Copies of these documents will normally be sent directly to the Bishop of the receiving diocese. The Deacon should then contact the Office of the Permanent Diaconate of the receiving diocese to request permission to serve in that diocese. The Director of Diaconal Life (Diocese of Superior) is to be notified in writing by the transferred Deacon of any new assignment in the receiving diocese. This information will be shared with the Bishop for his review and a copy of the appointment by the Bishop of the receiving diocese will be placed in the Deacon's personal file. The transferred Deacon remains incardinated in the Diocese of Superior, his status remains *active* and he retains all rights and obligations of an *active* Deacon in the Diocese of Superior.⁷
53. A Deacon wishing to transfer into the Diocese of Superior must notify the Director of Diaconal Life by letter to confirm that he has established a residence, seasonal or year around, in this diocese and to request that he be granted diaconal faculties and a diaconal assignment in the Diocese of Superior. Documentation to be included with this written request will be the Deacon's curriculum vitae, the names and addresses of the Deacon's previous Priest Supervisors, a letter of introduction and recommendation from the Bishop of his diocese of incardination and a copy of the faculties granted to the Deacon in his diocese of incardination. Upon receipt and review of the above documentation, the Director of Diaconal Life will interview the Deacon and his wife, if married. The director will also obtain the necessary documentation and letters of reference to verify that the Deacon has met the requirements necessary to serve as an *active* Deacon in this diocese and, if not in full compliance, to identify those steps necessary to become compliant. The director will also arrange an interview with the Bishop for the Deacon and his wife.
54. After determining the suitability of the Deacon to serve in in an active ministry in this diocese, the Bishop will issue a *Letter of Appointment* to identify the parish or institution where the Deacon will be assigned and to grant the appropriate faculties necessary for the Deacon to serve in his ministry.⁸
55. After the *Letter of Appointment* has been issued, the Director of Diaconal Life will meet with the Deacon and his wife, if married, and the Deacon's Supervising Priest to draft a *Pastoral Service Agreement*.
56. A Deacon transferring into the Diocese of Superior will have the same privileges and obligations as an *active* Deacon who is incardinated in this diocese. He also retains all rights and obligations of Permanent Deacons in his diocese of incardination.⁹

⁷See *Incardination/Excardination*, ¶57-61.

⁸See *Faculties*, ¶36-40.

⁹See *Incardination/ Excardination*, ¶57-61.

Incardination/Excardination for Deacons From/To Other Dioceses

57. All ordained Deacons are bound by the obligations and enjoy the rights that come with incardination, the same as all clergy.¹⁰
58. Any Deacon transferring to a different diocese remains incardinated in his diocese of ordination. Deacons who transfer from one diocese to another are not automatically incardinated in the new diocese. Excardination and Incardination may follow a Deacon's permanent transfer from one diocese to another as outlined above.¹¹ To be incardinated in the new diocese, the Deacon must request the formal process of excardination and incardination. More information may be obtained from the Director of Diaconal Life.
59. A Deacon who has transferred to the Diocese of Superior may petition the Bishop of the Diocese of Superior for incardination into this diocese. Prior to this petition, the transferred Deacon must have resided in this diocese for at least five years, during which time he served as an *active* Deacon in a parish or institution in the Diocese of Superior and met the obligations of an *active* Deacon incardinated in the Diocese of Superior. Additionally, he will have established permanent residency within the boundaries of the Diocese of Superior.
60. Upon notification that the Bishop has received the petition from the Deacon to be incardinated in the Diocese of Superior, the Director of Diaconal Life will verify that the above requirements have been met and conduct an evaluation of the Deacon's ministry in the Diocese of Superior. The Director of Diaconal Life will present this information to the Bishop and make a recommendation. With the Bishop's approval, the Deacon completes the application process for incardination in the Diocese of Superior.
61. Upon completion of the application process and the Bishop of Superior's final approval, the Deacon writes a letter to the Bishop of his current diocese of incardination and requests a letter of excardination. This letter should explain the just causes for this request. If this Bishop agrees to this request, he grants the Deacon a permanent and unconditional excardination. This document states that this excardination is given for just cause. The Bishop of the Diocese of Superior then issues a decree of incardination. Incardination in the Diocese of Superior is complete after both documents have been executed and both Bishops have been duly notified.

Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People

62. As members of the clergy, all Deacons are mandated reporters under WI State law (S48.981). Mandated reporters "who have reasonable cause (that set of facts which would cause a reasonable and prudent person to conclude that abuse will occur or has occurred) to suspect child abuse or who have reason to believe that a child has been threatened with abuse and that the abuse will occur, are

¹⁰ See *Canon 288; Canon 273; Canon 274, §2; Canon 283, §1.*

¹¹ See *Transfer to or from Another Diocese, ¶51-56.*

obligated to report the case as soon as possible but within 24 hours, by telephone or personal visit to the local county child welfare agency, the office of the county sheriff or the city police department.”¹²

63. All ordained Permanent Deacons who are participating in any ministry in the Diocese of Superior are required to comply with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People*. A *retired* Deacon who is still participating in any ministry, even occasionally in the Diocese of Superior, is required to comply with the Charter. Ministry is defined as the participation in Liturgies or other rites; simply stated this includes any activity for which the Deacon is vested or any ministry or diaconal service, within or outside the parish setting, which includes contact with any other person regardless of age and physical, mental or emotional state.
64. Compliance with the *Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People* is coordinated and overseen by the *Diocesan Safe Environment Coordinator*.
65. All training and background checks must be completed before a Deacon is allowed to begin his ministry in the Diocese of Superior.
66. Each Deacon is given a copy of the *Parish Personnel Policies Handbook* which contains the *Diocesan Morals and Ethics Policy*; the *Morals and Ethics Assurance Statement* must be signed and returned to the parish. He is also given a copy of the *Diocesan Code of Conduct* which he is to read, complete, sign, and return to the parish. By signing, the Deacon agrees to comply with the *Diocesan Morals and Ethics Policy* and with the conditions set forth in the *Code of Conduct*, and he grants permission to have a background check conducted.
67. *Basic Adult Safe Environment (BASE)* training is to be completed by each Deacon before beginning his ministry in the Diocese of Superior. All Deacons providing any diaconal ministry in the diocese, even if occasional and regardless of whether the ministry involves children or young adults, must participate in BASE training.
68. After returning the signed *Diocesan Code of Conduct* form and the completion of a successful background check, and upon completion of *BASE* training, the Deacon will be issued a Charter Safe Environment Program ID card.
69. The *Diocesan Code of Conduct* form must be signed, a background check must be completed, and *BASE* training must be completed at least every five (5) years. An *Annual Affirmation Statement* is to be signed in the years between background checks.

¹² For more information, please see *Steps to a Safe Environment, Protecting God's Children in the Diocese of Superior*, Tab 1, p.52

Ministering Outside the Diocese of Superior

70. Prior permission must be obtained before Deacons who are incardinated in the Diocese of Superior are allowed to provide or participate in a “one-time” diaconal ministry in another diocese. Diaconal ministry includes any liturgy or rite for which the Deacon is vested and participates as clergy, the administration of any Sacrament, the faculty to preach, and participation in any other ministry directly or indirectly associated with Deacons or the permanent diaconate. This permission must be obtained both from the diocesan Bishop and the Pastor of the parish where the ministry will be provided.
71. Before this permission can be granted, a copy of the *Form to Request a Letter of Good Standing and Testimonial of Suitability for Ordained Ministry* must be completed and submitted to the Chancellor of the Diocese of Superior. The Chancellor may be contacted directly by mail, phone, or email to obtain a copy of the request form. The form may also be downloaded or printed from the Diocese of Superior website (www.catholicdos.org); on the home page click on “Administration” > “Chancellor” > “Letter of Good Standing”. The form is available at the top of the page as a PDF document that can be downloaded and completed by hand and mailed or faxed to the chancellor. There is also an online form on the page that can simply be filled out and submitted. If possible, the completed request form should be submitted to the Chancellor at least two weeks before the date the ministry is to be performed.
72. Following receipt of this written request, the Chancellor will draft a *Letter of Good Standing and Testimonial of Suitability for Ordained Ministry* which verifies that the Deacon is incardinated in the Diocese of Superior and is “a cleric in good standing and that there are no concerns, allegations or criminal convictions relating to any sexual misconduct with children or adults at risk”. This letter is then signed by the Bishop of the Diocese of Superior and a copy of the signed letter is sent to the Chancellor or the Bishop of the diocese and to the Pastor of the parish where ministry will be performed. A copy is also sent to the Deacon who will be performing the ministry.
73. Permission is ordinarily granted for one specific rite or event (e.g. a Baptism, Witness marriage, etc.) at a specific parish. If a sacrament is being administered, the person(s) who will receive the sacrament are also to be named. In some circumstances, permission may be granted for a longer time period but ordinarily the process must be repeated at least annually.

Rights and Obligations by Diaconal Status

Basic Rights and Obligations of Ordained Permanent Deacons

74. The Code of Canon Law (c. 273-289) identifies certain rights and obligations shared by all clerics. All clerics are bound by a special obligation to show reverence and obedience to the Supreme Pontiff and their own ordinary and are bound to undertake and fulfill faithfully the function(s) which their ordinary has entrusted to them.
75. In the pursuit of holiness, clerics will faithfully and tirelessly fulfill the duties of their pastoral ministry. Further, they will nourish their spiritual life through frequent, daily if possible, participation in the celebration of the Eucharist, by praying the Liturgy of the Hours daily as defined by the conference of bishops, and by making an annual spiritual retreat. After ordination, they are called to pursue sacred studies and are to strive after that solid doctrine founded in sacred scripture and commonly accepted by the Church, as set out especially in the documents of councils and of the Roman Pontiffs.
76. *The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* defines these basic rights and obligations as they apply to Permanent Deacons incardinated in any diocese in the United States. Ordained Deacons are to pray the Liturgy of the Hours, specifically the Morning Prayer (Lauds) and the Evening Prayer (Vespers). Deacons are entitled to time each year for continuing education and for a spiritual retreat. Each diocese is to establish basic norms for the Deacons' annual spiritual retreat and to define the number and types of continuing education hours that are to be completed annually by all "active" Deacons incardinated and / or ministering in that diocese. Each diocese must establish norms regarding the sources and amount of financial assistance offered to the Deacon to offset the expenses incurred in meeting these obligations. These norms, as established in the Diocese of Superior, are described below.

Status of Permanent Deacons

Introduction

77. Each Deacon who has been incardinated in the Diocese of Superior shall be defined by one of the following categories: 1) Active; 2) Retired; 3) Temporary Leave of Absence; 4) Suspended; or, 5) Laicized (dismissed from the clerical state).
78. The rights and obligations of Permanent Deacons in the Diocese of Superior will vary depending on the Deacon's status.

Active

79. All Deacons ministering in the Diocese of Superior shall show their obedience to the Bishop by abiding by their ordination promises, by fulfilling their canonical obligations and the obligations specified in this manual, and by obeying all lawful instructions from the Bishop of the Diocese of Superior.
80. The Bishop issues a *Letter of Appointment* to each Deacon before he begins his diaconal ministry in the Diocese of Superior.¹³ The *Letter of Appointment* names the parish or institution where the Deacon will be assigned. It also lists the faculties that have been granted to the Deacon by the Bishop.¹⁴
81. Deacons, incardinated in the Diocese of Superior, may wish to provide ongoing diaconal ministry in another diocese. The Deacon is required to obtain the permission of both Bishops before beginning this ministry. These Deacons retain rights and obligations of “active” status in the Diocese of Superior and may also be required to comply with the obligations of the diocese in which they serve. These Deacons are required to submit a *Deacon’s Annual Report* each year to the Diocese of Superior Director of Diaconal Life.
82. Deacons, currently incardinated in another diocese, who wish to provide ongoing diaconal ministry in the Diocese of Superior are required to obtain the permission of both Bishops. These Deacons are classified as “active” in the Diocese of Superior and, as such, share the rights and obligations of Deacons incardinated in the Diocese of Superior. These Deacons will receive a *Letter of Appointment* from the Bishop of the Diocese of Superior and a *Pastoral Service Agreement* will be drafted by the Director of Diaconal Life after meeting with the Deacon, his wife if married, and the Deacon’s Priest Supervisor.

Retired

83. In accordance with Canon Law and (arch) diocesan policies for clerics, all active Deacons in the Diocese of Superior are required to send a Letter of Retirement to the Bishop when they reach the age of seventy-five (75) years. This letter marks the end of the Deacon’s regularly scheduled ministry and releases him from some of the obligations required of “active” Deacons (see paragraphs 85-87). At the time he submits this letter, if he desires to continue his ministry, the Deacon may request permission to continue his diaconal ministry. This request should state that the Deacon’s Priest Supervisor and spouse, if he is married, have been consulted and both support the request. If the request is granted by the Bishop, the Deacon will begin retired status and continue his ministry as he wishes and is

¹³ See *Letter of Appointment*, ¶32-35.

¹⁴ See *Faculties*, ¶36-40.

able. The letter from the Bishop allowing the Deacon to continue in his ministry may place certain restrictions or expectations on the Deacon in his future ministry.

84. A request for early retirement may be submitted to the Bishop by an *active* Deacon in the diocese who has not reached the age of seventy-five (75). This written request for early retirement should indicate the reason for the request and that the Deacon's Priest Supervisor supports this request. It should also reflect the fact that the Deacon has considered the impact of his retirement on the diocese, the parish, and the faithful.
85. After retirement from active ministry, the *retired* Deacon remains a member of the clergy and, as such, is not relieved of his personal obligations as an ordained minister of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Superior. He remains obedient to the Bishop and is expected to conduct himself in a manner that reflects his status as an ordained member of the clergy.
86. Even though the *retired* Deacon retains the faculties he was granted as an ordained Deacon, he is not given a canonical assignment; he no longer has a *Letter of Appointment* or a *Pastoral Service Agreement*. The *retired* Deacon has no regularly scheduled ministry but he may occasionally engage in diaconal ministry as permitted by his schedule and his health. To do so, the *retired* Deacon is to obtain permission from the Pastor of the parish where the ministry is to take place.
87. Even though attendance is not required at an annual spiritual retreat, the annual Deacon Convocation or other continuing education events, the *retired* Deacon shall be invited to and is welcome at all such events.¹⁵ The retention of a spiritual director is not required; however, the *retired* Deacon is encouraged to continue his relationship with a spiritual director. The *retired* Deacon is not obligated to file a Deacon's Annual Report. However, he is encouraged to do so thus enabling the Office of Diaconal Life to maintain up-to-date contact information and to record his participation in Continuing Education activities and spiritual retreats.

Temporary Leave of Absence

88. Permission for a *Temporary Leave of Absence* must be granted by the Bishop. By his granting a leave of absence, the Bishop releases the Permanent Deacon from certain diaconal obligations as defined below. The duration of the leave is for a specific period of time, usually not more than one year.
89. Although the Bishop may grant a *Temporary Leave of Absence* without a written request, the process is ordinarily initiated by a written request being sent to the Bishop. This request may be made by the Deacon, his wife, the Deacon's Priest Supervisor, the Director of Diaconal Life, or the Vicar General. This letter identifies those persons who have been consulted (e.g. Deacon's wife, Pastor, Priest Supervisor, Director of Diaconal Life) prior to sending the request. It should also specify the reasons for the request; these may include personal or family health issues, current

¹⁵See *Reimbursement*, ¶126.

financial hardships, or other familial or personal circumstances. The letter should also explain how the Deacon's ministry and his diaconal obligations are being affected by his current circumstances.

90. If a Deacon is granted a *Temporary Leave of Absence*, all his diaconal faculties are suspended for the duration of his leave.¹⁶ Attendance is not required at the annual Deacon Convocation or continuing education events, however the Deacon on leave shall be invited and encouraged to attend all such events. He should fulfill his canonical obligation to attend an annual retreat.¹⁷ He is also encouraged to remain in spiritual direction. He is not obligated to file a *Deacon's Annual Report* but may do so at his discretion. The Deacon's Pastoral Service Agreement is voided. He remains obedient to the Bishop.
91. Several steps are required before a Deacon can return to active ministry after being granted a *Temporary Leave of Absence*. This process is initiated by the Deacon on leave when he submits a letter to the Bishop requesting a return to *active* status. The Bishop may require a review of the Deacon's original *Letter of Appointment*. Since the original *Pastoral Service Agreement* was voided, a new service agreement will be drafted. The Deacon may be required to attend a spiritual retreat and/or resume participation in spiritual direction. He may be expected to meet certain continuing education requirements. Other conditions may be required as the Bishop deems appropriate.

Suspended Status

92. For significant reasons, the Bishop may suspend a Deacon from participation in any diaconal ministry.
93. When the Bishop suspends a Deacon from participation in diaconal ministry, all faculties to engage in diaconal ministry are removed.¹⁸ The *suspended* Deacon may remain in spiritual direction, however he will not attend the annual Deacon Convocation, continuing education events for Deacons or the spiritual retreat sponsored by the Office of Diaconal Life unless permission to attend has been granted by the Bishop, Vicar General, or Director of Diaconal Life. The *suspended* Deacon does not file an Annual Report. His *Letter of Appointment* and *Pastoral Service Agreement* are declared void. The obligation to pray the Liturgy of the Hours remains. The discipline of celibacy also remains if the Deacon is single. The *suspended* Deacon is expected to remain obedient to the Bishop, to abide by the conditions of his status, and to respond to Bishop's requests for information.
94. The return to *active* status may be granted by the Bishop to a *suspended* Deacon if the conditions that led to his suspension are corrected. The request to return to active status, which is made to the Bishop in writing, must include evidence that the condition leading to the Deacon's suspension has been resolved. The Bishop may stipulate that the Deacon is to meet other requirements before his

¹⁶See *Faculties*, ¶36-40.

¹⁷See *Reimbursement*, ¶127.

¹⁸See *Faculties*, ¶36-40.

return to active ministry. He may be required to attend a spiritual retreat and resume active participation in spiritual direction. He may also be required to participate in specific continuing education activities. Additionally, other specific actions or conditions may be established that must be met before the Bishop agrees to restore the Deacon to active status. If the *suspended* Deacon's return to active ministry is approved by the Bishop, a new *Letter of Appointment* will be granted and a new *Pastoral Service Agreement* will be drafted.

Laicized Status (Deacons Dismissed from the Clerical State)

95. A Deacon, for grave reasons, may be permanently removed from the Clerical State. This canonical procedure is initiated at the diocesan level and ultimately completed by the Holy See.
96. The laicized Deacon is “dismissed from the clerical state”. He is relieved of all clerical obligations and all clerical rights are removed. The laicized Deacon is no longer a member of the clergy or of the diaconal community.
97. The Holy See may impose additional requirements on the laicized Deacon. The laicized Deacon may be required to move to another parish, to discontinue any teaching ministry, and to cease active participation in any and all liturgical ministries.

Deacon in Good Standing

98. A Permanent Deacon who is incardinated in the Diocese of Superior must be in good standing before receiving permission from the Bishop to provide any diaconal ministry in the Diocese of Superior.
99. Before being granted permission to participate in any diaconal ministry in another diocese, a copy of the *Form to Request a Letter of Good Standing and Testimonial of Suitability for Ordained Ministry* must be completed and submitted to the Chancellor of the Diocese of Superior. The Chancellor will then inform the Bishop and Pastor where the ministry will be provided that the Deacon is in good standing in the Diocese of Superior.
100. Only an *active* or *retired* Deacon can be a “Deacon in Good Standing”.
101. To maintain his *good standing* in the Diocese of Superior, the Deacon is expected to meet the obligations that are associated with his ordained status and follow the diocesan guidelines included in this handbook.

Ongoing Formation

Continuing Education

102. *Active* Deacons are to complete a minimum of 18 hours of continuing education annually. Deacons who are *retired* or on *temporary leave of absence* are encouraged and invited to participate in CE events but are not obligated to fulfill this requirement. *Suspended* Deacons are neither expected nor invited to participate in diocesan sponsored CE programs.
103. Several CE opportunities are provided by the Diocese of Superior. They include the Deacon Convocation and workshops offered by the Office of the Permanent Diaconate, the Annual Clergy Ongoing Formation Workshop, the School of Servant Leadership, Professional Development Days, courses and workshops offered by the *Office of Education and Catholic Formation*, and courses and workshops offered by the *Office of Stewardship and Development*.
104. Continuing education opportunities from outside the diocese are also available. Distance Learning courses are available from the University of Dayton Virtual Learning Center for Faith Formation. Certain regional or national conventions or other events may fulfill the CE requirement. Certain college courses related to the diaconate or diaconal ministry and other self-directed studies may also be used to fulfill the CE requirement. Pre-approval by the Director of Diaconal Life is required if educational resources from outside our diocese are to be used to meet the CE requirement.

Continuing Spiritual Formation

105. Several daily activities can serve as sources of holiness. Regular participation in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and attendance as often as practical at daily Mass are especially important. As part of their personal daily prayer, Deacons are required to pray those parts of the Liturgy of the Hours known as Morning Prayer (Lauds) and Evening Prayer (Vespers). Deacons are encouraged to pray Morning and Evening Prayers with the laity. The Deacon's spiritual exercises should also include various spiritual readings and other forms of prayer.
106. Deacons are obligated to attend at least one spiritual retreat annually that meets the conditions listed in ¶107. Spouses are invited each year to attend the spiritual retreat offered through the Office of Diaconal Life and are especially encouraged to attend at least one spiritual retreat every three years.

107. The Deacon's annual spiritual retreat is expected to meet certain guidelines.
- The retreat should be a withdrawal from the ordinary; it should be held at a location away from the familiar.
 - The Deacon cannot be involved with facilitating the retreat or with any responsibilities associated with running the retreat.
 - The retreat must encompass a minimum of 42 consecutive hours.
 - Mass must be celebrated at least once and preferably twice during the retreat.
 - The Sacrament of Reconciliation must be available to retreatants during and as part of the retreat.
 - Personal spiritual guidance from trained spiritual directors must be available to the retreatants during the retreat.
 - This must be a guided retreat with a Catholic theme that is designed to assist Deacons and their wives on their spiritual journey.
 - An opportunity to participate in Adoration and Benediction is recommended.
 - A healing service, preferably in the form of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, is also recommended.
108. The Office of Diaconal Life will offer at least one annual spiritual retreat for Permanent Deacons and their spouses that meet these requirements. Other spiritual retreats may be used to meet the annual retreat requirement but must meet the guidelines listed in ¶107.
109. Spiritual Direction is an integral and necessary part of the Deacon's continued spiritual formation. Spiritual direction is a relationship between three parties: the Holy Spirit; the director; and the deacon. The central purpose of spiritual direction is to identify God's Will for the deacon, to promote a deeper and more intense personal relationship with Christ, and to identify how this relationship will be shared by the deacon with those he has contact with through his ministry.
110. Each Deacon is to have a spiritual director. The Deacon should meet with his spiritual director at least quarterly. The spiritual director should be a practicing Catholic of spiritual maturity. The director should be one with whom the deacon can comfortably share his faith journey, one who can listen attentively, reflect upon, and respond to deacon's feelings and insights, and one who gently challenges the deacon to deeper spiritual growth. The spiritual director shall not be the Pastor or Associate Pastor at the Deacon's assigned parish, the Deacon's Priest Supervisor if different than above, or a member of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate staff.

Deacon's Annual Report

111. Each year all *active* Deacons in the Diocese of Superior are required to submit a report to the Director of Diaconal Life. The *Deacon's Annual Report* form will be mailed to each Deacon in the diocese in January. This form is to be completed and returned to the Director of Diaconal Life by March 1. Any change in contact information should be noted in this report. Also documented on

the report is a detailed list of CE hours completed during the previous year, the spiritual retreat(s) attended during the previous year by the Deacon, and the name of the Deacon's spiritual director and frequency of their meetings.

112. *Retired* Deacons and Deacons who are on a *Temporary Leave of Absence* are also encouraged to submit an annual report so that the Office of the Permanent Diaconate can update any changes in contact information, etc.
113. The annual report will be the Deacon's official record of participation in Spiritual Retreat(s) and Continuing Education events. This report will be placed in the Deacon's personal file.
114. The Director of Diaconal Life will contact Deacons who do not return the Annual Report or who have not met minimum CE and retreat requirements.

Other Guidelines

Attire

115. The Deacon's daily attire should be appropriate for his field of secular work. The Code of Canon Law (Canon 284) does not oblige permanent deacons to wear clerical attire. Each diocesan Bishop should, however, determine and promulgate any exceptions to this law, as well as specify the appropriate clerical attire if it is to be worn. Deacons in the Diocese of Superior have the option to wear a gray clerical shirt with Roman collar when the deacon is exercising his ministry. This includes, but is not limited to visits to hospitals, prisons/jails, bringing holy communion to the sick and visits to nursing homes; visible participation in ecumenical services; meetings with individuals, couples or classes for religious instruction, sacramental preparation or other spiritual purposes and liturgies in which the deacon is leading the faithful in prayer. When serving in a specific liturgical ministry, deacons are to wear the vesture that is prescribed in the rubrics. **The wearing of a black clerical shirt with Roman collar is not permitted.**
116. The Deacon's basic liturgical attire consists of an alb and a stole of the appropriate color. The alb and stole should be worn at liturgies, Communion services, Baptisms, funeral services and other rites including Benediction.
117. The dalmatic is optional but is especially appropriate, if available, at liturgies on Sunday and special feast days and when witnessing a wedding. The dalmatic, if used, is to be worn over the alb and stole.
118. If the Deacon is presiding at a Benediction service, a Humeral Veil is also to be worn. It is optional, but appropriate, that a cope be worn as well.
119. When participating in an Ecumenical Service, an alb and stole may be used if appropriate. A coat and tie may be more appropriate at other times.

Title

120. The proper title for a Deacon in the Diocese of Superior is: "Deacon John Smith". A Deacon and his wife are addressed as "Deacon and Mrs. John Smith". In verbal communication, the Deacon is addressed as "Deacon John" or "Deacon Smith".
121. The title, "Rev. Mr. John Smith", is not used by Permanent Deacons in the Diocese of Superior but may be used by Transitional Deacons in the Diocese of Superior.

Use of Oils

122. Deacons are to use the Oil of Catechumens and Sacred Chrism when presiding at infant baptisms.
123. The Oil of the Infirm is only used in the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, a Sacrament administered only by priests and bishops. In an effort to avoid any possible confusion regarding this sacrament on the part of the laity, Deacons are prohibited from using any oil, whether that oil is blessed or not, when praying with or ministering to the sick.

Deacon Remuneration, Support and Reimbursement

124. Permanent Deacons are to provide for their personal needs and those of their family from income derived from their own full-time employment or other personal sources of income.¹⁹
125. *Active* Deacons who are assigned to a parish are not directly compensated for their diaconal ministry. The parish will be billed directly by the Office of the Permanent Diaconate for the costs associated with the Deacon's attendance at the diocesan annual Deacons' spiritual retreat and for continuing education events, including the Deacon Convocation, that are offered by the Office of Diaconal Life. The Deacon may be reimbursed for those expenses associated with his participation in other programs designed to further his growth as a minister. This reimbursement would be provided by the Deacon's parish and is subject to the approval of his Pastor (Priest Supervisor).
126. Since the *retired* Deacon is not assigned to a parish and his attendance at an annual spiritual retreat and his participation in continuing education events are not required, he is personally responsible for the costs associated with his participation in these events. The parish where the Deacon was previously assigned may reimburse the *retired* Deacon for the cost of attending these events but is not required to do so. In case of financial need, financial assistance may be available from a diocesan "Designated Education Fund". More information is available from the Director of Diaconal Life.
127. Since a Deacon who is on a *temporary leave of absence* does not have a current *Pastoral Service Agreement*, he is personally responsible to pay for the costs incurred by his participation in a spiritual retreat and any continuing education events. The parish where the Deacon was assigned before his leave may reimburse the Deacon for the cost of attending these events during his leave but is not required to do so.
128. Permanent Deacons, whether in full-time secular employment or in paid part-time ministries are to be reimbursed for legitimate expenses incurred in their ministries. Reimbursements by the parish are subject to the prior approval of the Pastor, Parochial Administrator, Parish Life Coordinator or Parish Director.²⁰

¹⁹ See *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, ¶ 94.

²⁰ See *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, ¶ 96-2.

129. A Deacon must not require fees or encourage gifts from the faithful for the preparation or administration of a Sacrament or for leading or participating in a prayer service, blessing or liturgy.
130. A Deacon may accept a cash gift freely given in appreciation. Prior to accepting the gift, the Deacon must not suggest or specify a particular amount for such a gift. He must make it clear to the person offering the gift that it is not mandatory, and he must clarify with the donor whether the gift is to be given to the Deacon personally or is to be given to the parish. Finally, the receipt of any gift must comply with any other parish policies regarding such gifts.
131. Permanent Deacons who are full-time employees of the diocese or their parish should receive remuneration commensurate with the salaries and benefits provided for similar lay employment.²¹

Political Activities²²

132. A Permanent Deacon may not present his name for any general election to public office or accept a nomination or appointment to public office without prior written permission from the Bishop.
133. A Permanent Deacon may not actively or publicly participate in another political candidate's campaign without prior written permission from the Bishop.

Marital Status of Permanent Deacons

Married²³

134. Most Deacons in the United States are married. The love shared by husband and wife is an efficacious sign of the love of Christ for the Church. This forms the basis for the married Deacon's unique gift within the Church. The married Deacon must always remember that through his participation on both Sacraments of service, Marriage and Holy Orders, he is challenged to be faithful to both. He must live out both sacraments in harmony and balance. "By facing in a spirit of faith the challenges of married life and the demands of daily living, [the married Deacon and his family] strengthen family life not only of the Church community but of the whole of society."²⁴
135. Anyone who has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders is expressly prohibited from entering into marriage (See *Canon 1087*). Therefore, it is the norm and the understanding of all married Deacons that should his wife precede him in death or if his marriage should end in divorce, the Deacon cannot remarry.

²¹ See *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, ¶ 96-1.

²² See *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, ¶ 91.

²³ See *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, ¶ 66-68.

²⁴ Pope John Paul II, *The Heart of the Diaconate: Servants of the Mysteries of Christ and Servants of Your Brothers and Sisters*, September 19, 1987.

Divorce²⁵

136. Divorce between a Deacon and his wife can happen. The Director of Diaconal Life is to see that pastoral care is to be offered to the Deacon, his wife, and children as deemed appropriate. While this may be particularly difficult in the case of divorce, it is the responsibility of the diaconal community and the entire Church to provide consolation, understanding and direction to the divorced Deacon, his wife and his family through this painful adjustment.
137. As a general rule, a Permanent Deacon who is divorced will be asked to resign from his current ministerial assignment and take a six month leave of absence.²⁶ At the end of his leave, the Permanent Deacon will be asked to meet with the Bishop or his delegate to determine if a reinstatement of faculties is appropriate at that time or if the leave should be extended. When reinstated, the subsequent ministerial assignment (*Letter of Appointment*) may be at a new or different location from his previous appointment.
138. A Permanent Deacon, who is divorced after ordination, even if he receives a declaration of nullity, is prohibited from entering into another marriage.

The Widowed Deacon²⁷

139. For the Deacon who is married at the time of his ordination, should his marriage end through the death of his spouse, he is impeded from contracting another marriage.
140. When the marriage of a Permanent Deacon ends because of the death of a spouse, the Church is called on to minister to both the Permanent Deacon and the other members of his family. This ministry of charity includes support and comfort from the entire diaconal community and may include professional counseling and spiritual direction.

²⁵ See *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, ¶ 76.

²⁶ See *Temporary Leave of Absence*, ¶ 100-103.

²⁷ See *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, ¶ 73-75.

Celibacy²⁸

141. The obligation of clerical celibacy affects every Deacon, whether married or unmarried. A married man ordained to the permanent diaconate is obliged to maintain the chastity required of those in the married state.

142. An unmarried man who receives ordination to the permanent diaconate is obliged to live a celibate life “according to its true nature and according to its real purposes, that being for its evangelical, spiritual and pastoral motives”.²⁹

²⁸See *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, ¶ 69-72.

²⁹Pope John Paul II, *I Will Give You Shepherds*, Washington, DC, US Catholic Conference, 1992.

Death of a Deacon

Introduction

143. Since the Deacon is an ordained cleric of the Holy Catholic Church, procedures for the funeral of a Deacon are necessarily different than those for the laity. The death of a Deacon is significant, not only in the life of his family but also in his parish and in the entire diocese. An effort should be made to reflect the special relationships that the Deacon has, not only with his family but also with the diaconate community and the local and diocesan Church. Because of the nature of his diaconal ministry, his life has assumed a public dimension and both personal and community considerations should be included in the planning of his funeral. The Director of Diaconal Life, on behalf of the Bishop and the entire diocese, is available to help assure that these unique relationships with family, parish, diocese and Bishop, are reflected in the rite if his assistance is requested by those planning the funeral.
144. The Deacons should discuss his desires regarding arrangements for his Christian burial with his immediate family. The Deacon may wish to have a written record of his preferences for his funeral. If requested, this information can be kept in the Deacon's personal file.³⁰

Death Notification

145. Upon his death, the family of the Deacon should notify their local Pastor and the chancery, either the Director of Diaconal Life or the Chancellor. This information will then be shared with the Bishop and members of the diocesan staff and all members of the clergy, according to the wishes of the family.

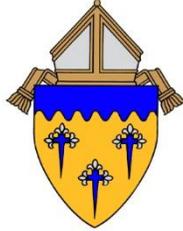
The Funeral Rite

146. Generally, the guidelines found in the *Order of Christian Funerals* are followed. If requested by the family, the Director of Diaconal Life may act as consultant to those planning the funeral rite. Cremation of the Deacon's remains is acceptable; however, if possible, his body should be present at the funeral rite. Donation of organs or the entire body to appropriate institutions for research or transplant is acceptable.
147. If practical, the vigil should be held at the Deacon's assigned parish. It may be scheduled on the evening prior and/or immediately prior to the Funeral Mass. The Pastor, another Priest or a Deacon may preside at the vigil service.

³⁰See *Appendix D – Funeral Planning Form*.

148. If it does not cause undue hardship for the immediate family, the vigil and funeral should be scheduled to allow brother Deacons and their families, and friends of the deceased and his family, to attend and participate in the funeral rite.
149. The deceased Deacon should be clothed according to the wishes of his family. If vested in liturgical vestments, he should be dressed in an alb, stole, and dalmatic if desired. If the family prefers that he be dressed in secular clothing, a Deacon stole should be on or near casket. The stole may not be worn over secular clothing.
150. The funeral liturgy should follow the norms of the rites of the *Order of Christian Funerals*. If the deceased Deacon was married, the liturgy should reflect the Deacon's dual vocation of Marriage and Holy Orders. If it reflects the wishes of the family and if allowed by the Bishop's schedule, he will serve as presider. If the Bishop is not the presider, the Pastor or another priest, if it is the wishes of the family and with the approval of the pastor, will serve in this role. The Pastor is the homilist unless another Deacon or Priest is requested and appropriate. If it is the wishes of the family, Priests and Deacons may serve as Eucharistic Ministers. The Pastor, another Priest or a Deacon may preside at the Rite of Committal.
151. A pall is to be placed over the casket during the Mass of Christian Burial. If, at any time during his life, the Deacon was a member of the military, a flag may be placed over the casket at the cemetery before interment.

Appendix A



Diocese of Superior

The Deacon at Mass

Based on the

General Instruction of the Roman Missal (2011)

and the

Ceremonial of Bishops (1989)

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Introduction³¹

General Principles

The celebration of Mass, as the action of Christ and of the People of God arrayed hierarchically, is the center of the whole of Christian life for the Church both universal and local, as well as for each of the faithful individually. For in it is found the high point both of the action by which God sanctifies the world in Christ and of the worship that the human race offers to the Father, adoring him through Christ, the Son of God, in the Holy Spirit [GIRM 16]. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that the celebration of the Mass or the Lord's Supper be so ordered that the sacred ministers and the faithful taking part in it, according to the state proper to each, may draw from it more abundantly those fruits of the Eucharistic Sacrifice of Christ's Body and Blood [GIRM 17]. The entire celebration is to be arranged in such a way that it leads to a conscious, active and full participation of the faithful [GIRM 18].

The Mass consists of two parts, the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, with these being so closely interconnected that they form but one single act of worship. There are also certain rites that open and conclude the celebration [GIRM 28].

In texts that are to be pronounced in a loud and clear voice, whether by the Priest or the Deacon, by a reader, or by everyone, the voice should correspond to the genre of the text itself [GIRM 38]. The Christian faithful, who come together as one, are to sing together Psalms, hymns, and spiritual canticles. Great importance should be attached to the use of singing in the celebration of the Mass [GIRM 39-41]. The gestures and bodily posture of the Priest, the Deacon, other ministers, and also of the people, must be conducive to making the entire celebration resplendent with beauty and noble simplicity, to making clear the true and full meaning of its different parts, and to fostering the participation of all [GIRM 42-44]. Sacred silence also, as part of the celebration, is to be observed at the designated times [GIRM 45]. The parts of the Mass and their purpose are explained in the Individual Parts of the Mass section of the GIRM [GIRM 46-90].

The duties and ministries in the Mass are found in Chapter III, paragraphs 91-111, of the General Instructions of the Roman Missal (GIRM). All, whether ordained ministers or lay Christian faithful, in fulfilling their function or their duty, should carry out solely but totally that which pertains to them [GIRM 91]. After the Priest, the Deacon, in virtue of the sacred Ordination he has received, holds first place among those who minister in the celebration of the Eucharist. For the sacred Order of the Diaconate has been held in high honor in the Church even from the early time of the Apostles [GIRM 94].

The different forms of celebrating Mass are noted in Chapter IV of the GIRM. Sections for a Mass without a Deacon and for a Mass with a Deacon are noted. Details for Mass with a Deacon are found in 171-186. Chapters V – IX of the GIRM provide additional important information pertaining to the proper celebration of the Eucharist [GIRM 3].

³¹ References in brackets refer to paragraph numbers in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 2011 (GIRM)

Reflection on the Ministry of the Deacon

A Deacon is ordained to serve the community in charity and justice. That ministry, as in the ministries of Bishop and Priest and in the Christian witness of all the baptized, is deeply intertwined with the ministries of word and liturgy. If the Deacon's primary ministry is one of service, then his action within the Mass and in all the other rites and celebrations of the Church is modeled on that diakonia. A thorough knowledge and understanding of his functions within the liturgy are important to the Deacon's ministry within the community.

The Deacon has many other ministries in which service and liturgy intermingle. For example, the Deacon has traditionally brought communion to the sick and the dying. Such visitation of those in spiritual need is as much a diakonia of liturgy as it is a ministry of charitable service.

Assisting at Mass

This document is offered as an aid for Deacons who will be assisting a Priest or Bishop during the Celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy. It is important that the Deacon understands the significance of his role in the liturgy and that he is prepared to carry out that role in a reverent and efficient manner.

In the reformed liturgy of the Roman Rite, especially as outlined in the Roman Pontifical, the Deacon always assists the Bishop, whether in the cathedral or in a parish church. Deacons assist the Bishop in all the rites of ordination, not just those of Deacons but also in the ordinations of Bishops and Priests. Deacons assist the Bishop at the altar even if Priests are present for it is not the role of Priests to assist at the altar unless a Deacon is absent [GIRM 116].

As noted above, the procedure for a Mass with a Deacon is also followed in the usual way for a concelebrated Mass. A concelebrating Priest does not assume the diaconal functions at the Mass when a Deacon is present [GIRM 116, 171, 208, 215].

One, two, (and in some special episcopal liturgies three or more) Deacons may assist at Mass.³² If there are two Deacons present, one Deacon usually assists as the Deacon of the Word and the other as the Deacon of the Altar. Unlike Priests, who often concelebrate at Mass, Deacons present but not specifically assisting would normally participate as a member of the Assembly (not vested or specially seated). However, in some liturgies, (such as all diocesan Masses or at a Deacon's funeral) a larger group of Deacons may be present and "vested but not assisting" (wearing their vestments and seated together in a special place but without the assignment of any specific assisting role).

The Deacon's role in the celebration of the Eucharist is three-fold. First, reflecting his ordination as a living icon of Christ the Servant, his role is clearly one of "assisting" the presider. He may assist the Priest by

³² At the Chrism Mass, besides the Deacon of the Word and the Deacon of the Altar, three other Deacons are asked to function as bearers of the urns containing the Oil of the Sick, Oil of Catechumens and the Sacred Chrism.

very briefly introducing the faithful to the Mass of the day [GIRM 50], by guiding the assembly with suitable instructions regarding their gestures and posture [GIRM 94], by ministering to/assisting the priest as necessary [GIRM 94], and by carrying out the duties of other ministers in their absence. Second, in his role as a cleric, the Deacon may announce the invocations if the third form of the Penitential Act is used (and may also lead the Kyrie which concludes the first and second forms of the Penitential Act), proclaim the Gospel, present the homily, function as an ordinary minister of Holy Communion (especially as minister of the chalice), and purify the sacred vessels. Third, as a representative of the people, the Deacon announces the intentions of the General Intercessions, calls the people to prayer, prepares the gifts, sets the altar, assists in the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and sends the people forth at the end of Mass.

Vesture

The vestment proper to the Deacon when assisting at Mass is the dalmatic, worn over the alb and Deacon stole. The dalmatic may be omitted out of necessity or on account of a lesser degree of solemnity [GIRM 119, 338]. It is preferable to wear a dalmatic, if available, for more solemn occasions such as Easter, Christmas, Chrism Mass, and Holy Thursday. The color of the stole and dalmatic of the vested Deacon should be consistent with that of the presiding Priest.

When assisting at Mass, the norm for the Deacon is to avoid using the orans position. The orans position may be appropriate when the Deacon is presiding at other prayer services or rites.

Ordinarily during Mass, no specific persons or objects (water, gifts, gift bearers, etc.) are blessed by the Deacon.

Preparation for Mass

Preparations for Mass are of utmost importance to the celebration. Ordinarily the sacristan and other ministers help with these preparations. However, if some or all of these ministers are unable to complete their usual tasks, the Deacon may be asked to fulfill these roles. The Deacon may then need to make certain that the necessary liturgical books, cloths, vessels and vestments are properly arranged for the celebration, that sufficient altar breads, wine, and water are prepared and that the tabernacle key is conveniently located. The Lectionary should be properly marked for the readings of the day and placed on the ambo [GIRM 117-119].

At weekend and some special liturgies, it is preferable that a *Book of Gospels* is used for the proclamation of the gospel and that it be carried in the opening procession by the Deacon of the Word. Alternatively, the *Book of Gospels* may be placed on the altar prior to the beginning of Mass. In the absence of a *Book of Gospels*, the gospel may be read from the *Lectionary for Mass*, however, unlike the *Book of Gospels*, the *Lectionary* is not carried in procession.³³

³³ See <https://www.rcbo.org/offices/images/pdfs/worship/Processing%20Lectionary.pdf> for an article explaining why.

The Ministry of the Deacon in the Celebration of the Mass³⁴

Guidelines for Masses with a Priest are in black and not indented.

Red, indented guidelines indicate where they differ slightly at a Mass where Bishop presides.

Introductory Rites³⁵

Entrance Procession

The Deacon's position in the procession/the *Book of Gospels*... Vested and carrying the *Book of Gospels* with the binding to the right and with the book slightly elevated, the Deacon of the Word walks directly in front of the Priest on the way to the altar. If the *Book of Gospels* is not being carried in the procession, the Deacon (as above) walks a little ahead of the Priest.³⁶ If there are two Deacons assisting, the Deacon of the Word, with or without the *Book of Gospels*, processes directly in front of the Deacon of the Altar who walks directly in front of the Priest.³⁷

Number of assisting Deacons...The *Ceremonial of Bishops* envisions “at least three Deacons” [CB 26] assisting Bishop, one completing the dual task of proclaiming the gospel reading and ministering at the altar, while the other two are there to, more generally, “assist Bishop”. However, in most circumstances, two Deacons (one functioning as the Deacon of the Word and the other as Deacon of the Altar) would suffice. In the absence of multiple Deacons, a single Deacon may assist Bishop by performing the various diaconal tasks as best he can by himself.

Order of the opening procession including the *Book of Gospels*...The *Ceremonial of Bishops* [CB 128] lists the order of the opening procession this way:

- A thurifer carrying a thurible with burning incense in one hand and the incense boat and spoon in the other. (The incense boat and spoon may also be carried by another server.)

³⁴ GIRM 172-174, 46-54

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ This eliminates the option found in the GIRM, where it says the Deacon may also walk at the Priest's side. (Bishop feels that most aisles are too narrow to comfortably accommodate the Deacon walking at the Priest's side, especially when a Knights of Columbus Honor Guard is present.)

³⁷ This is a change from what it says in the GIRM, where the Deacon of the Word would be walking directly in front of the Priest and the Deacon of the Altar would be walking at the Priest's side. (See footnote 6 above)

- A server carrying a cross, with the image to the front, walks between two to seven servers carrying candlesticks with lighted candles.³⁸
- The Deacon of the Word carrying the *Book of Gospels* vested in alb, stole and possibly dalmatic.
- Any other Deacons (vested but not assisting), processing two by two.
- Any concelebrating Priests, processing two by two.
- The Deacon of the Altar and any other assisting Deacons.³⁹
- Bishop, walking alone, wearing the miter, carrying the pastoral staff in his left hand and blessing with his right.
- Finally, the servers who assist with...the miter and the pastoral staff. (Sometimes these two servers may be referred to as *vimps*.⁴⁰)

If the *Book of Gospels* is excluded from the procession... If the *Book of Gospels* is not being carried in the procession, the Deacon of the Word may then process just in front of the Deacon of the Altar (who is processing just in front of Bishop). If a Deacon is assisting alone, he may process with the Book of the Gospels in the position mentioned above (behind the candles and cross and in front of any other clerics if applicable) or, if he is not carrying the *Book of Gospels*, he positions himself just in front of Bishop.

Assistance with the miter/crozier including the possibility of vimps... At Mass with Bishop presiding, there are certain times when he will need assistance with his miter and pastoral staff (crozier). The *Ceremonial of Bishops* outlines the proper times for Bishop to wear or remove his miter and when his pastoral staff is to be held by him or placed in its stand. However, except at certain diocesan liturgies, Bishop would like to limit this assistance to:

- **Miter on/crozier in-hand...** During the Opening Procession, Bishop wears the miter and holds the pastoral staff.
- **Miter off/crozier put in stand...** Upon reaching the sanctuary steps, and before bowing (or genuflecting) toward the altar, Bishop gives the pastoral staff and miter to a server (or to two different servers). All then bow toward the altar and ascend the sanctuary steps. The server(s) then place the crozier in its stand near Bishop's chair and store the miter until it is needed again.

³⁸ Though not a requirement, seven altar candles may be used at a Mass where Bishop presides—this is one more than the traditional six, and therefore a sign of increased solemnity. (This is in no way an expectation on Bishop's part.)

³⁹ Bishop departs here from the order found in the *Ceremonial of Bishops* by placing any additional assisting Deacons just ahead of him in the procession rather than a little behind him.

⁴⁰ These servers—miter and crozier bearers—are sometimes called “vimps” because of the veils they may wear over their shoulders. These veils (called *vimpae*, or, in the singular, a *vimpa*) are secured at the neck by ribbons or a clasp (much like a humeral veil, but without any elaborate decoration). The servers keep these veils over their hands when handling the miter or the crozier, and their use shows (in a ceremonial way) that the person carrying the item does not have the authority of a Bishop. These are certainly “extras” as far as server roles are concerned, but the assistance they provide sometimes proves useful. A Deacon could easily assist in this way instead (without wearing a *vimpa*).

- **Miter on/ crozier in-hand...** Before the final blessing at the end of Mass, immediately prior to Bishop's exchange with the assembly, "The Lord be with you"... "And with your spirit", the server offers Bishop the miter. After the final blessing, the server offers Bishop the pastoral staff.

Bowing toward the altar and kissing the altar... Upon arriving at the sanctuary, if he is carrying the *Book of the Gospels*, the Deacon omits bowing to the altar, walks directly to it and either lays the Book flat there or places it in a stand which holds it up [GIRM 173]. If he is not carrying the *Book of Gospels*, the Deacon makes a profound bow (or genuflection) to the altar with the Priest in the customary way before entering the sanctuary.⁴¹ After placing the *Book of the Gospels* on the altar, the Deacon of the Word waits there for the arrival of the Priest (and Deacon of the Altar if there is one). Then together they venerate the altar with a kiss.

Assistance with the miter/crozier without vimps, bowing toward/kissing altar... If there is one assisting Deacon and no vimps, the Deacon, assists the Bishop by:

- First, receiving the crozier and miter from him;
- Second, bowing toward the altar with him before ascending the sanctuary steps;
- Third, correctly placing the crozier in the stand near Bishop's chair and storing the miter until it is needed again—most often the end of Mass;
- Fourth, returning to the altar to kiss it with Bishop.

The Deacon should perform the miter and crozier tasks as efficiently as possible so that his participation in the kissing of the altar, which follows closely, is not unduly hindered. If this one Deacon is processing in with the Book of Gospels, the book must be placed on the altar ahead of the assistance he provides to Bishop with the miter and crozier as described above. This may be a reason to choose not to process with the Book in this case, depending on if there is a "time buffer" of additional clergy processing behind the Deacon of the Word which would help to cover this movement.

If there are two assisting Deacons and no vimps, the Deacon of the Altar should assist with the miter and crozier tasks as described above, as local circumstances suggest.

⁴¹ **If the tabernacle is located in the sanctuary**, the Priest, Deacon and other ministers (who are not carrying articles used in the celebration) should genuflect when they approach the altar before entering the sanctuary. They should do this again when they leave the sanctuary at the end of the Mass, *but not during the celebration of Mass itself*. Ministers who are carrying the processional cross, candles or Book of Gospels bow their heads instead of genuflecting [GIRM 274]. This practice of genuflection, while the most correct, may be modified in our diocese to bowing due to physical incapacity or as local custom suggests. (It is interesting to note that the *Ceremonial of Bishops* only mentions bowing at this point in the Mass.)

Incensation of the altar and cross

If incense is being used, the censer (and incense boat) bearer approach the altar. The Deacon assists the Priest in putting some incense into the thurible. The GIRM then describes the Deacon(s) as “assisting” the Priest in the process of incensing the cross and altar. (Practically speaking, what this assistance specifically consists of is difficult to visualize, and so in most cases may not be necessary.)⁴²

After the incensation, the Deacon goes to the chair with the Priest, sits next to him, and assists him as required.

Penitential Act

If the third option of the Penitential Act is used, the *Roman Missal* specifically states that, besides the Priest, the Deacon (or another minister) may announce or sing the invocations along with leading the *Kyrie, eleison*. If the first (*Confiteor*) or second (“Have mercy on us, O Lord...For we have sinned against you...”) options are used the Missal prescribes that these forms are to conclude with the *Kyrie, eleison* without invocations. The rubric is silent about any allowance for someone other than the Priest celebrant to lead this concluding *Kyrie* in either of the first two forms. However, upon inquiry, a representative of the USCCB Committee on Divine Worship stated that the Deacon (or another minister) may also lead the *Kyrie, eleison* which concludes the first two forms. **In all forms of the Penitential Act there should be a brief pause for silence between the Priest celebrant’s initial invitation and the part which follows.**

Sprinkling Rite

The rubrics at the Sprinkling Rite do not specifically mention the Deacon(s) assisting the Priest in this action, but it is thought that it may be helpful at times if the Deacon(s) would assist the presider with sprinkling the people as requested.

If the Sprinkling Rite is used at a Mass with Bishop, the *Ceremonial of Bishops* envisions Bishop receiving the sprinkler from one of the Deacons and the Deacons then accompanying Bishop through the church as he sprinkles the people. Exactly what this assistance consists of is not made clear, and Bishop finds it easiest to hold the vessel of water himself. However, especially depending on the size of the worship space, the Deacon(s) may be asked assist Bishop with the task of sprinkling the people.

⁴² Other than by presenting the incense boat to the Priest and possibly by putting incense into the censer, it is somewhat difficult to say how the Deacons are to specifically “assist” with the incensation of the altar and cross. In the *Ceremonial of Bishops* it mentions that the two Deacons “accompany” Bishop while he incenses the altar and cross [CB 131]. It does not define the precise manner in which they are to “accompany” him.

Liturgy of the Word⁴³

Proclamation of the readings...The Deacon remains seated at his place for the Liturgy of the Word until the time of the Gospel. If the scheduled readers are absent and no suitable replacements can be found, the Deacon may proclaim the other readings as well. However, every effort should be made to ensure the presence of readers for the celebration of the Eucharistic liturgy.

Gospel Reading

Assistance with putting incense in the thurible...At a Mass without a Bishop, if incense is used during the procession with the Book of the Gospels to the ambo, the Deacon may assist the Priest as he places incense in the thurible during the singing of the *Gospel Acclamation* prior to the procession. If incense is not used in the procession but will be used at the incensation of the Book, at a Mass without the Bishop, the Deacon who proclaims the gospel then waits to place incense in the thurible immediately prior to that incensation.

Asking for the Priest's blessing...Before beginning the procession to the Ambo, the Deacon makes a profound bow before the Priest and asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice, "***Your blessing, Father.***" The Priest blesses him, "*May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips that you may proclaim His Gospel worthily and well, in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.*" The Deacon signs himself with the sign of the cross and responds, "***Amen.***"⁴⁴

Assistance with incense boat, asking Bishop's blessing while standing...When the gospel acclamation begins, everyone but the Bishop stands. If incense is used during the procession with the *Book of Gospels* to the ambo, the Thurifer takes the thurible to the Bishop, and the Deacon holds the incense boat while Bishop (who is seated) spoons the incense into the thurible and blesses it.

After Bishop stands, the Deacon makes a profound bow before him and asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice, "***Your blessing, Father.***"⁴⁵ Bishop blesses him, "*May the Lord be in your heart and on your lips that you may proclaim His Gospel worthily and well, in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.*" The Deacon signs himself with the sign of the cross and responds, "***Amen.***"

⁴³ GIRM 175-177, 55-71

⁴⁴ *Roman Missal*; The Order of Mass; The Liturgy of the Word; #14

⁴⁵ Note that the same words (including the specific word "Father") are used whether asking for the blessing from a Priest or a Bishop [*Ceremonial of Bishops*, 140]. The formula from the *Ceremonial of Bishops* has been adapted here to match that contained in the current *Roman Missal*, but the word "Father" is common to both.

Assistance with incense boat, asking Bishop's blessing while kneeling...Alternatively, if desirable, the Deacon may kneel in front of Bishop (who is seated) prior to assisting him with the incense boat. In this option, the deacon assists him with the boat while still kneeling, omits the profound bow, and remains kneeling during the spoken exchange prior to Bishop's blessing. Both Bishop and the Deacon stand after the blessing.

Retrieval of the *Book of Gospels*...If the *Book of Gospels* is being used, the Deacon walks to the altar where it has been placed, bows to the altar, picks the book up and holds it up. With the book slightly elevated, the Deacon then processes with it to the ambo. Servers with lighted candles may precede the Deacon. If incense is being used, the procession is led by the thurifer with smoking thurible followed by servers with lighted candles and then the Deacon. If the *Book of Gospels* is not used, the Deacon goes directly to the ambo without a procession.

Announcing the Gospel reading...At the ambo the Deacon opens the book and greets the people (with hands joined) saying, "*The Lord be with you.*" After the people respond he signs a cross on the page with his thumb while saying, "*A reading from the holy Gospel according to _____.*" He then signs a cross with his thumb on his forehead, mouth and breast.

Incensation of the *Book of Gospels*...If the *Book of Gospels* is to be incensed and incense was not used during the procession to the ambo, the Deacon who proclaims the Gospel places incense in the thurible at this point. If incense was used during the procession, more may be placed in the thurible at this point if necessary. He then bows to the *Book of Gospels*, incenses the book with three swings of the thurible, (in the center, to the left, and to the right⁴⁶) bows again, returns the thurible to the thurifer and proclaims the Gospel reading.

Note: When using incense, a single series of three swings is used if incensing an individual or an object. If incensing the Blessed Sacrament, (e.g. at Benediction), three series of three swings each (in the center, to the left, and to the right) [CB 74] should be used from a kneeling position.

After the proclamation...After the reading, the Deacon acclaims, **without raising the book**, "*The Gospel of the Lord,*" to which all respond, "*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.*" The Deacon then, **without raising the book**, venerates it with a kiss and says quietly, "*Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away*".

Veneration of the Book of Gospels/Imparting a Blessing with the Book of Gospels...Before Mass, the Deacon who will be proclaiming the Gospel should verify with Bishop whether he wishes to venerate the *Book of Gospels* and also possibly impart a blessing with it at the conclusion of the proclamation.

If Bishop does choose to venerate the book after the proclamation, the Deacon then does not venerate the book himself but rather takes the *Book of Gospels* directly to Bishop who will venerate it with a kiss. For this veneration the book may be kept

⁴⁶ *Ceremonial of Bishops*, 74.

open as it is being carried by the Deacon to Bishop, unless it is more convenient for the Deacon to carry it closed. If it is carried closed, the page should be held with a finger so the Deacon is able to reopen the book to the correct page before handing it to Bishop for veneration.

In more solemn celebrations, after Bishop venerates the book, he may also impart a blessing over the people with it, much like the Eucharistic Blessing performed with a Host in a monstrance. If so, Bishop, after venerating the open book, may be assisted by the Deacon with closing it. Holding the closed book, Bishop then makes the sign of the cross with it over the people before returning the book to the Deacon. In either situation, the Deacon receives the book back from Bishop and then puts it in its usual place.

If Bishop does not choose to venerate the *Book of Gospels*, the Deacon venerates the book with a kiss and says quietly, "*Through the words of the Gospel may our sins be wiped away*". He then puts the book in its usual place.

The Deacon as homilist...After placing the *Book of Gospels* in its usual place, the Deacon returns to his chair unless he is presenting the homily. While the Priest is the usual homilist, he may delegate the Deacon to do so.

General Intercessions

After the Bishop or Priest introduces the General Intercessions (or Prayer of the Faithful or Universal Prayer), the Deacon announces or sings the intentions from the ambo or another suitable place. (See the *Roman Missal*, Appendix V, Examples of Formularies for the Universal Prayer 1-11.) He remains at the ambo while the Priest concludes the intercessions with a prayer [GIRM 94, 171, 177].⁴⁷ In the absence of a Deacon or in special circumstances, a cantor, lector or members of the lay faithful may announce the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful [GIRM 71].

⁴⁷ Writing and presenting intercessions in the name of the assembly has traditionally been the role of the Deacon because he, by serving as a minister of charity among the people, knows well the needs of the community and gives voice to those needs. In a sense the general intercessions are the prototype of diaconal prayer.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist⁴⁸

Receiving the Gifts and Preparing the Altar

Placement of the corporal and vessels...After the Prayer of the Faithful, while the Priest remains at the chair, the Deacon prepares the altar. He may be assisted by the acolyte, but it is the Deacon's place to take care of the sacred vessels himself. The Deacon oversees the arrangement of the corporal, the paten, the vessels and the *Roman Missal*.

Receiving the gifts...After the altar is prepared, the bread and the wine are brought forth by the people to an appropriate place. The Deacon assists the Priest in accepting the gifts of the people according to the local custom.

Preparation of the altar...After the gifts are brought to the altar, the Deacon presents the paten with the bread to be consecrated to the Priest, who says, "*Blessed are you...*" All respond, "*Blessed be God forever.*" Meanwhile, the Deacon pours wine into the primary chalice and additional cups if they have not been filled prior to being placed on the altar. According to local custom, the Deacon may add a little water to the carafe before filling the chalices or he may pour a little water into the primary chalice only after all the chalices have been filled.

While adding the water he quietly says, "*By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity.*" Then the Deacon presents the primary chalice to the Priest who again says the prayer with the peoples' response while the Deacon positions the cups appropriately for the Eucharistic Prayer.

Alternatively, the Priest may prefer to remain seated and approach the altar only after the chalice(s) have been filled and placed by the Deacon. In that case, the Deacon presents the paten to the Priest upon his arrival at the altar (or even as a signal to the Priest that the altar has been prepared). After the people have responded, "*Blessed be God for ever.*" the Deacon then hands the Priest the primary chalice.

Preparation of the altar with two Deacons...Due to the large number of chalices required for distribution of the Precious Blood at some diocesan liturgies, two Deacons may be asked to prepare them simultaneously. After the gifts are brought to the altar, the Deacons position the main chalice and additional chalices and then pour wine into them (if they were not filled prior to being placed on the altar, which is the case at Priestly Ordinations). The Deacon then pours a little water into the primary chalice only, saying quietly, "*By the mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the divinity of Christ, who humbled himself to share in our humanity.*" After all is prepared, the Deacon then presents the paten to Bishop upon to his arrival at the altar. Bishop says, "*Blessed are you...*" All respond, "*Blessed be God forever.*" Then the Deacon presents the primary chalice to the Bishop who again says the prayer with the peoples' response.

⁴⁸ GIRM 178-181, 72-83

Incensation of the altar, gifts, presiding Priest, other clerics and assembly...If incense is used, the Deacon assists the Priest as he places incense in the thurible and, according to the *Missal*, may then assist the Priest with the incensation of the gifts, the cross and the altar.⁴⁹ After this, depending on the solemnity of the occasion, the Deacon may then incense the Priest celebrant. While the Priest washes his hands, the Deacon may then also incense any vested clerics (as a group) and then also the people (as a group or by section—depending on local circumstances). The Priest and the people are each incensed with three swings of the thurible. A profound bow both precedes and follows the incensation of each group.

The Deacon receiving the thurible from Bishop...At a Mass with Bishop presiding, if servers are assisting with the thurible and incense boat, it may be best for them to be trained to have the Deacon receive the thurible after Bishop's incensation of the altar and gifts, as this facilitates the Deacon's incensation of Bishop which follows closely.

Eucharistic Prayer

Position of the Deacon(s)...During the Eucharistic Prayer, the Deacon stands near but slightly behind the Priest, so that when necessary he may assist with the chalice or the *Roman Missal*.

The option of kneeling...At Mass, anyone not directly involved in the Act of Consecration must kneel during the Consecration. As a rule, the Deacon kneels from the epiclesis until the elevation and showing of the chalice. That is, he kneels when the Priest extends his hands over the gifts and remains kneeling until he says, "*The mystery of faith.*" If age or physical condition makes it difficult for the Deacon to kneel or the presiding Priest needs his assistance because of age or physical condition, the Deacon may remain standing. If there are two Deacons assisting at a Mass and one is unable to kneel, both should remain standing to maintain a uniform posture.

Incensation during the elevations...When incense is used and if there are several Deacons present, one of the Deacons may go to place incense in the thurible for the consecration and then, with three swings of the censer, incenses the host and the chalice at their respective elevations. Because of the movement involved, it is thought that this option would be less desirable if only one Deacon was assisting at Mass.

Assistance with the chalice at the doxology...At the concluding doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer, the Deacon stands next to the Priest, and holds the chalice elevated while the Priest elevates the paten with the host, until the people have acclaimed, "*Amen.*" (The doxology is the prayer of the Bishop, Priest celebrant and concelebrating Priest alone.)

⁴⁹ As with the incensation of the altar and cross after the opening procession above, it is difficult to say just what the Deacon's assistance to the Priest would be at this point (not with the placement of the incense in the thurible prior to the incensation, but with the actual task of incensation itself). Because of this it may be best for the Deacon(s) to simply remain standing stationary and somewhat back from the altar as the Priest incenses the gifts, the cross and the altar.

The Communion Rite⁵⁰

The Deacon's invitation at the Sign of Peace...After he has said the prayer for peace, the Priest greets the people, saying, "*The peace of the Lord be with you always.*" After the people respond, "*And with your spirit*", the Deacon invites all to exchange the sign of peace, saying, with hands joined and facing the people, "***Let us offer each other the sign of peace***". He himself receives the sign of peace from the Priest and may offer it to the other ministers near him.

Assistance with portioning the consecrated hosts...As the *Agnus Dei* or *Lamb of God* is begun, the Priest alone, or with the assistance of the Deacon and if necessary of concelebrating Priests, breaks the Eucharistic Bread. Other empty ciboria are then brought to the altar if this is necessary. The Deacon or Priest places the consecrated bread in several ciboria or patens for the distribution of Holy Communion. If it is not possible to accomplish this distribution in a reasonable time, the Priest may call upon the assistance of other Deacons or concelebrating Priests [Norms Part II, No. 37].

Assistance with distributing consecrated hosts to any concelebrating Priests...After the *Agnus Dei*, the Deacon may be asked to assist with the distribution consecrated hosts to the concelebrating Priests. The Deacon does not hand the host to a vested Priest; the Priest himself takes the host from the paten or ciborium.

Reception of Holy Communion/distribution to the assembly...After the presiding Priest's communion, the Deacon receives under both kinds from the Priest himself. When communion is given to the congregation under both kinds, those Deacons who assist with distribution normally serve as ministers of the chalice, although as Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion they may assist with either the paten or the chalice. Note: at a parish Mass with the Bishop the Deacon receives from the chalice then places the chalice on the altar for any concelebrating priests.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion...If extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are required by pastoral need, they approach the altar after the Priest receives Communion. After the Priest has concluded his own Communion and the Deacon has received, the Priest distributes Communion to the extraordinary ministers, assisted by the Deacon, and then the Priest and/or the Deacon hands the sacred vessels/purificators to them for distribution of Holy Communion to the assembly [Norms Part II, No. 38].

Reverent consumption of the remaining Precious Blood...When the distribution is completed, the Deacon immediately and reverently consumes at the altar all of the Blood of Christ which remains. He may be assisted with this, as needs dictate, by other Deacons and Priests or by Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion [Norms No. 52].

Collection of remaining hosts/purification of the vessels...The Deacon collects any remaining consecrated hosts to be returned to the tabernacle. Purification of the chalice and other vessels may take place at the altar, or at the credence table, or another side table. After Communion, the corporal should always be folded in a manner that ensures that any remnants of consecrated hosts that may have fallen onto

⁵⁰ GIRM 181-183, 84-89 and Norms for Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion found in the Roman Missal following the GIRM

the corporal will remain in the folded corporal for proper disposal after Mass. This is done by the Deacon and/or Priest, according to local custom. It is also permissible to leave the vessels on a corporal and suitably covered on the side table to be purified immediately following the dismissal of the people at the end of Mass. The Deacon is to ensure that this important matter is tended to with reverence and all due haste. An instituted acolyte may assist in the purification of the vessels, but other lay people may not [Norms No. 53]. It is appropriate to say the following prayer during the purification of the sacred vessels, “*What has passed our lips as food, O Lord, may we possess in purity of heart, that what has been given to us in time may be our healing for all eternity.*”

Washing the vessels...After Mass (and only after being correctly purified) extraordinary ministers or other lay people may assist in the task of washing/drying the vessels.

The Concluding Rites⁵¹

Announcements...Following the *Prayer after Communion*, if there are any brief announcements, the Deacon may make them, unless the Priest prefers to do so himself.

Miter on/ crozier in-hand...Before the final blessing at the end of Mass, immediately prior to Bishop’s exchange with the assembly, “The Lord be with you”...“And with your spirit”, the Deacon offers Bishop the miter. After the final blessing, the Deacon offers Bishop the pastoral staff.

Instruction prior to Solemn Blessing or Prayer Over the People...If a solemn formula for the blessing or a prayer over the people is used, the Deacon says, “*Bow down for the blessing.*”

Dismissal...After the final blessing, the Deacon, with hands joined and facing the people, dismisses them, saying one of the following formulas from the Roman Missal:

“Go forth, the Mass is ended.”

or

“Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.”

or

“Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.”

or

“Go in peace.”

Recession...Together with the Priest, the Deacon venerates the altar with a kiss and makes a profound bow (if the tabernacle is in the sanctuary, all genuflect) upon leaving the sanctuary. The procession to the rear of the Church is in the same order as the entrance procession.

⁵¹ GIRM 184-186, 90

Appendix B - The Pastoral Service Agreement Worksheet

Overview

In the process of defining the ministries that will be provided by the Deacon, the needs of the community must be assessed while recognizing the gifts which the Deacon brings to the community and how those gifts might be best utilized to meet community needs.

This agreement must also reflect an awareness of and consideration for the priorities of family and job, while encouraging the spiritual growth and maintaining the personal well-being of the Deacon and his family. It is understood that the Deacon's ministry, as described below, is voluntary and that he is a man with secular employment who must place appropriate priority upon his personal and family obligations and those of his employment. The Deacon's wife, if he is married, is recognized as an integral part of his service to the community. It is with her support that his ministry is possible.

It is with these above priorities in mind, together with the necessity to clearly understand the nature and purpose of the Deacon's role in the parish community that this agreement is formulated. This Pastoral Service Agreement should reflect a full understanding of the role of Deacon, complementary yet distinct from the priest's role as leader and presider of the parish community. As a reflection of the Deacon's ministerial role, this agreement should include the three avenues of diaconal service: Justice/Charity, Liturgy/Sacrament and Word.

This document is intended to provide a general overview of the voluntary pastoral services offered by the Deacon to the people of God and agreed to by the following parties:

Deacon _____

Deacon wife _____

Pastor (Priest Supervisor) _____

Parish / Cluster _____

Office Location _____

Unless otherwise noted, the hours of service by the Deacon should be limited to 20 hours per month.

Each avenue of service will be identified separately. Emphasis on a particular avenue of Church ministry will vary with individual Deacons and the needs of the local community. However, every Deacon's ministry should, by definition, include meaningful support and involvement with charity and social justice activities.

Ministry of Justice/Charity

A ministry of Justice/Charity to the community may be carried out through:

- Outreach ministry to a charitable or social justice institution or organization.
- Membership or leadership of a parish social concerns or justice committee.
- Another ministry, within or outside the parish, in which he will serve the poor and marginalized in society and/or in the Church.

The Deacon will exercise the Ministry of Justice/Charity by:

Ministry of Liturgy/Sacrament

Specific areas of Sacramental/Liturgical ministry include:

- Function as Deacon at weekend and holyday liturgies and special liturgical functions of the parish.
- Read, honor and protect the Word of the Lord.
- Assist bishops and priests at liturgical functions.
- Take part in and lead the faithful in the various liturgical services of the Church (e.g. Scripture Services, Benediction, prayer services) as his personal schedule will permit and in collaboration with the Pastor.
- Distribute the Eucharist within the context of the Mass and take the Eucharist to the sick and dying.
- Preside at vigil services, at funerals outside of Mass, and at committal services as his personal schedule permits and in collaboration with the Pastor.
- Preside at Baptisms and Marriages and provide the necessary preliminary preparations or instructions as his personal schedule permits and in collaboration with the Pastor.

The Deacon will exercise the ministry of the Sacrament/Liturgy in the Parish as follows:

Ministry of Word

There are many areas of Word necessary to the Parish:

- Prepare and deliver homilies, after completion of homiletics, and being granted faculties by the Bishop.
- Assist in the Faith Formation program of the parish in areas of competence or special interest.
- Serve members of the community through Sacramental preparation instructions.
- Participate as a member of the RCIA team.
- Assist the Parish Worship Commission in planning and coordination of all areas of worship, particularly toward development of the prayer life of the community.
- Participate in parish ecumenical functions.

The Deacon will exercise the ministry of Word in the Parish as follows:

Role of the Parish/Cluster/Institution

Recognizing that the Deacon's service is of a limited time nature with no compensation expected, the following will be provided for his ministry by the parish:

- Defray the costs of continuing education, workshops, and retreats provided to the diaconate community by the Diocese of Superior.
- Defray the costs of other programs related to growth as a minister as approved by the Pastor (Priest Supervisor).
- Offer release from his normal responsibilities to allow him to participate in required or recommended spiritual exercises, continuing education events and other community activities offered to the Deacons of the Diocese of Superior.
- Make necessary provisions to allow his participation in Diocesan Liturgical celebrations, especially those that recognize his diaconal role of service to the Bishop, Priests and faithful of the Diocese.
- Reimburse those personal expenses incurred by the Deacon in carrying out his ministry as approved by the Pastor (Priest Supervisor).

Duration and Acceptance

Recognizing the importance of ongoing communication and evaluation of ministry the Pastor (Priest Supervisor) and Deacon will schedule regular and frequent consultations.

In the event of a change in the major emphasis of the Deacon's ministry, a revised or new Pastoral Service Agreement will be drafted in consultation by the Pastor, the Deacon and his wife, and the Director of Diaconal Life.

Additionally, if the Pastor (or Priest Supervisor) is changed, this agreement is to be reviewed and updated as needed following consultation with the Pastor and the Deacon and his wife by the Director of Diaconal Life.

This agreement is to be in effect for a period of five years unless there is a change as noted above.

The Above Terms Are Hereby Accepted:

DEACON

DEACON'S WIFE (IF MARRIED)

PASTOR (PRIEST SUPERVISOR)

DIRECTOR OF DIACONAL LIFE

DATE

BISHOP

Appendix C – Deacon Funeral Planning

General Information

Deacon: _____

Date: _____

I request the following Deacon/Priest to assist my family in supervising the funeral and burial arrangements.

Deacon/Priest Name

Telephone

Military Service

- I am a veteran.
- I wish an American Flag.
- I wish a military Honor Guard at the graveside.

Personal Requests

- It is my intention to be cremated.*
- I would like to be vested in my alb and stole.
- I would like to be vested in my alb, stole and dalmatic.
- I do not wish to be vested in liturgical garments.**

*I understand that the preference is that the body is to be in a casket during the vigil service and funeral Mass and that the remains are to be cremated after the funeral Mass. (See *Order of Christian Funerals*).

** If not vested in liturgical vestments, you will be dressed in appropriate attire chosen by your family. In such a case, your stole may be placed on or near the casket but may not be worn over secular attire.

Funeral Rite

Priest or Deacon to lead the Vigil Service:

Deacon/Priest Name

Telephone

Presider at the Funeral Mass:

- I would like the Bishop to preside if possible.
- I would like the following priest to preside if the Bishop is unable:
- I prefer to have the following priest preside as my first choice:

Priest Name

Telephone

Deacons to assist at the Funeral Mass:

Deacon Name

Telephone

Deacon Name

Telephone

Homilist:

Deacon/Priest Name

Telephone

Scripture readings at the Funeral Mass:

First Reading: _____

Responsorial Psalm: _____

Second Reading: _____

Gospel: _____

Music at the Funeral Mass:

Processional: _____

Presentation of gifts: _____

Communion: _____

Farewell: _____

Recessional: _____

Priest or Deacon to lead the Rite of Committal:

Deacon/Priest Name

Telephone

Other special requests:

Other information for planning the liturgy and burial:

