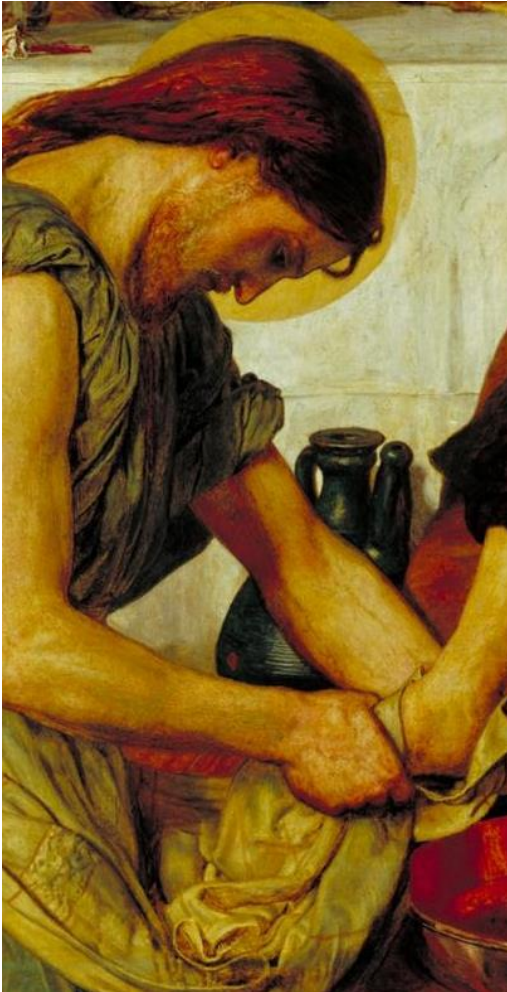


VOCATIONS.IE

ARE YOU BEING CALLED
TO SERVE AS A
PERMANENT DEACON?



NATIONAL VOCATIONS OFFICE
IRISH CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE

BECOMING A PERMANENT DEACON

WHAT IS A DEACON?

He is a man called by the Bishop of the Diocese to Ordination. He is ordained to serve the Church in a threefold ministry

WHO SERVES AS A DEACON?

Candidates for the Permanent Diaconate are Roman Catholic, baptized males who exemplify these qualities:

WHO CAN APPLY TO BE A PERMANENT DEACON?

Single men over 30 and married men over 35 and under sixty who feel a call to service of the Church and the World. Single men must also feel called to a celibate life.

Most candidates will be in the world of work and will continue there after ordination. Some may be men who have taken early retirement. It remains, however, the role of every permanent deacon to have one foot in the sanctuary and the other in the workplace / community. Furthermore their will normally be exercised on a voluntary part-time basis through deacons are deacons at all times and in all circumstances.

Successful candidates will have demonstrated the necessary maturity for a life-long commitment. They will be prepared to embark on a 4 year course of formation. They will be already working collaboratively with priests and lay-people in the local church in works of service and exercising some leadership roles.

Above all, they will be men of faith and prayer with a desire to serve others for the sake of God's Kingdom. They will be resident in their diocese or working for the diocese for at least five years.



HOW DO PERMANENT DEACONS SERVE?

Deacons are a permanent sign of Christ the Servant, no matter where they are or what they are doing. They extend the sacramental presence of Christ's service outside of the Church building and into the secular world. Diaconal service is modelled after the threefold apostolic ministry of the Bishop: the ministry of charity, the ministry of the Word and the ministry of Sacrament.

A MINISTER OF THE

Word

Deacons proclaim the Gospel and preach at liturgical celebrations, provide catechetical instruction, offer adult faith formation and lead sacramental preparation.

A MINISTER OF THE

Altar

Deacons assist priests during Mass, administer baptisms, witness marriages, preside at funerals with no Mass and burials, officiate at Benediction and lead community prayer services.

A MINISTER OF

Charity

Deacons personally serve the poor, the aged, the sick and the imprisoned, bringing the Gospel to all those in need. They preach and embody social justice



FORMATION

Diaconal candidates participate in a program of human, spiritual, theological and pastoral formation sessions in the evenings and on weekends

HUMAN FORMATION

to minister, work and serve the people of God

SPIRITUAL FORMATION

consists of retreats, study days, spiritual direction and commitment to the Liturgy of the Hours

ACCADEMIC FORMATION (THEOLOGY)

focuses on the central teachings and practices of the Church and the development of pastoral skills`

PASTORAL FORMATION

brings together all the components into supervised fieldwork experiences, of homiletics, catechesis, liturgy, pastoral roles in hospitals, prisons, youth groups, RCIA, sacramental preparation or other parish involvements.

HOW DO I APPLY TO BECOME A DEACON

In the first instance, a man who is considering the possibility of offering himself for service as a deacon check if there is a Permanent Diaconate programme in his diocese and should make contact with his parish priest. Following initial discussion at local level, contact may be made with the Diocesan Director for the Permanent Diaconate.

An arrangement will be made to meet with him and, where applicable, with his wife, in order to explore any questions he / they may have, and to decide whether it would be appropriate for him to participate in the propaedeutic period.

During the initial enquiry stage, a recommendation will be sought from the man's parish priest, or from a priest who has responsibility for some area of ministry in which the man is actively involved.

Anyone wishing to participate in the propaedeutic programme which begins in the Autumn, should make his initial enquiry no later than the end of June of that year. During the propaedeutic period every effort will be made to accompany the aspirant on his journey of discernment, and to help him to make a mature decision as to whether he should apply to be accepted into the three year formation programme.

Acceptance into the propaedeutic programme is not, however, a guarantee of acceptance into formation, or of eventual ordination to the permanent diaconate.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Not every diocese in Ireland has a Permanent Diaconate programme. Further information on the Permanent Diaconate and the contact details for the relevant Diocese which are currently accepting applications for the Permanent Diaconate can be found on: www.vocations.ie



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