

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK FOR THE PERMANENT DIACONATE



DIOCESE OF COLORADO SPRINGS

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Issued: January 2023

Updated: March 2024

By: Bishop James R. Golka

To: The Deacons of the Diocese of Colorado Springs

“In the context of the Church’s public worship, because of its centrality in the life of the believing community, the ministry of the deacon in the threefold diakonia of the word, of the liturgy, and of charity is uniquely concentrated and integrated. ‘The diaconate is conferred through a special outpouring of the Spirit (ordination), which brings about in the one who receives it a specific conformation to Christ, Lord and servant of all.’ ‘Strengthened by sacramental grace, they are dedicated to the people of God, in conjunction with the diocesan bishop and his body of priests, in a service of the liturgy of the word and of charity.’” (NDFML #36)

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DECREE

I, THE MOST REVEREND JAMES R. GOLKA,
by the grace of God and the Apostolic See
Bishop of Colorado Springs,

having seen Canons 29-34 of the Code of Canon Law,

and

having seen that the Policies and Procedures Handbook for the Permanent Diaconate for the
Diocese of Colorado Springs numbers 28 and 29 have been updated,

do hereby decree:

that the Policies and Procedures Handbook for the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of
Colorado Springs, updated March 1, 2024, be promulgated and immediately take effect.


Servatis Servandis

Given at the Chancery of Colorado Springs on the 1st day of March in the Year of the Lord Two
Thousand Twenty-Four

+ James R. Golka

Most Reverend James R. Golka
Bishop of Colorado Springs

Mandated by Our Bishop,


Deacon Douglas Flinn, Esq.
Chancellor



A NOTE FROM BISHOP GOLKA

Permanent Deacons are a gift of the Church to serve the greater Church. They are also a gift to the Church in their ministry among us as Christ the Servant. Typically, they are men of mature years, with families. They have distinguished themselves in their work or professional lives, and they bring great personal gifts to the Church.

As an order, the diaconate began in the Acts of the Apostles (6:1-7), when the Twelve realized that they should not neglect preaching in favor of waiting at tables. Hence the Seven were chosen and ordained. In subsequent centuries, the office remained prominent. The first Christian martyr, Stephen, was a deacon. St. Francis of Assisi was a deacon.

As the Middle Ages wore on, though, the order faded in prominence until it was simply a stepping stone to the priesthood. In 1964, the Second Vatican Council changed this. It called for a restoration of the permanent diaconate and left the concrete decision to local bishops. Since then, both the Holy See and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have issued governing documents.

The diaconate is based on the Greek word for service, diakonia. A deacon is a servant. He has a hands-on ministry, a service at tables, a service behind the scenes. He also has a liturgical ministry. He can proclaim the Gospel and preach; he can assist at the altar and distribute communion; he can baptize; he can witness marriages. In all this the defining element of his ministry is service.

Like all ministry in the Church, his is a loving ministry. Deacons care for people in difficult circumstances, as Jesus would. Deacons are called to care for the poor, the homebound, the special needs—people who are often shunned. Deacons care for them courageously, in a spirit of respect for their human dignity. They care for them because Christ cares for them and identifies with them.

Diaconal ministry is a call. No one takes this ministry on himself or solely on his own initiative. He is called to it by Christ and empowered by him as well. The Bible is filled with stories of such calls and a variety of responses. In our day, such a call could be discerned with an inner interest, a being-charmed, a willingness to accept challenges, and importantly freedom. From an external point of view, it can involve suggestions from others; the application and acceptance into the formation program; advancement in the program; and finally, the actual call to the order in the ordination ceremony itself.

In all of this, it is the Holy Spirit who active, gently drawing the deacon candidate to himself and to the ministry. Christ is active as well. In fact, ordination brings about a sacramental configuration to Christ the Servant. It confers a sacramental character, a special relationship with Christ. Consequently, the diaconal ministry becomes an imitation of Christ, exercised with support from him and in his name.

The Second Vatican Council specifically envisioned that the permanent diaconate could be exercised by married men of mature years. Thus, the deacon's wife is an important element of this ministry. At a minimum, she is a support to her deacon husband. In some ways she can even be a partner in his ministries.

For this reason, wives are strongly encouraged to take part, alongside their husbands, in the deacon formation program.

The great Gospel symbol of the diaconate is the incident of Jesus rising from the Last Supper, putting aside his outer garment, tying a towel around his waist, and washing his disciples' feet (Jn 13:1-20). Here we see concretely what the Philippians hymn celebrated, namely the kenosis or emptying of the Son of God, who became a slave and even accepted a slave's death (Phil 2:5-11). Jesus, who was worthy of all honor, made himself our servant. In following after him can we do the same thing for others?

In Christ,
Bishop Golka

**GENERAL INTRODUCTION:
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES CONCERNING THE PERMANENT DIACONATE**

1. THE PURPOSE OF THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The permanent diaconate was restored as an active and stable ministry in the Church by the Second Vatican Council. The deacon, by virtue of the Sacrament of Holy Orders, is constituted as a sacred minister of the Church, working under the direction of the diocesan bishop and cooperatively with the presbyterate of the diocese. As such, the permanent deacon is a sign of the Lord, configured to Christ the Servant, who came “not to be served, but to serve.” Every deacon, by virtue of his ordination, and in union with the diocesan bishop and the college of presbyters, is called to a ministry of service to Word, Liturgy, and Charity. As a public person of the Church who has promised obedience to the diocesan bishop, the deacon must exercise his ministry responsibly, creatively, and in accordance with the mind of the Church and the diocesan bishop. Receiving the Sacrament of Holy Orders effects an ontological change in the deacon, a change in his very being that configures him to Christ who made himself the "deacon" or servant of all. It is as Christ the servant that the deacon faithfully serves his community and the Church as called by his diocesan bishop.

To facilitate this service, support the diaconate community, and ensure each deacon’s proper integration into the overall ministry of the diocese, the following policies and procedures are intended to be normative for the Diocese of Colorado Springs.

2. REFERENCES

Hereinafter, references to the “Bishop” will mean the Ordinary of the Diocese of Colorado Springs, unless otherwise qualified. References to the “Diocese” will mean the Diocese of Colorado Springs, unless otherwise qualified. All usages of the term, “deacon” denotes “permanent deacon,” unless otherwise qualified.

References to the National Directory [NDFML] are to the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, Second Edition*, approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and promulgated June 9, 2022. The National Directory is based upon the 1998 joint documents of the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy and the Congregation for Catholic Education – *Basic Norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons* [BNFPD] and the *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* [DMLPD].

References to the Code of Canon Law [CIC] are to the *Code of Canon Law Latin-English Edition (Codex Iuris Canonici)*, trans. Canon Law Society of America (Washington, DC: Canon Law Society of America, 1983).

PART ONE: THE PERMANENT DIACONATE – GENERAL PRINCIPLES

3. INTRODUCTION

“One of the great legacies of the Second Vatican Council was its renewal and encouragement of the Order of Deacons throughout the entire Catholic Church.” (NDFML #1). When the Diocese of Colorado Springs was created in January of 1984, there were eleven men serving as deacons within the new diocesan boundaries. The Archdiocese of Denver continued to form men for service in Colorado Springs until 1998, when Bishop Richard Hanifen initiated the Diocese’s own process of formation here in Colorado Springs.

4. SACRAMENT OF HOLY ORDERS

“The Sacrament of Holy Orders marks deacons ‘with an imprint ('character') which cannot be removed and which configures them to Christ, who made himself the 'deacon' or servant of all.’ For this level of Holy Orders, Christ the Servant calls, and the Church asks the bishop to ordain, deacons to be consecrated witnesses to service.” (NDFML #29)

“Ordination confers an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. It configures the deacon to Christ's consecration and mission. It constitutes the deacon as a sacred minister by the Sacrament of Holy Orders. He is ‘consecrated and deputed to serve the People of God by a new and specific title’ with a distinct identity and integrity in the Church that marks him as neither a lay person nor a priest; rather, the deacon is a cleric who is ordained to *diakonia*, namely, a service to God's People in communion with the diocesan bishop and his body of priests. ‘The principal function of the deacon, therefore, is to collaborate with the bishop and the priests in the exercise of a ministry which is not of their own wisdom but of the Word of God, calling all to conversion and holiness.’” (NDFML #30)

5. THE THREEFOLD MUNUS: WORD, LITURGY AND CHARITY

Deacons are ordained to the threefold ministry of Word, Liturgy, and Charity. “The ministry of the deacon is characterized by the exercise of the three *munera* proper to the ordained ministry, according to the specific perspective of *diakonia*.

In reference to the *munus docendi*, the deacon is called to proclaim the Scriptures and instruct and exhort the people. This finds expression in the presentation of the Book of the Gospels, foreseen in the rite of ordination itself.

The *munus sanctificandi* of the deacon is expressed in prayer, in the solemn administration of baptism, in the custody and distribution of the Eucharist, in assisting at and [witnessing] marriages, in presiding at rites of funeral and burial and in the administration of sacramentals. This brings out how the diaconal ministry has its point of departure and arrival in the Eucharist, and cannot be reduced to simple social service.

Finally, the *munus regendi* is exercised in dedication to works of charity and assistance and in the direction of communities or sectors of church life, especially as regards charitable activities. This is the ministry most characteristic of the deacon.” (BNFPD #9)

6. RELATIONSHIP TO THE BISHOP

“The deacon exercises his ministry within a specific pastoral context: the communion and mission of a diocesan Church. He is in direct relationship with the diocesan bishop with whom he is in communion

and under whose authority he is assigned to exercise his ministry. In making his promise of respect and obedience to his diocesan bishop, the deacon takes as his model Christ, who became the Servant of his Father. The diocesan bishop also enters into a relationship with the deacon because the deacon is his collaborator in the service of God's People.” (NDFML #43)

7. RELATIONSHIP WITH PRIESTS

“Deacons exercise their ministry in communion not only with their diocesan bishop but also with the priests who serve the diocesan Church. As collaborators in ministry, priests and deacons are two complementary but subordinate participants in the one apostolic ministry bestowed by Christ upon the Apostles and their successors. The diaconate is not an abridged or substitute form of the priesthood; it is a full order in its own right.” (NDFML #54)

“Deacons and priests, as ordained ministers, should develop a genuine respect for each other, witnessing to the communion and mission they share with one another and with the diocesan bishop in mutual service to the People of God.” (NDFML #57)

8. DEACONS AND THOSE IN FORMATION

“By virtue of their ordination, a sacramental fraternity unites deacons. They form a community that witnesses to Christ the Deacon-Servant. ‘Each deacon should have a sense of being joined with his fellow deacons in a bond of charity, prayer, obedience to their bishops, ministerial zeal and collaboration.’ . . . [T]he diaconal community should be, for those in the aspirant and candidate stages in formation, ‘a precious support in the discernment of their vocation, in human growth, in the initiation to the spiritual life, in theological study and pastoral experience.’” (NDFML #59)

9. DEACONS AND WOMEN AND MEN RELIGIOUS

“Deacons ought to promote collaboration between themselves and women and men religious who also have dedicated their lives to the service of the Church. Pastoral sensitivity between deacons and religious should be carefully nurtured.” (NDFML #60)

10. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LAITY

“By ordination, deacons are members of the clergy. The vast majority of deacons in the United States of America, married or celibate, have secular employment and do not engage exclusively in specific Church-related ministries. This combination of an ordained minister with a secular occupation and personal and family obligations can be a great strength, opportunity, and witness to the laity on how they too might integrate their baptismal call and state in life as they live their Christian faith in society.” (NDFML #61)

“Through his ordination to service, the deacon promotes, in an active fashion, the various lay apostolates and guides these in communion with the diocesan bishop and local priests.” (NDFML #62)

11. THE MARRIED DEACON

“In particular the deacon and his wife must be a living example of fidelity and indissolubility in Christian marriage before a world which is in dire need of such signs. By facing in a spirit of faith the challenges of married life and the demands of daily living, they strengthen the family life not only of the Church community but of the whole of society. They also show how the obligations of family life, work, and ministry can be harmonized in the service of the Church’s mission. Deacons and their wives and children can be a great encouragement to others who are working to promote family life.” (NDFML #73)

12. THE CELIBATE DEACON

“If the celibate deacon gives up one kind of family, he gains another. In Christ, the people he serves become mother, brother, and sister. In this way, celibacy as a sign and motive of pastoral charity takes flesh. Reciprocity, mutuality, and affection shared with many become channels that mold and shape the celibate deacon's pastoral love and his sexuality. ‘Celibacy should not be considered just as a legal norm . . . but rather as a value . . . whereby [the celibate deacon] takes on the likeness of Jesus Christ . . . as a full and joyful availability in his heart for the pastoral ministry.’” (NDFML #77)

13. CELIBACY AND EVERY DEACON

“In one way or another, celibacy affects every deacon, married or unmarried. Understanding the nature of celibacy – its value and its practice – is essential to the married deacon. Not only does this understanding strengthen and nurture his own commitment to marital chastity, but it also helps to prepare him for the possibility of living celibate chastity should his wife predecease him.” (NDFML #78)

14. THE WIDOWED DEACON

“The death of a married deacon’s wife is a ‘particular moment in life which calls for faith and Christian hope.’ The death of the wife of a married deacon introduces a new reality into the daily routine of his family and ministry. Charity should be extended to the widowed deacon as he assesses and accepts his new personal circumstances, so he will not neglect his primary duty as father to his children or any new needs his family might have. As required, a widowed deacon should be helped to seek professional counsel, and he is always encouraged to address the challenges he faces during the bereavement process with his spiritual director.” (NDFML #79)

15. REMARRIAGE

“In exceptional cases, the Holy See, having heard the opinion of the deacon's diocesan bishop, may grant a dispensation for a new marriage or for a release from the obligations of the clerical state. . . . If a dispensation for a new marriage is petitioned and granted, the new wife's written informed consent to his exercise of diaconal ministry should be sought before the marriage. Additional time will be required for the formation of a stable relationship in the new marriage; therefore, a suitable period of time is required before the deacon resumes active ministry.” (NDFML #80). Deacons who seek to enter marriage following ordination should contact the Director for guidance and assistance.

PART TWO: STRUCTURE RELATED TO THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

16. OFFICE OF PERMANENT DIACONATE

The Office of Permanent Diaconate is led by the Director of the Permanent Diaconate (hereinafter, referred to as the “Director”) and serves the permanent deacons of the Diocese and their families with the post-ordination path in diaconate formation, assisting the Bishop with supervision of the spiritual and personal welfare of deacons and their families, and personnel management. The structure of this office is set forth below, as are the policies governing the election and/or appointment of advisory bodies concerning the permanent diaconate.

17. DIRECTOR OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

The Bishop appoints the Director, who is to be a priest or deacon, and who is directly responsible to the Bishop. It shall be the specific ministry of the Director to serve the diaconal community of the Diocese in personnel, placement, formation, continuing formation and education, and pastoral matters. He shall administer the policies established herein under the general supervision of the Bishop. To support the Director, the Bishop may assign assistant directors. Normally, the assistant directors will be deacons.

18. SUPERVISION OF THE OFFICE OF PERMANENT DIACONATE

It will be the responsibility of the Bishop to supervise the Director. The Director will advise the Bishop regarding deacon personnel and management matters, and he will review and recommend policies and procedures regarding the administration and formation of permanent deacons to the Bishop when necessary or appropriate. Whenever policies and procedures are proposed, reviewed, or revised, the Director shall ensure that there is consultation with the deacons of the Diocese.

19. DEACON COMMUNITY BOARD

The Director is assisted in his ministry of service to the diaconal community by a Deacon Community Board (DCB), which is advisory in purpose and nature. Members of the DCB include a suitable number of deacons and wives as appointed by the Bishop, or by the Director on behalf of the Bishop, in accordance with the board’s statutes, as approved by the Bishop (see NDFML #303).

The primary function of DCB is to assist the Director in the formulation and recommendation of policies related to the ministry and life of deacons in the Diocese. All policies approved by the consensus of the DCB will be presented as recommendations for the consideration of the Bishop. These policies include those that are found in the Policies and Procedures Handbook for the Permanent Diaconate.

Additionally, the DCB will assist the Director in the support of deacons in ministry and to advise the Director and the Bishop regarding recommended assignments of deacons throughout the Diocese based on needs assessment. This function includes the periodic evaluation of permanent deacons and their assignments and coordinating the mentoring of those who are in the first five years of ordained ministry as deacons.

Finally, the DCB may be asked to address other matters as presented or requested by the Director or the Bishop.

Appendix A provides the statutes governing the purpose, membership, and operation of the DCB as established in the Diocese of Colorado Springs.

PART THREE: POLICIES CONCERNING THE MINISTRY AND LIFE OF DEACONS

20. FACULTIES

Unless otherwise specified in his decree of appointment, a deacon lawfully assigned to a parish or diocesan ministry in the Diocese has the following faculties, to be used under the supervision of the pastor or supervisor (see NDFML #37):

- A.** To take part in liturgical functions assigned to a deacon in the approved liturgical books.
- B.** To administer solemn baptism to children under the age of seven (7) and to complete the ceremonies omitted in an emergency baptism (CIC 861.1).
- C.** To give Holy Communion, to administer Viaticum, and to give benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament (CIC 910.1, 921 and 943).
- D.** To preside at funeral and burial rites (CIC 1176.1, Order of Christian Funerals #14).
- E.** To preach and to instruct the faithful (CIC 764).
- F.** To witness marriages in his assigned parish when delegated by his pastor, and to witness marriages, with the specific delegation of the pastor, when functioning in parishes other than his assignment (CIC 1108 and 1111).
- G.** To impart blessings in accord with the norms contained within the liturgical books (CIC 1168 and 1169.3).

Diaconate faculties in the Diocese are exercised according to the assignment letter (*pagella*) and with the approval of the pastor or ministerial supervisor to whom the deacon is assigned.

21. ASSIGNMENTS

The primary objective in the assignment of permanent deacons will be to meet the needs of the “People of God” in the Diocese of Colorado Springs, as determined by the Bishop. The Bishop assigns deacons in the Diocese by way of a decree of appointment that will state with some specificity the deacon’s duties and responsibilities (see NDFML #44 and #46). Deacons may be assigned either to parish ministry, and/or to a diocesan or non-parochial ministry that may include a limited parochial assignment to provide the deacon with a community for liturgical service and/or to address a need in the Diocese. Configured to Christ, the servant in charity, the deacon’s assignments, parochial or extra-parochial, should include a ministry of service based on his gifts and abilities. Because of the threefold nature of Ministry to Word, Sacrament, and Charity, the deacon should exercise his assigned ministries with balanced precedence as a mutual expression of his ordination.

Deacons are required to provide ministerial services in accordance with the provisions of the Bishop’s decree of appointment. In consultation with the DCB as needed, the Director will make recommendations for assignments and transfers to the Bishop. According to his assessment of diocesan need, the Bishop will either confirm or make another assignment by his decree of appointment. Deacons receive a canonical assignment that is binding until a new canonical assignment is made by decree of the Bishop. Pastors cannot remove a deacon from a canonical assignment, nor may deacons remove themselves from a canonical assignment.

Deacons may not negotiate new assignments or move from their parishes without reassignment or direction by the Bishop. The change of a canonical assignment requires the action and decree of the Ordinary of the Diocese. (CIC 273 and 274)

All deacons in parochial ministry and those in special diocesan ministries will have a priest or deacon supervisor. As a norm, the priest supervisor will be the pastor of the parish to which the deacon is assigned. Secondly, deacons with diocesan or non-parochial ministries may be assigned to a priest or deacon supervisor who is in direct contact with them in the special ministry. In rare cases, a deacon may have an assignment to a diocesan ministry that has a liturgical community. In this case, if the Bishop so desires, the deacon will be supervised by the priest who leads the community.

A. First Assignment After Ordination

Newly ordained deacons in the Diocese ordinarily will be assigned to a parish other than the parish that supported them as a candidate. To allow the newly ordained deacon an opportunity to begin his ministry anew, the Director will make first assignment recommendations to the Bishop based on a needs assessment of diocesan parishes and missions. In consultation with the DCB as needed, the Director will make every effort to align newly ordained deacons with assignments that match their talents, accounting for the existing number of deacons currently assigned to each parish and the geographical location of each new deacon's home and work.

For his first assignment, a newly ordained deacon may be assigned to the parish that sponsored him as a candidate, if travel from his place of residence to another parish would create a hardship for him, his family, or the supporting community. An effort should be made to give these deacons an opportunity to serve in a secondary assignment in addition to their assigned parish.

In a case where a particular parish has supported one or more candidates, every attempt will be made to assign a different deacon(s), newly ordained or senior, to replace the position intended for the candidate(s) at that parish. In either case, all new assignments will account for the existing number of deacons at each parish with the goal of serving all parishes in the Diocese.

B. Deacon Assignments for Parish Employed Deacons

Deacons who are employed by or accept employment from a parish church ordinarily will be assigned to a different parish for their diaconal service of Liturgy, Word, and Charity. Deacons will have one (1) year from the time of employment at a diocesan parish church to notify the Director and receive the new diaconal assignment. The exception to this policy will be deacons who reside and work in remote parish locations, where their long-distance travel to another parish to fulfill their diaconal responsibilities would be impractical.

22. LETTERS OF APPOINTMENT

Letters of appointment are required to function as a deacon in good standing in the Diocese. The Director will prepare letters of appointment for the Bishop's approval and signature. In preparing letters of appointment, the Director will consult with the current and proposed pastor or supervisor of the deacon and with the deacon himself. The wife of a married deacon is to be kept duly informed of developments in the assignment process, and the family, employment and personal circumstances of the deacon must always be given significant consideration. "Until the letter of appointment is signed by the diocesan bishop and publicly announced by the diocesan bishop's office, all parties are bound by confidentiality." (NDFML #46)

23. REASSIGNMENTS

The process of a reassignment can be initiated by a deacon, his pastor or supervisor, the Director, or the Bishop. When a pastor initiates the request, he may approach the Bishop or the Director. When a supervisor or a deacon initiates the request for a transfer, it is highly recommended that the request for reassignment be presented to the Director.

When initiated by the deacon, the reassignment request will include the reasons for the request, as well as the deacon's preferences for an assignment, either as to location or as to type of ministry, or both. The Director shall consult with the deacon's current pastor or supervisor, the DCB as needed, and the proposed receiving pastor. If the reassignment request poses no significant personnel, pastoral or personal conflicts for any relevant parties, the proposed reassignment will be presented to the Bishop for final approval and issuance of a new decree of appointment.

A request for reassignment initiated by the deacon's current pastor or supervisor, due to concerns regarding the performance of the deacon's ministry, shall be presented to the Director or to the Bishop and will include the reason for the request. The Director will consult with the deacon whose reassignment has been requested and the pastor to discuss any opportunities to reconcile the current situation and continue the assignment. Once the two parties have been consulted, and if the current situation cannot be reconciled, the Director may call an ad hoc meeting with the DCB if circumstances demand, or he will recommend a specific assignment directly to the Bishop. The Bishop may resolve the issue, confirm the reassignment, or direct that the matter be presented to the DCB for further recommendations.

After the consultations and review of circumstances, the Director will make a final recommendation for reassignment to the Bishop for his consideration and approval. The consultations with deacons, pastors or supervisors as discussed in this section will be conducted by the Director or his designees (assistant directors or members of the DCB). Regardless of the reason for a reassignment, significant consideration shall be given to the personal circumstances of the deacon in any reassignment; recognizing that deacons will have family, work, social and community commitments to consider also.

In any case and for any reason, the Bishop may direct a transfer without any additional consult with either of the parties involved.

24. RELOCATION INTO THE DIOCESE

Deacons who are relocating into the Diocese of Colorado Springs, and who are not seeking incardination, must receive a letter of appointment as a visiting deacon before beginning any ministry in the Diocese. Visiting deacons and pastors should not negotiate any assignments nor make any commitments about opportunities to minister without first contacting the Office of Permanent Diaconate and the Bishop.

The process of obtaining a decree of appointment will include interviews with the visiting deacon, scrutiny of the deacon's history of ministry and personal situation, and the securing of favorable references from his previous bishop and supervisors to verify his good standing within the Church. "A diocesan bishop is under no obligation to accept a permanent deacon – ordained or incardinated elsewhere – for assignment to a diocesan or parochial ministry. Nevertheless, because a permanent deacon is an ordained cleric, the diocesan bishop may not ordinarily forbid a visiting permanent deacon the exercise of his order, provided that the deacon is in good standing and with due regard for the provisions of particular law." (NDFML #109)

All visiting deacons serving in the Diocese will be required to be formally accepted for ministry and must receive decrees of appointment by the Ordinary of this Diocese. Relocation procedures for a temporary appointment into the Diocese or official notice, with the possibility of future incardination require the following:

- A. A letter from the deacon indicating that he wants to minister in this Diocese.
- B. A letter from the Office of Permanent Diaconate to the previous diocese requesting a copy of the deacon's personnel file.
- C. A letter of recommendation from the bishop of the previous diocese along with a completed Suitability for Ministry form. The Diocese will run a new criminal background check report.
- D. A letter of recommendation from the previous pastor or supervisor.
- E. A letter from the Bishop of the Diocese of Colorado Springs assigning the deacon.
- F. Completion of the initial safe environment training for the Protection of Children and Young People as implemented in the Diocese of Colorado Springs.

25. RELOCATING OUT OF THE DIOCESE

A deacon who is relocating to another diocese, and who desires to function as a deacon and minister in the diocese that will become his temporary residence, must contact the bishop, and personnel responsible for the oversight of permanent deacons, of the diocese to which he is relocating. He should inform them that he will be relocating there and request information on their process for securing an assignment. At the same time, the deacon should contact the Director of the Diocese of Colorado Springs, who will then note the transfer and inform the DCB and the Office of the Bishop. If requested to do so, the Director will obtain a letter from the Bishop stating whether the deacon is in good standing. The Director will coordinate obtaining and forwarding other documents that may be requested by the bishop of the diocese of temporary residence.

26. EXCARDINATION AND INCARDINATION

“Every cleric must be incardinated either in a particular church . . . , in such a way that unattached or transient clerics are not allowed at all.” (CIC 265)

Excardination is the releasing of a cleric from the jurisdiction of the diocese in which he is incardinated, and incardination is the attachment of a cleric into the jurisdiction of another diocese (see CIC 267-272).

A. Excardination from the Diocese

Excardination from the Diocese is normally executed through the following process:

1. The deacon petitioning excardination from the Diocese has been serving in a “remote” diocese *ad experimentum* (with an openness to incardination) for at least two (2) years, has a positive recommendation from his pastor, and intends his domicile in the remote diocese to be permanent.
2. The deacon will submit a letter to the Bishop of Colorado Springs requesting excardination so that he may be incardinated into the remote diocese in which he is serving. In this letter, he will state that his ministry is needed in the remote diocese and that he intends his domicile in the remote diocese to be permanent. A copy of this letter is to be sent to the Director and to the bishop of the remote diocese.

3. Concurrent with the letter requesting excardination, the deacon will need to write a letter to the bishop of the remote diocese in which he is serving requesting incardination into that diocese. In this letter, the deacon needs to state his intention to be permanently domiciled within the boundaries of the remote diocese, his satisfaction with his ministry, and his desire to serve perpetually as a permanent deacon in the remote diocese. A copy of this letter is to be sent to the Bishop of Colorado Springs and to the Director.
4. All further correspondence is done by the ordinaries of the two dioceses. If approved, the deacon will receive a letter of excardination from the Bishop of Colorado Springs (which does not take effect until he receives a decree) and a decree from the bishop of diocese in which he is requesting incardination. Upon issuance of the letter of decree, the permanent deacon becomes a cleric of the remote diocese.

B. Incardination into the Diocese

Incardination into the Diocese is normally executed through the following process:

1. The deacon petitioning incardination into the Diocese of Colorado Springs has been serving in the Diocese *ad experimentum* (with an openness to incardination) for at least two (2) years, has a positive recommendation from his pastor, and intends his domicile in the Diocese to be permanent.
2. The deacon will submit a letter to the bishop of the diocese in which he is presently incardinated requesting excardination so that he may be incardinated into the Diocese of Colorado Springs. In this letter, he will state that his ministry is needed in the Diocese and that he intends his domicile in the Diocese to be permanent. A copy of this letter is to be sent to the Bishop of Colorado Springs and to the Director.
3. Concurrent with the letter requesting excardination, the deacon will need to write a letter to the Bishop of the Diocese of Colorado Springs requesting incardination into the Diocese. In this letter, the deacon needs to state his intention to be permanently domiciled within the boundaries of the Diocese, his satisfaction with his ministry, and his desire to serve perpetually as a permanent deacon in the Diocese. A copy of this letter is to be sent to the bishop of the diocese in which the deacon is presently incardinated. Also, a copy of this letter is to be sent to the Director.
4. All further correspondence is done by the ordinaries of the two dioceses. If approved, the deacon will receive a letter of excardination from the bishop of his prior diocese (which does not take effect until he receives a decree) and a decree from the Bishop of Colorado Springs. Upon issuance of the letter of decree, the permanent deacon becomes a cleric of the Diocese of Colorado Springs.

27. SERVING IN ANOTHER DIOCESE

A deacon who desires to serve at a liturgy (Mass, Baptism, wedding, or funeral rite) in another diocese, must obtain a letter of suitability from the Diocese and submit it to the “remote” diocese in which the liturgy is to be performed. Normally, the letter is addressed to the bishop of the remote diocese, a courtesy copy is sent to the pastor of the parish at which the liturgy will be celebrated, and a scan of the signed letter is sent via email to the deacon making the request. That way the remote diocese has the letter in the event the deacon ends up at a different parish, the pastor has a copy and knows that it went to his diocese, and the deacon has a copy in case everyone else loses their copy. For instances where time is of the essence, e.g., funerals, the Diocese will send the scan copy via email to the bishop of the remote diocese and the pastor of the parish, notifying them the original is in the mail.

Letter of suitability request forms are available online at the Diocese of Colorado Springs Diaconate Teams site and should be sent to the office of the Bishop. Adequate time must be allowed for letter preparation, signing, returning the letter to the requesting deacon, and mailing it to the appropriate office in the remote diocese. Please allow time for the remote diocese to further process the letter and send it to the actual place of the liturgy.

28. DIACONAL STATUS

The status of a deacon serving in the Diocese falls within one of the following categories:

Active: An active deacon is a deacon in good standing, with the faculties of ministry within the Diocese, has an assignment from the Bishop, and is currently working in that assignment. Active deacons are required to fulfill their assignment through liturgical and service-oriented ministry, and are subject to the spiritual, liturgical, formational, and ministerial requirements and guidelines as specified in this policy document.

Deacons in active ministry may require short-term leave to address circumstances that may arise in their personal lives. For absences of thirty (30) days or less, the deacon should notify the Director, and the length and terms of the leave should be agreed to by the deacon and his pastor, or ministerial supervisor, and documented in writing.

“Absences of more than thirty days’ duration must be approved by the proper local ordinary.” (NDFML #97) The deacon must contact the Director, who will consult with the deacon and his pastor, or ministerial supervisor, to establish the length and terms of the leave, which will be documented in writing and presented to the Bishop for approval. The nature and length of the leave may require the deacon to submit a request for a temporary leave of absence.

Senior Deacon: A deacon, who after seven (7) years of active ministry and after reaching the age of seventy (70), may request the status of “senior deacon.” A senior deacon continues to reside in the Diocese, remains in good standing, and with the approval of the Bishop, retains his faculties to minister within the Diocese, usually at a reduced level. Upon reaching the age of seventy-five (75) and with approval of the Bishop, an active deacon automatically transitions to senior deacon status.

A senior deacon is relieved of his official parish assignment but remains attached to that parish, and with the pastor’s approval, continues his diaconal ministry as his health and personal circumstances permit. The pastor, in consultation with the senior deacon, determines the extent to which the deacon may exercise his faculties within the parish to which he is attached. If a senior deacon desires to change parishes, he may make this request through the Director.

At the request of his pastor, ministerial supervisor, or the Director, a senior deacon will be subject to evaluation for continued ministry. When determined that retirement is in the best interest of all parties, the deacon, if physically/mentally/psychologically able to do so, must submit a letter to the Bishop requesting retirement.

A senior deacon must maintain compliance with all safe environment requirements as implemented in the Diocese. Senior deacons are obligated to attend an annual spiritual retreat (see #48) and are subject to the canonical requirement for praying the Liturgy of the Hours (see #45).

A senior deacon is relieved of the annual requirement for continuing education; however, he is encouraged to participate in continuing education activities, both individually and through diocesan-sponsored programs, e.g., community meetings. A senior deacon serving in designated ministries,

e.g., marriage preparation or tribunal case sponsorship, may be required to attend initial and/or ongoing training.

Retired: A retired deacon has neither an assignment nor is required to perform continuing education. He does not have diocesan faculties but may minister on an occasional basis only with the permission of and to the extent of the scope authorized by the Director. Agreement of the pastor where the ministry will take place is also required. To receive permission for ministry, the deacon must be knowledgeable in current liturgical practices and diocesan guidelines for the ministry he will perform.

Ordination to the Permanent Diaconate is a call to lifelong service within the abilities of those who are called to serve. However, due to age, health, employment, family needs, or other circumstances, a deacon in good standing, with the faculties of ministry within the Diocese, may petition the Bishop for resignation from a ministerial office or retirement from ministerial duties. Retired deacons are obligated to attend an annual spiritual retreat, if able (see #48) and are subject to the canonical requirement for praying the Liturgy of the Hours (see #45).

A senior deacon who desires to retire must submit a letter to the Bishop requesting retirement. However, an active deacon may request resignation from his ministerial office prior to age seventy (70) for an appropriate reason as outlined above. All letters are reviewed by the Office of Permanent Diaconate and forwarded to the Bishop for approval. Upon written approval by the Bishop, the deacon becomes “retired” as defined above.

Even after a deacon leaves "active" ministry, he is encouraged to remain involved in the diaconate community by sitting in college at diocesan liturgies, mentoring younger deacons and candidates, and participating in all diaconal community programs to the best of his abilities. A retired deacon may choose the parish at which he will be a parishioner. As a courtesy, however, the deacon should notify the Director whenever he changes parishes. A retired deacon will not be required to seek excommunication upon moving outside the Diocese.

Inactive: A inactive deacon is a deacon who is not functioning in a diaconal assignment and is not retired. A deacon may be classified as inactive for the following reasons:

A. Temporary Leave: A deacon in good standing who, at his request or the recommendation of the Director, has been authorized by the Bishop to withdraw from active ministry for a specified period is on temporary leave. A deacon may request a temporary leave from his assignment for reasons that include, but are not limited to, health, study, personal problems, family commitments, change of occupation, change in parish situation, extended travel, or temporary relocation from the diocese.

The request, including the length of time and the reason for the leave, shall be submitted in writing to the Director and the deacon’s pastor or ministerial supervisor. For a sabbatical, the request must also include how the deacon’s activity will benefit the deacon and/or the Diocese. The terms of the leave, if granted, will be documented in writing, and signed by the deacon.

During this time, the determination as to the retention of faculties remains at the discretion of the Bishop. The deacon is encouraged to participate in all activities of the diaconal community (social, educational, and spiritual) within the limit of his capabilities. At the request of the deacon and/or the Director, in consultation with the deacon’s pastor or ministerial supervisor, and with an evaluation appropriate to the terms of the leave, the deacon may return to active ministry with approval of the Bishop.

B. Administrative Leave: At the behest of the Bishop and for a serious matter, a deacon may be placed on administrative leave. While on administrative leave, a preliminary investigation might be initiated depending on the circumstances that initiated the leave. During this time, the deacon will be relieved of his diaconal assignment and his faculties. He may not function or represent himself as a deacon while this status is in effect. Restoration of faculties and return to active ministry are at the discretion of the Bishop, depending on the outcome of the investigation. Alternatively, the Bishop could request the deacon to submit a letter of resignation from his ministerial office, or the Bishop could initiate canonical suspension.

C. Suspension: A deacon who incurs the canonical censure of suspension, resulting from an administrative or juridical procedure, is suspended. A deacon whose faculties have been suspended by the Bishop may not function or represent himself as a deacon in any parish, agency, or institution of the Diocese. The deacon will receive a letter from the Chancery stating the fact of his suspension and the effective date. Suspended deacons are removed from all listings of deacons in the Diocese. After an appropriate investigation, the deacon could be reinstated, or the Bishop could initiate the process of laicization.

D. Unauthorized Absence (AWOL): A deacon who leaves his assignment without the permission of the Bishop is absent without leave. As a result, his faculties cease. If the situation is not rectified, the deacon may be subject to suspension.

Laicized: A deacon who, voluntarily or involuntarily, is returned to the lay state by the Apostolic See in accordance with the norms of law, at his request, or the request of the Ordinary of his diocese, has lost his clerical state.

Deceased: A deacon in good standing who dies is listed in the necrology of deacons.

29. [removed in March 2024 revision]

30. LOSS OF CLERICAL STATE/LAICIZATION

“A deacon can lose the clerical state by canonical dismissal or by a rescript granted by the Holy See. Deacons who lose the clerical state are no longer bound by the obligations arising from Holy Orders and do not enjoy the rights, offices, functions, and powers accorded clerics in the Church.” (NDFML #106)

31. DEACONS IN CRISIS

The Diocese and its offices are committed to the support of deacons in individual or family crisis. Deacons and/or their spouses or supervisors are encouraged to contact the Director immediately upon the recognition of a condition or circumstances that would or could impair the deacon’s ability to minister (e.g., health, substance abuse, etc.), cause scandal to the Church (e.g., engaging in an extramarital affair, legal arrest for any cause), or any other circumstances that merit the attention of his supervisor such as job loss, catastrophic illness, or death of a family member. The Director, as delegated by the Bishop, is empowered to intervene, and work with the deacon to determine appropriate steps to remedy the situation or, when appropriate, to provide support. The Director may require that the deacon seek and show evidence of professional counseling. Where appropriate, the Diocese will provide funding for such counseling on a limited basis as determined by the Bishop. The Director, in consultation with the Bishop, may assign another deacon to serve as mentor and specific support for the deacon in crisis and/or his family. This deacon would be bound by the confidentiality of the circumstances and would be a minister of Christian charity in this time of suffering and brokenness. Furthermore, deacons in financial crisis may

have access to the Deacon Crisis Fund by contacting the Director, a Deacon Crisis Fund board member, or the Bishop.

32. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Sexual misconduct by any of the ordained clergy is an offense against Christian morality (Sixth Commandment) and is an issue of professional ethics. It may also be an issue of canonical, criminal and/or civil law. This type of misconduct has the potential to do serious harm to the Body of Christ and the local Church. Deacons are to be mindful that they are in public positions of leadership and influence, which can enhance the seriousness of any alleged misconduct. In all matters concerning allegations of sexual misconduct, deacons will follow the policy of the Diocese.

33. FAMILY DIFFICULTIES

Deacons and their families are not immune from experiencing marital or other family discord. Significant discord in the family of a deacon can adversely affect the ministry of the deacon and the community he serves. When it becomes clear that these difficulties are above and beyond the normal stress and strain of married life, a deacon or his wife is encouraged to bring these difficulties to the attention of the Director or, if family difficulties regarding the deacon are brought to the attention of the Director by other means, the Director will assist the deacon, his wife and family in whatever ways are possible, and will ensure that the appropriate diocesan resources are made available to them.

If marital or other family difficulties are not close to resolution within a three-month period, the Director will initiate a meeting with the deacon and his wife to assess whether the ministry of the deacon has become impaired. If this is the case, or if the family situation deteriorates to the point of scandal, the Director shall recommend appropriate action to the Bishop. Appropriate action might include directed marriage/family counseling, and/or a temporary/administrative leave of absence.

The deacon has a grave duty to report to the Director immediately at such time as a divorce is filed. Based upon all the facts and circumstances of each individual case, and considering the needs of the parish, ministry, and Diocese, appropriate action, if any is warranted, will be taken. Such appropriate action may include a temporary or administrative leave of absence. If the deacon's divorce could compromise his ministry or reputation among parishioners, he may be reassigned.

34. COMPENSATION

Canon law (see CIC 281.3) specifies that, normally, the income of a deacon will be derived from non-Church sources. Typically, there is no remuneration for diaconal service. Various out-of-pocket expenses incurred in an approved diaconal ministry should, however, be reimbursed to the deacon. Such reimbursable expenses include, but are not limited to, mileage, professional development, specifically designated conference expenses, and annual retreat expenses. Even though a deacon is not normally compensated for diaconal service, he shall be entitled to receive stipends or stole fees for such ministerial services as weddings, funerals, or baptisms, on the same basis as priests in the parish in which the services are provided. Deacons engaged in full-time or part-time paid Church employment will be compensated according to the terms of their letter of employment, and any diocesan or parish policies applicable to such employees. There is an accountable reimbursement plan for documented expenses for deacons employed by diocesan institutions.

35. PREACHING STIPENDS

Deacons who are asked to preach outside of their assigned parish or institution for Sunday Masses or special celebrations have a right to ask to be compensated for the time of preparation, travel, and delivery of the homily. Deacons should be compensated \$50 for preaching a single homily plus mileage to and from the place where the homily is given and \$100 plus mileage for two or more homilies. These dollar values are intended to provide a just compensation for extern preaching by deacons while protecting parishes and deacons from an abuse of inappropriate or competitive stipends.

36. PARISH/DIOCESAN COMMITMENTS TO DEACONS

The following support for the deacon will be provided by the parish or diocesan ministry to which he is assigned, based on individual parish ability:

- A. Comparative budget allowed for a priest per year for the purpose of defraying the costs of continuing education, workshops and other forms of continuing formation including travel.
- B. Furnishing vestments required for the fulfillment of liturgical roles, including dalmatics. Recommended is that each parish provide its deacon(s) with a diocesan dalmatic and/or stole for diocesan events.
- C. A designated area suitable for counseling, study, and preparation for preaching and teaching.
- D. Provisions for release from his normal responsibilities to participate in recommended spiritual exercises for the deacon.
- E. Payment for annual spiritual retreat expenses up to the diocesan limit. This is applicable to either a diocesan-sponsored retreat or an approved non-diocesan spiritual retreat.

37. LITURGICAL VESTMENTS

For liturgical dress at Mass, the dalmatic, worn over the alb and stole, is the vestment proper to the deacon; however, when serving as a master of ceremonies, choir dress or alb may be worn (donning a stole when receiving and/or distributing Communion). For all other liturgies, please consult the appropriate ritual book or the Diocesan Vestment guidelines, available online or by request from the Director. When vested, the deacon must not wear the deacon cross on the outside of his outer vestment.

38. CLERICAL ATTIRE

While the wearing of clerical attire is optional, some ministerial or pastoral situations may allow the deacon to communicate his presence as an ordained minister through proper clerical attire. This consists of a light grey (not charcoal) shirt, Roman collar, black or grey slacks, and a matching jacket (as appropriate). Situations where clerical attire is appropriate include, but are not limited to, liturgical celebrations; catechetical situations; visitations in hospitals, prisons/jails; hospices and nursing homes, and chaplaincy-related activities. It is recommended that when wearing clerical attire *with a jacket*, the deacon should not wear the deacon cross on a chain around his neck. Rather, a deacon cross *lapel pin* is appropriate.

When a deacon wears clerical attire, it is sending a message to those who see him that the Church is present. As such, consideration needs to be given as to where the clerical attire is worn and with whom. There are times when it is appropriate (and even recommended) for a deacon to wear clerical attire to non-parish locations or functions (e.g., a diocesan-hosted event or fundraiser). There are also times when it is clearly not appropriate (e.g., to your secular place of employment, out to dinner with friends or family, out to a bar/night club, or during other secular activities). The deacon should recall that clerical attire is

sacramental – designed to help those who see the deacon vested in this manner to call to mind the Church and Jesus Christ.

If the deacon chooses to not wear clerical attire, then he should be dressed appropriately for the situation. This includes the wearing of dress slacks (preferably black), a collared shirt, and dress shoes. This would also be the appropriate vesture with which to wear the deacon cross on a chain around the neck.

39. TITLES OF ADDRESS

In accordance with the National Directory (see NDFML #93), in all forms of address for permanent deacons in the Diocese, the appropriate title is "Deacon". For example, the written salutation will be "Dear Deacon _____," and letters will be addressed to "Deacon _____." This use of the title extends to all written and published communication at the diocesan and parish levels.

40. BUSINESS, EMPLOYMENT AND POLITICAL OFFICE

The deacon is free to engage in business, to function as a union official, or to administer property belonging to the laity. However, care should be taken that deacons do not work in a profession or trade that is a cause of scandal, or that will interfere with the fruitful exercise of their office. Furthermore, a "deacon may not present his name for election to any public office or in any other general election, or accept a nomination or an appointment to public office, without the prior written permission of the diocesan bishop. A deacon may not actively and publicly participate in another's political campaign without the prior written permission of the diocesan bishop." (NDFML #96)

41. SPIRITUAL LIFE

"The primary sources of a deacon's spirituality are his participation in the Sacraments of Christian initiation, as well as his sacramental identity and participation in ordained ministry. For a deacon who is married, his spirituality is nurtured further in the Sacrament of Matrimony, which sanctifies conjugal love and constitutes it as a sign of the love with which Christ gives himself to the Church. For the celibate deacon, loving God and serving his neighbor roots his whole person in a total and undivided consecration to Christ." (NDFML #67)

A deacon is to nourish his spiritual life through participation in daily Mass, praying the Liturgy of the Hours, mental prayer, regular reading and study of Sacred Scripture, regular access to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and devotion to the Virgin Mary, Mother of God. In addition to private prayer, the deacon should pray frequently with his spouse, family, pastoral staff, fellow deacons, and spiritual director. Participation in regular spiritual direction is strongly recommended (see #46), and in annual spiritual retreats is required (see #48).

42. INTEGRATION

Deacons "should integrate their family obligations, professional life, and ministerial responsibilities so as to grow in their commitment to the person and mission of Christ the Servant." (NDFML #68)

43. SIMPLICITY OF LIFE

". . . [D]eacons are called to a simple lifestyle. Simplicity of life enables a cleric 'to stand beside the underprivileged, to practice solidarity with their efforts to create a more just society, to be more sensitive and capable of understanding and discerning realities involving the economic and social aspects of life, and to promote a preferential option for the poor.'" (NDFML #70)

44. THE EUCHARIST AND DIACONAL MINISTRY

The threefold ministry of the deacon finds its source and its nourishment in the daily celebration of the Eucharist. Deacons are encouraged to participate and function as the deacon for daily Mass in their parish whenever possible.

45. LITURGY OF THE HOURS

“Permanent deacons in the United States of America are required to include as part of their daily prayer those parts of the Liturgy of the Hours known as Morning and Evening Prayer. Permanent deacons are obliged to pray for the universal Church. Whenever possible, they should lead these prayers with the community to whom they have been assigned to minister.” (NDFML #95)

46. SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Monthly spiritual direction is strongly recommended (see DMLPD #58 and NDFML #259). Therefore, each deacon is encouraged to choose and meet regularly with a personal spiritual director. Spiritual directors should be priests or deacons, preferably trained in spiritual direction. If no priest or deacon is available, it is permissible for the deacon to have a trained and/or certified Catholic religious or lay spiritual director.

47. DEACON MENTOR

“There are particular matters relevant to the newly ordained. It is important, therefore, that the newly ordained begin their ministry in a positive and supportive manner.” (NDFML #263). To support the newly ordained, the Director will design and coordinate a program for the first five (5) years of their ministry. This program will consist of the selection of individual deacon mentors and/or participation in regular diocesan “mentoring” meetings.

48. SPIRITUAL RETREAT

Deacons are entitled to an annual spiritual retreat (see NDFML #104). This retreat is obligatory and must have a minimum duration of three (3) days. To meet this obligation, the deacon may participate in the annual spiritual retreat offered by the Office of Permanent Diaconate for the diaconate community, or he may choose to find a suitable retreat on his own. The deacon may seek counsel with his spiritual director to identify the type, style, length, and location for an annual retreat. The deacon’s assigned parish or the Office of Permanent Diaconate will reimburse retreat expenses up to the diocesan limit annually.

49. CONTINUING EDUCATION AND FORMATION

The National Directory requires that the Diocese establish a program of ongoing formation for deacons (see NDFML #276). This program of ongoing formation is in addition to time allocated for an annual spiritual retreat or diaconal community retreat. Distance learning courses from approved institutions are mentioned in the National Directory as a possibility for fulfilling the ongoing formation requirement.

All permanent deacons given faculties and actively serving in ministry within the Diocese are required to successfully complete and document a minimum of thirty (30) hours (Continuing Education Units or CEUs) each calendar year. Deacons, not engaged in any ministry, are encouraged to fulfill this requirement to the best of their ability. CEU’s are calculated based on contact hours.

- A. Fifteen (15) of the requisite 30 CEU credits are awarded through documented attendance at the following mandatory events/trainings: annual spiritual retreat, Bishop’s Annual Convocation of Deacons, and all quarterly Deacon Community Meetings.

- B.** The additional fifteen (15) CEU credits can be earned by:
1. Participation in studies and continuing education programs established by the Diocese, college/seminary courses, or enrichment/formation courses.
 2. Self-directed activities such as book studies and video-based programs.
 3. Any expenditure for continuing education would be made with the prior approval of the pastor or ministerial supervisor for those deacons who are assigned to special ministries.
- C.** Participation in continuing education will be reported to the Office of Permanent Diaconate as set by the Director. Deacons failing to fulfill the continuing education requirement will be contacted by the Director, or his assistants, to determine an appropriate course of action.

50. THE WIFE OF A DEACON

Among the greatest and most important supports for the ministry of a deacon are his wife and family, who make a great sacrifice of love, offering the gift of their husband and father to the Church. There is no single expectation regarding the role that wives of deacons will play in the Church and society. Some wives will assist their husbands in ministry. Other wives will engage in other ministries in the Church separate from their husbands. Others will focus on the ministry of the domestic Church, attending to the needs of the household. In any case, the wives of deacons are to be treasured and supported in their roles as members of diaconal families. “The wife of a deacon should be included with her husband, when appropriate, in diocesan clergy and parochial staff gatherings. A deacon and his wife, both as a spiritual man and woman and as a couple, have much to share with the diocesan bishop and his priests about the Sacrament of Matrimony.” (NDFML #74)

51. THE FAMILY OF THE DEACON

The family is called “the domestic Church” in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council. As such it provides an environment for growth in faith and holiness for its members, and an opportunity for extending the ministry of Christ to the everyday world. The first order of business in any family is nurturing faith and love in both parents and children. The deacon has a particular responsibility to see that his ministry, job, and other commitments are integrated with the loving care for his wife and children. Good deacons do what all good husbands and fathers do in spending time with their families. This integration of marriage, family, diaconal ministry, and work demands extra care and constant attention. It is incumbent upon deacons, pastors, supervisors, and spouses to maintain open communication and constant dialogue about the integration of family, ministry, and work. Extra care should be given to discourage extended periods of over-involvement.

52. DEATH OF A DEACON

The family of a deacon, or his current pastor or supervisor, should immediately notify the Director of the death of a deacon. In turn, the Director will notify the Bishop and the Chancellor who will send out a death notice to the parishes. The Director shall also ensure that the Deacon community of the Diocese is notified promptly and that whenever possible a deacon-support person is assigned to represent the presence of the diaconate community to the family of the deceased deacon. Though the family of the deacon has the primary responsibility for funeral arrangements for the deceased deacon, the deacon’s pastor, and the Director shall offer every reasonable assistance to the family in the way of bereavement assistance, in the planning of a vigil and funeral liturgy, and in any reception after the funeral liturgy that may be desired.

A bishop is the normal presider at the funeral liturgy, and every effort should be made to coordinate funeral arrangements to facilitate a bishop's presence. If possible, and with the permission of the family, the deceased deacon should be attired in alb, stole and dalmatic. If cremation is to occur, the family should be strongly urged to postpone this until after the Mass of Christian Burial, so that the body may be present in the Church. Within the first month after the death and burial of a deacon, the Director will prepare a letter for the Bishop's signature to the surviving wife and/or children. The letter is to recognize and acknowledge the deacon's service to the Church, the history of his assignments, and the loss to the diocesan and the domestic Church of this faithful servant.

Deacons are encouraged to maintain updated funeral plans (including any pre-arranged funeral arrangements with a funeral home) in their files at the Office of Permanent Diaconate. These plans may be changed at any time by the deacon submitting a new plan in writing. The suggested Funeral Plan Form is available from the Director's office or online at the Diocese of Colorado Springs Diaconate Teams site.

53. DEATH OF A DEACON'S WIFE OR CHILD

The deacon, or his current pastor or supervisor, should immediately notify the Director of the death of a deacon's wife or child. In turn, the Director will notify the Bishop. The Director shall also ensure that the diaconate community of the Diocese is notified promptly. The Director will assign a deacon-support person to represent the presence of the diaconate community to the deacon and his family before, during, and after the burial of the spouse or child. Also, the support deacon will notify the Director if he observes that any special assistance is needed to support this deacon and/or his family.

PART FOUR: POLICIES CONCERNING LITURGICAL MINISTRY OF DEACONS

54. INTRODUCTION

The policies drawn from the liturgical texts and documents concerning the diaconate are established as the norms for the liturgical ministry of deacons in the Diocese. Deacons are required to study, be familiar with, and adhere to all liturgical documents of the Roman Catholic Church. Specifically, deacons should be familiar with:

- The Roman Missal
- The General Introduction to the Roman Missal (GIRM)
- *Sacrosanctum Concilium*
- *Redemptionis Sacramentum*
- Ceremonies of the Modern Roman Rite (by Bishop Peter J. Elliott)
- Norms for the Distribution and Reception of Holy Communion Under Both Kinds
- All appropriate ritual books and their introduction
- Liturgical guidelines specific to this Diocese

55. THE DEACON AT THE MASS

As ordinary ministers at the Mass, deacons are expected to vest and fulfill the liturgical ministry of deacon whenever they are at Mass in their assigned parish. “The celebration of Mass is the action of Christ and the People of God – ministers and congregation. Within the one body of Christ are many gifts and responsibilities. But just as each organ and limb is necessary for the sound functioning of the body (see 1 Cor 12), so every member of the liturgical assembly gathered by Christ has a part to play in the action of the whole. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance that in all circumstances and on every occasion the celebration be organized so that priest, deacon, lay ministers, and faithful may all take their own parts. . . . In the celebration of the Eucharist, all who are present participate according to their role and function in the Liturgy. A celebration is the work of the whole body of Christ; the ministers and other members of the congregation have a part in the action and have a contribution to make. Each of these special services is performed for the good of the whole and for the glory of God.” (*Introduction to the Order of Mass*, #4, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* #14, #28, GIRM #16-18, #20).

At a minimum, a deacon should strive to assist at one Sunday Mass in his assigned parish, unless ill or out of town. In parishes with more deacons than Sunday Masses, it is recommended that two deacons assist at a Mass so that all deacons meet the minimum recommendation. Alternatively, a deacon may choose to attend Mass at another parish.

In keeping with the canonical regulations for presbyters (see CIC 905.2), deacons should assist at no more than three Masses on any given Sunday or Holy Day. On occasions and in settings where a deacon is assigned to preach more than three Masses, the deacon may assist at all Masses for both the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, but deacons are not to receive the Holy Eucharist more than twice daily (CIC 917). On any single day, where a deacon assists at more than two Masses, the deacon could assist fully at each Mass, while not receiving the Holy Eucharist more than twice, or the deacon could vest and participate from the beginning to the end of the Liturgy of the Word only.

“After the priest, in virtue of the sacred ordination he has received, the deacon has first place among those who minister in the celebration of the Eucharist.” (*De Ordinatione Episcopi, Presbyterorum et*

Diaconarum, 1989, no. 173) While attending Mass in his assigned parish, the proper place of the deacon is in the sanctuary assisting with the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and/or the distribution of Holy Communion. In extraordinary circumstances, such as the wedding of a deacon's child or his own wedding anniversary, a deacon may elect to remain in the pew with his family. When attending Mass outside his assigned parish, the deacon may participate in the Mass from the pew, unless invited to assist at the Mass. This directive does not apply to inactive deacons, including those who serve occasionally at the parish they regularly attend.

56. MULTIPLE DEACONS

Liturgical principles state that presbyters, deacons, and laity have appropriate roles in the celebration of the Mass. In keeping with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, the involvement of the laity in the Mass is to be encouraged whenever and wherever possible. Thus, deacons should never take on roles that belong to the laity such as serving as lector, cantor, usher, altar server, or acolyte. At the same time, lay persons are not to take on the roles of ordinary ministers, such as the ministry of distributing Holy Communion, except when and where there are insufficient numbers of ordinary ministers. "All present contribute to the Eucharistic celebration by their full, active, and conscious participation and, where necessary or appropriate, by the carrying out of the responsibilities of their particular order or function. By doing all and only those parts that belong to them, ordained and lay ministers, and all members of the congregation, contribute to the participation of all and show the Church as the Body of Christ, actively engaged in worship of the living God with the help of various orders and ministries." (*Introduction to the Order of Mass*, #5)

In general, except for major parish or diocesan feasts, or Mass with a bishop, no more than two deacons should assist at a Sunday or daily Mass. In a number of parishes, it is not uncommon to have more than one deacon attending a Sunday or daily Mass. In keeping with liturgical principles as expressed in GIRM #109, on those occasions when multiple deacons are present, as many deacons can assist at the Mass as there are legitimate diaconal roles. At major feasts, when more than two deacons assist, the diaconal roles should be distributed to accommodate the number of deacons attending the liturgy. Only those deacons should vest who have a legitimate diaconal role in the Mass. Appropriate diaconal roles include proclamation of the Gospel, assisting at the altar, and the distribution of Communion, particularly, but not exclusively, the chalice. Deacons are not to assist at distribution of Holy Communion unless they are properly vested. Again, deacons are not to take roles that are specifically those of the laity, such as proclamation of the first and second reading; however, "if there is no other suitable reader present, the Deacon should proclaim the other readings as well." (GIRM #176)

When two deacons assist with a bishop at Mass, one is Deacon of the Word, and the other is Deacon of the Table. When three deacons assist with a bishop at Mass, one is the Deacon of the Mass (start to finish including Word and Eucharist) and two are Assisting Deacons 1 and 2. Assisting Deacons 1 and 2 would fill any other roles that the bishop requires, such as incensing and distribution of Holy Communion as Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

57. PREACHING

Among the primary liturgical ministries of the deacon are proclaiming the Gospel and preaching at the liturgies. As one ordained to announce the "good news," the deacon can extend this ministry in almost unlimited ways. The deacon may preach on the following occasions when he is the presiding minister of a sacrament or liturgical rite: *Reception of Holy Communion outside of Mass and Sunday Celebrations in Absence of a Priest; Baptism of Infants; Sacrament of Matrimony; Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament;*

Order of Christian Funerals, including the Vigil and related rites and prayers, and Rite of Committal and Final Commendation; Celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours; and Visitation of the Sick and the administration of Viaticum Outside Mass.

The deacon may also preach at any liturgy at which he is not the presider, including Mass, at the invitation of the presider.

58. THE DEACON IN OTHER LITURGICAL SITUATIONS

- A. Baptisms and RCIA:** Deacons may preside at the Sacrament of Baptism for infants; that is, children up to the catechetical age, considered to be seven (7) years of age. The deacon may preside at the minor rites of the RCIA according to the norms for those rites.
- B. Marriage:** Deacons may witness marriages outside the Mass as well as conduct the premarital investigations and preparations; request necessary permissions and dispensations; and assist with the process for convalidation, for declarations of nullity, and/or for dissolutions of the bond. When a deacon is witnessing marriage, whether in his own assigned parish or outside of the juridical boundaries of the parish to which he is assigned, he must receive proper delegation from that pastor prior to the wedding. This is for the validity of the marriage.
- C. Funerals:** Except for the Mass, a deacon may conduct any of the funeral rites. This includes conducting the Vigil, Funeral Liturgy Outside of Mass, and Rite of Committal.
- D. Sacramentals:** Deacons may bless sacramentals including medals, rosaries, and religious articles with the Sign of the Cross and administer invocative blessings from the Liturgical books and the Book of Blessings. Deacons may distribute, but not bless, ashes (unless the blessing of ashes is part of a liturgical service at which he presides, e.g., a Liturgy of the Word service on Ash Wednesday).

PART FIVE: THE STATUS OF THESE POLICIES

59. PARTICULAR LAW

These policies and procedures, once approved and promulgated by the Bishop of Colorado Springs, become normative for the Diocese until amended by the Bishop or his successor (see CIC 288).

60. AMENDMENTS

Recommendations for amendments to these policies and procedures may be offered by the DCB upon a consensus vote of the membership. As this body is advisory, the Bishop is under no obligation to accept the recommendations of the DCB or to amend these policies.

APPENDIX A: DEACON COMMUNITY BOARD STATUTES

The Director of the Permanent Diaconate is assisted in his ministry of service to the diaconal community by the Deacon Community Board (DCB), which is advisory in purpose and nature. The following are the statutes governing the purpose, membership, and operation of the DCB.

A. Purpose: The DCB has as its primary function assisting the Director in the formulation and recommendation of policies related to the ministry and life of deacons in the Diocese. All policies approved by the consensus of the DCB will be presented as recommendations for the consideration of the Bishop. These policies include those that are found in the Policies and Procedures Handbook for the Permanent Diaconate.

Members of the DCB may be asked to advise the Director and the Bishop regarding recommended assignments of deacons throughout the Diocese based on needs assessment. Additional support may include the periodic evaluation of permanent deacons and their assignments and coordinating the mentoring of those who are in the first years of ordained ministry as deacons. As needed, the DCB may consult with the Priest Personnel Board and the formation team to ensure the most effective distribution of diaconal ministry throughout the Diocese.

In addition, the DCB may be asked to address other matters as presented or requested by the Director or the Bishop.

B. Membership: The DCB comprises the following:

1. The Director.
2. A suitable number of deacons and wives as appointed by the Bishop or the Director on behalf of the Bishop. The number of deacons and wives selected should ensure a representative cross section of the deacons/parishes in the Diocese.
3. If the Bishop deems necessary, he may appoint a pastor or priest of the Diocese to advise on deacon assignments.

C. Officers: The Bishop, the Director, or a cleric designated as the Bishop's delegate in his absence, serves as the president of the DCB (see NDFML #303). The Director will facilitate meetings of the DCB.

D. Terms of Office: Terms of office for DCB members will be four (4) years with the possible reappointment to additional terms at the discretion of the Bishop. As is possible, appointments to the board will be staggered to ensure continuity within the board.

E. Vacancies: In the event of a vacancy, a replacement will be appointed by the Director with the Bishop's approval of the replacement candidate. DCB members appointed to fill vacancies will serve for the remainder of the term of the vacating member but may be reappointed to additional terms at the discretion of the Bishop.

F. Removal from Office: If a DCB member is unable for any reason to participate in a productive and constructive manner, or directly violates the confidentiality agreement, the DCB may request that the Bishop vacate his or her position and appoint a replacement member.

G. Meetings: The DCB shall meet at the discretion of the Director or a majority of its members. Meetings will be held at least twice a year or when necessary. One of these meetings will be held in conjunction with the annual deacon convocation. Any unsettled decisions will be brought before the Bishop for his consideration.

- H. Voting and Consensus:** The DCB will operate utilizing the principles of discernment and consensus for all major decisions regarding policy. As an advisory board, all votes are nonbinding; thus, the consensus model provides the Bishop with a more certain understanding of the mind of the College of Deacons.
- I. Committees:** The DCB will be supported in its work by such standing and ad hoc committees as shall be named to address the specific needs of the diaconate and the Diocese (e.g., Continuing Education/Formation, Retreat).
- J. Special Committees:** The Director can name and appoint members to serve on special committees, projects, or ad hoc task forces as needed to serve the needs of the diaconate community or the Diocese. Special committees should be given a specific purpose or mission and term to complete their work. To meet new or long-term needs, special committees can be designated as standing committees with the approval of the DCB.
- K. Personnel Interviews:** Upon request from either the Director or the Bishop, the members of the DCB will interview any or all deacons regarding their assignments and ministry.
- L. Recommendations:** The Director, in consultation with the DCB as necessary, will make advisory recommendations for assignments and transfers to the Bishop who according to his assessment of diocesan need, will confirm or make another assignment by decree of appointment.
- M. Confidentiality:** Members of the DCB are required to sign confidentiality agreements because the board may be asked to advise on personnel matters such as assignment changes, personal problems of a deacon who needs professional counseling or treatment, or other confidential/sensitive matters.

