



**OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE
ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON**

**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES HANDBOOK
FOR THE PERMANENT DIACONATE OF THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF GALVESTON-HOUSTON**

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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 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 bishop, the deacon must exercise his ministry responsibly, creatively, and in accordance with the mind of the Church and the bishop. Because he has received the sacrament of Holy Orders, and because he has promised obedience to the bishop, the question for the deacon is no longer, “will I serve,” but rather, “how will I be called upon to serve.”

To facilitate this service, support the diaconate community and insure each deacon’s proper integration into the overall ministry of the Archdiocese, the following policies and procedures are intended to be normative for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

2. REFERENCES

Hereinafter, references to the bishop will mean the “diocesan bishop” as that term is used in the Code of Canon Law, and references to “deacon” will mean “permanent deacon.” References to the National Directory [NDFML] are to the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops promulgated December 26, 2004. The *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* 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* [BNF] and the *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* [DML].

PART ONE: THE PERMANENT DIACONATE - GENERAL PRINCIPLES

3. INTRODUCTION

One of the ministries in the Church that was restored after the Second Vatican Council was the order of deacon as a permanent and stable order of the Church’s hierarchy. In 1968, the Texas vocation directors petitioned the bishops of the state to restore the order of deacon for service in the dioceses of Texas.

In 1969, Bishop John Morkovsky gave approval for a study committee to consider the issues of planning and executing a formation program in the diocese. After a year of planning, the first formation class began in September 1970. The Diocese of Galveston-Houston was one of the first five dioceses to launch a formation program for the restored permanent diaconate.

When the Second Vatican Council restored the diaconate as a permanent ministry in the Church, three motives were at work:

1. A desire to restore to the Church the full complement of active apostolic ministries;
2. The desire to integrate and strengthen with sacramental ordination and grace those who are, in fact, already exercising many diaconal functions; and
3. To provide ministers for those regions where functions vital to the Church's life could not be carried out.

Deacons are ordained by the local bishop for service to the diocesan Church. It is the local Church that mediates God's call to diaconal ministry. It is the local Church that discerns and ratifies the call to ministry. It is to this Church that a deacon commits himself and is bound in service in communion with the bishops and priests.

4. SACRAMENTS 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 calls and the Church asks the bishop to ordain deacons to be consecrated witnesses to service.” (NDFML #28)

“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 and a member of the hierarchy,’ with a distinct identity and integrity in the Church that marks him as neither a lay person nor a priest; rather, the deacon is a cleric who is ordained to *diakonia*, namely, a service to God's People in communion with the bishop and his body of priests. The principle function of the deacon therefore is to collaborate with the bishop and his priests in the exercise of a ministry that is not of their own wisdom but of the word of God, calling all to conversion and holiness.” (NDFML #29)

5. THE THREEFOLD MUNUS: WORD, LITURGY AND CHARITY

Deacons are ordained to the threefold ministry of the Word, the 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. 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 blessing marriages, in presiding at rites of funerals 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.” (BNF #9)

6. RELATIONSHIP TO THE BISHOP

“The deacon exercises his ministry within a specific pastoral context – the communion and mission of the diocesan Church. He is in direct relationship with the bishop with whom he is in communion and under whose authority he exercises his ministry. In making his promise of respect and obedience to his bishop the deacon takes as his model Christ, who became the servant of his Father. The bishop also enters into a relationship with the deacon since the deacon is his collaborator in the service of God’s People.” (NDFML 41)

7. RELATIONSHIP WITH PRIESTS

“Deacons exercise their ministry in communion not only with their 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 priesthood, but a full order in its own right.” (NDFML #50)

“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 bishop in mutual service to the People of God.” (NDFML #52)

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.’ ...the diaconal community should be, for those in the aspirant and candidate paths 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 #54)

9. DEACONS AND WOMEN AND MEN RELIGIOUS

“Deacons ought to promote a 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 #55)

10. RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LAITY

“By ordination, deacons are members of the clergy. The vast majority of deacons in the United States, 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 in living their Christian faith in society.... Through his ordination to service, the deacon promotes, in an active fashion, the various lay apostolates and guides these in communion with the bishop and local priests.” (NDFML #56-57)

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 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 #67)

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 #71)

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 #72)

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 assisted to seek professional counsel and spiritual direction as he encounters and integrates the bereavement process.” (NDFML #73)

15. REMARRIAGE

“In exceptional cases, the Holy See 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, additional time will be required for the formation of a stable relationship in the new marriage, as well as the enabling of his new wife to obtain sufficient understanding and experience about the diaconate in order to give her written, informed consent, and support.” (NDFML #75)

PART TWO: STRUCTURE RELATED TO THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

16. OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

The Office of the Permanent Diaconate serves the deacons of the Archdiocese and their families in three areas: formation, ministry and life, 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. SECRETARIAT FOR CLERGY FORMATION AND CHAPLAINCY SERVICES

It will be the responsibility of the Director of the Secretariat for Clergy Formation and Chaplaincy Services (hereinafter the Director of the Secretariat) or the designee of the Archbishop (1) to supervise the Director of the Permanent Diaconate, (2) to advise the Archbishop regarding deacon personnel and management matters with the Director of the Permanent Diaconate, and (3) to review and recommend policies and procedures regarding the administration and formation of permanent deacons to the Archbishop when necessary or appropriate. Whenever policies and procedures are proposed, reviewed or revised, the Director of the Secretariat and the Director of the Permanent Diaconate shall insure that there is consultation with the deacons of the Archdiocese, and especially with any canonically established associations of deacons.

18. DIRECTOR OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

The Director of the Secretariat is assisted in his responsibilities by the Director of the Permanent Diaconate (hereinafter, the Director). It shall be the specific ministry of the Director to serve the diaconal community of the Archdiocese in personnel, placement, formation and continuing education matters. He shall carry out the policies established herein under the general supervision of the Director of the Secretariat. To support the Director, there will be assistant directors as assigned by the Archbishop. Normally, the assistant directors will be deacons.

19. DEACON COMMUNITY BOARD

The Director is assisted in his ministry of service to the diaconal community by a Deacon Community Board and a Deacon Personnel Board (hereinafter Community Board and Personnel Board respectively).

- A. Purpose of Deacon Community Board:** The Community Board 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 Archdiocese. All policies approved by the consensus of the Deacon Community Board will be presented as recommendations for the consideration of the Archbishop. These policies will include those that are found in the archdiocesan Deacon Handbook. In addition, the Community Board might be asked to address other matters as presented or requested by the Director of the Permanent Deacons or the Archbishop.
- B. Membership:** The Deacon Community Board shall be comprised of the following:
- one member elected from the deacons serving in each of the deaneries;
 - two wives appointed by the Director. Any wife who is appointed to the Deacon Community Board may not be the spouse of a deacon who is elected or appointed to serve on the Deacon Community Board.
 - one pastor or priest of the Archdiocese appointed by the Archbishop;
 - ex officio, the Assistant Director(s);
 - ex officio, the Director; and
 - ex officio, the Director of the Secretariat for Clergy Formation.
- C. Officers:** The Archbishop or a priest designated as the Archbishop's delegate in his absence serves as the president of the Deacon Community Board (NDFML #290). A chairman shall be elected from among the membership of the Board. The chair will facilitate meetings of the Board. A vice chairman will be elected to facilitate meetings in the absence of the chairman. Officers will serve for a term of one year beginning November 1 each year beginning with the first election. Officers can be elected a total of two terms.
- D. Nominations and Elections:** Nominations for the elected members of the Board will be gathered from the deacons who serve in each deanery. The election of Deacon Community Board representatives from the deaneries will take place by e-mail and regular mail. All (1) incardinated deacons (2) with active status (3) residing in the Archdiocese will be qualified to be nominated and to vote in elections for the Deacon Community Board. To be elected to the Deacon Community Board, a deacon must receive a simple majority (50% + 1) of the votes cast for that deanery.
- E. Terms of Office:** Terms of office for Community Board members will be for three years with the possible reelection to a second term. At the end of two terms, the member must rotate off the Community Board for three years.
- F. Vacancies:** In the event of a vacancy, a replacement will be appointed within two months with the Archbishop's approval of the replacement candidate. Board members appointed to fill vacancies will serve only for the remainder

of the term of the vacating member, but may be reelected for one or two additional terms.

- G. Removal from Office:** If a Community Board member misses three meetings in one year, the Board may request that the Archbishop vacate his or her position and appoint a replacement Board member.
- H. Meetings:** The Board shall meet at the discretion of the Director or the Director of the Secretariat or the majority of its elected members. Meetings will be held at least once per quarter. A quorum will consist of 50% +1 of the members of the Community Board exclusive of ex-officio members. Quarterly meetings will be held in the months of November, February, May and August. The annual year for the Deacon Community Board will begin November 1 with new members taking office at the November meeting.
- I. Voting and Consensus:** The Community Board 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 Archbishop with a more certain understanding of the mind of the College of Deacons.
- J. Committees:** The Community Board 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 Archdiocese.
- K. 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 Archdiocese. Special committees should be given a specific charter 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 Community Board.
- L. Initial Elections:** Those deacons who are serving on the Deacon Ministry and Life Task Force will become the initial Deacon Community Board, effective April 1, 2005. This initial Board will serve until the first meeting of the elected and appointed members of the full Deacon Community Board in November, 2005. The first election of deanery representative to the Deacon Community Board will be held in September, 2005. Any runoffs will be conducted in September or October so that a full Deacon Community Board is seated at the first meeting of the full Board in November, 2005. Newly elected members will take office no later than two months after the date of the election. Terms of service for the elected members and the appointed members will be staggered. Through a lottery, members will be chosen to serve one, two and three-year terms to assure that only one-third of the Board is elected and/or appointed each year.
- M. Election to the Community Board:** To be elected to the Deacon Community Board, a deacon must receive a simple majority (50% + 1) of the votes cast for that deanery.
- N. Orientation:** Newly elected Board members will be invited to an orientation meeting as soon after the election as possible but no later than the last week of October each year.

- O. Annual Calendar:** Quarterly meetings will be held in the months of November, February, May, August and November. The annual year for the Deacon Community Board will begin November 1 with new members taking office at the November meeting.

20. DEACON PERSONNEL BOARD

The Deacon Personnel Board exists to assist the Director of the Permanent Diaconate in the support of deacons in ministry and to advise the Archbishop regarding recommended assignments of deacons throughout the Archdiocese. This Board is intended to work in tandem with the Priest Personnel Board to ensure the most effective distribution of diaconate ministry throughout the Archdiocese. The Deacon Personnel Board might be asked to address any issues related to personnel policies related to the diaconate, or the members might be asked to advise the Deacon Community Board in the development of specific policies. Additional roles of the Deacon Personnel Board will include the periodic evaluation of deacons and their assignments, and the mentoring of those who are in the first three years of ordained ministry as deacons. Finally, the Deacon Personnel Board will serve as a clearinghouse for all parishes and institutions who are seeking applications for full- or part-time employment of a deacon in a specific parish role or ministry such as parish life coordinator, pastoral associate or parish administrator.

- A. Membership:** The Deacon Personnel Board shall be comprised of the following:
- one member elected from the deacons serving in each of the vicariates;
 - the chair of the Deacon Personnel Board as appointed by the Archbishop;
 - one pastor or priest of the Archdiocese appointed by the Archbishop;
 - ex officio, the Assistant Director(s);
 - ex officio, the Director; and
 - ex officio, the Director of the Secretariat for Clergy Formation.
- B. Officers:** The Deacon Personnel Board will be chaired by a cleric appointed by the Archbishop. This cleric could be a priest or bishop who chairs the Priest Personnel Board. This will assure a continuity related to the assignment and circumstances of priests and deacons in the Archdiocese. The chairperson of the Deacon Personnel Board will serve for as long as the Archbishop desires.
- C. Nominations and Elections:** Nominations for the elected members of the Board will be gathered from the deacons who serve in each vicariate. All (1) incardinated deacons (2) with active status (3) residing in the Archdiocese will be qualified to be nominated and to vote in elections for the Deacon Personnel Board. The election of Deacon Personnel Board representatives from the vicariates will take place by e-mail and regular mail.
- D. Rotation of Elections by Vicariate:** After the election of the first Deacon Personnel Board, there will be a four-year rotation of electing the members from the vicariates. Each year at the time of the Diaconate Convocation, one vicariate representative will be elected to serve a four-year term. The

sequence of annual election will be based upon the alphabetical listing of the names of each vicariate including any future additional or renamed vicariates. The sequence of vicariate representative elections as of the promulgation of this handbook will be: Central, Northern, Southern, Western.

- E. Terms of Office:** Terms of office for the Deacon Personnel Board members will be for four years limited to one term.
- F. Vacancies:** In the event that a vacancy occurs among the elected members, a new member will be appointed by the Archbishop in the affected constituency within two months. The member thus appointed shall serve only for the remainder of the term of the vacating member, but may be reelected for two additional consecutive terms.
- G. Removal from Office:** If a Personnel Board member misses three meetings in one year, the Board may request that the Archbishop replace him.
- H. Meetings:** It is anticipated that the Deacon Personnel Board would meet quarterly to review assignments, address problems and make recommendations to the Archbishop for assignments or changes. The chair of the Deacon Personnel Board and the Director of the Permanent Diaconate could cancel a quarterly meeting if they judge that there is not sufficient business to warrant a meeting. A quorum will consist of 50% +1 of the members of the Personnel Board.
- I. Voting and Consensus:** The Personnel Board will operate utilizing the principles of discernment and consensus.
- J. Relation to Episcopal Vicars:** The elected vicariate representatives on the Deacon Personnel Board will work closely with the Episcopal Vicar in their vicariate in order to understand and respond to the specific needs of the vicariate.
- K. Personnel Interviews:** The members of the Deacon Personnel Board will interview all deacons regarding their assignments and ministry at least once every five years and as personnel assessments are required in special circumstances. Upon a request for reassignment, a personnel interview with the deacon is mandatory. Personnel interviews may be conducted more frequently if deemed necessary or appropriate by the Archbishop, the Director of the Permanent Diaconate or the Deacon Personnel Board.
- L. Recommendations:** The Deacon Personnel Board will make recommendations for assignments and transfers to the Archbishop who, according to his assessment of archdiocesan need, will confirm or make another assignment by decree of appointment.

21. DIACONATE FORMATION

The activities of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate related to diaconate formation will be directed by a Director of Formation and Assistant Director of Formation. These will be assisted in their respective areas of responsibility by a Director of Spiritual Formation (preferably a priest) and a Coordinator of Field Education. These individuals as appointed by the Archbishop will constitute the staff for Diaconate Formation.

22. DIACONATE FORMATION RESOURCES

In the specific areas of human, intellectual, spiritual and pastoral formation, the Diaconate Formation staff will be assisted by the following bodies:

- A. Admissions and Scrutinies Committee;
- B. Spiritual Formation Team;
- C. Academic Faculty; and
- D. Field Supervision Teams.

23. DIACONATE FORMATION HANDBOOK

For information regarding the policies governing the structure of the Diaconate Formation program from admission through ordination, see the Deacon Formation Handbook of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

PART THREE: POLICIES CONCERNING THE MINISTRY AND LIFE OF DEACONS

24. FACULTIES

Unless otherwise specified in his decree of appointment, a deacon lawfully assigned to a parish or archdiocesan ministry in this Archdiocese has the following faculties, to be used under the supervision of the pastor or supervisor:

- 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 (Canon 861.1);
- C. To give Holy Communion, to administer Viaticum, and to give benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament (Canons 910.1, 921 and 943);
- D. To preside at funeral and burial rites (Canon 1176.1);
- E. To preach and to instruct the faithful (Canon 764);
- F. To witness marriages in his assigned parish and to witness marriages *with the specific delegation of the pastor* when functioning in parishes other than his assignment (Canons 1108 and 1111); and
- G. To impart blessings in accord with the norms contained within the liturgical books (Canons 1168 and 1169.3).

Diaconate faculties in the Archdiocese are exercised according to the pagella and with the approval of the ministerial supervisor to whom the deacon is assigned.

25. ASSIGNMENTS

The primary objective in the assignment of permanent deacons will be to meet the needs of the People of God in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, as determined by the Archbishop. Assignments of deacons in the Archdiocese are made by the Archbishop

by way of a decree of appointment that will state with some specificity the deacon's duties and responsibilities (NDFML #44). Deacons may be assigned either to (1) parish ministry, or to (2) an archdiocesan or special non-parochial ministry that may include a limited parochial assignment in order to provide the deacon with a community for liturgical service. Deacons will be expected to provide ministerial services in accordance with the provisions of the Archbishop's decree of appointment.

The Deacon Personnel Board will make recommendations for assignments and transfers to the Archbishop who, according to his assessment of archdiocesan need, will 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 Archbishop. 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 Archbishop or the Director of the Permanent Diaconate. The change of a canonical assignment requires the action and decree of the ordinary of the diocese. (Canons 273 and 274)

All deacons in parochial ministry and those in special archdiocesan ministries will have a priest supervisor. As a norm, the priest supervisor will be the pastor of the parish to whom the deacon is assigned. Secondly, deacons with archdiocesan or non-parochial ministries may be assigned to a priest supervisor who is in direct contact with them in the special ministry.

In rare cases, a deacon may have an assignment to an archdiocesan ministry that has a liturgical community. In this case, if the Archbishop so desires, the deacon will be supervised by the priest who leads the community.

25A. MINISTERIAL AGREEMENTS

The practice in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston is for deacons to complete a ministry agreement which specifies the kinds and degree of ministerial activity expected of the deacon in the course of his assignment. This agreement is signed by the deacon, his wife, the pastor or priest-supervisor and the director of the diaconate.

In addition, deacons complete an annual ministry report which specifies the scope of the ministry the deacon he has exercised for the past year. This data is used to provide reports to the national bodies studying the diaconate. Also, the deacon completes an annual update profile providing demographic and background information concerning the deacon.

Active deacons are to complete a new ministry agreement upon reassignment or at the time of their first assignment after ordination.

Deacons in active ministry are required to submit ministry agreements to the Director of the Office of the Diaconate every fourth year unless they are reassigned to a

parish of special archdiocesan ministry in which case a new ministry agreement must be submitted.

Even though the canonical assignment of a deacon continues during a vacancy or change of a pastor, when a new pastor, administrator, or parish life coordinator is appointed to a parish, or a new supervisor is named to an archdiocesan ministry, active status deacons must complete a new ministry agreement as soon as reasonable.

Active deacons are required to submit only the diaconate ministry report, evaluation, and personal update profile on an annual basis to the Office of the Diaconate, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

Deacons with retired status are required to submit the annual ministry report and the update profile each year, even though retired deacons are not required to submit ministry agreements.

26. DECREES OF APPOINTMENT

Decrees of appointment are required to function as a deacon in good standing in this Archdiocese. Decrees of appointment will be prepared for the Archbishop's approval and signature by the Director of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate. In preparing decrees 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 a decree of appointment is signed by the Archbishop and publicly announced, all parties are bound by confidentiality." (NDFLM #44)

27. REASSIGNMENTS

The process of a reassignment can be initiated by a deacon, his pastor or supervisor, the Deacon Personnel Board or the ordinary. When a pastor, a supervisor or a deacon initiates the procedures for a transfer, it is highly recommended that a request for reassignment be presented to the Director 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 Deacon Personnel Board and the proposed receiving pastor. If the reassignment request appears to pose no significant personnel, pastoral or personal issues for any relevant parties, the proposed reassignment will be presented to the Archbishop 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 about the performance of the deacon's ministry shall be presented to the Director of the Permanent Diaconate or to the Archbishop 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 in

order to continue the assignment. Once the two parties have been consulted and if the current situation cannot be reconciled, the Director will then request a recommendation for reassignment from the Deacon Personnel Board at its next regular meeting or will recommend a specific assignment directly to the Archbishop. The Archbishop may resolve the issue or direct that the matter be presented to the Deacon Personnel Board.

The Deacon Personnel Board or the Archbishop assessing the needs of the Archdiocese can initiate the procedures for a transfer. In light of a specific archdiocesan need that might include a parochial ministry or special ministry, the Deacon Personnel Board or the Archbishop can instruct the Director of the Permanent Diaconate to inform and consult with the deacon and his pastor or supervisor. The Deacon Personnel Board, after this consultation and review of circumstances, will make a final recommendation for reassignment to the ordinary for his approval.

The consultations with deacons, pastors or supervisors as discussed in this section will be conducted by the Director of the Permanent Diaconate or his designees (assistant directors or members of the Deacon Personnel Board).

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, the Deacon Personnel Board will develop guidelines to be used in the reassignment process including restrictions on the distance between a deacon's home and a parochial or special assignment.

28. TEMPORARY TRANSFERS INTO THE DIOCESE

Deacons who are temporarily relocating into the Archdiocese and who are not seeking incardination must receive a decree of appointment as a visiting deacon before beginning any ministry in the Archdiocese. Visiting deacons and pastors should not negotiate any assignments or make any commitments about opportunities to minister without first contacting the Office of the Permanent Diaconate. The process of obtaining a decree of appointment will include interviews with the visiting deacon, scrutiny of the deacon's history of ministry, personal situation, and securing references from his previous bishop and supervisors.

“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, since a permanent deacon is an ordained cleric, the bishop may not ordinarily forbid a visiting permanent deacon the exercise of his order provided that the deacon is under no censure.” (NDFLM #102)

All visiting deacons serving in the Archdiocese who do not have current decrees of appointment will be required to be formally accepted for ministry and must receive decrees of appointment by the ordinary of this Archdiocese.

Transfer procedures for a temporary transfer or with the possibility of future incardination require the following:

- A. A letter from the deacon indicating that he wants to minister in this Archdiocese.
- B. A letter from the Office of the 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 and criminal background check report.
- D. A letter of recommendation from the previous pastor or supervisor.
- E. A letter from the Archbishop of this Archdiocese assigning the deacon *ad experimentum* for six months.

After six months, a review of the assignment is made by the Director of the Permanent Diaconate by interviewing the pastor and deacon. If the results are positive, the assignment is extended without a specified term.

29. TEMPORARY TRANSFERS OUT OF THE DIOCESE

A deacon who is temporarily relocating to another diocese and who desires to function as a deacon and minister in the diocese that will be his temporary residence, must contact the bishop of the diocese to which he is relocating and persons responsible for the oversight of permanent deacons to inform them that he will be relocating there and obtaining information on their process for obtaining an assignment. At the same time, the deacon should contact the Director of the Permanent Diaconate of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston who will then note the transfer, inform the Deacon Personnel Board and the Office of the Archbishop. The Director will obtain a letter from the Archbishop stating that the deacon is in good standing. The Director of the Permanent Diaconate will coordinate obtaining and forwarding other documents that may be requested by the bishop of the diocese of temporary residence.

30. EXCARDINATION AND INCARDINATION

Excardination (the releasing of a cleric from the jurisdiction of the diocese in which he is incardinated) and incardination (the membering of a cleric into the jurisdiction of another diocese) is normally handled through the following manner:

- A. The permanent deacon has been serving in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston "ad experimentum" (with an openness to incardination) for at least two years, has a positive recommendation from his pastor, and intends his domicile in the Archdiocese to be permanent.
- B. The deacon petitioning incardination writes a letter to the diocesan bishop of the diocese to which he is presently incardinated requesting excardination in order to be incardinated into the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. In this letter he states that his ministry is needed in the Archdiocese and that he

intends his domicile in the Archdiocese to be permanent. A copy of this letter is sent to the Archbishop of Galveston-Houston.

- C. At the same time the deacon writes the letter requesting excardination, he writes a letter to the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston requesting incardination into the Archdiocese. In this letter the deacon states his intention to be permanently domiciled within the boundaries of the Archdiocese, his satisfaction with his ministry, and his desire to serve perpetually as a permanent deacon in the Archdiocese. A copy of this letter is sent to the bishop of the diocese to which the deacon is presently incardinated.
- D. 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 letter of incardination) and a letter of incardination from the Archbishop of Galveston-Houston. Upon issuance of the letter of incardination, the permanent deacon becomes a cleric of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

31. STUDY ABSENCES

A study absence is a leave of absence from ministerial duties for the purpose of spiritual or professional clerical enrichment or education. A deacon, incardinated in this Archdiocese, is entitled to and may request a study absence every seven years. Such leaves for study relieve the deacon from duties related to his assignment in order for a period of renewal and enrichment that is not to exceed six months. Study absences may be requested for lesser periods. Procedures and policies for requesting and granting of study absences shall be developed by the Director in consultation with the Deacon Personnel Board.

Based upon the unique circumstances of deacons who share the integral vocations of ordination and marriage, deacons may request study absences at times in which a focused attention toward renewing their marriage will facilitate a renewed and strengthened ministry. Study absences for marriage renewal would be for deacons who are in healthy and stable marriages.

Normally, expenses related to study absences will be borne by the deacon. In cases where the use of budgeted spiritual retreat and/or continuing education funds is appropriate, the pastor may approve the use of these funds to assist with the cost of study absences.

It should be noted that study absences are intended to be a time of focusing on growth, development and renewal and as such are distinct from “time off to be with family” or an extended leave for vacation. The Deacon Personnel Board will establish policies governing the evaluation of applications for study absences.

32. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A leave of absence is a time of release from the ministry of a deacon. During a leave of absence, the deacon is prohibited by the Archbishop from exercising his diaconal

faculties. A leave may be requested in writing to the Archbishop or the Director of the Permanent Diaconate. If granted, the Archbishop will inform the deacon in writing.

Possible reasons for a leave of absence resulting in a withholding of the authorization to utilize diaconal faculties include:

- A. Health reasons, understood to include issues relating to spiritual, mental and physical well-being;
- B. Family reasons, understood to include issues relating to the immediate family, or to especially close members of an extended family; or
- C. Personal reasons, understood to include any other reason that would have a significant probability of adversely affecting a deacon's ministry for an extended period of time. Examples of personal reasons might include, but not be limited to, job changes, employment issues or the shifting scope of secular professional responsibilities.

Upon receiving a request for a leave of absence from the deacon or the Archbishop, the Director of the Permanent Diaconate will meet with the deacon to discuss his request for a leave of absence. As appropriate, the Director will also discuss the request with the deacon's pastor or supervisor. Thereafter, the Director, in consultation with the Deacon Personnel Board, if appropriate, will make a recommendation concerning the request for a leave of absence to the Archbishop, who will approve or deny the request in writing.

In all cases, when a deacon is placed on a leave of absence, he is relieved of his ministerial assignments and is prohibited from exercising his ministry except when permission is sought in writing from the Archbishop for a singular exercise of his ministry and it is approved in writing from the Archbishop. For example, a deacon on a leave of absence can by letter to the Archbishop request permission to baptize an individual infant or witness a particular marriage. The Archbishop, depending on circumstances, may grant or deny that request.

Deacons on leave of absence are prohibited from assisting at Mass, baptizing, presiding at vigils or funerals, witnessing weddings or preaching.

In accordance with the provisions of canon law, the Archbishop may place a deacon on involuntary administrative leave pending investigation into alleged violations of canon law. The Archbishop may also place a deacon on involuntary administrative leave for violations of the civil law, the seriousness and circumstances of which can reasonably be expected to compromise the ability of the deacon to minister effectively.

Leaves of absence will be for a specific period of time. After one year, consideration will be given to continuing the leave for an additional period of time or reinstating the deacon. When a deacon has been on leave for more than one year, procedures for suspension and loss of clerical state can be initiated at the direction of the Archbishop.

33. REINSTATEMENT FROM A LEAVE OF ABSENCE

A deacon may seek readmission to diaconal ministry by making a formal written request to the Archbishop and the Director of the Permanent Diaconate. The Director would meet with the deacon who is requesting a return to ministry to ensure that the concerns which led to the leave have been sufficiently resolved. If appropriate, the Director would meet with the Deacon Personnel Board, which would make a recommendation to the Archbishop regarding the terms of reinstatement and a new decree of assignment. The Archbishop would grant the deacon reinstatement in writing.

34. SUSPENSION

“Bishops are reminded that if the ministry of a permanent deacon becomes ineffective or even harmful due to some personal difficulties or irresponsible behavior, his ministerial assignment and faculties are to be withdrawn by the diocesan bishop in accord with Canon Law.” (NDFLM #100)

For a grave reason, the Archbishop may suspend a deacon de facto prohibiting any exercise of the deacon’s faculties. Refusal to function as a deacon and/or fulfill one’s canonical duties as assigned by the Archbishop, attempted marriage after ordination without dispensation, attempted remarriage after a valid marriage, public crime, scandal, heterodox teaching, preaching or theology are regarded as grave reasons that would lead to suspension while an investigation is conducted or for a period determined by the Archbishop.

After an appropriate investigation, the deacon could be reinstated or the process of laicization could be initiated by the Archbishop.

35. LOSS OF CLERICAL STATE/LAICIZATION

“A deacon can be returned to the lay state by canonical dismissal or because of a dispensation granted by the Holy See. Once dismissed or dispensed, he no longer enjoys any rights or privileges accorded to clerics by the law of the Church.” (NDFLM #99)

36. RETIREMENT

Upon their 70th birthday, deacons are automatically retired from their canonical assignment and their diaconal status is changed from active to retired. The procedures to be followed, and/or circumstances other than age that would justify retirement, shall be the same for deacons as for priests of this Archdiocese. In addition, however, significant family or work-related matters beyond the deacon’s control, and which can reasonably be expected to inhibit the ability of the deacon to exercise any diaconal ministry, may justify retirement. Deacons will receive notice in writing from the Archbishop granting them retirement status.

Unless explicitly revoked or modified, faculties remain in effect after retirement. A retired deacon is retired from active ministry only, and not from the Order of Deacons. Accordingly, he and his wife remain welcome to participate in liturgical celebrations and archdiocesan functions.

Retired deacons are not bound to obligations of continuing education, on-going participation in safe environment programs, annual retreats and annual evaluations. At the same time, retired deacons of the Archdiocese can participate in the exercise of their diaconal faculties at a parish with the specific delegation of the pastor.

37. MINISTERIAL STANDING OF DEACONS

Based upon the above circumstances and the standing of the deacon in the Archdiocese, deacons will be identified as belonging to one of the following classifications:

- A. Active:** Involved in a parochial or special ministry assignment by appointment of the Archbishop and meeting the obligations of their office according to archdiocesan policy.
- B. Retired:** Retaining faculties but no longer requiring or bound by an appointment to ministry in a parish or special ministry.
- C. Leave of absence:** Relieved from active ministry and any canonical appointment for a period up to one year during which time the deacon is prohibited from exercising his faculties without explicit written permission from the Archbishop.
- D. Suspended:** Formal suspension from active ministry and the use of faculties at the directive of the Archbishop. Suspended deacons are removed from all listings of deacons in the Archdiocese.
- F. Deceased:** Listed in the necrology of deacons as having died in good standing.

38. DEACONS IN CRISIS

The Archdiocese 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 of the Permanent Diaconate immediately upon the recognition of a condition or circumstances that would 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 Archbishop, 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 Archdiocese will provide funding for such counseling on a limited basis as determined by the Archbishop.

The Director, in consultation with the Director of the Secretariat or Archbishop, may assign a 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.

39. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Sexual misconduct by any of the ordained clergy is an issue of professional ethics, and 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 Archdiocese.

40. 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 can bring these difficulties to the attention of the Director of the Permanent Diaconate. The Director will assist the deacon, his wife and family in whatever ways are possible, and will ensure that the appropriate archdiocesan 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, in consultation with the Director of the Secretariat, shall recommend appropriate action to the Archbishop. Appropriate action might include directed marriage and/or family counseling or voluntary/involuntary administrative leave for a specified period of time.

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 Archdiocese, appropriate action, if any is warranted, will be taken. Such appropriate action may include a leave of absence or suspension. If the deacon's divorce can compromise his ministry or reputation among parishioners, he may be reassigned.

41. COMPENSATION

Canon law 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 may be, but are not necessarily 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 archdiocesan or parish policies applicable to such employees. There is an accountable reimbursement plan for documented expenses for deacons employed by archdiocesan institutions.

41A. 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 2 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.

42. PARISH/ARCHDIOCESAN COMMITMENTS TO DEACONS

The following support for the deacon will be provided by the parish or archdiocesan ministry to which he is assigned:

- A. An expense allowance of \$750 per year for the purpose of defraying the costs of continuing education, workshops and other forms of continuing formation including travel; (See section #53 of these policies.)
- B. Furnishing vestments required for the carrying out of liturgical roles including dalmatics;
- 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; and
- E. Payment for annual retreat expenses up to the archdiocesan limit.

43. ATTIRE

The Code of Canon Law exempts permanent deacons from the obligation of wearing clerical attire in view of their obligations and engagement in the secular world. The National Directory provides that deacons should “resemble the lay faithful in dress and matters of lifestyle.” (NDFML # 89) Accordingly, permanent deacons in this

Archdiocese will normally be attired in nonclerical clothing, tasteful and appropriate for the circumstances.

Under some circumstances, the benefits of wearing clerical attire with a “deacon cross” on his coat lapel may outweigh any adverse considerations. Such circumstances include chaplaincy ministry in a prison. The Archbishop can specifically grant permission in an individual case for a deacon to wear clerical attire. In such a case, as a means of mitigating any possible confusion of the roles of priests and deacons, it is recommended that a “deacon cross” be worn on the clerical attire.

Deacons may wear an alb and deacon stole for funeral vigils and liturgies at funeral homes and cemeteries.

The typical manner for deacons to establish their identity is the wearing of an identification badge.

44. TITLES OF ADDRESS

In accordance with the National Directory, permanent deacons in this Archdiocese will be addressed as “Deacon” in all forms of address. The written salutation will be “Dear Deacon _____.” Letters will be addressed to “Deacon _____.” This use of the title extends to all written and published communication at the archdiocesan and parish levels. (NDFML #88)

45. BUSINESS, EMPLOYMENT AND POLITICAL OFFICE

The deacon is free to engage in business, acting as union officials, holding public office or administering property belonging to the laity. The deacon must consult and receive the written permission of the Archbishop before seeking elected public office, accepting an appointed public office, or participating in another’s political campaign. (NDFML #91) In particular cases, the Archbishop may forbid such an undertaking. Care should be taken that deacons do not work in a profession or trade that is a cause of scandal or will interfere with the fruitful exercise of their office.

46. 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 #62)

Deacons are to nourish their spiritual life through participation in daily Mass, praying the Liturgy of Hours, mental prayer, the regular reading and study of Sacred Scripture, regular access to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and devotion to the Virgin Mother of God.

In addition to private prayer, the deacon should pray frequently with his spouse, family, pastoral staff, fellow deacons and spiritual director and should participate in regular spiritual direction and retreats.

47. 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 #63)

48. SIMPLICITY OF LIFE

“Deacons 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 #64)

49. 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 this is possible.

50. LITURGY OF THE HOURS

Deacons are to pray the Liturgy of the Hours daily, in particular Morning and Evening Prayer. Permanent deacons are obliged to pray for the universal Church. “Whenever possible, deacons should lead these prayers with the community to whom they have been assigned to minister.” (NDFML #90)

51. SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

Each deacon is expected to choose and regularly meet with a personal spiritual director. While the preference is that spiritual directors be priests, it is appropriate and encouraged to have a trained and/or certified director, whether clergy, religious or lay.

52. SPIRITUAL RETREAT

Each deacon is to set aside time for retreats and days of reflection. An annual two-day retreat is required for all deacons. At least every other year, the deacon and his wife should attend one of the retreats specifically designed for diaconal husbands and wives.

53. ON-GOING FORMATION

The National Directory requires that the Archdiocese establish a program of on-going formation for deacons. This program of on-going 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 possible means of fulfilling the on-going formation requirement.

Deacons are required to complete 18 hours of continuing education each fiscal year. Hours are calculated on the basis of contact hours.

- A. A minimum of 12 of those contact hours must be in an educational classroom type of program or academic program such as those offered by the Archdiocese, institutions of higher education, conferences or seminars.
- B. Up to six hours credit can be earned through attending mandatory archdiocesan training meetings, participation in additional educational programs, or special work on diaconate-related projects as approved.

To support this required participation in continuing education, each parish or archdiocesan agency to which deacons are primarily assigned will be required to budget and make \$750* available annually for continuing education for each deacon as follows: \$500 for continuing education registrations, tuitions and fees and \$250 for travel related to continuing education. Parishes within their means could budget in excess of this amount to meet the specific needs of the parish. Expenses would include tuition or registration fees and could be used for travel to attend workshops or conferences. 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.

(*Note that parishes without adequate financial resources could negotiate an appropriate continuing education budget within their means and could appeal for additional funding for diaconal continuing education from the Archdiocese or tuition reduction from the educational institution or the agency providing the program. It should be further noted that most deacons serve without compensation and therefore the parish budget allocation for their annual continuing education and retreat are signs of the parish's commitment to support deacons and their families in light of their ministry rendered without cost to the parish.)

Participation in continuing education will be reported as a part of the annual diaconate ministry report or evaluation to be submitted to the archdiocesan Office of the Permanent Diaconate. Deacons failing to fulfill the continuing education requirement will be contacted by the Director of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate or his assistants to determine an appropriate course of action. Failure to fulfill the requirement as determined by the Director of the Permanent Diaconate may result in temporary or permanent loss of certain ministerial functions.

While spouses of deacons cannot be required to participate in continuing education, they are certainly welcomed and encouraged to participate, where appropriate, in continuing formation programs with their husbands. Parishes should be very supportive of wives in ministry and set aside some funds for wives of deacons who are engaged in parish ministry.

The costs of theological/spiritual books can be reimbursed with the use of continuing education funds as approved by the pastor or ministerial supervisor.

54. THE WIFE OF A DEACON

Among the greatest and most important supports for the ministry of the deacon are the wife and the family of the deacon who make the great sacrifice of love, making a 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 minister with their husbands in teams. Other wives will engage in other ministries in the Church. Others will carry 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 bishop and his priests about the Sacrament of Matrimony.” (NDFLM #68)

55. 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.

56. DEATH OF A DEACON

The family of a deacon, or the current pastor or supervisor, should immediately notify the Director of the Permanent Diaconate of the death of a deacon. In turn, the Director will notify the Director of the Secretariat, the Archbishop and the chancellor who will send out a death notice to the parishes. The Director shall also ensure that the deacon community of the Archdiocese 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 Church.

Within the first month after the death and burial of a deacon, the Director will prepare a letter for the Archbishop'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 archdiocesan and the domestic Church of this faithful servant.

Deacons are to maintain updated funeral plans in their file at the Office of the Permanent Diaconate. These plans may be changed at any time by the deacon submitting a new plan in writing. Suggested Funeral Plan Form are in the appendix.

57. DEATH OF A DEACON'S WIFE OR CHILD

The deacon, or the current pastor or supervisor, should immediately notify the Director of the Permanent Diaconate of the death of a deacon's wife or child. In turn, the Director will notify the Director of the Secretariat and the Archbishop. The Director shall also ensure that the diaconate community of the Archdiocese 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 THE LITURGICAL MINISTRY OF DEACONS

58. 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 Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

59. THE DEACON AT THE MASS

Deacons are ordinary ministers at the Mass and are therefore to vest and fulfill the liturgical ministry of deacon whenever they are at Mass in their home parish.

“The celebration of the 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 (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)

Minimally, deacons are to assist at one Sunday liturgy in their parish. At the most, in keeping with the canonical regulations for presbyters, 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 one, two or three Masses for both the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. For those Masses at which the deacon preaches but does not assist at all of the Mass, the deacon should vest and participate from the beginning to the end of the Liturgy of the Word.

“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 Episcopii, presbyterorum et diaconarum*, 1989, no. 173)

While in their assigned parish, in extraordinary circumstances such as weddings of their children and wedding anniversaries, deacons may elect to remain in the pew with their spouse; however, the normal 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 Communion. When attending Mass outside his assigned parish, the deacon would participate in the Mass from the pew unless invited to assist at the Mass.

If a deacon has assisted at a vigil or Sunday Mass in the parish, for the sake of his marriage, a deacon could be excused from functioning in order to participate in the Mass from the pew with his wife and family. Care should be given that the identity of the deacon is maintained and not confused through this practice. Always, it should be clear that the proper place of the deacon is at the ambo and altar fulfilling his liturgical ministry.

60. MULTIPLE DEACONS

Liturgical principles state that presbyters, deacons and laity have appropriate roles to play 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 over 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 over the roles of ordinary ministers, such as the ministry of distributing 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 carrying 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)

As a *general rule*, with the exception of major parish or archdiocesan feasts or Mass with a bishop, no more than two deacons should assist at a Sunday or daily Mass. Care should be taken that deacons are assigned to specific liturgies to minimize conflict with lay men and women who have been assigned and are prepared to assist at a specific liturgy.

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 one or more 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. Again, deacons are not to take roles that are specifically those of the laity, such as proclamation of the first and second reading.

61. VESTURE

Whenever deacons assist at the liturgy, they are to wear proper vesture. The proper liturgical vesture for the deacon is an alb, cincture, stole and dalmatic – unless the alb is designed in such a way as to be worn without the cincture. The dalmatic is the ordinary vesture of the deacon and is not to be lightly disregarded as “too formal” or “not fitting an individual preference.”

If a deacon is present at a liturgy but does not function diaconally or serve at the Eucharist as communion minister, he is not to vest, except at diaconate ordinations, the funeral of a deacon or another specifically determined liturgical celebration approved by the Archbishop.

Note that in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, deacons presiding at vigils, funerals or graveside commendations, including rites at funeral homes, are allowed to vest in alb and white stole.

62. PREACHING

Among the primary 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:

- A. Reception of Holy Communion outside of Mass and Sunday celebrations in the absence of a priest;
- B. Baptism of Infants;
- C. Sacrament of Matrimony;
- D. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament;
- E. Order of Christian Funerals: Vigil and related rites and prayers, Rite of Committal and Final Commendation;
- F. Celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours; and
- G. Visitation of the Sick and the administration of Viaticum.

The deacon may also preach at any liturgy at which he is not the presider at the invitation of the presider. Deacons are encouraged to preach at Sunday liturgies on average of every four to six weeks.

63. 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 that is considered to be seven years of age. The deacon may preside at the minor rites of the RCIA according to the norms for the rites.
- B. Marriage:** Deacons may witness and bless marriages as well as conduct the premarital investigations and preparations; request necessary permissions and dispensations; initiate the process for convalidation for declarations of nullity and/or for dissolutions of the bond; administer the Rite of Marriage within or outside of Mass; and give the nuptial blessing at marriages outside of Mass. If a deacon is witnessing a marriage 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 all 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 and religious articles with the sign of the cross and administer invocative blessings from the ritual (except where such blessings are reserved to priests). Deacons may distribute, but not bless, ashes (unless the blessing of ashes is part of a liturgical service at which he presides).

E. Dispensations: A deacon may dispense in individual cases and for a just reason from days of precept and penance or commuting these obligations to other pious works and dispensing from Eucharistic abstinence for parishioners and those visiting within the boundaries of the parish to which he is assigned.

64. SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM

The following are liturgical principles and norms set forth in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of the Second Vatican Council (December 4, 1963).

SC #10. “Nevertheless the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows. For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of His Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord's Supper.

“The liturgy in its turn moves the faithful, filled with ‘the paschal sacraments,’ to be ‘one in holiness’ (26); it prays that ‘they may hold fast in their lives to what they have grasped by their faith’ (27); the renewal in the Eucharist of the covenant between the Lord and man draws the faithful into the compelling love of Christ and sets them on fire. From the liturgy, therefore, and especially from the Eucharist, as from a font, grace is poured forth upon us; and the sanctification of men in Christ and the glorification of God, to which all other activities of the Church are directed as toward their end, is achieved in the most efficacious possible way.”

SC #14. “Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation by the Christian people as ‘a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people (1 Pet. 2:9; cf. 2:4-5),’ is their right and duty by reason of their baptism.

“In the restoration and promotion of the Sacred Liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit; and therefore pastors of souls must zealously strive to achieve it, by means of the necessary instruction, in all their pastoral work.”

SC #28. “In liturgical celebrations each person, minister or layman, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to his office by the nature of the rite and the principles of liturgy.”

65. GENERAL INSTRUCTION OF THE ROMAN MISSAL

The following are specific principles and norms drawn from the revised GIRM (2003). Brackets [] have been used where additions have been made due to clarifications made in subsequent documents. Ellipses ... have been used to show where Latin texts have been removed in favor of the English translation of the text as rendered in the English version of the GIRM.

GIRM #94. “After the priest, the deacon, in virtue of the sacred ordination he has received, holds first place among those who minister in the Eucharistic Celebration. For the sacred Order of the diaconate has been held in high honor in the Church even from the time of the Apostles. At Mass the deacon has his own part in proclaiming the Gospel, in preaching God's word from time to time, in announcing the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful, in ministering to the priest, in preparing the altar and serving the celebration of the Sacrifice, in distributing the Eucharist to the faithful, especially under the species of wine, and sometimes in giving directions regarding the people's gestures and posture.”

GIRM #109. “If there are several persons present who are able to exercise the same ministry, nothing forbids their distributing among themselves and performing different parts of the same ministry or duty. For example, one deacon may be assigned to take the sung parts, another to serve at the altar; if there are several readings, it is well to distribute them among a number of lectors. The same applies for the other ministries. But it is not at all appropriate that several persons divide a single element of the celebration among themselves, e.g., that the same reading be proclaimed by two lectors, one after the other, except as far as the Passion of the Lord is concerned.”

GIRM #171. “When he is present at the Eucharistic Celebration, a deacon should exercise his ministry, wearing sacred vestments. For the deacon:

- A. Assists the priest and remains at his side [unless he is carrying the *Book of the Gospels*, in which case, he precedes the priest];
- B. Ministers at the altar, with the chalice as well as the book;
- C. Proclaims the Gospel and, at the request of the priest celebrant, may preach the homily (cf. GIRM #66);
- D. Guides the faithful by appropriate introductions and explanations, and announces the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful;
- E. Assists the priest celebrant in distributing Communion especially as minister of the Precious Blood, and purifies and arranges the sacred vessels; and
- F. As needed, fulfills the duties of other ministers himself if none of them is present.”

The Introductory Rites

GIRM #172. “Carrying the *Book of the Gospels* slightly elevated, the deacon precedes the priest as he approaches the altar or else walks at the priest's side [if another deacon is carrying the *Book of the Gospels*.]”

GIRM #173. “When he reaches the altar, if he is carrying the *Book of the Gospels*, he omits the sign of reverence and goes up to the altar. It is particularly appropriate that he should place the *Book of the Gospels* on the altar, after which, together with the priest, he venerates the altar with a kiss.

“If, however, he is not carrying the *Book of the Gospels*, he makes a profound bow to the altar with the priest in the customary way and with him venerates the altar with a kiss.”

GIRM #274. “If, however, the tabernacle with the Most Blessed Sacrament is present in the sanctuary, the priest, the deacon and the other ministers genuflect when they approach the altar and when they depart from it, but not during the celebration of Mass itself.”

GIRM #173. “Lastly, if incense is used, he assists the priest in putting some into the thurible and in incensing the cross and the altar.”

GIRM #174. “After the incensation of the altar, he goes to the chair together with the priest, takes his place there at the side of the priest and assists him as necessary.”

The Liturgy of the Word

GIRM #175. “If incense is used, the deacon assists the priest when he puts incense in the thurible during the singing of the Alleluia or other chant. Then he makes a profound bow before the priest and asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice, ...‘Father, give me your blessing.’ The priest blesses him, saying, ...‘The Lord be in your heart.’ The deacon signs himself with the Sign of the Cross and responds, ‘Amen.’ Having bowed to the altar, he then takes up the *Book of the Gospels*, which was placed upon it. He proceeds to the ambo, carrying the book slightly elevated. He is preceded by a thurifer, carrying a thurible with smoking incense, and by servers with lighted candles. There the deacon, with hands joined, greets the people, saying, ...‘The Lord be with you.’ Then, at the words ... ‘A reading from the holy Gospel’, he signs the book with his thumb and, afterwards, himself on his forehead, mouth, and breast. He incenses the book and proclaims the Gospel reading. When the reading is concluded, he says the acclamation ...‘The Gospel of the Lord,’ and all respond, ...‘Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.’ He then venerates the book with a kiss, saying privately, ...‘May the words of the Gospel wash away our sins,’ and returns to the priest's side.

“When the deacon is assisting the bishop, he carries the book to him to be kissed, or else kisses it himself, saying quietly, ...‘May the words of the Gospel.’ In more solemn celebrations, as the occasion suggests, a bishop may impart a blessing to the people with the *Book of the Gospels*.

“Lastly, the deacon may carry the *Book of the Gospels* to the credence table or to another appropriate and dignified place.”

GIRM #176. “If, in addition, there is no other suitable lector present, the deacon should proclaim the other readings as well.”

GIRM #177. “After the introduction by the priest, it is the deacon himself who normally announces the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful from the ambo or another suitable place.”

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

GIRM #178. “After the Prayer of the Faithful, while the priest remains at the chair, the deacon prepares the altar, assisted by the acolyte, but it is the deacon's place to take care of the sacred vessels himself. He also assists the priest in receiving the people's gifts.

*[All chalices to be used in the Mass are placed on the altar.]** Next, he hands the priest the paten with the bread to be consecrated, pours wine into each chalice and a little water into the *[principal chalice]**, saying quietly, ... ‘By the mystery of this water,’ and after this presents the chalice to the priest. He may also carry out the preparation of the chalice at the credence table. If incense is used, the deacon assists the priest during the incensation of the gifts, the cross, and the altar; afterwards, the deacon himself or the acolyte incenses the priest and the people.” (**The words in italics reflect the clarifications and additional instructions provided in Redemptionis Sacramentum.*)

GIRM #179. “During the Eucharistic Prayer, the deacon stands near the priest but slightly behind the priest, so that when needed he may assist the priest with the chalice or the Missal.

“From the epiclesis until the priest shows the chalice, the deacon normally remains kneeling. If several deacons are present, one of them may place incense in the thurible for the consecration and incense the host and the chalice as they are shown to the people.”

GIRM #180. “At the final doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer, the deacon stands next to the priest, holding the chalice elevated while the priest elevates the paten with the host, until the people have responded with the acclamation, ‘Amen.’”

GIRM #181. “After the priest has said the prayer at the Rite of Peace and the greeting ... ‘The peace of the Lord be with you always’ and the people have responded, ... ‘And also with you,’ the deacon, if it is appropriate, invites all to exchange the sign of peace. He faces the people and, with hands joined, says, ... ‘Let us offer each other the sign of peace.’ Then he himself receives the sign of peace from the priest and may offer it to those other ministers who are closer to him.”

GIRM #182. “After the priest's Communion, the deacon receives Communion under both kinds from the priest himself and then assists the priest in distributing

Communion to the people. If Communion is given under both kinds, the deacon himself administers the chalice to the communicants; and, when the distribution is completed, he immediately and reverently consumes at the altar all of the Blood of Christ that remains, assisted if necessary by other deacons and priests [or in their absence, by Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (This Holy and Living Sacrifice #37).”]

GIRM #183. “When the distribution of Communion is completed, the deacon returns to the altar with the priest and collects the fragments, if any remain, and then carries the chalice and other sacred vessels to the credence table, where he purifies them and arranges them in the usual way while the priest returns to the chair. It is also permissible to leave the vessels that need to be purified, suitably covered, at the credence table on a corporal and to purify them immediately after Mass following the dismissal of the people.”

The Concluding Rites

GIRM #184. “Once the prayer after Communion has been said, the deacon makes brief announcements to the people, if indeed any need to be made, unless the priest prefers to do this himself.”

GIRM #185. “If a prayer over the people or a solemn formula for the blessing is used, the deacon says, ... ‘Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.’ After the priest's blessing, the deacon, with hands joined and facing the people, dismisses them, saying, ... ‘The Mass is ended, go in peace’ [or another formula found in the Missal].”

GIRM #186. “Then, together with the priest, the deacon venerates the altar with a kiss, makes a profound bow, and departs in a manner similar to the procession beforehand.”

66. ADDITIONAL PRINCIPLES AND NORMS

The following are additional sections of the revised General Instruction of the Roman Missal (2003) that are important for the liturgical ministry of the deacon.

Veneration of the Altar and the *Book of the Gospels*

GIRM #273. “According to traditional practice, the altar and the *Book of the Gospels* are venerated by means of a kiss. Where, however, a sign of this kind is not in harmony with the traditions or the culture of some region, it is for the Conference of bishops to establish some other sign in its place, with the consent of the Apostolic See.”

Genuflections and Bows

GIRM #274. “A genuflection, made by bending the right knee to the ground, signifies adoration, and therefore it is reserved for the Most Blessed Sacrament, as well as for the Holy Cross from the solemn adoration during the liturgical celebration on Good Friday until the beginning of the Easter Vigil.

“If, however, the tabernacle with the Most Blessed Sacrament is present in the sanctuary, the priest, the deacon, and the other ministers genuflect when they approach the altar and when they depart from it, but not during the celebration of Mass itself.

“Otherwise all who pass before the Most Blessed Sacrament genuflect, unless they are moving in procession.

“Ministers carrying the processional cross or candles bow their heads instead of genuflecting.”

GIRM #275. “A bow signifies reverence and honor shown to the persons themselves or to the signs that represent them. There are two kinds of bows: a bow of the head and a bow of the body.

- A. A bow of the head is made when the three Divine Persons are named together and at the names of Jesus, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the Saint in whose honor Mass is being celebrated.
- B. A bow of the body, that is to say a profound bow, is made to the altar; during the prayers ... ‘Almighty God, cleanse my heart’ and ... ‘Lord God, we ask you to receive’; in the Creed at the words ... ‘by the power of the Holy Spirit ... made man’; in the Roman Canon at the words ... ‘Almighty God, we pray that your angel.’ The same kind of bow is made by the deacon when he asks for a blessing before the proclamation of the Gospel. In addition, the priest bows slightly as he speaks the words of the Lord at the consecration.”

Incensation

GIRM #276. “Thurification or incensation is an expression of reverence and of prayer, as is signified in Sacred Scripture (cf. Ps 141 [140]:2, Rev 8:3).

“Incense may be used if desired in any form of Mass:

- A. During the Entrance procession;
- B. At the beginning of Mass, to incense the cross and the altar;
- C. At the Gospel procession and the proclamation of the Gospel itself;
- D. After the bread and the chalice have been placed upon the altar, to incense the offerings, the cross, and the altar, as well as the priest and the people; and
- E. At the showing of the host and the chalice after the consecration.”

GIRM #277. “The priest, having put incense into the thurible, blesses it with the sign of the Cross, without saying anything.

“Before and after an incensation, a profound bow is made to the person or object that is incensed, except for the incensation of the altar and the offerings for the Sacrifice of the Mass.

“The following are incensed with three swings of the thurible: the Most Blessed Sacrament, a relic of the Holy Cross and images of the Lord exposed for public veneration, the offerings for the sacrifice of the Mass, the altar cross, the *Book of the Gospels*, the Paschal Candle, the priest, and the people.

“The following are incensed with two swings of the thurible: relics and images of the Saints exposed for public veneration. This should be done, however, only at the beginning of the celebration, after the incensation of the altar.

“The altar is incensed with single swings of the thurible in this way:

- A. If the altar is freestanding with respect to the wall, the priest incenses walking around it; or
- B. If the altar is not freestanding, the priest incenses it while walking first to the right hand side, then to the left.

“The cross, if situated on or near the altar, is incensed by the priest before he incenses the altar; otherwise, he incenses it when he passes in front of it.

“The priest incenses the offerings with three swings of the thurible or by making the sign of the cross over the offerings with the thurible, then going on to incense the cross and the altar.”

The Purification

GIRM #279. “The sacred vessels are purified by the priest, the deacon, or an instituted acolyte after Communion or after Mass, insofar as possible at the credence table. The purification of the chalice is done with water alone or with wine and water, which is then consumed by whoever does the purification. The paten is usually wiped clean with the purificator.

“Care must be taken that whatever may remain of the Blood of Christ after the distribution of Communion is consumed immediately and completely at the altar.”

Communion under Both Kinds

GIRM #281. “Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it is distributed under both kinds. For in this form the sign of the Eucharistic banquet is more clearly evident and clear expression is given to the divine will by which the new and eternal Covenant is ratified in the Blood of the Lord, as also the relationship between the Eucharistic banquet and the eschatological banquet in the Father's Kingdom.”

GIRM #284. “When Communion is distributed under both kinds:

- A. The chalice is usually administered by a deacon or, when no deacon is present, by a priest, or even by a duly instituted acolyte or another extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, or by a member of the faithful

who in case of necessity has been entrusted with this duty for a single occasion; and

- B. Whatever may remain of the Blood of Christ is consumed at the altar by the priest or the deacon or the duly instituted acolyte who ministered the chalice. The same then purifies, wipes, and arranges the sacred vessels in the usual way.

“Any of the faithful who wish to receive Holy Communion under the species of bread alone should be granted their wish.”

GIRM #285. “For Communion under both kinds the following should be prepared:

- A. If Communion from the chalice is carried out by communicants' drinking directly from the chalice, a chalice of a sufficiently large size or several chalices are prepared. Care should, however, be taken in planning lest beyond what is needed of the Blood of Christ remains to be consumed at the end of the celebration.
- B. If Communion is carried out by intinction, the hosts should be neither too thin nor too small, but rather a little thicker than usual, so that after being dipped partly into the Blood of Christ they can still easily be distributed to each communicant.”

GIRM #286. “If Communion of the Blood of Christ is carried out by communicants' drinking from the chalice, each communicant, after receiving the Body of Christ, moves and stands facing the minister of the chalice. The minister says, ...‘The Blood of Christ,’ the communicant responds, ‘Amen,’ and the minister hands over the chalice, which the communicant raises to his or her mouth. Each communicant drinks a little from the chalice, hands it back to the minister, and then withdraws; the minister wipes the rim of the chalice with the purificator.”

GIRM #287. “If Communion from the chalice is carried out by intinction, each communicant, holding a communion-plate under the chin, approaches the priest, who holds a vessel with the sacred particles, a minister standing at his side and holding the chalice. The priest takes a host, dips it partly into the chalice and, showing it, says, ...‘The Body and Blood of Christ.’ The communicant responds, ‘Amen,’ receives the Sacrament in the mouth from the priest, and then withdraws.”

Vesture

GIRM #335. “In the Church, which is the Body of Christ, not all members have the same office. This variety of offices in the celebration of the Eucharist is shown outwardly by the diversity of sacred vestments, which should therefore be a sign of the office proper to each minister. At the same time, however, the sacred vestments should also contribute to the beauty of the sacred action itself. It is appropriate that the vestments to be worn by priests and deacons, as well as those garments to be worn by lay

ministers, be blessed according to the rite described in the Roman Ritual 137 before they are put into liturgical use.”

GIRM #336. “The sacred garment common to ordained and instituted ministers of any rank is the alb, to be tied at the waist with a cincture unless it is made so as to fit even without such. Before the alb is put on, should this not completely cover the ordinary clothing at the neck, an amice should be put on. The alb may not be replaced by a surplice, not even over a cassock, on occasions when a chasuble or dalmatic is to be worn or when, according to the norms, only a stole is worn without a chasuble or dalmatic.”

GIRM #338. “The vestment proper to the deacon is the dalmatic, worn over the alb and stole. The dalmatic may, however, be omitted out of necessity or on account of a lesser degree of solemnity.”

Liturgical Colors

GIRM # 346. “As to the color of sacred vestments, the traditional usage is to be retained: namely:

- A. White is used in the Offices and Masses during the Easter and Christmas seasons; also on celebrations of the Lord other than of his Passion, of the Blessed Virgin Mary, of the Holy Angels, and of Saints who were not Martyrs; on the Solemnities of All Saints (1 November) and of the Nativity of Saint John the Baptist (24 June); and on the Feasts of Saint John the Evangelist (27 December), of the Chair of Saint Peter (22 February), and of the Conversion of Saint Paul (25 January).
- B. Red is used on Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion and on Good Friday, on Pentecost Sunday, on celebrations of the Lord's Passion, on the feasts of the Apostles and Evangelists, and on celebrations of Martyr Saints.
- C. Green is used in the Offices and Masses of Ordinary Time.
- D. Violet or purple is used in Advent and Lent. It may also be worn in Offices and Masses for the Dead (cf. below).
- E. Besides violet, white or black vestments may be worn at funeral services and at other Offices and Masses for the Dead in the Dioceses of the United States of America.
- F. Rose may be used, where it is the practice, on Gaudete Sunday (Third Sunday of Advent) and on Laetare Sunday (Fourth Sunday of Lent).
- G. On more solemn days, sacred vestments may be used that are festive, that is, more precious, even if not of the color of the day.
- H. Gold or silver colored vestments may be worn on more solemn occasions in the dioceses of the United States of America.”

67. REDEMPTIONIS SACRAMENTUM

Matters Concerning the Liturgical Ministry of Deacons in the Vatican Instruction On Certain Matters to be Observed or to be Avoided Regarding the Most Holy Eucharist (2004).

RS #34. “Deacons ‘upon whom hands are imposed not for the Priesthood but for the ministry,’ as men of good repute, must act in such a way that with the help of God they may be recognized as the true disciples of him ‘who came not to be served but to serve,’ and who was among his disciples ‘as one who serves.’ Strengthened by the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, they are in service to the People of God, in communion with the Archbishop and his presbyterate. They should therefore consider the Archbishop as a father, and give assistance to him and to the Priests ‘in the ministry of the word, of the altar, and of charity.’”

RS #35. “‘Let them never fail,’ as the Apostle says, ‘to hold the mystery of faith with a clear conscience, and to proclaim this faith by word and deed according to the Gospel and the tradition of the Church,’ in wholehearted, faithful and humble service to the Sacred Liturgy as the source and summit of ecclesial life, ‘so that all, made children of God through faith and Baptism, may come together as one, praising God in the midst of the Church, to participate in the Sacrifice and to eat the Lord’s Supper.’ Let all deacons, then, do their part so that the Sacred Liturgy will be celebrated according to the norms of the duly approved liturgical books.”

RS #59. “The reprobated practice by which priests, deacons or the faithful here and there alter or vary at will the texts of the Sacred Liturgy that they are charged to pronounce, must cease. For in doing thus, they render the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy unstable, and not infrequently distort the authentic meaning of the Liturgy.”

RS #67. “Particular care is to be taken so that the homily is firmly based upon the mysteries of salvation, expounding the mysteries of the Faith and the norms of Christian life from the biblical readings and liturgical texts throughout the course of the liturgical year and providing commentary on the texts of the Ordinary or the Proper of the Mass, or of some other Rite of the Church. It is clear that all interpretations of Sacred Scripture are to be referred back to Christ himself as the one upon whom the entire economy of salvation hinges, though this should be done in light of the specific context of the liturgical celebration. In the homily to be given, care is to be taken so that the light of Christ may shine upon life’s events. Even so, this is to be done so as not to obscure the true and unadulterated word of God: for instance, treating only of politics or profane subjects, or drawing upon notions derived from contemporary pseudo-religious currents as a source.”

RS #125. “The proper vestment of the deacon is the dalmatic, to be worn over an alb and stole. In order that the beautiful tradition of the Church may be preserved, it is praiseworthy to refrain from exercising the option of omitting the dalmatic.”

PART FIVE: THE STATUS OF THESE POLICIES

68. PARTICULAR LAW

These policies and procedures, once approved by the Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, become normative for the Archdiocese until amended by the Archbishop or his successor.

69. AMENDMENTS

Recommendations for amendments to these policies and procedures may be offered by the Deacon Community Board or the Deacon Personnel Board upon a consensus vote of the membership. As these bodies are advisory bodies, the Archbishop is under no obligation to accept the recommendations of either Board or to amend these policies.

ADDENDUM: ADDITIONS AND AMENDMENTS:

A. DEACON FUNERAL PLAN:

Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Deacon Funeral Arrangements

INTRODUCTION

It is our sincere hope that this instrument will assist you in advising both your loved ones, your parish and the Archdiocese of those “final wishes”. For the death of a deacon places unique demands on the community because the deacon is an ordained minister of the Church as well as a husband, father, grandfather, parish staff member, etc. At the death of a brother deacon, both the family and the Church are in grief. Therefore, both the needs of the family and the church are considered vital. We recommend that you fill this form out with the assistance of loved ones, that you leave one copy in their possession, and that you forward one copy to the Diaconate Office, Chancery deacon file and at the parish of assignment, in a sealed envelope plainly marked with your name and labeled “Funeral Instructions”. If you have pre-planned your funeral already with a local funeral home, you may want to provide them with a copy of this instrument as well.

We ask that you be thorough in filling out this instrument and that you do so just as soon as possible. These instructions should be updated as needed and a copy sent to the Director of the Diaconate or his delegate.

GENERAL GUIDELINES

There are a few standing policies in the Pastoral Manual for Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston deacons which you should keep in mind when filling out the attached form:

1. Though the family of the deacon has the primary responsibility for the funeral arrangements for the deceased deacon, the deacon’s pastor, the Director of the Diaconate or his designate, and Diaconal community stands ready to assist the family with any of the arrangements where they are applicable.
2. At the death of a deacon, the family must make contact with the Director of the Diaconate or his designate at 713-686-4345 ext. 268 prior to arrangements being made for the vigil service and funeral mass. This is to allow confirmation with the Office of Diaconate (or his designate), to check the availability of the principal celebrant at the funeral mass and make proper notifications, so that the Chancellor may send out the death notice to the parishes in the Archdiocese.
3. The Archbishop (or his designated representative), will be the primary celebrant of the Funeral Mass, unless otherwise noted.
4. For the Funeral Vigil, Funeral, and burial deceased deacons should be dressed in an alb and white stole (ordination stole if possible), and may be vested with a white dalmatic.

5. All deacons are urged to attend the Vigil and the Funeral Mass of their deceased brother deacon. Proper attire is alb and white stole. The deacons should process in and sit as a community in a designated area. Some deacons may be called upon to assist with distribution of Communion at the Funeral Mass as the situation warrants. Wives of deacons should come with their husbands to show their solidarity with the widow of our brother deacon.
6. A deacon should be the presider and homilist at the Vigil and the celebrant or his designate should give the homily at the Funeral Mass.
7. There should be at least two deacons chosen to assist at the altar during the Funeral Mass: One will be deacon of the Word while the other will be the deacon of the Eucharist. (Maybe a third with the Archbishop or Bishop presiding)
8. Deacons, in alb and white stole, should, if at all possible, go the cemetery for the Rite of Committal.
9. Deacon wives may be asked to present the gifts if the family does not designate anyone.
10. In solidarity with our deceased deacon brother, there could be 6 to 8 deacons to assist with the pall and bring our brother deacon to the altar at the beginning of the Funeral Mass.
11. At the funeral mass of a deacon's wife, the community of deacons may vest and process in alb and stole and be seated as a community of deacons.

Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Funeral Instructions for Deacon

Full Name: _____

Wife's Name: _____ Date of Marriage: _____

Address: _____

Name of Family Contact: _____ Phone Number: _____

Family Phone: _____ Funeral Home: _____

Funeral home Phone: _____ Name of Funeral Director: _____

Cremation: Yes ___ No ___

Open Casket: Yes ___ No ___

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Date of Ordination: _____ Place of Ordination: _____

Ordaining Bishop: _____

Parish assigned: _____ Pastor's Name: _____

Ever served in another Parish? If so, where: _____

Children: _____

Number of Grandchildren ___ Number of Great Grandchildren ___

Are Parent/s alive? Yes ___ No ___ Names even if deceased: _____

Brother's Names: _____

Sister's Names: _____

School(s) with dates of attendance:

Diploma or Degree(s) awarded:

Military Service: Yes ___ No ___ Branch: _____ Rank: _____

Medals and Awards:

Will you be buried at the Veterans' National Cemetery? Yes ___ No ___

Vigil Service for Deacon

Where: (funeral home/Church): _____

When: (time) _____ Celebrant: _____

Rosary following Vigil? Yes ___ No ___ Who will lead? _____

Readings: 1st _____ Reader: _____

Psalm: _____ Reader: _____

Gospel: _____ (Proclaimed by the Presider)

Homilist (if different from Presider): _____

Any Eulogies? Yes ___ No ___ Whom: _____

*Note: Eulogies are to be done at the Vigil and not at the Funeral Mass

Music: Entrance Song: _____

Recessional Song: _____

Funeral Mass of the Deacon

Church of the Funeral Mass: _____

Place for the Rite of Committal: _____

Presider: (Normally the Archbishop or his delegate) _____

Concelebrant(s): _____

Deacon of the Word: _____

Deacon of the Eucharist: _____
Cantor: _____
Homilist: _____
Placing of Pall: (deacons or family) _____
Entrance Song: _____
First Reading: _____
Responsorial Psalm (sung): _____
Second Reading: _____
Gospel: _____
Preparation Song: _____
Communion Song: _____
Meditation Song if any: _____
Song of Farewell: _____
Recessional Song: _____
Gift presenters: _____
Other instructions: (i.e. who is to receive crucifix etc.) _____

Rite of Committal for Deacon

Presider: _____ Cemetery: _____

Please sign and date this form: (make copies, and send one to the Director of the Diaconate)

Deacon Signature: _____ Date: _____

Spouse Signature: _____ Date: _____

If there is anything that you feel was not included above, please indicate it on a separate type written page(s) and attach to this form. (If there are any changes made to this document, please turn in to the Office of the Diaconate).

**Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
Funeral Instructions for Deacon's Wife**

Wife's Full Name: _____

Deacon's Name: _____ Date of Marriage: _____

Address: _____

Name of Family Contact: _____ Phone: _____

Family Phone: _____ Name of Funeral Home: _____

Cremation: Yes ___ No ___

Open Casket: Yes ___ No ___

Date of Birth: _____ Place of Birth: _____

Parish: _____

Other parishes: _____

Parish Ministries involved in: _____

Children: _____

Number of Grandchildren: ___ Number of Great Grandchildren: ___

Are Parent/s alive? Yes ___ No ___ If deceased, name(s): _____

Brother(s) names: _____

Sister(s) names: _____

School(s) with dates of attendance: _____ Diploma or Degree(s) awarded: _____

Military Service: Yes ___ No ___ Branch: _____ Rank: _____

Medals and Awards: _____

Vigil Service for Deacon's Wife

Where: (Funeral home/Church): _____

When: (time) _____ Celebrant: _____

Rosary following Vigil? Yes ___ No ___ Who Will lead? _____

Reading: 1st _____ Reader: _____

Psalm: _____ Reader/Cantor(if sung): _____

Gospel: _____ (Proclaimed by the Presider)

Homilist (if different from the Presider): _____

Any Eulogies? Yes ___ No ___ Whom: _____

*Note: Eulogies are always done at the Vigil, not at the Funeral Mass

Music: Entrance Song: _____

Recessional Song: _____

Funeral Mass of the Deacon's Wife

Church of the Funeral Mass: _____

Place for the Rite of Committal: _____

Presider: (Normally the Archbishop or his delegate) _____

Concelebrant(s): _____

Deacon of the Word: _____

Deacon of the Eucharist: _____

Cantor: _____

Homilist: _____

Placing of Pall: (deacon's or family) _____

Entrance Song: _____

First Reading: _____

Responsorial Psalm (sung): _____

Second Reading: _____

Gospel: _____

Preparation Song: _____

Communion Song: _____

Meditation Song if any: _____

Song of Farewell: _____

Recessional Song: _____

Gift presenters: _____

Other instructions: (i.e. who is to receive crucifix etc.) _____

Rite of Committal for Deacon's Wife

Presider: _____ Cemetery: _____

Please sign and date this form: (make copies, and send one to the Director of the Diaconate)

Deacon Signature: _____ Date: _____

Spouse Signature: _____ Date: _____

If there is anything that you feel was not included above, please indicate it on a separate type written page(s) and attach to this form. (If there are any changes made to this document, please turn in to the Office of the Diaconate).