

## FORMATION OF DEACONS

If deemed suitable through the admission process, applicants are invited to begin their first year, the *aspirancy path*, wherein aspirants and their wives attend formation gatherings to prayerfully consider how their family lives will be impacted by ordination. Unmarried aspirants will use this time to discern their readiness to commit to celibacy. With the recommendation of an advisory committee, the Bishop selects those who are to be admitted to the *candidacy path*.

Diaconal candidates undergo a program of human, spiritual, theological and pastoral formation.

**Human Formation** refers to the development of the skills that help candidates relate to and work with the diverse people of God.

**Spiritual Formation** consists of retreats, study days, spiritual direction and commitment to the Liturgy of the Hours.

**Theological Formation** focuses on the central teachings and practices of the Church and the development of pastoral skills.

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

Most formation sessions will take place evenings and weekends.

## IS GOD CALLING YOU?



I invite men who believe that they have the qualifications and interest necessary for service of the Church as a deacon to begin to pray for guidance. If you are married you should pray together with your wife confident that the Lord who has strengthened you by the sacrament of matrimony will help you to discern whether He is calling you to embrace a second sacramental call.

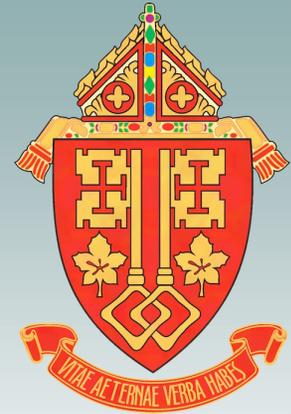
Together let us place our petition for the fruitfulness of the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Peterborough in the hands of our patron Saint Peter, asking him to watch over candidates for this ministry who will proclaim the Word faithfully, serve the liturgy reverently and care for the needs of the community joyfully.

In Christ, the Servant,  
+ Most Reverend Daniel Miehm  
Bishop of Peterborough

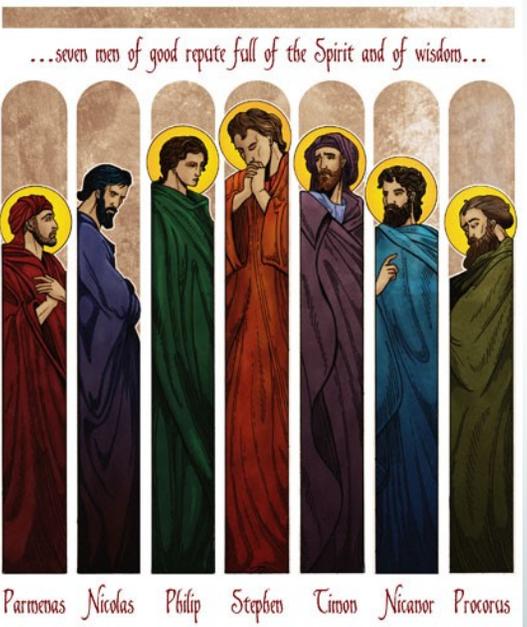


If you think God may be calling you to serve as a permanent deacon, speak with your parish priest or contact the Diocesan Pastoral Centre:

Director of the Permanent Diaconate  
Formation Program  
350 Hunter Street West, Box 175  
Peterborough, ON, K9J 6Y8  
Phone: (705) 745-5123  
williamjradigan@gmail.com



## ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PETERBOROUGH



## PERMANENT DEACONS CALLED TO SERVE

## What is a Permanent Deacon?

The diaconate was established at the time of the apostles. In the early Church some men were called to become deacons, ordained ministers who served the people of God under the direction of the Bishop.

In response to the recommendations of the Second Vatican Council, the bishops of Canada reactivated the order of permanent deacon in 1969. The diocese of Peterborough has been served by permanent deacons for more than twenty years.

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*They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas, a proselyte of Antioch. They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them.*

Acts 6:5-6

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Deacons are called to serve. The title deacon comes from the Greek word *diakonos* which means “servant.” Permanent deacons are not preparing for priesthood. They have been called to serve as a permanent public sacramental sign of Christ at the service of the world.

Like a priest, a deacon is a member of the clergy who shares in the ministry of the Bishop. Unlike a priest, he may have a wife and a family and hold a secular job.

The diaconate is a distinct vocation to imitate Christ in His service to all humanity, to bring Christ to the world and the world to Christ.

## What do Permanent Deacons Do?

Deacons are a permanent sign of Christ the Servant, no matter where they are or what they are doing. Deacons do not celebrate Mass, hear confessions, or anoint the sick. They extend the sacramental presence of Christ’s service outside of the Church building and into the secular world.

Diaconal service is modelled after the threefold apostolic ministry of the Bishop: the ministry of charity, the ministry of the Word and the ministry of Sacrament.

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

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

**Ministry of Sacrament:** Deacons assist priests during Mass, administer baptisms, witness marriages, preside at funerals with no Mass and at wakes, officiate at Benediction and lead community prayer services.



## Who May Become a Deacon?

Candidates for the diaconate are:

- Catholic males who have been baptized and are practicing the faith for at least five years;
- Between the ages of 35 and 60 at time of admission;
- Of good moral reputation and character;
- In a valid marriage or living celibately if single or widowed;
- Actively involved in a parish community or ecclesial movement;
- Of sound physical and psychological health;
- Economically stable and self-sufficient;
- Resident of the Diocese of Peterborough;
- Living a deep sacramental, spiritual life evidenced by attendance at Mass, reception of the sacraments and participation in spiritual exercises and retreats.

Because the discernment of a vocation to the diaconate is a communal process, married candidates must have the consent and support of their wives, who must be willing to participate in the formation process as needed.

Candidates will seek the recommendation and support of their pastors, who will attest to the above traits and express their opinion with regard to suitability for ministry.

Candidates will also be part of a process which discerns spiritual, social and psychological suitability for ministry and pastoral roles.

Candidates from all cultural, professional and educational backgrounds are welcome to apply.