

“... you will recognize them as disciples of Him who came not to be served, but to serve ”

- Rite of Ordination of Deacons

“The service of the deacon is the Church’s service sacramentalized”

- Blessed Pope John Paul II

“The link

between the lay world, the professional world, and the world of priestly ministry”

- Pope Benedict XVI

“The vocation of the permanent deacon is a great gift of God to the Church” -

- Blessed Pope John Paul II

St Francis of Assisi

Monk and missionary who preached about God’s great love shown to us in creation

“This isn’t exactly what I had planned for my life”

-Greg Kandra, deacon, husband, and Emmy award-winning journalist

St Stephen

One of seven men chosen to be the first deacons of the Church. Protomartyr, patron of deacons.

The invitation: Is God calling you?



I invite men who believe they have the qualifications and interest necessary for this service of the Church to begin now to pray for guidance. If they are married, they should pray together with their wives, confident that the Lord Who has strengthened them by the sacrament of marriage will help them discern whether He is calling them to embrace a second sacramental call...

Together let us place our petitions for the fruitfulness of the permanent diaconate in the Archdiocese of Vancouver in the maternal hands of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of the Holy Rosary, asking her to watch over the candidates for this ministry who will proclaim the Word faithfully, serve the liturgy reverently, and care for the needs of the poor joyfully.



+ J. Michael Miller CSB

Most Rev. J. Michael Miller, CSB
Archbishop of Vancouver

If you think God may be calling you to discern the vocation of permanent deacon, the process begins by contacting the Program Director, **Msgr. Gregory Smith.**
deacons@rcav.org 604.443.3229
www.rcav.org/permanentdiaconate



The Permanent Diaconate

Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Vancouver

...seven men of good repute full of the Spirit and of wisdom...



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Parmenas Nicolas Philip Stephen Timon Nicanor Procorus

What is the permanent diaconate?

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. As a response to the recommendations of the Second Vatican Council, the Bishops of Canada reactivated the order of permanent deacons in 1969. In February 2011, Archbishop Michael Miller officially restored the permanent diaconate in the Archdiocese of Vancouver.

Deacons are called to serve.

The title “deacon” comes from the Greek word “diakonos,” which means “servant.” Though all Christians by baptism are called to “diakonia,” or service, deacons serve as a public sacramental sign of Christ in and 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 also have a wife, a family, and a secular job. The diaconate is a distinct vocation, or calling, to imitate Christ in His service to all humanity, to bring the world to Christ and Christ to the world.

What do permanent deacons do?

A deacon is just as engaged in his ministry when he is at home or at work. He is a permanent sign of Christ the Servant, no matter where he is, or what he is 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 and into the secular world. Diaconal service is modeled after the threefold apostolic ministry of the Bishop:



Ministry of Charity

A deacon personally serves the poor, the aged, the sick, and the imprisoned, bringing the Gospel to all those in need. He preaches and practices social justice.

Ministry of Word

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

Ministry of Sacrament

Deacons assist priests during Mass, administer baptisms, witness marriages, preside at funerals and wakes, officiate at Benediction and lead community prayer services.

Who can become a permanent deacon?

Diaconal candidates are:

- Catholic males who have been baptized and practicing the faith for at least five years
- Between the ages of 35 and 65 by ordination
- Of good moral character and reputation
- In a valid, stable marriage, or living celibately if unmarried or widowed
- Actively involved in their parish or in an ecclesial movement
- Of sound physical and psychological health
- Economically stable and self-sufficient
- Residents of the Archdiocese of Vancouver
- Living a deep and sacramental spiritual life, as evidenced by their frequent attendance at Mass, reception of the Sacrament of Penance, and participation in spiritual exercises and retreats.



In addition, married candidates must have the consent and support of their wives, who must be willing to participate in their formation as needed. Diaconal candidates will seek the recommendation of their pastor, who will attest to the above traits, and express judgment as to their suitability to begin formation. Candidates from all cultural, professional and educational backgrounds are welcome.

How are diaconal candidates formed?

Diaconal candidates undergo at least four years of human, spiritual, theological, and pastoral formation.

If deemed suitable through the admission process, applicants are invited to begin their first year, the aspirancy path, wherein aspirants and their wives attend a formation program to prayerfully consider how their families and lives will be impacted by ordination. Unmarried aspirants use this time to discern their readiness to commit to celibacy. With the recommendation of an Advisory Committee, the Archbishop selects those admitted to the candidacy path.

Human formation refers to the development of 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 public prayer of the Church, the Liturgy of the Hours.

Theological formation is provided by St. Mark's College at the University of British Columbia. Candidates are placed in one of two streams toward a Diploma in Pastoral Studies, based on their previous education. Pastoral formation brings together all components into supervised fieldwork that targets the needs of the candidate: homiletics, catechesis, liturgical ministry, work in social service agencies, hospital and prison visits, guidance of parish groups, volunteers and movements. Formation takes place on evenings and weekends.

With the assistance and discernment of those involved in their formation, the Archbishop calls men to the diaconate during the fourth year of the program. During the ordination rite, he lays hands on them, praying that every Gospel virtue may abound in the new deacons, who are called not only to be hearers of the Gospel, but its ministers.