

DEACON FORMATION PROGRAM

The “heart” of the Deacon is best expressed in the scripture, “...I am among you as one who serves.” (Luke 22: 27C) The Holy Order of the Diaconate came into existence at the very beginnings of the Church, and over the past thirty years there has been a renewal of this Order in the Diocese of New York. The purpose of the Deacon Formation Program (DFP) is to nurture and instruct those persons in whom the “heart of a Deacon” has been discerned, and to equip them for ministry.

The key word in describing this program is formation. It is more than an accumulation or completion of study. The program exists to form the ministry of those who are called to this Order, and to nurture them as they seek not only education but understanding of what it is to be a Deacon.

Canonical Areas of Competence for Diaconal Candidates [CANON III.6.5 (f)] include:

- (1) Academic studies including, The Holy Scriptures, theology, and the tradition of the Church.
- (2) Diakonia and the diaconate.
- (3) Human awareness and understanding.
- (4) Spiritual development and discipline.
- (5) Practical training and experience.

The DFP is a course of study consisting of a variety of experiences, both academic and practical. The academic piece is the curriculum of the Education for Ministry (EfM) Program from Sewanee, the Seminary of the South, which covers both Old and New Testaments, Church History, Spirituality and Theology, and how we integrate them into our daily life and faith. Years one through three of EfM must be completed prior to ordination and year four may be completed within one year of ordination, with approval of the Director of Deacon Formation & Transition (Director). A Postulant for the Diaconate may, in lieu of EfM and with the approval of the Director, take courses in Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, and a practical spirituality course at an accredited seminary.

Other areas of study which are part of the DFP curriculum are Homiletics, Leadership Styles and Parish Dynamics, Ethics, Liturgics, the Book of Common Prayer and Pastoral Care. Clinical Pastoral Training (CPT) requires 200 hours of a combination of instruction/lecture hours, completion of the 13-week Community of Hope International Lay Pastoral Care module, patient contact hours in a hospital setting, and parish pastoral care visits.

Two semesters of Field Placement will be assigned to parishes other than the Postulant’s home parish.

The DFP meets one Saturday a month, from September through May, from 8:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M. The Saturday meetings are currently held at St. Thomas Church, Mamaroneck, which is easily accessible by car or train. There may be occasional extra shorter sessions via Zoom.

Ordination to the Diaconate occurs at the completion of the third year, if all requirements have been successfully met and a positive recommendation is received. Newly ordained Deacons continue to have contact with the Director and are expected to attend support meetings as scheduled for a minimum of two years after ordination.

APPROXIMATE COSTS (*subject to change*):

Pre-admission to DFP costs

Psychological testing - \$2,000

Physical exam (depending on level of insurance coverage) – could be up to \$250

Miscellaneous application fees - \$250

Background check - \$250

Note: Financial assistance may be available to Aspirants undergoing financial hardship.

Education for Ministry (EfM)

Total costs for 4 years: \$1,540 (based on \$385/year)

OR

Specific courses at approved seminary (cost is per credit according to seminary)

DFP tuition costs

\$2,250 (based on 3 years at \$750/year)

Note: Church Canons ask that sponsoring parishes contribute towards Postulant’s tuition. Financial assistance may be available to Aspirants undergoing financial hardship.

Follow-up psychologist exam prior to ordination \$350

Additional optional costs Purchase of Alb, vestments, clergy shirts and collars

