

## **Protocol of a Deacon**

Deacons must follow the orders of its Priest and of the Bishop of the Parish and of its Diocese. These chain of commands must be met as requested. These are part of the Canons. All orders given must be followed as asked by the Priest or its Bishop of the Parish Church as well as to the Diocese.

1. In the “Rite of Ordination of Deacons” the Bishop proclaims: “Strengthened by the gift of the Holy Spirit, he will help the Bishop and his Priests in the ministry of the Word, of the Altar, and of Charity, showing himself to be a servant to all. As a minister of the altar, he will proclaim the Gospel, prepare the sacrifice, and distribute the Lord’s Body and Blood to the faithful.

Furthermore, it will be his duty, at the Bishop’s direction, to exhort believers and unbelievers alike and to instruct them in holy doctrine. He will preside over public prayer, administer Baptism, bring Viaticum to the dying, and conduct funeral rites.

Consecrated by the laying on of hands that come down to us by the Apostles and bound more closely to the service of the altar, he will perform works of charity in the name of the Bishop or the Pastor. With the help of God, he is to go about all these duties in such a way that you will recognize him as a disciple of him who came not to be served, but to serve.”

2. The function of diaconal duties must be in concert with the needs and circumstances of the parish or place of extra-parochial ministry to which the Deacon has been assigned.

3. Among the duties that he may be assigned include but are not limited to:

To function at least one (1) Mass per weekend.

To be available to preach as needed (unless faculty to preach has not been granted by the Bishop).

To preside at Baptisms

To make Pastoral visits to the sick and homebound

To preside at Eucharistic and non-Eucharistic prayer services

To preside at wake and/or funeral services as needed

#### **4. Deacons are obligated to:**

Attend Mass as best achieved considering family and employment restrictions

Recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours

Attend Diocesan Functions (i.e. ordinations, special occasions, etc.) as dictated by the Bishop)

#### **Regularly approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation**

To have an on-going relationship with a Spiritual Advisor

To immerse himself in the Sacred Scriptures through diligent reading and study

To have a balance of lifestyle in relationship to God, Family, Job, and Church

5. Bishops, in a special way, preside over and govern the particular Churches, aided by the presbytery. The role of the Deacon is to be a helper of the Bishop and Priests and, graced by the Sacrament, to proclaim by their very lives the Church's call to serve the needs of others. During the Ordination Rite Deacons were asked by the Bishop:

Do you promise respect and obedience to me and my successors?" To which the Deacon(s) replied "I do!".

6. At the Ordination Rite the Bishop holding the Book of Gospels with the Deacon kneeling before him saying: "Receive the Gospel of Christ, whose herald you have become, believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach".

7. The Deacon is publicly committed to the service of Christ through the Sacrament of Holy Orders. He is ordained to exercise a threefold ministry; Word, Liturgy, and Charity.

Ministry of the Word – "Proclamation of the Word in varied contexts of ministerial service: catechesis, preparation of sacraments, homiletics."

Ministry of Liturgy – "celebration of the sacraments and sacramentals, service at the altar."

Ministry of Charity and Justice - is one of the primary areas of emphasis in the Deacon's ministry. It was for this reason that Deacons were called and ordained in the early Church. The Ministry of Charity continues to give identity to the Deacon, a word which comes from the Greek word, "diakonia," meaning service.

8. The essential role of those in sacred Orders is to lead the Church in carrying out the mission of Christ. The three ordained ministries (Bishop, Priest, Deacon) coordinate all the other ministries and services by which the Church exists, lives and acts. The role is to apply the words of St. Paul, "to equip the saints (that is the whole community) for the work of a ministry building up of the Body of Christ."

At ordination the Bishop asks:

"Do you resolve to discharge the office of Deacon with humble charity in order to assist the Priestly Order and to benefit the Christian people?"

9. A Deacon who discharges the office of Deacon to its fullness – has a balance of Word, Liturgy, and Charity. On the other hand a Deacon who functions only at the altar, only in liturgical settings, is not fulfilling his diaconal responsibilities.

10. The Deacon exercises his order under the direction and supervision of the Pastor of the parish (or other ministry supervisor) to which he is assigned.

11. The Deacon is not bound by the canonical obligations of clerics to wear Roman collar. It is the policy of the Diocese that he is not to wear clerical dress, unless specifically dispensed by the ordinary [Example: Prison Ministry]. The proper attire is normally a collared shirt and dress slacks, or as the occasion dictates.

12. The Deacon is to wear appropriate vesture when assisting or presiding at liturgical celebrations. For Wake Services in funeral homes, the Deacon may wear either, coat and tie or Alb and White stole.

13. If a Deacon is present at parish liturgy but does not function or serve at the Eucharist as a communion minister, he is not to vest. At Diocesan celebrations he is to vest unless notified otherwise.

14. The Deacon is not bound by canons restraining clerics from engaging in business, acting as union officials, holding public office, or other positions/employment. However, a Deacon should consult the Bishop before seeking public office. In particular cases the Bishop may forbid such an undertaking." Care should be taken that Deacons do not carry on profession or trade which the local ordinary considers unsuitable or which will interfere with the fruitful exercise of their sacred office".

15. Each Deacon must adhere to the highest ethical, moral, and social standards of conduct. As a Deacon, he is expected to conduct himself in a courteous, pleasant, and a professional manner at all times. Deacons at the Ordination Rite confess that “they resolve to hold fast to the Mystery of Faith with a clear conscience, as the Apostle urges, and to proclaim this faith in word and deed according to the Gospel and the Church’s tradition”.

16. Deacons are to nourish their spiritual life from the Scriptures and the Eucharist and are encouraged to participate in daily Mass. They are to be conscientious in devoting time regularly to prayer, to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently, and to a devotion to the Virgin Mother of God. During the Ordination Rite the Bishop asks: “Do you resolve to maintain and deepen the spirit of prayer that is proper to your way of life and, in keeping with this spirit and what is required of you, to celebrate faithfully the Liturgy of the Hours with and for the People of God and indeed for the whole world?”

17. Deacons are to pray the “Liturgy of the Hours” and should not hold themselves lightly excused from the obligation they have to recite morning and evening prayer. They are expected to know the nature and structure of the Liturgy of the Hours and be able to lead it publicly.

18. Each Deacon is strongly encouraged to choose and maintain a 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 person.

19. Deacon are obligated to fully comply with the Church Diocese and it’s Parish.

### **Liturgical Function of a Deacon may exercise**

1. The Deacon's most solemn Ministry of the Word is that of reading the Gospel and preaching at the liturgy. But as one ordained to bring the Good News, he can extend this ministry in almost unlimited ways. At many gatherings and at formal and informal, meetings he can communicate a word of joy and hope. What is appropriate to the office of a Deacon is simply that he proclaims and witness God's Word in all his service, ministries and actions.

2. The Ministry of Preaching, for a Deacon, depends on faculties given by the

Diocesan Bishop and diocesan norms. How often the Deacon preaches and instructs the faithful - is to be agreed upon by the Pastor and Deacon.

3. While the Deacon exercises a "Ministry of Liturgy", his exercise of this ministry is to be seen as secondary to his day-to-day service to God's people.

4. Deacons are granted faculties by the Bishop, to be exercised only within the boundaries of their assigned parishes, except with permission of the proper Pastor.

5. The following are the liturgical functions which a Deacon may exercise and the norms for exercising those functions in the Diocese as they apply to Permanent Deacons.

**To assist the Bishops and Priests at the Liturgy:**

Normally, he is to function as Deacon at the Sunday Liturgy and is considered an "ordinary minister" of the Eucharist in a local parish.

He may lead the Congregation in the Penitential Rite.

Proclaim the Gospel at the Sunday Liturgy and other Liturgical Celebrations.

To administer solemn baptism to children under the age of seven.

To give Holy Communion, to administer Viaticum, and to give Benediction of the Most Blessed.

To impart blessings in accord with the norms contained within the liturgical Blessing of Sacramentals include medals, religious articles, Holy Water, etc., with the sign of the cross; administering in vocative blessing from the Ritual (unless they are reserved to a Priest); ritual blessings of throats, marriage rings, Baptismal water, but not ashes and oils.

The Liturgy of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

The Celebration of Morning or Evening Prayer or other Rites of the Hours.

Visitation of the sick and Sacrament of Viaticum.

Retreats days of recollections, missions, novenas, etc.

**Special Notice:** An Ordained Deacon **CAN NOT** officiate over a wedding due to State Laws that only authorize a Ordained Ministers and by their Circuit Court whom will register and license them to officiate over a marriage within their State. This is requires due to all marriages are registered through the Circuit Courts where wedding are officiated.

## **Fuctions of the Deacon at the Celebration of Mass**

1. After the Priest, the Deacon, in virtue of the sacred Ordination he has received, holds first place among those who minister in the celebration of the Eucharist. For the sacred Order of the Diaconate has been held in high honor in the Church even from the early time of the Apostles. At Mass the Deacon has his own part in proclaiming the Gospel, from time to time in preaching God's Word, in announcing the intentions of the Universal Prayer, in ministering to the Priest, in preparing the altar and in serving the celebration of the Sacrifice, in distributing the Eucharist to the faithful, especially under the species of wine, and from time to time in giving instructions regarding the people's gestures and posture.

2. If there are several 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 execute the sung parts, another to serve at the altar; if there are several readings, it is well to distribute them among a number of readers, and the same applies for other matters. However, 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 readers, one after the other, with the exception of the Passion of the Lord.

3. When he is present at the celebration of the Eucharist, a Deacon should exercise his ministry, wearing sacred vestments. In fact, the Deacon:

- a) assists the Priest and walks at his side;
- b) ministers at the altar, both as regards the chalice and the book;
- c) proclaims the Gospel and may, at the direction of the Priest Celebrant, give the Homily;
- d) guides the faithful people by giving appropriate instructions, and announces the intentions of the Universal Prayer;
- e) assists the Priest Celebrant in distributing Communion, and purifies and arranges the sacred vessels;
- f) carries out the duties of other ministers himself, if necessary, when none of them is present.

### **The Introductory Rites:**

4. 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.

5. 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 a praiseworthy practice for him to 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.

Lastly, if incense is being used, he assists the Priest in putting some into the thurible and in incensing the cross and the altar.

6. 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.

7. During Mass, three genuflection's are made by the Priest Celebrant: namely, after the elevation of the host, after the elevation of the chalice, and before Communion. Certain specific features to be observed in a concelebrated Mass are noted in their proper place.

If, however, the tabernacle with the Most Blessed Sacrament is situated 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.

### **The Deacon may lead the Penitential Rite.**

8. A bow signifies reverence and honor shown to the persons themselves or to the signs that represent them. There are two kinds of bow: 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 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 *Munda cor meum* (Cleanse my heart) and *In spiritu humilitatis* (With humble spirit); in the Creed at the words *et incarnatus est* (and by the Holy Spirit and became man.) The same kind of bow is made by the Deacon when he asks for a blessing before the proclamation of the Gospel. The Deacon remains standing, he does not kneel.

In addition, the Priest bows slightly as he pronounces the words of the Lord at the Consecration.

9. Once the altar has been incensed, the Deacon goes to the chair together with the Priest and there stands at the Priest's side and assists him as necessary.

### **The Liturgy of the Word:**

10. During the singing of the Alleluia or other chant, if incense is being used, the Deacon ministers to the Priest as he puts incense into the thurible. Then, bowing profoundly before the Priest, he asks for the blessing, saying in a low voice, Your blessing, Father.

The Priest blesses him, saying, May the Lord be in your heart. The Deacon signs himself with the Sign of the Cross and replies, Amen.

Having bowed to the altar, he then takes up the Book of the Gospels, which was placed on it and proceeds to the entrance, carrying the book slightly elevated. He is preceded by a thurifer carrying a smoking thurible and by ministers with lighted candles.

The Deacon greets the people, with hands joined, saying, The Lord be with you.



After this, at the words reading from the holy Gospel, he signs with his thumb the book and then himself on his forehead, mouth, and breast. Then he incenses the book and proclaims the Gospel reading.

When this is done, he acclaims, The Gospel of the Lord, and all reply, Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ. He then venerates the book with a kiss, saying quietly the formula per evangelic dicta (Through the words of the Gospel), and returns to the Priest's side.

When the Deacon is assisting the Bishop, he carries the book to him to be kissed. In more solemn celebrations, if appropriate, the 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 suitable and dignified place.

11. Moreover, if there is no other suitable reader present, the Deacon should proclaim the other readings as well.

12. After the introduction by the Priest, it is the Deacon himself who announces the intentions of the Prayer.

### **The Liturgy of the Eucharist**

13. After the Universal Prayer, 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. After this, he hands the Priest the paten with the bread to be consecrated, pours wine and a little water into the chalice, saying quietly, By the mystery of this water, etc., 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 being used, the Deacon assists the Priest during the incensation of the offerings, the cross, and the altar; and after this the Deacon himself or the acolyte incenses the Priest and the people.

14. During the Eucharistic Prayer, the Deacon stands near the Priest, but slightly behind him, so that when necessary he may assist the Priest with the chalice or the Missal. Only two Deacons are to assist the Priest at the altar. The others remain at their chairs.

From the epiclesis until the Priest shows the chalice, the Deacon usually 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 at the elevation. Only two Deacons are to assist the Priest at the altar. The other Deacons remain at their chairs.

15. At the concluding doxology of the Eucharistic Prayer, the Deacon stands next to the Priest, and holds the chalice elevated while the Priest elevates the paten with the host, until the people have acclaimed, Amen.

16. After the Priest has said the prayer for the Rite of Peace and the greeting 'The peace of the Lord be with you always and the people have replied, 'And with your spirit', the Deacon then says the invitation to the Sign of Peace. With hands joined, he faces the people and 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 nearest to him.

17. 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 over, standing at the altar, he immediately and reverently consumes all of the Blood of Christ that remains, assisted, if the case requires, by other Deacons and Priests.

18. When the distribution of Communion is over, the Deacon returns to the altar with the Priest, collects the fragments, should any remain, and then carries the chalice and other sacred vessels to the credence table, where he purifies them and arranges them as usual, while the Priest returns to the chair.

Nevertheless, it is also permitted to leave vessels needing to be purified on a corporal, suitably covered, on the credence table, and to purify them immediately after Mass, following the Dismissal of the people.

#### **The Concluding Rites:**

19. 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.

20. If a Prayer over the People or a formula of Solemn Blessing is used, the

Deacon says, Bow {your heads and pray for God's blessing} down for the blessing. After the Priest's blessing, the Deacon, with hands joined and facing the people, dismisses the people, saying, *Ite, missa est* (Go forth, the Mass is ended) or some other appropriate dismissal.

21. Then, together with the Priest, the Deacon venerates the altar with a kiss, makes a profound bow, and withdraws in a manner similar to the Entrance Procession.

If the Blessed Sacrament is directly behind the altar, they should genuflect.

Incensation:

22. Thurification or incensation is an expression of reverence and of prayer, as is signified in Sacred Scripture.

Incense may be used optionally 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 procession before the Gospel and the proclamation of the Gospel itself;
- d) after the bread and the chalice have been placed on the altar, to incense the offerings, the cross, and the altar, as well as the Priest and the people;
- e) at the Elevation of the Host and the Chalice after the Consecration.

23. 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 altar and the offerings for the Sacrifice of the Mass.

Three swings of the thurible are used to incense: 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.

Two swings of the thurible are used to incense relics and images of the Saints exposed for public veneration; this should be done, however, only at the beginning of the celebration, following 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;

b) if the altar is not freestanding, the Priest incenses it while walking first to the right hand side, then to the left.

The Priest before he, if situated on the altar or near it, incenses the cross 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 before going on to incense the cross and the altar.

### **The Purification:**

24. The sacred vessels are purified by the Priest, the Deacon, or an instituted acolyte after Communion or after Mass, in so far as possible at the credence table. The purification of the chalice is done with water alone, which is then consumed by whoever does the purification. The paten is wiped clean as usual with the purificator.

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

25. If a host or any particle should fall, it is to be picked up reverently; and if any of the Precious Blood is spilled, the area where the spill occurred should be washed with water, and this water should then be poured into the sacrarium in the sacristy.

### **Communion under Both Kinds:**

26. Holy Communion has a fuller form as a sign when it takes place under both kinds. For in this form the sign of the Eucharistic banquet is more clearly evident and clearer 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 connection between the Eucharistic banquet and the eschatological banquet in the Kingdom of the Father.

### **27. When Communion is distributed under both kinds:**

a) the chalice is usually administered by a Deacon or, in the absence of a Deacon, by a Priest, or even by a duly instituted acolyte or another extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, or by one of the faithful who, in a case of necessity, has been entrusted with this duty for a single occasion;

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 given Communion in this form.

**28. For Communion under both kinds the following should be prepared:**

a) If Communion from the chalice is done by drinking directly from the chalice, a chalice of a sufficiently large size or several chalices are prepared. However, care should be taken lest beyond what is needed of the Blood of Christ remains to be consumed at the end of the celebration.

b) If Communion from the chalice is done by intinction, the hosts should be neither too thin nor too small, but rather a little thicker than usual, so that after being intincted partly into the Blood of Christ they can still be easily distributed.

29. 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 to the minister of the chalice and stands facing him. The minister says, The Blood of Christ, the communicant replies, 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.

30. If Communion from the chalice is carried out by intinction, each communicant, holding a Communion-plate under the mouth, approaches the Priest who holds a vessel with the sacred particles, with a minister standing at his side and holding the chalice. The Priest takes a host, intincts it partly in the chalice and, showing it, says, The Body and Blood of Christ. The communicant replies, Amen, receives the Sacrament in the mouth from the Priest, and then withdraws. It is not proper to consume the Precious Blood at the place of distribution, nor while walking to the Altar.