



Deacon News

Diocese of Davenport

Fall 2012

Now the word of the Lord came to me saying, before I formed you in the womb I knew you

Jeremiah 1:4

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From the Diaconate Office

Deacon David Montgomery, Director of the Diaconate

Greetings to the deacons and wives, the deacon candidates and wives of class 6 and the deacon aspirants and wives of class 7! Thank you for joining our annual fall retreat. For those of you who were not able to attend the retreat, be assured that you are in our prayers.

The Spring Deacon and Wives Retreat will be held on April 20 – 21, 2013, at St. Mary, Riverside, led by Fr. Marty Goetz. The retreat is for all deacon couples, deacon widowers, widows of deacons and deacon candidate couples. This extra retreat allows for those who could not attend the fall retreat to make a retreat this year and for those who would like to attend an additional retreat.

Deacon Bob McCoy and I attended the National Association of Deacon Directors Region IX meeting earlier this month. As always it provided a good opportunity to exchange ideas and suggestions with the deacon directors in our region.

The National Diaconate Congress was announced for July 22-26, 2018 in New Orleans, LA. This meeting is sponsored by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and the NADD to commemorate 50 years of the diaconate in the United States. It is open for all deacons and wives to attend. You can sign up (no obligation made) at

www.deacon2018.org to receive additional information as it becomes available. One of the things being considered in our region is to charter buses to travel to New Orleans.

Another point of discussion at the Region IX meeting was how the diaconate as an order was celebrating the Year of Faith in each diocese. One diocese is inviting parishioners to request deacons to bless their homes sometime during the year. This idea was favorably received by Bishop Amos and the Diocesan Liturgical Commission. More information about this opportunity will become available soon.

In September, Bishop Amos requested a survey be created for priests regarding the diaconate. The results of the survey are in. The attitude toward the diaconate continues to be favorable overall and is growing thanks to your good work and service.

Of the 39 responses received:

- 83% have worked with a deacon in a previous parish yet only 40% currently have a deacon assigned to their parish
- 83% of priests would consider the assignment of a deacon to their parish; 17% would possibly consider it; **none would not consider it.**

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Important Dates**SS. Stephen & Phoebe
Deacon Council
Meeting**

October 28, 1pm
Following the fall retreat

November Clergy Days

November 5-6, 2012
Clarion Inn/Highlander
Iowa City

Priest Ordination

Deacon Steve Witt
December 15, 2012
10:00am
Sacred Heart Cathedral

**Spring Deacon and
Wives
Retreat**

April 20 – 21, 2013
St. Mary, Riverside
Led by Fr. Marty Goetz

**Permanent Deacon
Ordination**

July 13, 2013
10:00am
Sacred Heart Cathedral

From the Diaconate Office - continued from page 1

- 58% would consider the assignment of a deacon to their parish as a sacramental minister (while having another parish assignment)
- 25% would possibly consider it
- 15% would probably not consider it
- 3% (1 priest) would not consider it

The term “sacramental minister” is new when applied to the diaconate, yet it is not a new concept. While deacons are assigned to one or more parishes (unless retired), they serve the entire diocese. Some deacons may be asked to provide liturgical and sacramental assistance to parishes outside of their normal parish assignment. For example, this may involve baptisms, weddings, and funerals outside of Mass. Additional information about the assignment of deacons will be provided to you following the presbyteral council meeting in November.

Deacon Formation**Deacon Frank Agnoli***Class VI*

Twelve men have entered the final year of formation for the diaconate; God willing, they will be ordained on Saturday, July 13, at 10am at the Cathedral. Make sure to save that date on your calendars!

Last summer, they spent a week at St. Meinrad – and what a week! We arrived Sunday afternoon, and were treated to dinner and then a tour of the Abbey. Monday through Friday were work days, while taking breaks for meals and liturgy (Mass in the morning, Vespers in the evening; Morning Prayer for those early risers) we spent about 9 hours in class each day. Class time was split between lectures (given by me or by Dr. Rick Stern), preaching, or preparing to preach. Lectures included such topics as homiletic exegesis, liturgical preaching, homiletic structures and methods, preaching at the various rites and feasts, and ethics in preaching. The candidates came prepared to preach a Sunday homily, and during the week prepared a ‘hit-and-run’ homily (30 minutes to prepare) and a funeral homily. The Sunday and funeral homilies were videotaped and then reviewed with an instructor. The candidates (and the Bishop!) all received a DVD with all the homilies.

If you get the opportunity, ask the candidates about their experience. From what I can see, not only was the week a powerful spiritual experience, but the class grew even closer together as a community and became better preachers.

If you want to keep up with Class VI, check out our webpage:

<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/dcn/dcnclassvi.htm>

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Class VII's first year in Aspirancy is well under way. At their first session together, they learned how to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. In September, they were introduced to spiritual direction and discernment by Fr. Tom Hennen. Rather than meet for class in October, they will be joining the diocesan diaconal community for our annual retreat. The November session will focus on prayer, and they will be introduced to the fundamentals of pastoral care in December.

We have a general formation page (<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/dcn/dcnformation.htm>) as well as a page specific for class VII (<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/dcn/dcnclassvii.htm>) if you would like more information or know of someone who might be discerning a call to the Diaconate.

Preaching: Exegesis and Hermeneutics

Deacon Frank Agnoli

How do you approach the ministry of preaching? My personal approach is to pray the readings using the monastic model of *lectio divina*—reading the pericopes out loud, pausing as words or phrases “grab” my attention and resting in them. Those words/phrases often form the core around which the homily is built. I find it especially helpful to engage in *group lectio*—finding that the insights that others have into the readings can be quite profound, and an excellent way to help prepare a homily that will connect to the community. Therefore, during the week, as I read the paper and listen to the news, I try to find any anchoring issues or events. I don't turn to the commentaries until after I have “chewed” on the word myself for a while; depending on my schedule I begin the exegetical research around Tuesday. I have listed a number of my favorite resources below. I like to begin writing by Thursday and have a final text by Friday. Saturday is for practice.

Resources: Delving into the Scriptures

Whenever I prepare to preach, I always make sure to look – at least – at these resources:

Bergant, Diane with Richard Fragomeni. *Preaching the New Lectionary, Year A, B, C*.
Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999-2001.

Matera, Frank J. *Strategies for Preaching Paul*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2001.

Nowell, Irene. *Sing a New Song: The Psalms in the Sunday Lectionary*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993.

The *Sacra Pagina* series from The Liturgical Press.

Websites: The Athenaeum of Ohio: <http://www.mtsm.org/Homilies.aspx>
Jude Siciliano, OP / The Preachers' Exchange: <http://www.preacherexchange.com/>
The Center for Liturgy: <http://liturgy.slu.edu/>
The Text the Week (ecumenical): <http://www.textweek.com/>

Additional resources are listed on-line at:

<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/lit/liturgylibrary/Resources/litHomileticBibliography012712.pdf>
<http://www.davenportdiocese.org/lit/litpreach.htm>

This and That

Deacon Bob McCoy

Have you been paying attention to the seasonal changes around you? Many trees are splendid in their fall colors. The pumpkins you see may glisten with early morning frost---and the daylight hours are shorter.

As nature is entering into a period of conversion, this is a good time for each of us to step back, slow down and to recognize God's presence in our daily life. Psalm 16 reminds us that the Lord walks with us in this land of the living. Pope Benedict has called us to celebrate a Year of Faith, a time of conversion---to deepen our relationship with Christ and the Church. We might ask ourselves as Deacons, "*What am I doing to celebrate being Catholic and helping others grow closer to Jesus?*"

This Year of Faith began on October 11, 2012, on the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council and the 20th Anniversary of the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. It will close on the Feast of Christ the King, November 24, 2013.

The possibilities for meaningful change or conversion are endless--only limited by our imagination. How about taking a few more minutes daily for prayer, meditation, and scriptural study? Who around you can you help by reaching out to them to aid their spiritual healing or temporal needs? Take time to pray for the whole Church, that all may appreciate and love the vast richness of Scripture and Tradition. Do all you can to help others be brought closer to Eucharist, the heart of the Church's life.

It is always proper to give thanks for the Fathers of Vatican II who developed a blueprint for the restoration of the permanent diaconate in the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* (Lumen Gentium). Remember in prayer our own Bishop Gerald O'Keefe as one of the fathers of the council who established the permanent diaconate in our diocese and ordained those of us in Class I through Class IV.

Speaking of giving thanks, this is something we as Catholics do at the table of our Lord each week. Please take time to give special thanks on our National Thanksgiving Day, November 22 for all the many blessings we enjoy as US citizens, Catholics and as Deacons.

Deacon Profile: John Weber



Spouse: Dotty Weber

Children: Amy, Andy, and David.

Parish: Our Lady of Lourdes, Bettendorf

Ordination: June 8, 2002, Sacred Heart Cathedral in Davenport

Occupation: Retired from Deere & Co., manager, logistics.

Why did you become a deacon? I made a CEW (Christian Experience Weekend) and felt that God was asking me to do something more with my life. My pastor at that time, Father Tom Spiegel, asked me to consider the diaconate. I wanted to do something significant after retirement from my secular job.

What ministries are you involved in?

Parish outreach to the poor, working at Café on Vine, teaching Scripture classes, working at retreats (such as CEW), and serving on the board of directors for River Bend Food Bank.

What are your challenges?

Staying disciplined to quiet time with Jesus.

Favorite Scripture.

"Be still and know that I am God" Also Chapter 15 of Luke's Gospel, The Parable of the Lost Son.