



Office of the Permanent Diaconate
The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

March 2025

Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, Archbishop-Elect of Washington: Installation Mass on March 11



(Pictured above, Cardinal Robert W. McElroy will be installed as the eighth Archbishop of Washington on March 11, 2025, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.)

The permanent diaconate community extends a warm and cordial welcome to Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, Archbishop-elect of Washington.

Cardinal McElroy will be installed as the eighth Archbishop of Washington on Tuesday, March 11 at 2:00 p.m. at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. All deacons and wives are cordially invited to attend the Installation Mass, and have received a written invitation with registration instructions. If you have any questions about the Installation Mass, please contact Deacon Don Longano (longanod@adw.org) or Mrs. Karen Sachs (Sachsk@adw.org).

On January 6, 2025, Pope Francis named Cardinal McElroy as the Archbishop of Washington. Cardinal McElroy will succeed retiring Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory, who has faithfully served the People of God of this Archdiocese since 2019, and who plans to remain in Washington following his retirement.

Cardinal McElroy has served as the Bishop of San Diego since 2015. He was ordained a priest in the Archdiocese of San Francisco in 1980, and was ordained an Auxiliary Bishop of that Archdiocese in 2010. He was elevated to the College of Cardinals in 2022. Cardinal McElroy is a scholar of American history, political science and moral and pastoral theology. He is a member of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life. He was very active in the recently concluded Synod on Synodality.

In his introductory press conference on January 6 at the Cathedral of Saint Matthew the Apostle, Cardinal McElroy stated, "For the past 85 years, the Catholic community has radiated the light of Christ throughout the District of Columbia and the surrounding five counties in Maryland. It has radiated Christ through the formation of rich parish communities of faith that make the Lord's presence known in the Eucharist, the Word of God and the sacramental life of the Church... The light of Christ radiates in the sacrifices of priests, deacons, and consecrated men and women who have continually offered their lives mixed with fragility and glory to serve God's people in every dimension. Similarly, the light of Christ has radiated in the Archdiocese's path-breaking development of lay ministries and apostolates, and the nurturing of lay leadership in the Church that is genuinely participative and inclusive."

Cardinal McElroy further indicated that as he forms a vision for leading the People of God of our Archdiocese the necessary elements will include, "The Gospel of Jesus Christ and the teachings of the Church; a pastoral perspective where truly love and truth can meet, a dedication to missionary discipleship, and a growing understanding of the real lives of the women and men and children and families, singles, priests and religious that form this vibrant community of faith." The *Catholic Standard* article introducing Cardinal McElroy can be found [by clicking here](#). The complete statement of Cardinal McElroy on the announcement of his appointment as Archbishop of Washington can be found [by clicking here](#).

We in the permanent diaconate community look forward to meeting Cardinal McElroy, and for his leadership of our Order, as we rededicate our ministries to pastoral care of the People of God of our beloved parishes and Archdiocese.

Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory: In Sincere Gratitude



(Pictured above, Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory presides at a Mass held in St. Ursula Chapel at the Pastoral Center. Photo by Catholic Standard.)

Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory has led our Archdiocese and our Order since 2019 with wisdom, gentle yet firm guidance, fraternal love, and charitable pastoral care. In the introductory press conference for Cardinal Robert McElroy held on January 6, 2025, Cardinal Gregory stated, "As I reflect upon the past nearly six years in this wonderful local Church of Washington, my heart is filled predominantly with joy and gratitude for the many blessings, always appreciated but rarely deserved, that God has granted me."

Cardinal Gregory was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago in 1973, and ordained an Auxiliary Bishop of that Archdiocese in 1983. He was named the seventh Bishop of the Diocese of Belleville, Illinois, in 1998, serving there for eleven years. He was then installed as the sixth Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Atlanta in 2005, serving in that capacity until becoming our Archbishop in 2019. He was elevated to the College of Cardinals by Pope Francis in 2020, the first African American to be so honored. Cardinal Gregory earned his Doctorate in Sacred Liturgy at the Pontifical Liturgical Institute (Sant'Anselmo) in Rome in 1980. He was elected President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) in 2001, becoming the first African American to hold that post.

Cardinal Gregory has shown boundless energy and pastoral leadership and care in all aspects of the spiritual well-being of the People of God of our Archdiocese, including outreach to so many of the lay faithful in parishes and schools. His national leadership on child protection and safe environment issues continued in our Archdiocese, based upon his leadership of a national effort when he served as president of the USCCB. He is a nationally-recognized leader in social justice and racial equality issues. A compendium of articles in the *Catholic Standard* documenting Cardinal Gregory's loving and faithful service to our Archdiocese can be found [by clicking here](#).

In addition, Cardinal Gregory, as leader of our Order in our local Church, has an abiding friendship with the deacons and wives of this Archdiocese, ordaining classes of permanent deacons and leading deacons and wives in our annual convocations and related events. One of many presentations made by Cardinal Gregory to deacons and wives was his dialogue held at the November, 2024 Convocation for Deacons and Wives on the recently-completed Synod on Synodality. The replay of this excellent dialogue can be found [by clicking here](#). A *Catholic Standard* article discussing Cardinal Gregory's leading role in fostering vocations, and the ministry, of priests, deacons and religious can be found [by clicking here](#).

The diaconate community expresses the sincerest gratitude for the leadership, mentorship, and fraternal love that Cardinal Gregory has shown to us these six years. We are also very grateful that Cardinal Gregory will remain in residence in our Archdiocese, so that we can continue to work with him as we serve the People of God of our beloved Archdiocese.

Lenten Day of Reflection for Deacons and Wives: March 8



(Pictured above, Bishop Evelio Menjivar, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington, will preside at Mass at our annual Lenten Day of Reflection for Deacons and Wives on Saturday, March 8, 2025 in Saint Ursula's Chapel at the Pastoral Center.)

The annual Lenten Day of Reflection for Deacons, Candidates and Wives will be held on Saturday, March 8, 2025 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Pastoral Center. Bishop Evelio Menjivar will be the Principal Celebrant and homilist at our Mass.

Over 80 deacons, candidates and wives have already registered for our Lenten Day of Reflection. Please register for our Lenten Day of Reflection [by clicking here](#). For purposes of planning for lunch, please register by Monday, March 3.

Bishop Evelio Menjivar was born in 1970 in Chalatenango, El Salvador. He migrated to the United States in 1990. He attended the North American College in Rome and obtained a master's degree in theology from the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Rome (Angelicum) in 2002. He was ordained to the priesthood for The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington in 2004. From 2017 to 2023, he served as pastor of Saint Mary's Parish, Landover Hills, Maryland. He was ordained as an auxiliary bishop of Washington on February 21, 2023, by Cardinal Wilton Gregory. During his ministry, Bishop Menjivar has actively supported workers and promoted social justice for immigrants.

During our Lenten Day of Reflection, we will prayerfully prepare ourselves as individuals and for our pastoral responsibilities during the Lenten season by participating in Mass together, reflecting upon a spiritual presentation, and taking the opportunity for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and receipt of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Lunch will be served.

Ms. Anne-Elisabeth Giuliani, the Archdiocese Delegate for Consecrated Life, will present our spiritual reflection. Ms. Giuliani is a professed member in the Secular Institute of Notre-Dame de Vie, founded in 1932 by a Carmelite priest, Blessed Marie-Eugène of the Child-Jesus.

Ms. Giuliani received her formation in theology and spirituality at the Studium of Notre-Dame de Vie (Our Lady of Life) near Avignon, France. She continues to be involved with this international theological center rooted in the tradition of the great Carmelite saints and mystics. Her own work focuses on the spiritual formation of the laity in the context of the new evangelization, the spirituality of St. Therese of the Child Jesus, and the developments of Christian spirituality since Vatican II.

Please plan on joining us for a spiritual, meaningful day and share in the fraternity and sorority of the diaconate community as we make our Lenten spiritual preparations. (One continuing formation hour.)

Spring Retreat for Deacons and Wives:

March 21-23



(Pictured above, Reverend Nicholas Dustin Blackwell, O. Carm., will be our Retreat Leader at the Spring Retreat for Deacons and Wives, March 21-23, 2025, at the Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner, Maryland.)

The Spring deacons and wives retreat will be held during the weekend of March 21-23 at the Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner, Maryland. Reverend Nicholas Dustin Blackwell, O. Carm., will be our Retreat Leader.

Nearly 30 deacons and wives have already registered for our Spring retreat. Please register for our Spring retreat [by clicking here](#). Please register by March 13.

As an introduction, Father Blackwell has provided us an eight-minute Lenten spiritual reflection, inspired by his reverence for Saint Teresa of Avila, on silence and prayer, which can be found [by clicking here](#).

Father Blackwell grew up in Mayville, Michigan, a small rural town where he was raised as a hunter and fisherman by his family. After graduating from Northern Michigan University, he joined the Peace Corps and served in The Gambia, West Africa. During his service, he was injured, which eventually resulted in the amputation of his left leg.

Father Blackwell entered formation for the Saint Elias Province of the Carmelite Order in 2010, and was ordained a priest in 2017. During formation, he earned STB and MDiv. degrees from the Catholic University of America in 2016. He also earned his Licentiate in Canon Law (JCL) in 2023. He is currently studying for a Doctorate in Canon Law (JCD).

He also works as a canonical advisor for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. He has taught canon law at the Dominican House of Studies. Father Blackwell was also a part time military chaplain at Joint Andrews Airforce Base for the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA in 2024.

Please plan to join brother deacons and sister deacon wives on a spiritually meaningful, prayerful, and collegial Spring retreat.

RCIA to OCIA -- What Deacons and Wives Need to Know: Recap



(Pictured above, Ms. Sara Blauvelt, ADW Secretary of Catechesis, led a virtual workshop on the new OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults) on February 12, 2025.)

On February 12, Ms. Sara Blauvelt, ADW Secretary of Catechesis, led a virtual a presentation on the new OCIA (Order of Christian Initiation of Adults) which replaces the RCIA and important changes to the text and Rites. Over 70 deacons, candidates and wives participated in this important and topical workshop.

Ms. Blauvelt serves as the Secretary for Catechesis for the Archdiocese of Washington. She has a Masters in Catechesis/Religious Education and 28 years of catechetical experience. She has supported the catechumenal ministry of parishes for the past 13 years.

The Order of Christian Initiation remains familiar, but there are important changes. This workshop provided an overview of what has changed and what has not changed. Specifically, the more precise wording applied to those in the catechumenal process. Ms. Blauvelt answered several questions from deacons and wives on the new text.

For those who had schedule conflicts and could not participate in this virtual discussion, you may wish to [view this recording of the workshop](#).

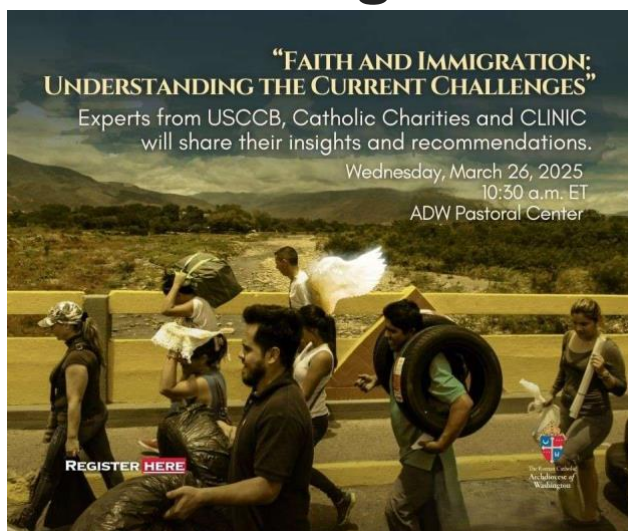
The presentation slides for the workshop are set forth below:



[OCIA Workshop presentation slides](#)

We thank Ms. Blauvelt for leading this important and topical discussion, providing deacons and wives with the insights and knowledge to use the new ritual text, which becomes mandatory beginning Ash Wednesday, March 5. (Two continuing formation credit hours.)

Faith and Immigration, Understanding Current Challenges: March 26



All deacons and wives are invited to a meeting on "Faith and Immigration: Understanding the Current Challenges," to be held at the Pastoral Center on Wednesday, March 26 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. This discussion is sponsored by the Archdiocese Offices of Cultural Diversity and Outreach, Pastoral Ministry and Social Concerns, and Public Policy.

In these unprecedented times, the role of our pastoral leaders is more crucial than ever. This gathering aims to help you navigate the current challenges while nurturing the faith and well-being of our archdiocesan communities. Experts from the United States

Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington, and the Catholic Legal Immigration Network (CLINIC) will share their insights and recommendations regarding the various situations faced by our brothers and sisters and the questions they may have. This meeting will be an excellent opportunity to learn, collaborate, and build mutual support. Your presence will greatly enrich our discussions as we strengthen our pastoral efforts.

Please register for this important and topical meeting by clicking [here](#). Prayer cards can be downloaded in [English](#) and [Spanish](#). If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Mrs. Claudia Bartolini, Archdiocese Office of Cultural Diversity and Outreach (bartolinic@adw.org).

Permanent Diaconate Community 'Save the Dates'



Please 'save the dates' for the diaconate community events scheduled for the first half of 2025. These activities are designed to enrich our spiritual lives, enhance our pastoral capabilities and enjoy the fraternity and sorority of our diaconate community.

March 8, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.: Annual Lenten Day of Reflection For Deacons, Candidates and Wives. Bishop Evelio Menjivar will be the Principal Celebrant and homilist at our Mass during our Lenten Day of Reflection for Deacons, Candidates and Wives, held at the Pastoral Center. In this popular annual event, we will have the opportunity to worship together at Mass, listen to a spiritual reflection, and have time for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and confessions. Lunch will be served. Please see further details and a registration link in this newsletter. (One continuing formation credit hour.)

March 11, at 2:00 p.m.: Installation of Cardinal Robert W. McElroy as the eighth Archbishop of Washington, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. All deacons and wives are very cordially invited to attend the Installation Mass for Cardinal Robert W. McElroy as the eighth Archbishop of Washington. Deacons and wives have received a written invitation and registration instructions for the Installation Mass. Further details are set forth in this newsletter.

March 21-23: Spring Deacons and Wives Retreat. The Spring deacons and wives retreat returns in 2025 at the Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner, Maryland. Reverend Nicholas Dustin Blackwell, O. Carm., will be our Retreat Leader. Father Blackwell is a nationally known spiritual advisor, and was also a part time military chaplain at Joint Andrews Airforce Base in 2024. Please see further details and a registration link in this newsletter.

March 26, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.: Meeting on Faith and Immigration, Understanding Current Challenges. Sponsored by various Archdiocese Offices, deacons and wives are invited to this discussion which will be held at the Pastoral Center. Please see further details and a registration link in this newsletter.

May 17, from 10:00 a.m. to Noon: Workshop on the Charitable Charism of the Josephite Order and the Permanent Diaconate. Our Spring continuing formation workshop for deacons and wives will focus on the charitable charism of the Josephite Order and the Permanent Diaconate. Following the reinstatement of the permanent diaconate after Vatican Council II, the Josephite Order led the formation program in our Archdiocese and other U.S. dioceses, and that Josephite commitment to charity continues ingrained in our permanent diaconate community. We will meet at St. Joseph's Seminary, 1200 Varnum Street, NE, tour the seminary and have a panel discussion with current Josephite formators and permanent deacons, including Deacon Joseph Curtis, Jr., who were directly connected to the first classes of permanent deacons in our Archdiocese. (Two continuing formation credit hours.)

June 7, from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.: Anniversary Jubilarian Mass and Celebration Luncheon. Bishop Juan R. Esposito will be the Principal Celebrant and homilist at our Mass for the anniversary celebration of jubilarian deacons and their wives, to be held in Saint Ursula Chapel at the Pastoral Center. Several ordination classes will be honored, and a celebratory luncheon will be served. A personal invitation will be issued to all jubilarians, and all deacons and wives are invited and highly encouraged to join in this Mass and celebration.

June 28, at 10:00 a.m.: Permanent Diaconate Ordination for the Class of

2025. Please plan on attending the ordination of our newest class of deacons who will be called to orders by Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Deacons should bring an alb, cincture, and white stole, and plan to arrive no later than 9:30 a.m. to vest. Wives of deacons will have reserved seating.

July 2025, Summer Reading and Virtual Discussion for Deacons and Wives: Our tradition of a summer reading selection for deacons and wives continues in Summer 2025. Our text will be *Remain in Me: Holy Orders, Prayer and Ministry* by Deacon James Keating (Paulist Press, 2019). Deacon Keating will lead us in a virtual discussion of this spiritual text in mid-July, date to be announced in a future newsletter. Deacon Keating is a nationally-known author, speaker and thought leader on the permanent diaconate. (Up to six continuing formation credit hours.)

Events for the second half of 2025 will be announced in a future newsletter. Special thanks to the members of the Continuing Formation Committee who have worked diligently to plan these activities. We know how quickly our ministerial, work and family calendars can fill up, so please 'Save the Dates' for these events aimed at enriching our spirituality, increasing our pastoral and liturgical skills, and deepening the fraternity and sorority of our ministry.

Permanent Diaconate Formation: Update



The eight members of the 2029 aspirancy cohort are studying an introduction to Sacred Scripture this month, and are beginning to sign up with Catholic Charities, D.C., for summer ministry in various charitable outreach activities.

The members of the 2027 (seven men) and 2025 (ten men) candidacy cohorts are in coursework, including taking the Christian Matrimony course together. This course addressed pre-Cana workshop training with a presentation by Deacon Oscar Mendez and his wife Cindy Soc Mendez, who shared their experiences leading marriage preparation programs at Saint Michael the Archangel Parish, Silver Spring, Maryland. Many thanks to Deacon Oscar and Cindy for a lively and insightful conversation on how deacons and wives can be witnesses to their parish communities in witnessing and explaining the importance of marriage in the Catholic Church.

The 2027 candidates continue in New Testament studies with Deacon Kenneth Scheiber, and the 2025 candidates are reviewing the canonical paperwork for weddings and annulments these next few weeks with presentations by Fr. George Stuart and Deacon Leo Schneider. They completed their Homiletics and Liturgy *practica* in February, the latter led by Deacon Master of Ceremonies Curtis Turner, Steve Nash, Vince Wolfinger, Kenneth Angell, and Leo Schneider.

All aspirants and candidates are expected to be present at the Lenten Day of Reflection on Saturday, March 8, at the Pastoral Center, so it will be a good time for deacons and wives to speak with them and get to know them better as we share prayer, spiritual enrichment, and fellowship as a diaconate community.

Pope Francis Message for the Jubilee of Deacons



(Pictured above, Pope Francis in a public appearance during 2019.)

The Jubilee Year celebration for deacons was held in Rome during the weekend of February 21-23. It is estimated that over 6,000 permanent deacons and their families participated representing over 100 countries. Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, recovering from his recent illness, could not attend, but provided a homily for the Holy Mass and Ordinations to the Diaconate held on Sunday, February 23. The homily was read by His Excellency Monsignor Rino Fisichella. Pope Francis in his homily stressed three fundamental dimensions of the Christian life and our ministries specifically: "forgiveness, selfless service and communions".

Pope Francis further explained, "Forgiveness means preparing a welcoming and safe future for us and our communities. Deacons, personally charged with a ministry that carries them to the peripheries of our world, are committed to seeing -- and teaching others to see -- in everyone, even in those who do us wrong and cause of suffering ... guidance and help."

With respect to selfless service, the Pope reflected, "For you as deacons, selfless service is not a secondary aspect of your activity, but an essential dimension of your very being."

And with respect to being a source of communion, the Pope exhorted, "Those of you who are permanent deacons do so as husbands, fathers and grandparents who, by your service, choose to extend your families to include the needy in all the places where you live. Dear deacons, your mission sets you apart from society only to be re-immersed in it in order to enable it to be an ever more open and welcoming place for everyone. It is one of the finest expressions of a synodal Church, one that 'goes forth.'"

The full text of Pope Francis' wonderful and insightful homily to instruct and provide inspiration for we in the diaconate community can be found [by clicking here](#).

Please Remember in Your Prayers

Please remember the following members of the Permanent Deacon community in your prayers this month.

Please inform Mrs. Karen Sachs if you would like to add someone to this prayer list in our next newsletter.



Mrs. Carmencita (Carmen) Cordova-Ferrer, deceased, wife of Deacon Nathaniel Cordova-Ferrer, ordination class of 1994.

Deacon John R. Barnes, ordination class of 1995, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Michael Bond, ordination class of 2006, for prayers of healing.

Deacon James L. Caldwell, Jr., ordination class of 2013, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Francisco Cartagena, ordination class of 2011, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Joseph Curtis, Jr., ordination class of 2002, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Willis C. Daniels, ordination class of 1995, for prayers of healing

Deacon Ronald Ealey, ordination class of 1975, and his wife Catherine, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Frank Enderle, ordination class of 1991, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Clark L. Glenn, ordination class of 2002, and his wife Doris, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Carlos Hernandez, ordination class of 2013, for prayers of healing.

Mrs. Megan Jackson, daughter of Deacon Alan Jeeves, ordination class of 2013, for prayers of healing.

Deacon James C. McCann, Jr., ordination class of 1991, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Lawrence Miles, ordination class of 1993, for prayers of healing.

Deacon John Montgomery, ordination class of 2008, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Andrew J. Nosacek, ordination class of 1993 and his wife Lorraine Ann, for prayers of healing.

Mrs. Maureen (Mo) Pagan, wife of Deacon Rafael Pagan, ordination class of 2013, for prayers of healing.

Mrs. Eleanor Ripple, wife of Deacon Ammon Ripple, ordination class of 2010, for prayers of healing.

Deacon John E. Robinson, Jr., ordination class of 2008, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Walter Rourke, ordination class of 1988, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Paul Ruffo, ordination class of 2000, for prayers of healing.

Deacon McBurnett (Mack) Smith, ordination class of 2004, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Robert (Bobby) White, ordination class of 1997, for prayers of healing.

Anjanette Young, daughter of Deacon Willis C. Daniels, ordination class of 1995, for prayers of healing.

Office of the Permanent Diaconate

Reverend Anthony E. Lickteig, Secretary for Ministerial Leadership
301-853-4550

Deacon Don Longano, Director, Office of the Permanent Diaconate

301-853-4583 | longanod@adw.org

Deacon Charles Huber, Assistant Director of Permanent Diaconate Formation

301-853-4582 | huberc@adw.org

Mrs. Karen Sachs, Administrative Assistant | Sachsk@adw.org



The Roman Catholic
Archdiocese of Washington