

THE SERVANT



The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington
Office of the Permanent Diaconate



March 2026

Workshop for Deacons and Wives Nearing/at Retirement: March 14



SAINT LUKE INSTITUTE

A workshop discussion for deacons and wives who are nearing, at or planning for retirement from secular work, or contemplating reduction in ministry, or are beginning to plan for those life changes, will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Saturday, March 14 at the Pastoral Center. Our discussion will be facilitated by Dr. Stephen T. Carroll, Clinical Staff, Saint Luke Institute. This workshop discussion will be held both in-person and by livestream. Lunch will be served following our workshop.

Please [click here to register](#).

Deacons (and wives) planning for, or at retirement from secular work, or contemplating reduction in ministerial activities, face diverse challenges, and our workshop will provide an overview of issues to be considered in ministry, including warning signs of burnout and vicarious trauma that can arise in parish ministry, and strategies for setting healthy boundaries for self-care. Deacons have unique challenges in ministry of balancing pastoral and family needs. The workshop will offer strategies for improving communication with pastors and other supervisors, and clarifying expectations for balance between pastoral and family responsibilities.

Our workshop discussion will be facilitated by Dr. Stephen T. Carroll, Clinical Staff, St. Luke Institute. Dr. Carroll has been a member of the clinical services department at the Institute since 2012 and now serves as Director of Education and Aftercare Services. He received his doctoral degree in counseling from Loyola University in Maryland, and a master's degree in pastoral ministry from Boston College. He has extensive experience in counseling with individuals, families, veterans, and people in ministry for the last thirty years.

Please join us for this most pertinent discussion for deacons and wives nearing, at, or planning for retirement and its commensurate impact on ministry. (Two continuing formation credit hours available).

Workshops for Newly-Ordained Deacons and Their Wives: March 14



(Pictured above, Most Reverend Roy E. Campbell, Jr., Auxiliary Bishop of Washington, and the ordination class of 2025 following ordination on June 28, 2025 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC).

Workshop discussions for newly-ordained deacons and their wives will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 12 Noon on Saturday, March 14 at the Pastoral Center. These workshop discussions are designed for deacons ordained in the Classes of 2021, 2023, and 2025, and their wives. Separate discussions will be held for deacons and for wives, with deacons and wives acting as facilitators. The discussions will focus on the joys and challenges of ministry, and offer a forum for open and meaningful dialogue for those who are beginning and maturing in their ministry. The workshop is designed to begin an ongoing periodic dialogue for recently-ordained deacons and their wives as they adjust to ministerial life, and balance work, family, and ministerial responsibilities. Lunch will be served following these discussions.

Please [click here to register](#).

Deacons in the ordination classes of 2021, 2023, and 2025 are highly encouraged to participate in these meaningful and lively discussions. (Two continuing formation credit hours available).

Lenten Day of Reflection for Deacons and Wives: Review



(Pictured above, Very Reverend Anthony Lickteig, ADW Episcopal Vicar for Clergy and Secretary for Ministerial Leadership, presides at Mass at the Lenten Day of Reflection for Deacons and Wives held on February 21 in the St. Ursula Chapel at the Pastoral Center. Father Lickteig is assisted by (left to right) Deacon Steve Nash as Master of Ceremonies, Deacon Robert Villanueva and Deacon Alton Davis).

Nearly 100 deacons, candidates, aspirants and wives participated in our annual Lenten Day of Reflection on February 21 at the Pastoral Center. At this popular annual event, we had the opportunity to prayerfully prepare ourselves as individuals and for our pastoral responsibilities during the Lenten season by participating in Mass together, reflecting upon a spiritual presentation, taking the opportunity for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and receipt of the grace of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, and sharing in the fraternity and sorority of our diaconal community.

Very Reverend Anthony E. Lickteig, Episcopal Vicar for Clergy and Secretary for Ministerial Leadership, led our Mass as Principal Celebrant and homilist, and presented our Lenten spiritual reflection. Father Lickteig was ordained a priest in the Archdiocese of Washington in 2010. He completed his theological training at the North American College in Rome. He has extensive pastoral experience in ministering in our Archdiocese, including serving as Pastor of Saint Mary of the Mills Parish, Laurel, Maryland, and previously as Pastor of both Sacred Heart Parish, Bushwood, Maryland and Holy Angels Parish, Avenue, Maryland. Prior to his ministry as pastor, he also served as Parochial Vicar at Our Lady Help of Christians in Waldorf, Maryland and the Church of the Little Flower Parish, Bethesda, Maryland. In addition, he served as Priest Secretary for Cardinal Donald Wuerl, then Archbishop of Washington.

In his Mass homily, Father Lickteig cited the Lenten message of the Holy Father Pope Leo XIV for 2026 (attached below): "Every path towards conversion begins by allowing the word of God to touch our hearts and welcoming it with a docile spirit. ... This year, I would like to first consider the importance of making room for the word through *listening*. The willingness to listen is the first way we demonstrate our desire to enter into a relationship with someone."

Father Lickteig emphasized, "Our Holy Father tells us that Lent is a time to rediscover and deepen what is most important in life: our relationship with God through Jesus Christ. And this begins by listening to the Word of God." Father Lickteig quoted Psalm 95, which we pray every day in the Liturgy of the Hours, "*If today you hear His voice, harden not your hearts.*" Father Lickteig also cited Jesus' calling of Levi (St. Matthew) in the Gospel passage of the Mass, "Follow Me." (Luke 5:27-32). Father Lickteig indicated that this is a great message for Lent, "Because Lent is a time when we, together with the whole Church, are invited to follow Jesus into the desert for the same amount of time he spent there, 40 days ... It is important to pay attention to what is moving in our hearts, as we hear Jesus say to us again, "*Follow me.*"

In his deeply meaningful spiritual reflection, Father Lickteig cited the conversion story of Rose Busingye, a nurse in Uganda who worked in the 1990's in a hospital that treated women with HIV/AIDS. (As related in the Preface by Father Julian Carron to the book *Your Names are Written in Heaven: The World of Rose Busingye*, by David Perillo, excerpts attached below). Deeply frustrated by her experiences when patients refused their medicines, she was thrown into a profound crisis and felt worthless. Then responding to the call of Father Luigi Giussani, an Italian priest and founder of the lay movement Communion and Liberation, to come to Italy and receive spiritual direction.

As Rose related, "Father Giussani made me discover my value ... I wanted to show everyone that life has a meaning, that there is a meaning to everything: even in sleeping, in suffering, in dying ... there is meaning." Rose returned to Uganda, working at the hospital and opening a school, persevering through great difficulties in her service to those in need. As Father Lickteig emphasized, "Rose heard the invitation from this Italian priest ... she followed ... and over the course of time something amazing happened. She discovered her true worth and value. ... And because she believed it and carried it with her, she was able to help others discover their worth ..."

Father Anthony related that through the example of the life of Rose Busingye, "When we speak of conversions, what better conversion to start with than to allow God to change how we look at ourselves? To allow God's Word to enter us, to allow Jesus to look at us in a new and profound way, a gaze that gives us the gift of ourselves, as sons and daughters who are loved unconditionally by their heavenly Father." He cited Pope Francis' homily for Christmas Eve Mass, 2021: "Brothers and sisters, standing before the crib, we contemplate what is central ... We contemplate the child, In his littleness, God is completely present ... He tells you: I love you just as you are. Your littleness does not frighten me, your failings do not trouble me. I became little for your sake, to be your God, I became your brother... I am close to you, and one thing only do I ask: trust me and open your heart to me."

Father Lickteig emphasized, "So the first conversion is to see ourselves in a new light, to see our great dignity and worth. This is a precious gift our Father in heaven and our Mother the Church wants to give us."

Later in his reflection, Father Lickteig stated, "If the first part of our conversion is, through God's gift, to stop believing the lie that we are worthless, the second part of our conversion is to take responsibility for the ways in which, after believing the lie that we are worthless, we have chosen through our own will to sin, to wound others, to engage in self-destructive behavior, to be ungrateful to God for all the blessings he has given to us." He invited participants to make a good confession during this Lenten season, "... taking responsibility for how we have contributed to wounding ourselves and through our ingratitude, even God himself."

As Father Lickteig concluded, "That is Jesus' invitation to us today and during this Lenten Season. He wants to lead us into the desert so we can listen to his voice again, the voice of God who really does love us. So we can rediscover...the first and greatest conversion: That God's love for me is real and profound and personal. We can also bring to him our wounds ... Our gratitude for this love then helps us face Jesus with honesty, as we share with him how we have in turn wounded ourselves and others through our actions. And take responsibility for them. But we are then called to be converted in how we listen to the suffering of others." He cited Pope Leo's Lenten message: "... let us ask for the grace of a Lent that leads us to a greater attentiveness to God and to the least among us."

Father Lickteig connected this conversion to our ministries as deacons, emphasizing that deacons, as ministers of charity, are called to be healed and converted this Lent, to "be more faithful and powerful witnesses of the charity that comes from God."

We sincerely thank Father Lickteig for leading us in our Day of Reflection, and for his excellent homily and spiritual reflection as we embark on our Lenten spiritual journey. Also, thanks to the deacons and wives who served in various roles during the day, including Deacon Robert Villanueva and Deacon Alton Davis (Deacons at the Mass), Deacon Steven Nash (Master of Ceremonies at Mass); Patrice Datovech, wife of Deacon James Datovech (lector at Mass); Deacon Rey Robles (Exposition and Benediction); Deacon James Summers and Karen Summers (Recitation of the Rosary); and candidates in formation who assisted at Mass and Adoration. We also thank our six priest confessors who made Christ's grace through the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation available to our deacons and wives: Reverend Taroh Amedee, S.J.; Reverend Joseph Corvi, MC; Reverend Ambrose Ekeroku, OCD; Monsignor Anthony Frontiero, Reverend Joseph Murphy, C.O.; and Reverend Charles Ukwe, O.P.

Handouts referred to by Father Lickteig in his spiritual reflection are attached below:



2026 Lenten DoR Handouts.pdf

Permanent Diaconate Formation: 'Come and See' Meetings Update



(Pictured above, inquirers, deacons, and wives at the Come and See meeting held at Saint Martin of Tours Parish in Gaithersburg, Maryland on February 23).

The following update on permanent diaconate formation and the 'Come and See' meeting process is provided by Deacon Charles Huber, Assistant Director of Permanent Diaconate Formation:

We have held ten 'Come and See' meetings for those discerning a potential vocation to the diaconate. In those meetings, four of which were rescheduled due to the recent snowstorm, I have been joined by deacons, candidates, and wives, to share their stories and help answer questions from inquirers. The remaining meetings are the following:

Sunday, February 28, 2026, after the 5:00 p.m. Mass, Sacred Heart Parish, La Plata.

Tuesday, March 3, 2026, 7 to 9 pm, Incarnation Parish, Northeast DC.

Wednesday, March 4, 2026, 7 to 9 pm, Saint Joseph Parish, Largo.

Saturday, March 7, 2026, after 4pm Mass, Resurrection Parish, Burtonsville.

Sunday, March 8, 2026, after 10:45am Mass, Saint John Vianney Parish, Prince Frederick

Friday, March 13, 2026, 7 to 9 pm, St. Jerome Parish, Hyattsville.

The meeting discussions so far have been good, with many interesting questions, and there have been quite a few who may be ready to apply this year. Those inquirers who fill out an Inquiry Form (link:) will be asked to submit a Spiritual Autobiography if their pastor approves their application in this cycle. Based on those autobiographies, the Screening Committee, made up of a priest, deacons, and wives, will interview the inquirer and his wife (if married) and then recommends whether he should get an application.

There are certain considerations for men interested in applying for the diaconate, and some of the most common impediments are: time married in the Catholic Church (5 years); time as a Catholic, whether from entry as a baptized Christian or as a neophyte (5 years); permission from pastor (the pastor has to know the inquirer and feel confident that he can enter into formation); past marriage situations (previous marriages of inquirer or wife, among other situations); prayer life; the ability to commit to formation coursework, workshops, and retreats; and residency status (he and his wife must be permanent residents or citizens of the United States).

There are also situations that come up in an inquirer's past life, health, or educational ability that may preclude entry at this time. Those that need to work on academics or English-language skills are encouraged to work on those. Sometimes they are able to get help at their parish, Catholic Charities, or a local school or community organization.

Prayer life is also an essential element of formation and ministerial life, and one which requires both dedication and desire to grow closer to Christ. Sadly, sometimes inquirers and applicants resist suggestions to grow in their spiritual lives. This is identified by Deacon James Keating as one of the biggest challenges for diaconate vocations.

Also, some men have been surprisingly hesitant to become lectors or Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion at their parishes, both of which are necessary preparation for the diaconate, and so we are now asking applicants to start serving in those roles.

Other circumstances that come up relate to sacramental certificates and history of engagement in the Catholic faith. A Catholic man must be able to prove that he has received the sacraments, and has been engaged in their faith in attending Mass and raising children in the faith.

Our conversations with inquirers start before the Come & See meetings, and continue as follow up after the meetings. If there is an issue that needs to be dealt with prior to acceptance, we work with the inquirer or applicant as we can, sometimes offering a pre-aspirancy mentoring.

If you know of a potential inquirer, encourage him to attend one of the remaining Come and See meetings, to [register for the meeting](#) and to fill out an [Inquirer's Information Form](#) so that we can communicate further. If you and/or your wife would like to attend one of the meetings, [please click here to register](#). Thank you for your support of our Come and See process and for our Order. The flyer providing information on the Come and See meetings is attached below:



Come-and-See-2026 Permanent-Diaconate-Flyer.pdf

Deacon O'Neill Appointed Coordinator of Pastoral Field Formation



(Pictured above, Deacon Steve O'Neill, ordination class of 2013, who has been appointed as Coordinator of Pastoral Field Formation by Cardinal Robert W. McElroy).

Cardinal Robert W. McElroy has appointed Deacon Steve O'Neill as Coordinator of Pastoral Field Formation. In this volunteer position, Deacon Steve will oversee the summer ministry placements of deacon candidates and aspirants, in which they are supervised in various pastoral ministries of charity, such as hospitals, prisons, or homeless shelters. Deacon Steve's appointment results from his longtime support for permanent diaconate formation, including as serving as a mentor for candidates.

The summer ministries engaged in by our candidates and aspirants are of vital importance in both introducing particular ministries of charity to those in formation, and developing their spirituality and the charitable charism of a deacon.

Deacon Steve was ordained in June 2013, and serves at Saint Andrew Apostle Parish in Silver Spring, Maryland. After four years in the Marine Corps and studies at the University of Maryland (where met Traci, now his wife of over 35 years, and earned a degree in English), he worked as a contractor for the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Defense Department before joining the U.S. Department of Agriculture, where he spent more than 32 years before retiring. His particular ministry of charity entails serving at Olney Help, the local food pantry, assisting needy families in the Olney/Sandy Spring area. Deacon Steve and Traci have four adult children and three grandchildren.

We thank Deacon Steve for his service to our Order. Also, sincere thanks to Deacon Steve Maselko, ordination class of 2010 who serves at Mother Seton Parish in Germantown, Maryland, who held this position for many years.

Permanent Diaconate Community 'Save the Dates'



Please 'save the dates' for the diaconate community events scheduled for the remainder of calendar year 2026. These activities are designed to enrich our spiritual lives, enhance our pastoral capabilities and enjoy the fraternity and sorority of our diaconate community.

March 14, 2026 (10:00 a.m. to Noon at the Pastoral Center): Workshop For Deacons and Wives Nearing/Attaining Retirement Age. Our series of ongoing formation workshops continues with a discussion designed for deacons and wives who are nearing or have attained retirement age, and focused on the practical and spiritual aspects of continued ministry. Our discussion will be facilitated by Dr. Stephen Carroll of the St. Luke Institute. Lunch will be served following the discussion. Please see further details in the separate article in this newsletter. (Two continuing formation hours available). [Click here to register.](#)

March 14, 2026 (10:00 a.m. to Noon at the Pastoral Center): Workshops for Newly Ordained Deacons and their Wives. Designed for newly-ordained deacons (and their wives) in the ordination classes of 2021, 2023, and 2025, discussions will be held on the joys and challenges of beginning and maturing in ministry. Being held concurrently with the workshop for deacons and wives nearing/at retirement age, both groups will join for lunch following the workshop discussions. Please see further details in the separate article in this newsletter. (Two continuing formation hours available). [Click here to register.](#)

May 16, 2026 - (10:00 a.m. to Noon at the Pastoral Center): Workshop on the Apostolic Exhortation *Dilexi Te* and our Diaconate Mission to Charity. Deacons are configured to spread Christ's message of Love and Truth through acts of charity in our parishes and communities. Pope Leo in his recent Apostolic Exhortation *Dilexi Te* details many of the particular Ministries of Charity focused on by deacons, and as expressed in scripture in Matthew 25:31-45. Our Spring workshop will explore our diaconal commitment to charity in practical application, and incorporate our working with Catholic Charities and other Archdiocesan and parish based organizations. The workshop discussion will also include focus on deacons and wives roles in implementing the six goals for pastoral action in our Archdiocese. Deacon Jim Shanahan, who has worked at Catholic Charities for nearly a decade in parish partner and other assistance programs will moderate our panel discussion. (Two continuing formation hours available). [Click here to register.](#)

June 27, 2026 (10:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. at the Pastoral Center): Deacon Jubilee Mass and Luncheon, and Rite of Candidacy. Bishop Roy E. Campbell, Jr., will be Principal Celebrant at our annual Jubilarian Mass and Luncheon celebration. Several classes of jubilee deacons will be honored. In addition, aspirants in the potential ordination class of 2029, as selected by Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, will be admitted as candidates in the Rite of Candidacy. A celebratory luncheon will be held following the Mass.

July, 2026 (Summer Reading: virtual discussion, date TBD): Our annual tradition of a summer reading text and virtual discussion for deacons and wives continues this summer with the new book written by Deacon James Keating, *The Diaconate and Marriage* (Our Sunday Visitor Press, 2026). Deacon Keating will join us to lead a virtual discussion of this text, which explores the Sacraments of Marriage and Holy Orders as those graces enable and resonate in the profound spirituality of the diaconate. Deacon Keating is a national thought leader on the spirituality of the permanent diaconate, and is professor of spiritual theology at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in Saint Louis, Missouri. A link for purchasing this text can be found [by clicking here.](#) (Up to six continuing formation hours available).

September 12, 2026 (10:00 a.m. -- Noon at the Pastoral Center): Deacons and Wives Fall Workshop. Our annual series of ongoing formation workshops will continue with a Fall workshop on a topic of importance to diaconal ministry and the diaconate community. Further details on the specific topic to be discussed will be set forth in a future newsletter. Lunch will be served following the workshop discussion. (Two continuing formation hours available).

September 25-27, 2026: Fall Retreat for Deacons and Wives at the Loyola Retreat House. Our popular tradition of a Fall weekend retreat continues at the Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner, Maryland. Reverend Monsignor Anthony R. Frontiero, S.T.D., will be our retreat master. Monsignor Frontiero, a priest of the Diocese of Manchester, New Hampshire, has extensive experience in pastoral ministerial service. He currently serves as Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia for the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA. [Click here to register.](#)

October 31, 2026: (10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at Saint Joseph Parish, Largo, Maryland): Convocation for Deacons and Wives. Cardinal Robert W. McElroy will lead us in our annual Convocation for Deacons and Wives, and will be the Principal Celebrant and homilist at our Convocation Mass. We will also have discussions on pertinent topics in diaconal ministry. Please plan to join us for this important and popular annual tradition. Lunch will be served. (Three continuing formation hours available).

December 5, 2026 (10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Pastoral Center): Advent Day of Reflection for Deacons and Wives. In our annual Advent tradition, deacons and wives will have the opportunity to spiritually prepare ourselves for the Advent Season and our pastoral responsibilities by participating in Mass together, reflecting upon an Advent spiritual presentation, taking the opportunity for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and receipt of the grace of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, and enjoy the fraternity and sorority of our diaconate community. Lunch will be served. (One continuing formation hour available).

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.

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, or if someone has recovered and should be removed from the prayer list.

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

Deacon Patrick Brown, ordination class of 2013, 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.

Mrs. Michelle Cullens, wife of candidate Gerald Cullens, 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.

Mr. Matthew Datovech, son of Deacon James Datovech, ordination class of 2008, 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 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.

Mrs. Tricia Klosky, wife of Deacon Kenneth Angell, ordination class of 2002, for prayers of healing.

Mrs. Marcia Mattocks, wife of the late Deacon Richard Mattocks, ordination class of 1993, for prayers of healing.

Deacon John E. Montgomery, ordination class of 2008, 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 McBurnett (Mack) Smith, ordination class of 2004, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Trinidad Soc, ordination class of 2005, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Al Turner, ordination class of 2000, for prayers of healing.

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