

THE SERVANT

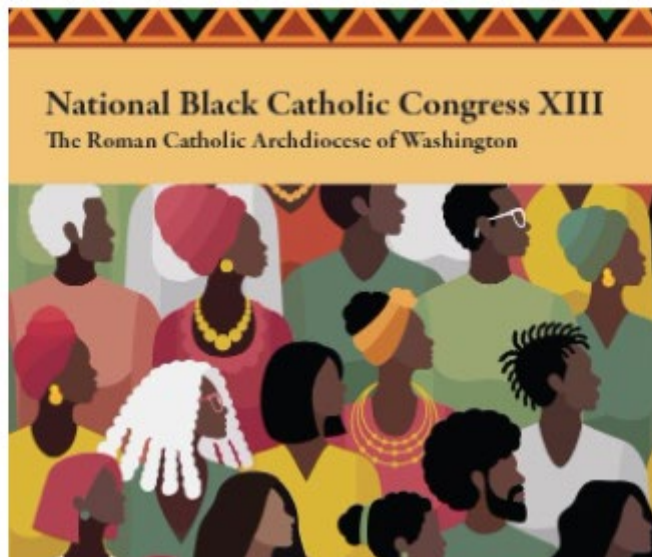


The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington
Office of the Permanent Diaconate



September 2026

Black Catholic Ministry Pastoral Plan: September 12 Workshop



A reminder that our deacons and wives Fall ongoing formation workshop will focus on the Black Catholic Ministry Pastoral Plan -- Listening Session, on Saturday, September 12, 2026, from 10:00 a.m. to Noon at the Archdiocese Pastoral Center, followed by lunch and informal discussion. Over 20 deacons and wives have already registered for our workshop, so please consider joining in this most important discussion. [Please click here to register](#) for our workshop. (Two continuing formation hours available).

United as one Body in Christ, deacons and their wives are invited to share their experiences, insights, and hopes for the future of Black Catholic ministry at an upcoming listening session for the Black Catholic Ministry Pastoral Plan. Rooted in faith, guided by the Holy Spirit, and inspired by the vision of the National Black Catholic Congress, this pastoral planning process seeks to prayerfully discern the gifts, hopes, needs, and aspirations of Black Catholics throughout the Archdiocese of Washington. Since June 2025, the Black Catholic Ministry Pastoral Planning Committee has been intentionally engaging in dialogue and discernment to help shape a pastoral plan that affirms our rich cultural heritage, strengthens evangelization, and fosters vibrant Catholic community life.

The listening session will provide an opportunity to:

- Receive an update on the pastoral planning process;
- Review, reflect, and discuss the emerging pastoral objectives;
- Share personal insights, experiences, and recommendations; and
- Help shape a pastoral vision that responds to the spiritual and pastoral needs of Black Catholics across the Archdiocese.

The voice, presence, and perspective of our deacons and their wives are important as we journey together in faith and synodality. Together, we can continue building a welcoming, faith-filled, and mission-driven Church that honors the spiritual legacy and ongoing contributions of Black Catholics in the Archdiocese of Washington.

Our workshop will be offered both in-person and virtually. For further information, please contact Mrs. Wendi Williams, Executive Director, ADW Office of Cultural Diversity and Outreach, williamsw@adw.org.

Deacons and Wives Fall Retreat: September 25-27



(Pictured above, Monsignor Anthony R. Frontiero, S.T.D., will be our Retreat Leader at the Fall Deacons and Wives Retreat, September 25-27 at the Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner, Maryland).

Our popular tradition of a Fall weekend retreat continues at the Loyola Retreat House in Faulkner, Maryland, on the weekend of September 25-27, 2026. 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. He has served as a confessor at recent Deacon and Wives Advent and Lenten Days of Reflection.

Please note that at this time we have reached our registration limit of 70+ for the Loyola Retreat House. If you have registered, but your plans have changed and you can no longer attend, please inform Mrs. Karen Sachs (sachsk@adw.org) as we have a small waiting list. In 2027, we hope to offer a Spring deacons and wives retreat; as well as continuing the traditional Fall retreat, and the scheduled dates for these retreats will be announced in a future Servant newsletter.

Convocation For Deacons and Wives: October 31



(Pictured above, Cardinal Robert W. McElroy, Archbishop of Washington, presents the homily at the Convocation for Deacons and Wives Mass held in October 2025 at Saint Joseph Parish, Largo, Maryland. Cardinal McElroy will lead our Convocation this year on October 31, 2026 at Saint Joseph Parish. Photo by Andrew Biraj for the Catholic Standard).

His Eminence, Robert Cardinal McElroy will lead us in our popular annual Convocation for Deacons and Wives, and will be the Principal Celebrant and homilist at our Convocation Mass. Our Convocation will be held on Saturday, October 31, 2026, at Saint Joseph Parish in Largo, Maryland from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Please [Click here to register](#).

In addition to Cardinal McElroy leading us in prayer, we will have plenary discussions on pertinent topics in diaconal ministry. We will focus our attention on our diaconal pastoral activities that promote the Six Goals for Pastoral Action of our Archdiocese: (1) Foster a parish culture which piercingly invites people to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ; (2) Provide formation which deepens the sacramental life of the Church; (3) Celebrate and evangelize marriage and family life; (4) Formation of the laity as missionary disciples; (5) Care for the vulnerable: migrants, the unborn and the marginalized; and (6) Reverse the avalanche of young people leaving the Church.

Please plan on joining us for this meaningful and popular annual tradition, as we meet under the leadership of our Archbishop, Cardinal McElroy, engage in meaningful discussion of topical diaconal ministerial issues, and enjoy the fraternity and sorority of our community. Lunch will be served. (Three continuing formation hours available).

Permanent Diaconate Formation: Update



(Pictured above, candidates, wives and assisting deacons and wives in attendance at the annual Candidates and Wives retreat, held on August 21-23 at the Priest Field Retreat Center, West Virginia).

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

"Candidates from both cohorts (classes of 2027 and 2029) and their wives were on retreat last weekend at Priest Field Retreat Center in West Virginia. I am thankful to several deacons and wives who joined to assist in this meaningful weekend.

Screening interviews of the applicants for the class of 2031 cohort have concluded, and the Deacon Formation Review Board will be recommending to Cardinal McElroy those applicants deemed ready for aspirancy after reviewing their application cases. I am very grateful for the support and significant efforts of the Review Board members and those deacons and wives who helped with the screening interviews.

The new aspirants will start with a retreat in early October, followed by a year of Saturday workshops. They will also attend the Advent and Lenten Days of Reflection for Deacons and Wives, so you will be able to meet them and their wives at those times to help support them.

A significant number of applicants were born outside the Continental United States, and several of those are from Latin America, both Central America, Mexico, and South America. There are also several applicants who decided to wait for family or employment issues, and a few who have been asked to wait while working on matters such as taking their GED high school equivalency, or to spend time engaged in deepening their faith. We offer mentoring for these men and their wives while waiting.

Since we are considering vocations being discerned by younger men, it also is important for us as a community to consider how those with young children can be supported in pursuing their vocations. Every cohort in recent years has had men with young children, and several had children born during or soon after formation. The gifts of families in our diaconate are opportunities for us to be agents of grace and encouragement to our parishioners, and witnesses of God's love expressed in family life and the Sacrament of Marriage.

The cohort of new candidates (class of 2029) will begin their coursework after Labor Day, with an introduction to liturgy and study of the Gospels. The class of 2027 cohort will start before Labor Day with their practicum coursework on preaching and liturgy. Please continue to pray for our candidates, applicants, their wives and their formators."

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. Diaconate community events and dates for the first half of calendar year 2027 will be announced in a future Servant newsletter.

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 focused on the development of the Black Catholic Ministry Pastoral Plan, building upon listening sessions being held throughout the Archdiocese during the Summer, and implementing the goals of the National Black Catholic Congress. This discussion will be facilitated by the ADW Office of Cultural Diversity and Outreach. Further details and a registration form are set forth in the separate article in this newsletter. (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. Further information is set forth in the separate article in this newsletter.

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 focusing on the Six Goals for Pastoral Action of our Archdiocese. Please plan on joining us for this important and popular annual tradition. Lunch will be served. Further information and a registration form are set forth in the separate article in this newsletter. (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. Most Reverend Gary R. Studniewski, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington and Vicar for Clergy and Secretary for Ministerial Leadership, is scheduled to be Principal Celebrant at our Advent Day of Reflection Mass and provide a spiritual reflection. 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.

Mass for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees: September 27



Deacons and wives are cordially invited to join in the Mass on Sunday, September 27, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. marking the [112th World Day of Migrants and Refugees](#) at the Cathedral of Saint Matthew the Apostle, Washington, DC. His Eminence, Robert Cardinal McElroy, will be Principal Celebrant at the Mass.

Most Reverend Robert Boxie, III, Auxiliary Bishop of Washington, has extended an invitation by letter to all deacons to this Mass, stating, "This year's theme, 'Even Just One of These Children,' chosen by Pope Leo XIV, draws special attention to the experiences of migrant and refugee children and to the responsibility we share to welcome, protect, and accompany them. The Holy Father reminds us that every child possesses immeasurable dignity and worth and that, amid the many challenges of migration, each person must be seen not as a statistic, but as a beloved child of God. Before the Mass, we will pray the Rosary in multiple languages beginning at 4:35 p.m. on the steps of the Cathedral. As we come together for this special liturgy, we will unite in prayer for migrants and refugees throughout the world, especially those facing displacement, family separation, and uncertainty about the future."

A copy of Bishop Boxie's invitation letter can be found below. Flyers with further details in English and Spanish can also be found below.

If you plan to attend, please contact Bishop Boxie's office at 301-853-4566 or by email at slattery@adw.org. Please note that deacons and wives attending the Deacons and Wives Fall Retreat at the Loyola Retreat House on September 25-27 should have ample time to travel to this Mass following the retreat.



Bishop Boxie's Letter to Deacons.pdf



World Migrant Day 2026_English Flyer.pdf



World Migrant Day 2026_Spanish Flyer.pdf

Catechetical Day: October 17



Catechetical Day 2026
Día Catequético 2026

EMPOWERING MISSIONARY DISCIPLES
EMPODERANDO DISCÍPULOS MISIONEROS



The Archdiocese Secretariat for Catechesis is excited to invite you and your wives to Catechetical Day 2026 – Saturday, October 17, 2026 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. at DeMatha Catholic High School. The theme - Empowering Missionary Disciples/ Empoderando Discípulos Misioneros - is drawn from the Pastoral Goals for the Archdiocese.

This unique formation offers both spiritual and professional opportunities for all who attend. The day includes Mass and a keynote address – by His Eminence, Robert Cardinal McElroy. Participants will also have an opportunity for fellowship with other catechists and,

in the afternoon, participants will be able to take part in two formation workshops. With 60 workshops (30 English and 30 Spanish) participants will be inspired to empower missionary discipleship in children's and youth catechesis, family formation, the catechumenal process, and adult faith formation.

For a complete listing of the workshops and the schedule for the day visit the CD2026 website [Catechetical Day 2026 - Archdiocese of Washington](#). Several of our brother Deacons will be presenting: Deacon Darryl Kelley, Deacon Eugene de Ribeaux, and Deacon Michael Brooks in the English track; and Deacon Jorge Gatica and Deacon Juan Ortiz in the Spanish track.

We are asking parish leaders to submit a single registration for the parish. Parishes will be invoiced after Catechetical Day. This should help us to get everyone checked in more quickly when they arrive on October 17. Please let your parish catechetical leader or OCIA coordinator know before September 30 if you want to attend so they can include you in the parish registration.

Companion Training to Accompany Spouses in Troubled Marriages



Married deacons, through receipt of Grace in the Sacrament of Marriage and the Sacrament of Holy Orders, are well configured to witness to the sacred joys of married life, and to provide pastoral care to those both preparing for sacramental marriage, and in supporting marriages. Many deacons' wives are also active in these parish ministries.

In promoting the Archdiocesan Goal for Pastoral Action to Celebrate and Evangelize Marriage and Family Life, the Archdiocese Office of Family Life, in collaboration with the Office of the Permanent Diaconate, plans to offer various training and workshop opportunities in the upcoming year (including our just-completed summer reading and virtual discussion of the text "The Diaconate and Marriage", and a workshop on marriage ministry planned for 2027) to assist those deacons and wives engaged in marriage-related ministries. This fall, a training program is offered to better equip deacons and wives to accompany spouses in troubled marriages.

Please join us for a webinar offered over three Tuesday evenings, September 29, October 6, and October 13, from 7:00 – 8:30 pm ET, to learn how to be a BreakThrough Companion to accompany individuals as they discover how to break through the gridlock of their troubled marriage relationships.

A BreakThrough Companion accompanies an individual spouse enrolled in the SmartLoving [BreakThrough course](#), providing them with accountability, motivation, and spiritual support to help them gain insights into the cause of their struggles, develop skills to restore hope, and reestablish loving connection in their marriage.

There is no cost for the companion training, which includes a 1-year companion license to the SmartLoving BreakThrough program. To register, please complete the [SmartLoving BreakThrough Training Registration Form](#) by Sunday, September 20. For more information, [view this short video](#) and contact the Office of Family Life at 301-853-4499 or flm@adw.org.

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.



Mrs. Maria Santiago, deceased, wife of Deacon Perfecto Santiago, ordination class of 2000.

Mrs. Vivas Allen, widow of deceased Deacon Alvah David Allen, ordination class of 1977, for prayers of healing.

Deacon John R. Barnes, ordination class of 1995, 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.

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.

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

Mr. Carlos Ortiz, father of Deacon Juan Ortiz, ordination class of 2017, 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.

Mrs. Marjorie Vazquez Soto, mother-in-law of Deacon Jose Carbonell, ordination class of 2011, for prayers of healing.

Deacon Robert Villanueva, ordination class of 2015, for prayers of healing.

Office of the Permanent Diaconate

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