



El Diácono

Archdiocese of Santa Fe



ARCHDIOCESE of
SANTA FE

JAN – MARCH 2024
ISSUE 44E

A Newsletter for the Deacons of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe

2024

As deacons, be a bridge between the altar and the world,
carrying the prayers of the people to God and bringing God's
love to the people

From the Desk of the Director

Like most, if not all people, I find this time of year to be one of reflection – both on what has been and what hopes I have for the future.

I am finishing up my first year as the director of the Office of Deacons and, honestly, I am rather pleased with what we have been able to accomplish. I say we because the support I have received from you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, has been the source of any success we have had as a community.

One of the greatest achievements has been the formation of a Deacon Personnel Board. This group has started to meet and has begun to make an impact on how assignments are managed. Thanks especially to Dcn. Andy Carrillo who has taken on the chairmanship for the Board.

We have had some transitions, too. Deacon Enrique and Charlene Montoya have stepped down as the coordinators of our Deacon Widows. I am grateful for all they have done and am very excited that Kathy O'Neill has taken on this important ministry. Please see her introductory article elsewhere in this newsletter. Kathy, a widow herself, brings a great deal of energy and experience to this ministry. I know that you will support her efforts.

Another transition is evident in this newsletter. Dcn. Jack Granato has generously given his time and talent for several years now to ensure the success of El Diacono. We are all grateful to him for that effort. We are also grateful to Dcn. Ed Leyba who has graciously said yes to taking over for Jack as he retires. I look forward to working with Ed and seeing how this newsletter evolves in 2024.

Many of you pitched in this past fall for our convocation with Archbishop Wester. It was wonderful to be able to see each other again and to be a part of the Rebuild My Church campaign. Thanks to all who offered their service as workshop leaders: Dcn. Michael and Donna Illerbrun, Dcn. Andy Carrillo, Dcn. Michael Rowley, Fr. Oscar Coelho, and (especially) my wife, Celeste and her chocolate!

Of course, perhaps the highlight of the year was the ordination of 36 men this past June. I am still in awe of that achievement for our community. So many of you were a part of their instruction and mentoring – or simply supported and encouraged them, especially in your prayers. Please know of my sincere gratitude!



Dcn Keith Davis
Deacon Director



While we won't have any ordinations in 2024, we do have lots to look forward to. After a three year break, the deacon community retreat is on track to return this fall. Dates are still pending but we have a committee working on this. Thanks especially to Deacon Mike Wesley for his leadership.

As our deacon candidates prepare for their final year of formation, my hope is that we will offer them a solid practicum in preaching. That hope includes bringing in an actual homiletics professor to work with them. Our Deacon Policy and Formation Committee has suggested that if we are successful in arranging that, we open it up for the entire deacon community and I am working to make that happen. More information will be in the next newsletter.

From the Desk of the Director *Continued...*

This year will see the inauguration of our Rebuild My Church Campaign. The Deacon Community, especially at the deanery level, will be integral to its success. I hope that all of us will find this to be a year of hope as we "reboot" the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

All in all, 2024 looks to be a great year! May God bless us all and fill us with His Peace. Special thanks to Yolanda Lovato who has served as my assistant and given me the support I needed to make it through this year.

A Message from the Deacon Widow's Outreach Coordinator: Kathryn O'Neill

I hail from New Mexico, specifically the Albuquerque area (Albuquerque/Moriarty/Cedar Crest), where I was born and raised. I completed my high school education at Manzano High School in 1979. In 1983, during our time as Active Duty US Army personnel, I crossed paths with my future husband. Our union took place in Albuquerque in 1986, and thereafter, we embarked on a journey that led us to Germany, where we served in the US Army initially as Army Officers and later as US Army Civilian employees.

Upon our return to the United States in 1998, we were stationed at Red River Army Depot. My husband resumed active status with the

Knights of Columbus, holding roles such as Grad Knight with Council 1003 in Texarkana, Texas. He also took on responsibilities as Knights of Columbus District Deputy and Diocesan Deputy within the Tyler Diocese. Our journey into Deaconate training commenced in 2002 at the University of Dallas.

My late husband was ordained on December 29, 2007, and was assigned to St Mary of the Cenacle Catholic Church in New Boston, Texas, where he faithfully served until his passing on August 5, 2012. I stood by his side throughout, initially as an Army wife, then as a Sir Knights Lady, and eventually as a Deacon's wife and widow.

Presently, I am an active member of Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Over the past four years, I have been dedicated to serving as the RCIA Instructor, and currently, I hold the position of Coordinator for our newly established ministry, "Military Veteran Outreach." This involves connecting with parishioners who are military Veterans and collaborating with the VA Chaplains Office. I eagerly anticipate contributing to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe as the Deacon Widows Coordinator.



Kathryn O'Neill
**Deacon Widows Outreach
Coordinator**

St. Vincent Saragossa - Feast Day Jan 23



We have been watching a magnificent spectacle with the eyes of faith, the holy martyr Vincent everywhere victorious. He was victorious in his words, victorious in the pains he endured; victorious in his confession, victorious in his tribulations; victorious when burned with fire; victorious when submerged in the waves. When his flesh, which was a kind of tribute to the victorious Christ, was thrown into the sea from the boat, it silently said, "We are cast down, but not lost."

~Sermon of Saint Augustine

Saint Augustine greatly admired Saint Vincent of Saragossa, a deacon-martyr from today's Spain. Augustine delivered a series of homilies praising the heroism and faith of this saint, whose martyrdom occurred during the intense persecution of the Church in the early 300s under Diocletian.

According to Augustine, the blood of martyrs is a sacred sacrifice that quells the devil's fires and strengthens the faith of those who reflect on such sacrifices. Augustine emphasized that Vincent's resistance inflicted greater torment on the devil than the persecution Vincent endured. Vincent, known as the "protomartyr," was the first to die for Christ on the Iberian Peninsula.

While little is known about Vincent's life, legends, including Augustine's testimony, shed light on his character. Vincent, a well-spoken deacon, served the speech-impaired Bishop Valerius of Saragossa. Both were arrested by the Roman governor Dacian for refusing to renounce their faith. Vincent faced brutal torture with serenity, fulfilling the words of Scripture.

Despite being scourged, stretched on a rack, burned, and subjected to other torments, Vincent remained at peace, inspiring one jailer to convert. The governor, seeking to break Vincent's resolve, offered comfort, but Vincent rejected it. He died on a soft bed, indifferent to threats or promises. Vincent's body faced disposal, but ravens defended it, or, according to another account, it washed ashore for a dignified burial.

Saint Vincent's final events, according to legend, occurred in southern Spain at Cape Saint Vincent, where ravens and vultures still hover. A prayer honors Saint Vincent for his courage, fidelity to Christ, and glorious martyrdom, seeking his intercession for strength in daily sacrifices of love.

Prayer: *Saint Vincent, in the face of persecution and torture, you remained courageous, even fixated on the love of Christ. You conquered the evil one by your fidelity and were crowned with glorious martyrdom. Please pray for me, that I may also receive that crown through my daily sacrifices of love. Saint Vincent, pray for me. Jesus, I trust in You.*

Deacon Formation Report

This year will be a transition year for both of our deacon formation cohorts. The 15 men in their second year of Candidacy will be installed into the ministry of Acolyte this fall bringing them to the brink of ordination in 2025. Their final scrutiny will take place this spring and summer. During this time they will complete two practica – one in prison/hospital ministry and the other in liturgical ministry.

We have 17 Aspirants who will be entering their second year. This is an important year of discernment as they will be scrutinized for admission to Candidacy in 2025. Their major practicum this year will be working with the poor in homeless shelters and soup kitchens.

Our Candidates and Aspirants hail from parishes from each of the seven Deaneries which make up the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. Please keep them in your prayers.
(need picture from the Advent retreat)



Just a friendly reminder that all deacons must submit an annual report of their continuing education hours to the Deacon Office. This report is typically submitted in January, and the deadline for this year is February 16.

As outlined in the Deacon Manual policy, every permanent deacon is obligated to provide a written report of the continuing education they have undertaken in the previous twelve months. Failure to comply with this requirement may result in the suspension of faculties.

You have the option to use either the online form or the form available in the Deacon Manual's appendix for submitting your report. The form can be accessed in both English and Spanish at this link:

<https://form.jotform.com/kdavis5430/continuing-education-report-form>.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.



Deacon Council

Vicar for Clergy – Fr. Glennon Jones

Chair – Dcn. Mark Marquez

Vice-Chair – Dcn. Ernest Chavez

Secretary – Darlene Chavez

Director Office of Deacons – Dcn. Keith Davis

Widow Coordinator – Kathryn O'Neill

Santa Fe Deanery

Primary Rep – Dcn. Michael Salazar

Alternative – Vacant

Next Meeting – N/A

Deanery A

Primary Rep – Dcn. David Little

Alternative – Dcn. Albert Dohle

Next Meeting – Feb 13, 2024 @St. Josephs

Deanery B

Primary Rep – Dcn. Patrick Sena

Alternative – Dcn. Lou Hernandez

Next Meeting – N/A

Deanery C

Primary Rep – Dcn. Leon Jones

Alternative – Vacant

Next Meeting – N/A

Deanery NE

Primary Rep – Dcn. Ryes Sanchez

Alternative – Dcn. Eloy Roybal

Next Meeting – N/A

Deanery NW

Primary Rep – Dcn. Alex Valdez

Alternative – Dcn. Chris Gilbert

Next Meeting – N/A

Deanery SE

Primary Rep – Vacant

Alternative – Vacant

Next Meeting – N/A

Deanery SW

Primary Rep – Dcn. Nicholas Keller

Alternative – Vacant

Next Meeting – N/A

Deacon Personnel Board

The newly organized Deacon Personnel Board met in November. The board, comprised of both clergy and deacon spouses, is in service to the Archbishop, priests, deacons and wives. The board will serve to develop policies and to address a variety of areas related to diaconal service. These include issues such as assignments, retirement and other issues that arise.

As example of the boards work. Currently, a subcommittee is drafting a policy regarding deacon assignments and reassignments. These policies, and others once established, will help to codify processes and procedures to ensure equitable application when need arises.

The assignment/reassignment policy will address not only the initial assignment of deacons but also the thoughtful reassignment of deacons when necessary.

For example, some parishes have many deacons, while others have a need for a deacon but have none; this creates an imbalance of the deacon population that affects our parishes and those we serve. A result of the June ordination of the large Diaconate class of 2023, we have such an imbalance.

Beyond balancing the diaconate population, issues do arise that require the reassignment of a deacon like family or health issues, or other matters that impact the service of the deacon to the parish.

The drafted policy will aim to address these issues while establishing reasonable evaluation standards to reassignment like time in the current parish as a deacon or traveling distances.

To some, a reassignment or even the possibility of reassignment may be cause for some anxiety. Please pray that our enkindled vocation of service be primarily to the salvation of souls and that our minds and hearts be fully open to needs of the people of God and the opportunity to serve the same. In this, we trust our vocation to the Holy Spirit.

The board will continue to work on this and other policies in the coming months.



Dcn John Chavez
Deacon Personnel Board

Rebuild My Church

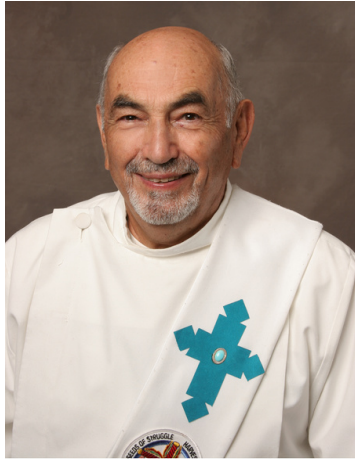


As communicated during the Deacon Convocation last autumn, the Archdiocese is launching a renewal program in response to the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and the bankruptcy situation. Archbishop Wester has formed an Archdiocesan Core Team to lead this initiative, with support from the Leadership Roundtable (<https://leadershiproundtable.org>).

The objective is to develop a working document or plan for implementation by the upcoming fall. Each deanery will customize the plan to address its specific local needs. Deacons will play a vital role in shaping and executing the deanery plan, particularly within the parishes.

Stay tuned for further updates as the process unfolds. Your involvement and contributions will be pivotal to the success of this renewal initiative.

Rest In Peace



Luis Casaus

Deacon Luis Casaus passed at the age of 87 on November 15, 2023.

He was ordained on January 23, 1999 and served in the parishes of Las Vegas, NM and Albuquerque.

Luis Eli Casaus, 87, went to be with his Lord and Savior on November 15, 2023. Luis was a cherished husband, father, grandpa, great grandpa, uncle,

mentor, spiritual leader and dear friend to many. He is survived by his loving wife of 63 years, Emily; children Louie (Anna), Loretta (Karl) and Anna (Dave); grandchildren, Analicia (Aaron), Andres, Ariela, David, Dillon, Isaiah (Onnica), Carina and Catalina; great grandchildren, Kane, Sophia and Eli. He is also survived by siblings, Leonard Casaus Sr., Edward & Marcella Gygox, Michael & Margaret Lucero, Mary Louise Gygox, David & Mela Gygox, as well as many other family members.

Luis is preceded in death by his parents, Clotario and Genoeva Casaus and in-laws Edward and Marcella Gygox, and other family members.

Luis was born on May 30, 1936 in Cuba, NM and shared many stories about growing up at the ranch. He attended college at St. Michael's, NM Highlands University, University of NM and Texas Tech University, earning a Doctorate in Education. Luis was a respected educator. He started his teaching career at Arizona State University and retired as a Professor Emeritus of Education/Counseling from NM Highlands University.

After retiring, Luis was ordained a Deacon with the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, serving parishes in Las Vegas, NM and Albuquerque.

Luis was a faithful and devout Catholic, attending Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church. A creative artisan, he enjoyed wood carving. Other hobbies included gardening, swimming and spending time with family and friends. Luis appreciated special friendships with many groups, including Alzheimer Support, carving class and church/Deacon affiliations.



Pray for the Dead

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.
~Amen~

January

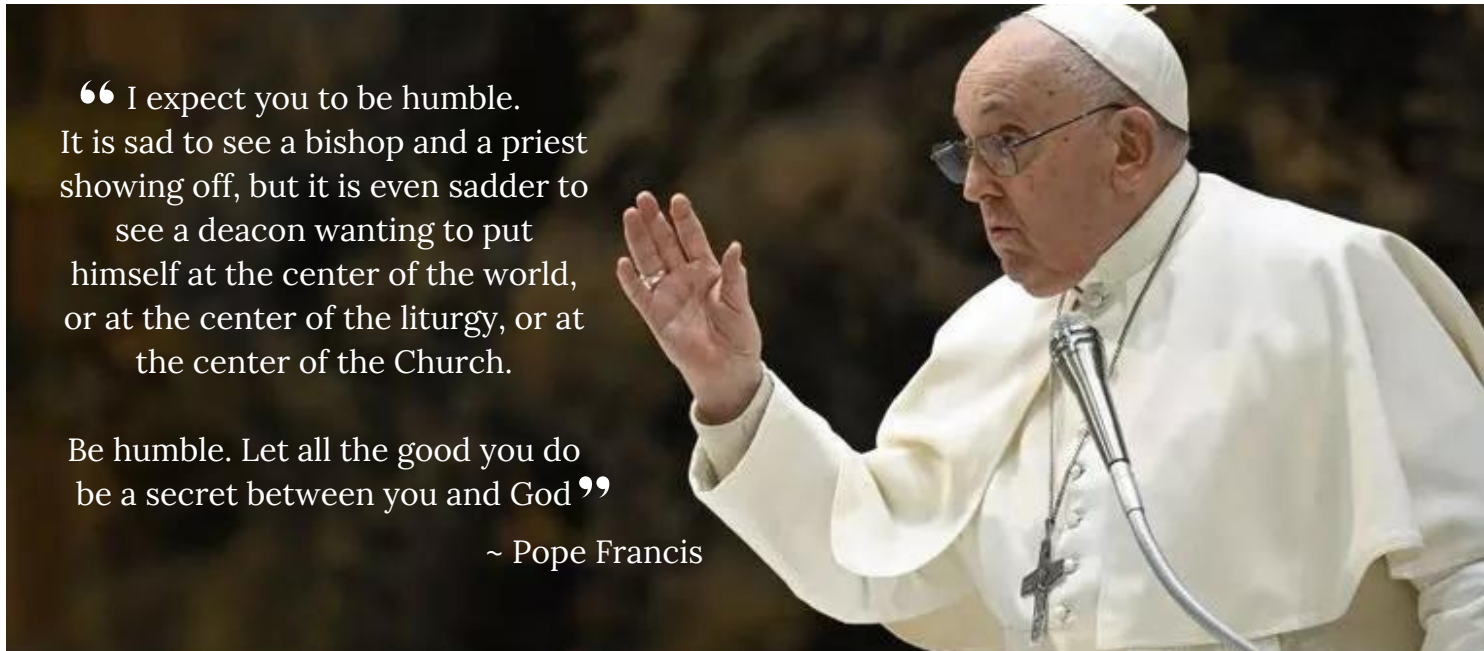
3 - Deacon Desiderio Luna
4 - Deacon Gilbert Valverde
5 - Deacon Diego Herrera
11 - Deacon Robert A. Paiz
20 - Deacon Alexander Elsberg
30 - Deacon Esequiel Torres
30 - Deacon Benjamin Lopez

February

1 - Deacon Frank Lovato
7 - Deacon Donald Bruckner
9 - Deacon Alberto Sandoval
10 - Deacon Salvador Nuñez
13 - Deacon John H. Tourville
14 - Deacon Oswaldo Montoya
25 - Deacon Robert Contreras
26 - Deacon John Patrick Kneafsey
26 - Deacon Patrick Delozier
28 - Deacon Alfred Gilbert

March

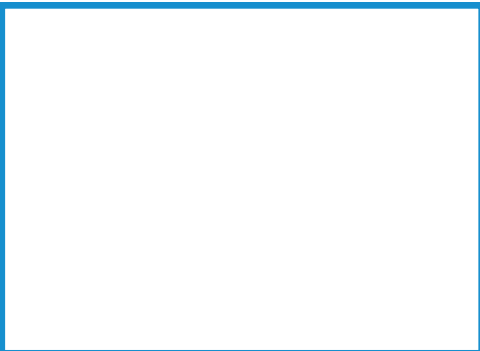
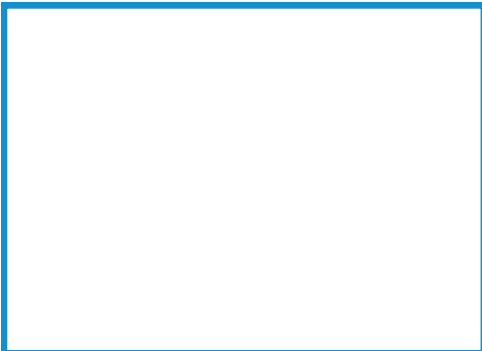
1 - Deacon Joe Black
18 - Deacon Robert Villarreal
22 - Deacon Alfred McLane
29 - Deacon Raymond J. Bouffard
31 - Deacon Renee Greivel



“ I expect you to be humble.
It is sad to see a bishop and a priest
showing off, but it is even sadder to
see a deacon wanting to put
himself at the center of the world,
or at the center of the liturgy, or at
the center of the Church.

Be humble. Let all the good you do
be a secret between you and God ”

~ Pope Francis



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