

THE DEACON MANUAL

CHAPTER II.

THE COMMUNITY OF PERMANENT DEACONS, THE DEANERY DEACON GROUPS, AND THE DIACONAL COUNCIL

A. THE COMMUNITY OF PERMANENT DEACONS

1. Overall Mission Statement.

This Manual recognizes, in an official publication of the Archdiocese, the *de facto* existence of the Community of Permanent Deacons of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, made up of all of the ordained permanent deacons either incardinated into the Archdiocese or granted faculties by the Archbishop of Santa Fe, regardless of their canonical assignments, together with the wives of such deacons and the widows of deceased deacons who served the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.

The *de jure* right to organize as a Community of Permanent Deacons is explicitly guaranteed by Canon 278, §1 of the revised Code of Canon Law of 1983.

Unless otherwise specifically stated all subsequent references in this Manual to “the Community” must be understood to include the wives and widows of deacons in addition to the deacons themselves.

This Community is committed to all the ministries for which permanent deacons are called, formed, and ordained. These ministries are broadly characterized as the ministry of love and justice, the ministry of the Word of God, and the ministry of the liturgy.

2. General Goals of the Deacon Community.

In support of the overall mission described above, we, the Community, set ourselves the following general goals:

- Provide a framework (the Community) within which we can nurture, sustain, and enhance our God-given talents and charisms for these ministries;
- Through the Deanery’s Diaconal Council representatives, identify, and then apply, the most effective means of communicating to the Diaconal Council the needs of all members of the Community, especially as they pertain to

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the continuing education, spiritual growth, and enhanced relationships of individual deacons, and the development of the Community itself; and

- Provide opportunities for each Deacon Deanery Community to gather for fellowship and the sharing of ministry.

B. THE DEANERY DEACON GROUPS

Within the Community there are organized several smaller groups of deacons and their wives and widows. These groups are territorial, corresponding generally to the boundaries of the deaneries (vicariates forane) established within the Archdiocese. As need dictates, groups with declining membership may merge with adjacent groups, and groups that have grown unwieldy may divide. A deacon's deanery affiliation is normally determined by the location of the parish or institution to which he is canonically assigned, not by the location of his family residence (domicile) or by his personal preference.

Each deanery group is expected to meet every month to conduct the routine business of the Community and for spiritual growth, fellowship, continuing education, and recreation.

One deacon and one deacon wife from each deanery group are to be elected to represent that group on the Council (see §II.C.2, following).¹

C. THE DIACONAL COUNCIL

1. Purpose.

The Diaconal Council (hereafter, the Council) is established to serve as an advisory body to the Archbishop on matters concerning diaconal ministry and life in the Archdiocese. It constitutes the forum by which input from deacons and their families is communicated, discussed, and acted upon by the Community at large. The council shall represent the Community in its dealings with the Archbishop, the Director of Deacons (hereafter, the Director), and other Archdiocesan staff agencies.

2. Organization and Membership.

The Archbishop is *ex officio* the president of the Council. Ordinarily, the Archbishop delegates the presidency of the Council to a deacon member of the Council, elected from its number. In matters of great importance to the entire Community, the Archbishop may choose to preside in person (**or have the Director act in that capacity**) over the proceedings of the Council.

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One deacon and one deacon's wife elected from each of the deanery groups of deacons of the Archdiocese shall provide representation of the Council. The deacon and the deacon wife representing a deanery group need not be married to one another.

Although the Director is not a voting member of the Council, he must attend all the meetings of the Council. In accordance with the letter from the Archbishop to the Diaconal Council members, dated October 22, 2002, he stated: "If he (the Director) is unable to attend, then the meeting should be postponed and rescheduled."

3. Mission Statement.

The Council will meet four times per year to act as the forum by which input from the Archbishop, the Director and the Community is discussed, acted upon and reported in the proper format:

- Meet four times
- Support the development of the Community in matters relating to on-going Spiritual Direction and Continuing Education.
- Assist the Archbishop and the Director in the recruiting and on-going support of the Candidate formation.

Goals of the Diaconal Council

Goal Number 1: The Council representatives will forward to the Chair issues and concerns that need to be addressed at the scheduled or special meetings.

Implementation Strategy of Goal Number 1: The Chair will prepare the invitation and agenda, which will be mailed to the Archbishop, the Director and the Council members at least one month prior to the scheduled meeting. The Secretary will take the minutes, send a draft to the Director for review and approval for publication. The Council may also direct the Chair to write any follow-up correspondence. The Chair will prepare the annual report, send draft to the Officers and the Director for review and finalize the draft to be included in the packet prepared for the Annual Retreat.

Goal Number 2: The Council will initiate and organize spiritual formation retreats and continuing education seminars and workshops for the Community throughout the liturgical year.

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Implementation Strategy of Goal Number 2: The Council will schedule and identify a host deanery as well as organize and publicize the time, date and location of the Annual Deacon's In-Service Day to 100% of the Community.

The Council will identify the deanery that will organize and host the Annual Deacon Retreat, schedule the date with the retreat location, e.g., the Glorieta Retreat Center, assist the host deanery in selecting the Retreat Master, and assist with all logistical matters the host deanery may request of the Council members. It must be noted that the purpose of the Annual Deacon Retreat is to be a purely spiritual time for the deacons and wives to come together as a community to be renewed and refreshed in the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Council will furnish guidelines to each deanery group to be used when the deanery group is responsible for the development and organization of the Annual Deacon Retreat.

The Council will solicit ideas for additional spiritual formation and/or continuing education activities from individual Community members.

Goal Number 3: The Council will support all the activities relative to the formation of Deacon Candidates.

Implementation Strategy of Goal Number 3: The Council will assist the Archbishop, the Director, the Director of Formation and the Formation Team in the recruitment and initial assessment, and will be available to offer general support to the Candidates during the entire formation process.

Notes for Chapter II

1. The symbols § and ¶ denote "section" and "paragraph," respectively.