

## CHAPTER VI.

### PASTORAL AND PROFESSIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

#### A. GENERAL.

**D***iakonia* makes tangible, visible, and audible the concept of **service**. *Diakonia* is not only the response of an individual to a call to a particular ministry, but a constitutive, essential element of the Church of Christ. In the same way that a bishop or a priest is not defined solely by his sacred functions, neither should the deacon be defined merely by what he does. Rather, like the other two orders in the hierarchical, ordained ministry, he must be regarded in the context of what he is: the consistent and effective embodiment of Christ's commandment to love the least of our brothers and sisters.

Pastorally, the deacon is not necessarily a pastoral associate (unless he is canonically assigned as such),<sup>1</sup> nor does he because of his ordination possess exceptional authority in the governance of his ecclesiastical community.<sup>2</sup> The deacon's pastoral relationship and responsibility are to help the Church see through his eyes, to hear through his ears, and to perceive through his own life experiences, not only the needs but also the resources and opportunities present in the People of God. From his unique perspective within the Christian community, the deacon must then respond to the needs of his sisters and brothers. The permanent deacon is envisioned as a "driving force [animator] for the church's service or *diakonia* toward the local Christian communities."<sup>3</sup> Sometimes employed in administrative or institutional responsibilities of the Church, sometime committed to his secular employment, the deacon has a great potential for service to the Church by his response to his vocation to be public witness before all believers.

#### B. THE DEACON AND HIS BISHOP

The integration of the permanent deacon's role is best understood in the context of the interrelated settings in which he is called to minister.<sup>4</sup> The deacons of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe are accountable to the Archbishop for their stewardship. Permanent deacons, localized because of their canonical assignments whatever their particular ministries, are extensions of the Archbishop's pastoral solicitude for the health and growth of the entire flock. This view of the deacon's role demands a close relationship between the Archbishop and the deacons ordained for his service and are bound by obedience to him. That relationship must foster open, regular, frequent communication and dialogue about the respective needs and goals of the Archdiocese on the one hand, and those of the Community on the other hand. The Director will normally conduct the day-to-day business of the Community with the Archbishop, while the Archbishop himself is an *ex-officio* member of the Community.

## THE DEACON MANUAL

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### C. THE DEACON AND THE PRESBYTERATE

Although the deacons of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe are assigned by the Archbishop and remain ultimately accountable to him, their immediate supervision is most often accomplished through a pastor or another priest in order to carry out the Archdiocesan mission. In the parochial setting, both priests and deacons are assigned by the Archbishop to work in fraternal association and collaboration in the exercise of their respective responsibilities under the coordinating authority of the pastor. They also work in collaboration with all members of the pastoral team. It is highly recommended that the pastor meet with the deacons and their wives on a regular basis.

Adequate and appropriate means of communication are indispensable for a fruitful relationship between priest and deacon.<sup>5</sup> Mutual respect, fraternal unity, freedom, and honesty are of paramount importance. It would be wrong to foster a sense of identity between priests and deacons; what should be nurtured is the recognition of the real interdependence between the two hierarchical orders in accomplishing Christ's mission through his Church. This relationship must not exclude the many other ministers (professed religious women and men, the laity, the pastoral council, the parish staff, parish organizations, etc.) who together with the ordained ministers, constitute the Body of Christ.

### D. THE DEACON AND HIS BROTHER DEACONS

Each deacon of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe must maintain a loving, fraternal relationship with every other deacon. Together, they must exemplify in their mutual support and encouragement their common call to service. Whether active in ministry on a full-time basis or part-time, whether assigned at diocesan or at parish level, whether urban or rural, whether newly ordained or with many years of incardinated service to the Archdiocese – all are deacons, servants of the faithful flock of Santa Fe.

The scheduled monthly deanery meetings and annual Archdiocesan In-Service Training Day, weekend retreat and other gatherings are important means of strengthening relationships within the Community. To sustain and enhance these relationships, all deacons and their wives are expected to meet at least monthly in their deanery communities. See also §V.A.2, preceding.

### E. THE DEACON AND THE LAITY

The deacons of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe must always remember that the same Second Vatican Council that restored the permanent diaconate also gave great impetus to the empowerment of the laity in the affairs of the Church. One major accomplishment of Vatican II must not impede another. Deacons should consider it an important part of their ministries to facilitate the active participation of the lay faithful in

## THE DEACON MANUAL

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all aspects of Church life. This collaborative ministry is the right of the laity by virtue of their baptism, confirmation, and individual charisms. The deacon holds a position from which he can most appropriately serve as liaison, promoter, and integrator of all the varied activities within the church.

### F. THE DEACON AND HIS PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Since we know neither the time nor the day that we will be called from this life, it is suggested that each deacon prepare for that eventuality by completing the necessary documentation relative to planning for his funeral. This pre-planning effort will greatly reduce the stress that family members experience when the death of a loved one occurs. The form that is to be used is found in Appendix C. It is essential that the information entered onto this form be kept current. A copy of the form should be placed in a file by the deacon's family and a copy provided to his pastor to be kept in the parish's office file.

All deacons are required by canon law to make spiritual retreats according to particular law.<sup>6</sup> In the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, particular law binds permanent deacons to an annual weekend retreat. In addition, all deacons are required to attend the annual In-Service Training Day. Further, all deacons are expected to participate actively in the business of their respective deaneries, not least by regular attendance at scheduled meetings of all deanery clergy **in addition to** attendance at monthly meetings of deanery deacons and wives.

Like every other person doing the work of the Archdiocese, deacons and men in formation are governed by the *Policy of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe Relating to Sexual Misconduct which is Unlawful or which Causes Injury to Another*. Beyond proscribing any such conduct by employees of the Archdiocese, this directive requires that each deacon candidate and ordained deacon “attend a Sexual Abuse [Prevention] Workshop sponsored by the archdiocese during the first year of training or their first year of service to the Archbishop.”<sup>7</sup> A record of this attendance and participation is kept in each deacon's general personnel file (see §XII.D.1., following). A copy of the attendance certificate should be sent to the parish by the deacon/candidate.

In the same category as more widely recognized forms of sexual misconduct is sexual harassment. This behavior is likewise unacceptable and, if substantiated, will result in disciplinary actions, up to and including the termination of a deacon's canonical assignment and the consequent withdrawal of his faculties. The operative definition of sexual harassment is as follows:

“Unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment (Quid pro quo); (2) submission to or

## THE DEACON MANUAL

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rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment (hostile work environment).”<sup>8</sup>

### Notes for Chapter VI.

1. Distinction must be made between an “associate pastor” (more properly called “parochial vicar”), who by definition is always a priest, and a “pastoral associate” who may be a deacon, a professed religious woman or a man, or a layperson.
2. Canon 517, §2 states that if the pastoral care of a parish is entrusted to other than a priest, the deacon is given preference for this position if one is available.
3. *Ad Paschendum, the Introduction*, Apostolic Letter containing Norms for the Order of diaconate, Paul VI, 15 August 1972.
4. *Service Ministry of the Deacon*, Rev. Timothy J. Shugrue, Bishops' Committee on the Permanent Diaconate (Washington D.C.: National Council of Catholic Bishops, 1988), p. 44.
5. *Service Ministry of the Deacon*, Rev. Timothy J. Shugrue, Bishops' committee on the Permanent Diaconate (Washington D.C.: National Council of Catholic Bishops, 1988), p. 50.
6. Canon 276, §2, 4°.
7. *Policy of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe Relating to Sexual Misconduct which is Unlawful or which Causes Injury to Another*, effective 7 - 1-90, amended 9-1-92
8. *Archdiocese of Santa Fe Catholic Center Employee Handbook*, p. II-17.