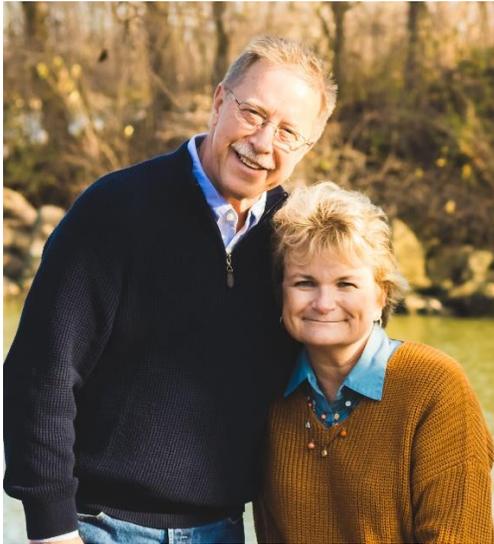


DEACONS: Ministers of Service

Charlie Salway to be Ordained Permanent Deacon



Born and raised in Rockford, OH., IC Parishioner Charlie Salway began the long journey of preparation for the order of permanent deacon in the Spring of 2013, attending an information gathering on what it means to serve the church as a deacon. He began the Lay Pastoral Ministry Program (LPMP) in the Fall of 2013, attending classes most Saturdays. In 2016, Charlie was accepted into the Diaconate Formation at the Atheneum of Ohio in Cincinnati and attended classes every other weekend for the next three years. Charlie is now preparing for ordination to the diaconate on Saturday, April 27, 2019 at St. Peter in the Chains Cathedral, Cincinnati. While Charlie will begin service as a deacon the next day at IC, it will be another year until Charlie

completes courses and receives the faculty for preaching. Charlie will serve as deacon for both IC and St. Teresa parishes. Charlie and his wife Judy welcome our prayers as he begins ministry and service in the Church as a permanent deacon.

A Brief History of the Diaconate

Throughout the first centuries of the Church, the deacon served as "the ears, mouth, heart, and soul of the bishop." (Didascalia Apostolorum). Baptizing, taking communion to the sick, and caring for the poor, the deacon's ministry was truly one of service. The Council of Nicaea (325) subordinated deacons to presbyters (who represented the bishop in local communities and presided at the Eucharist), thus signaling the beginning of the end of the ministry of permanent deacons in the early Church. As the number of men who wanted to remain deacons all their lives decreased, the diaconate evolved into a brief, final "step" in preparation for the priesthood. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) did propose the restoration of the permanent diaconate, but it was not until 1964 that the bishops at Vatican II approved its restoration. In 1967, Paul VI issued guidelines for the permanent diaconate and gave permission for national bishops' conferences to restore the diaconate. The United States' bishops did so in 1971 when they published guidelines for the ministry and formation of permanent deacons. In our archdiocese, the first class of permanent deacons were ordained in 1976.

Who are Deacons?

Who are deacons and what do they do? The Second Vatican Council tells us that strengthened by sacramental grace, deacons are dedicated to the People of God in the service of the liturgy, of the Gospel, and of works of charity. (Vatican II, Lumen Gentium #29) Men who are ordained deacons receive the first of three degrees of the sacrament of Holy Orders, the other degrees being that of priest and bishop. At the ordination of deacons, the bishop lays hands on the candidate signifying the deacon's special attachment to the bishop in the deacon's ministry of service. Thus, deacons share in Christ's mission and grace in a special way. Through their ordination, they are configured to Christ who came "as one who serves." (Luke 22:27) "Deacons are ministers ordained for tasks of

service of the Church; they do not receive the ministerial priesthood, but ordination confers on them important functions in the ministry of the word, divine worship, pastoral governance, and the service of charity, tasks which they must carry out under the pastoral authority of their bishop." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1596)

What Can Deacons Do?

"It is the task of deacons to assist the bishop and priests in the celebration of the divine mysteries, above all the Eucharist, in the distribution of Holy Communion. in assisting and blessing marriages, in presiding over funerals, and in dedicating themselves to the various ministries of charity." (Vatican II, Lumen Gentium #29)

As ministers of Sacrament, the deacon's liturgical ministry includes: assisting the bishop and priest at Mass, exposition, and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, deacons also baptize infants and lead the faithful in prayer. As ministers of Word, deacons proclaim the Gospel, preach, and teach in the name of the Church, Deacons cannot hear confessions or anoint the sick but are often involved in visitations and communion to the sick, as well as giving Viaticum (the final reception of communion before death.) Deacons can also lead all the Rites of Christian Burial apart from Mass, e.g. prayers at a visitation/wakes, memorial services, and cemetery burials.

A deacon is given the unique liturgical role of thrice singing "Christ our Light" as he carries the Easter candle into the darkened church at the Easter Vigil; the deacon then sings the great Easter Proclamation (Exsultet). Normally deacons sing the ancient petitions of the Good Friday liturgy. Liturgical rubrics also indicate a preference for deacons to sing the Roman Martyrology (at Christmas Midnight Mass) and the Epiphany proclamation.

Having promised to pray the Divine Office daily, it is most appropriate that a deacon preside at communal celebrations of the Liturgy of the Hours, especially Morning Prayer (lauds) and Evening Prayer (Vespers), when a priest is not available to preside.

As ministers of Charity, deacons are leaders in identifying the needs of others, then marshaling the Church's resources to meet those needs. Deacons are also dedicated to eliminating the injustices or inequities that cause such needs. But no matter what specific functions a deacon performs, they flow from his sacramental identity. In other words, it is not only WHAT a deacon does, but WHO a deacon is, that is important.

1. assist the bishop and priest at Mass, exposition, and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, deacons also lead the faithful in prayer
2. presiding at baptisms and weddings outside of Mass and at the Liturgy of the Hours
3. blessing objects and persons usually within liturgical celebrations (4) proclaiming and preaching the Word of God
4. providing pastoral care of the aged, sick, and dying

Deacons also play an important catechetical role, often being involved in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) and in preparing parents for infant baptism. His liturgical ministry of proclaiming and preaching the Word of God is often extended beyond liturgy to parish meetings and religious education sessions.

