

**Critical assessment of the
Profile and Ministry of the Catholic Diaconate
in the Archdiocese of Cape Town**

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree
of Magister Theologiae in the Department of Religion and Theology,
University of the Western Cape

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November 2009

KEY WORDS

Catholic Diaconate

Archdiocese of Cape Town

Second Vatican Council

Canon Law

Curial Documents

Policy document

Statues

Evolution of the Diaconate

Diaconate training

Deacons Jubilee celebration



ABSTRACT

The service of deacons in the Church is documented from Apostolic times. A tradition attested already by St. Irenaeus and influenced in the liturgy of ordination, sees the origin of the diaconate in the institution of the “seven” mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (6:1-6). St Paul refers to the deacons and to bishops in his letter to the Philippians. (1:1), while in his first letter to Timothy (3:8-13) he lists the qualities and virtues which they should possess so as to exercise their ministry worthily.

While the permanent diaconate was maintained from earliest Apostolic times to the present in the Eastern rite churches (Orthodox and Catholic), it gradually disappeared in the western church during the first millennium. The diaconate continued as a vestigial form as a temporary, final step along the course to ordination to the priesthood in the western church. In the 20th Century, the Permanent Diaconate was restored in the western church.

Following the recommendations of the Second Vatican Council (in *Lumen Gentium* 29), in 1967 Pope Paul VI issued the motu proprio *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*, restoring the ancient practice of ordaining to the diaconate men who were not candidates for priestly ordination.

The permanent deacons are assigned to work in a parish and to assist priests in their pastoral and administrative duties, but report directly to the bishop who appoints them. Unlike most clerics, permanent deacons are married or single men who also have a secular profession.

In the Archdiocese of Cape Town, the first deacons to be ordained to the order of Permanent deacons took place in 1980. In the early days, the archdiocese had a clear policy for diaconate training and formation. Priests requested men to study towards becoming deacons. Over the past 30 years the bishops have ordained close to 100 deacons to minister in 75 parishes throughout the Archdiocese.

Today there is a need to try to understand why deacons lack the zeal and passion that was so prevalent at their ordinations. Is it due to their training or has a need arisen for a deeper theological understanding of the diaconate. Priests do not fully understand

the ministry of the deacons which on occasions gives rise to conflict within the parish. Currently more and more communities are calling on the parish deacon before approaching their parish priest for advice. It is in these theoretical grounds that a critical assessment of the Profile and Ministry of the Catholic Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Cape Town was undertaken. This is pioneer research in the Archdiocese.



DECLARATION

I hereby declare that:

*Critical assessment of the
Profile and Ministry of the Catholic Diaconate
in the Archdiocese of Cape Town*

is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or assessment in any other university, and that all the sources I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature: Date:

Eugene Gilbert Tito



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I dedicate this thesis to the memory of my father, Harold Tito (February 1, 1927 – August 5, 1993) and my mother, Harriet Susan Tito nee Chippendale (July 31, 1930 – November 11, 2005). I thank them for the gift of life and for nurturing my faith.

Thanks to God, our heavenly Father for calling me to be a deacon, a Servant of Christ and for the Capuchin Fathers for their nurturing and moulding my life.

Thanks to my wife, Lynette and daughters, Maria and Lucinda for their support, motivation and patience that enabled me to complete this thesis.

Thanks to His Grace, Archbishop Lawrence Henry - Archbishop of Cape Town for his inspiration, continual motivation and the opportunities that he affords me to grow within the diaconate and the church. Special thanks too for allowing me to access the archive material with regards to the diaconate.

Thanks to the Deacons of the Archdiocese of Cape Town for their openness, transparency, willingness and tremendous response to the questionnaire.

Special thanks to Deacons Weston Barwise and Michael Ramages for your editing.

Thanks to the lecturers in the Religion and Theology faculty at UWC who lectured and moulded me through my BA(Hons) and helped me towards the completion of my Magister Theologiae. With special thanks to my supervisors, initially Dr Kobus Anthonissen and in the later stages Prof. Christo Lombard, for the diligent and thorough way in which they have guided me.

I am also deeply grateful for the support, encouragement, love and care from all those who are always keeping me in prayer. Thank you.

Bellville
November 2009

Eugene Gilbert Tito

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Introduction

The service of permanent deacons in the Church is documented from apostolic times. A tradition attested to already by St. Ireneus and influenced in the liturgy of ordination, sees the origin of the diaconate in the institution of the “seven” mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (6:1-6). St Paul refers to the deacons and to the bishops in his letter to the Philippians. (1:1), while in his first letter to Timothy (3:8-13) he list the qualities and virtues which they should possess so as to exercise their ministry worthily.

While the permanent diaconate was maintained from earliest Apostolic times to the present in the Eastern rite churches (Orthodox and Catholic), it gradually disappeared in the Western church during the first millennium. The diaconate continued as a vestigial form as a temporary, final step along the course to ordination to the priesthood in the Western church. In the 20th Century, the permanent diaconate was restored in the Western church.

Following the recommendations of the Second Vatican Council (in Lumen Gentium 29), in 1967 Pope Paul VI issued the motu proprio *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*, restoring the ancient practice of ordaining to the diaconate men who were not candidates for priestly ordination, but for ministry (Walsh 1979:217).

The permanent deacons are assigned to work in a parish and to assist priests in their pastoral and administrative duties, but report directly to the bishop who appoints them. Unlike most clerics, permanent deacons are married or single men who also have a secular profession.

In the Archdiocese of Cape Town, the first deacons to be ordained to the order of Permanent deacons took place in 1980. In the early days, the archdiocese had a clear policy for diaconate training and formation. Priests requested men to study towards becoming deacons. Over the past 30 years the bishops have ordained close to 100 deacons to minister in 75 parishes throughout the Archdiocese.

Today there is a need to try to understand why deacons lack the zeal and passion that was so prevalent at their ordinations. Is it due to their training or has a need risen for a deeper theological understanding of the diaconate. Some priests do not fully understand the ministry of the deacons which, on occasions, gives rise to conflict within the parish. Currently more and more communities are calling on the parish deacon before approaching their parish priest for advice. It is in these theoretical grounds that a critical assessment of the Profile and Ministry of the Catholic Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Cape Town needs to be undertaken. This would be a pioneer research in the Archdiocese.

Methodology and Research procedure

In order to investigate the research problem stated above, the following logical steps will be followed.

The first step will be to offer a brief synopsis of the restoration of the permanent diaconate in the Catholic Church; how the idea of restoring the diaconate was developed within the church; how the popes implemented the restoration. To address this I will make use of literature relating too and shall discuss the Second Vatican Council documents, especially *Lumen Gentium*, the Apostolic letters and the Code of Canon Law.

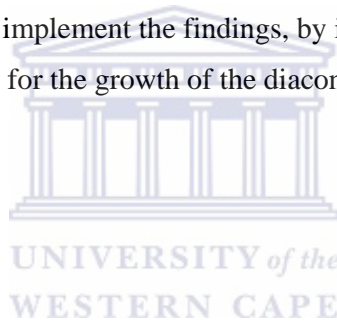
In the second step, Chapter 2, I will focus on the Magisterial teaching about the Permanent Diaconate - post Second Vatican Council. I shall analyse the key Curial documents of 1998 issued by the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy. I shall not seek to offer a detail analysis of their joint declarations and introductions, but will rather study the ideas behind these statements and how they impact the deacons. I will offer a detail critical analysis of the Basic norms for the formation of Permanent Deacons and the directory for the ministry and life of Permanent Deacons as issued by the respective congregations.

In the third step, Chapter 3, I will focus on the diaconate in today's context in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town. Here I will make use of literature covering the

Statutes of the Council of Deacons, the policy document regarding deacons', Faculty to exercise diaconal ministry and the profile of the permanent deacons.

In the Fourth step, Chapter 4, I will focus on the results of the diaconate questionnaire. To gain a better perspective of the ministry of the deacon; an optional research questionnaire will be undertaken with every deacon in the Archdioceses of Cape Town. The questionnaire will cover the diaconate's functionality; chaplaincy; ministry; compensation and general diaconate matters. A letter containing an ethical statement will be sent to every deacon with the questionnaire. I will gather the information, analyse it and write a report. The target audiences are the current 65 active deacons in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town.

In the Final step, Chapter 5, I shall offer a constructive proposal and make recommendations on how to implement the findings, by identifying the shortcomings in order to address the issues for the growth of the diaconate in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town.



Chapter 1

The restoration of the Permanent Diaconate in the Catholic Church

1 Permanent diaconate

1.1 Definition of the Permanent Diaconate

The origin of the diaconate is the consecration and mission of Christ, in which the deacon is called to share¹. Through the imposition of hands and the prayer of consecration, the deacon is constituted a sacred minister and a member of the hierarchy (Walsh 1979:214). This condition determines his theological and juridical status within the Catholic Church.²

Chapman (1999:352) describes the nature of Orders and what constitutes diaconal service in the following terms:

“Deacons share in Christ’s mission and grace in a special way. The sacrament of Holy Orders marks them with an imprint (character) which cannot be removed and which configures them to Christ, who made himself the ‘deacon’ or servant of all.”

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1.2 Diaconate service

Deacons’ are ordained to the ministry of Christ the servant.

The Congregation for divine worship and the discipline of the sacrament gives the following instruction in its *Redemptionis Sacramentum* (Sacrament of Redemption) referring to deacons;

“Deacons, upon whom hands are imposed not for the priesthood but for the ministry, as men of good repute, must act in such a manner that with the help of God they may be recognized as true disciples of him, who came not to be served but to serve, and who was among his disciples as one who serves. Strengthened by the gift of the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands, they are in service to the people of God, in communion with the Bishop and his presbyterate. They should consider the bishop as a father, and give

¹ Dogmatic Constitution on the Church Vatican II, Lumen Gentium, 1964:387

² Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons. Congregation for the clergy. 1998:75

assistance to him and to the priest in the ministry of the word, of the altar, and of charity. Let them never fail, as the apostle Paul says, to hold the mystery of faith with a clear conscience, and to proclaim this faith by word and deed according to the Gospel and the tradition of the church, in wholehearted, faithful and humble service to the sacred liturgy as the source and summit of ecclesial life, so that all made children of God through faith and baptism may come together as one, praising God in the midst of the church, to participate in the sacrifice and to eat the Lord's Supper."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church refers to the deacon as one who configures Christ as a servant of all. It goes on to say that it is the task of deacons to assist the bishop and priest in the celebration of the divine mysteries, above all the Eucharist, in the distribution of Holy Communion, in assisting and blessing of marriages, in the proclamation of the Gospel and preaching, in presiding over funerals and in dedicating themselves to the various mysteries of charity (Chapman 1999:353).

2 Historical Diaconate

2.1 Scripture and Tradition

It is clear that in the early years of Christianity, the diaconate established itself as a well-defined office and is documented from apostolic times. An Ecclesiastical tradition, attested to by St. Ireneus³, influenced in the liturgy of ordination, sees the origin of the diaconate in the institution of the "seven" mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles (6:1-6).

"About this time, when the number of the disciples was increasing, the Hellenists made a complaint against the Hebrews: in the daily distribution their own widows were being overlooked. So the twelve called a full meeting of the disciples and addressed them, 'It would not be right for us to neglect the word of God so as to give out food; you brothers, must select from amongst yourselves seven men of good reputation, filled with the spirit and with wisdom, to whom we can hand over this duty. We ourselves will continue to devote ourselves to prayer and to the service of the word.' The whole assembly

³ St Ireneus died in 202 AD

approved of this proposal and elected Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus of Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these to the apostles, and after prayer they laid their hands on them.” (Acts 6:1-6)

Hayes (1975:383) states that tension developed between the Hellenists and the Hebrews over the distribution of the food, and the Hellenists claimed that partiality was shown to the Hebrews. Hayes states that the group of seven was apparently selected from the Hellenist community although the Acts account is not explicit. The seven were consecrated to their task by prayer and the laying on of hands.

Holmes (1987:12) records that due to the vigorous and effective preaching of the apostle Peter, the numbers increased. This led to the necessity of appointing others to free the twelve from domestic duties to continue the ministry of evangelization. Holmes concurs with Hayes, but is more explicit, that the first helpers were the seven deacons, all of whom had Greek names.

Therefore; at the initial grade of the sacred hierarchy are deacons, whose ministry has always been greatly esteemed in the Church (Walsh 1979:208).⁴

By the time the pastoral letters of St Paul were written, a fairly structured system of church officials had developed. His letters refer to the office of bishop and to deacons and stipulating the qualifications of each. (Hayes 1975:465)

When St Paul, in his letters makes reference to their presiding elders and the deacons, he refers to elders and deacons as an order in the Church.

“Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, to all God’s holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with their presiding elders and the deacons.” (Phl:1)

While in his first letter to Timothy he lists the qualities and virtues which they should possess so as to exercise their ministry worthily (1 Tim 3:8-13).

⁴ Second Vatican council, Lumen Gentium 29; Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Letter Ad pascendum (August 15, 1972)

“Similarly, deacons must be respectable, not double-tongued, and moderate in the amount of wine they drink and with no squalid greed for money. They must hold to the mystery of faith with a clear conscience. They are first to be examined, and admitted to serve as deacons only if there is nothing against them. Similarly, women must be respected, not gossips, but sober and holy reliable. Deacons must be husbands of one wife and must be people who manage their children and households well. Those of them who carry out their duties well as deacons will earn a high standing for themselves and an authoritative voice in matters concerning faith in Christ Jesus.”(1 Tim 3:8-13)

From the beginning, patristic literature witnesses to this hierarchical and ministerial structure in the Church which included the diaconate.

Writing to the Christians at Smyrna, St Ignatius of Antioch⁵ refers to the situation in Antioch where the overseer (bishop) enjoyed authority and was helped in his ministry by the priest and Deacons. He considers a Church without a bishop, priest or deacon unthinkable. (Holmes 1987:18)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church re-echoes the writings of St Ignatius of Antioch:

“Let everyone revere the deacons as Jesus Christ, the bishop as the image of the Father, and the presbyters as the senate of God and the assembly of the apostles. For without them one cannot speak of Church. (Chapman 1999:348)”

St Ignatius points out that the ministry of deacons is nothing other than “the ministry of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before time began and who appeared at the end of time”.⁶ They are not deacons of food and drink but ministers of the Church of God (Walsh 1979:208).

The Didascalia Apostolorum,⁷ the Fathers of subsequent centuries, the various Councils⁸ as well as Ecclesiastical praxis⁹ all confirmed the continuity and development of the above.

⁵ St Ignatius of Antioch died in 108 AD

⁶ Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Letter Ad pascendum (August 15, 1972) Pg 433

⁷

http://ia340943.us.archive.org/1/items/didascaliaaposto00gibsuoft/didascaliaaposto00gibsuoft_djvu.txt;
Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Letter Ad pascendum (August 15, 1972) Pg 433

Up to the fifth century the Diaconate flourished in the Western Church, thereafter it experienced a slow decline, which ended its growth and only remained as a transitional stage for candidates preparing for priestly ordination. It would be interesting to understand why or the cause of the decline. I can only speculate that many of the roles and functions of the deacon were done by Priests. This would result in a lack of ambiguity between the Diaconate and that of the Priesthood. Another view to consider is that the diaconate ministry must have been carried out by the laity and therefore the need for deacons declined. Council of Trent¹⁰ intended to restore the Diaconate and decrees that the ministries are only to be exercised by those holding appropriate orders (Tanner1990:750). Pope Pius XII¹¹ ended all issues about the “lay diaconate” by clarifying that the deacons belong to the clerical state. Canon 266 §1 of the revised Code of Canon Law (1983) states by the reception of the Diaconate a person becomes a cleric.

2.2 Ecumenical Councils of the church

A general or an Ecumenical Council is an assembly of the bishops of the Church gathered together to consider and make decisions on ecclesiastical matters. For example; matters relating to doctrine, discipline, liturgy and the life of the Church, Decisions of an Ecumenical Council are binding, on the people of God, (canonical) only when a pope has subsequently ratified them. The Holy Father¹², as the successor of St. Peter, can call and approve an Ecumenical Council in accordance with Canon Law. It goes therefore without saying that no assembly of bishops can be a general council unless it is convoked by, or its convocation is approved by the Holy Father. To date there have been twenty-one general councils.

The first general council was held in Nicaea in the year 325 and the most recent was held at the Vatican in 1962 – 1965. (Bellitto 2002:4f) The diaconate was only discussed at the Council of Trent and then again at the Second Vatican Council which gave rise to the restoration of the permanent diaconate.

8 Council of Nicea 325 AD; Council of Trent 1554AD; Vatican II 1962AD

9 In the first period of Christianity, every local church needed a number of deacons proportionate to her numbers so that they might be known and helped. (cf Didascalia Apostolorum, III,12)

¹⁰ Council of Trent: 1545 - 1563

¹¹ Pope Pius XII papacy 1939-1958.

¹² Roman Pontiff

2.3 Council of Trent. (1545 – 1563)

The nineteenth ecumenical council opened in Trent on December 13, 1545 and an attempt was made to restore the diaconate, as it existed in ancient times, in accord with its proper nature, to the original function in the Church (Tanner 1990:742).

Canon 17 of the Council of Trent refers to what manner the exercise of minor orders is to be restored.

“The functions of holy orders from deacon to doorkeeper have been commendably accepted in the church since apostolic times and, through a lapse of time in some places are now being brought back according to the sacred canons, and are not to be denounced by heretics as superfluous. Hence the holy council, desiring from its heart to restore early practice, decrees that henceforth that these ministries are only to be exercised by those holding the appropriate orders, and it exhorts and commands, in the Lord each and all who are in charge of churches, as far as can be reasonable done, to restore these functions in the cathedral and collegiate and parish churches of their diocese if the number of people and the revenues make this possible and it bids them assign stipends from part of the revenues of some simple benefices or of the church’s fabric fund at its resources suffices, or of both, to those who carry out these functions, who can be fined or totally deprived of payment at the bishop’s judgement if they are negligent. And if there are not enough celibate clerics to carry out the functions of the four minor orders, there can be added married clerics of worthy life, as long as they have not married twice, who will fulfill these task and wear the tonsure and clerical dress in the church (Tanner 1990:750).

It is clear that canon 17 from the council regarding the diaconate was not implemented and 400 years later, at the 21st Ecumenical Council of the Roman Catholic Church, the 2nd Vatican Council, a call was once again made for the restoration of the diaconate.

3 The Commission of the 2nd Vatican Council

First Pope Pius XI¹³ and then Pope Pius XII had thought of an ecumenical council and had already the preparatory studies underway, but both initiatives, for various reasons, were blocked.

Pope Pius XII died in October 1958, that same month, Pope John XXIII succeeded him and on January 25, 1959 speaking to the cardinals gathered at the Benedictine Monastery of Saint Paul, Pope John XXIII announced his decision to celebrate an ecumenical council¹⁴(Hurley 2005:6).

3.1 Ante-preparatory Commission

“Faithful in God, without hesitations,” Pope John XXIII ordered the preparations to go ahead. On May 17, 1959, the feast of Pentecost, he instituted the ante-preparatory commission, with the aim of soliciting a vast consultation, in order to determine the themes to study.”¹⁵

Cardinal Tardini¹⁶ who on June 18, 1959 sent a letter to all bishops and others around the world asking for suggestions for the Council led this Ante-preparatory commission (Vorgrimler 1967:307).

Lehmann (1994:60) concurs that in the early planning stage of the council over 2150 expressions of opinion from the church, as a whole demanded the renewal of the diaconate – even if the diaconate was interpreted differently by different expressions of opinion. One cannot fail to recognise that the depressing lack of priests and the need for help in the service of the apostleship were decisive motives for this.

¹³ Pope Pius XI papacy 1922-1939.

¹⁴ Vatican Council II: In light for the church and for the modern world.
http://www.vatican.va/jubilee_2000/magazine/documents/ju_mag_01051997_p-21_en.html.
[25.03.2008]

¹⁵ Vatican Council II: In light for the church and for the modern world.
http://www.vatican.va/jubilee_2000/magazine/documents/ju_mag_01051997_p-21_en.html.
[25.03.2008]

¹⁶ Cardinal Tardini was an Italian Cardinal and a prominent member of the Roman Curia in Vatican City

3.2 Preparatory Commission

On June 15, 1960 Pope John XXIII appointed ten preparatory Commissions and a central commission with the task to trace the complex outlines of the preparatory apparatus and to order and collate the replies to Cardinal Tardini's request for suggestions (Hurley 2005:11). On March 22, 1961 Karl Rahner¹⁷ was appointed as a consultant to the commission, which included in its draft about the Sacraments of Orders a chapter about the restoration of the permanent diaconate.¹⁸

This met with strong opposition in a meeting of the central commission on January 17, 1962. Those who were opposed were mainly concerned about the erosion of the discipline of priestly celibacy with the introduction of married deacons.

Besides the commission for the sacraments, the commission for missions also recommended the restoration of the permanent diaconate. The central commission debated their submission on March 28 & 29, 1962. Cardinal Ottaviani¹⁹, one who opposed the restoration of the diaconate was appointed head of the Theological Commission. In August 1962 he sent out the first draft of the Constitution of the Church to all bishops. Medina (1968:43ff) points out that this first draft of the constitution made no mention of the diaconate.

The Supporters of the restoration of the diaconate was not satisfied with this omission. In 1962, Karl Rahner and Herbert Vorgrimler published a collection of research articles about the history, theology and current aspects of the diaconate with the title *Diaconia in Christo*. These research papers impacted and influenced the debates before the Council opened. Despite the strong influence of Cardinal Ottaviani in the Theological Commission, "curial opponents manoeuvred unsuccessfully to block the proposal" (Echlin 1971:110). The proposal was formally presented to the Council Fathers, which was endorsed by theologians from 19 countries (Medina 1968: 43ff). This proposal made a significant impacted and influenced the documents of the Second Vatican Council.

¹⁷ His theology influenced the Second Vatican Council and was ground-breaking for the development of what is generally seen as the modern understanding of Catholicism.

¹⁸ Rahner was one of the authors of the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Lumen Gentium*; among others, the concepts of "the Church as mystery" and "people of God," as accepted by Vatican II, are attributed to him.

¹⁹ Cardinal Ottaviani was a prominent figure in the Church and was the leading conservative voice at the Second Vatican Council.

4 Introduction to the Constitution - “Lumen Gentium”

“For the nurturing and constant growth of the People of God, Christ the Lord instituted in His Church a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole body. For those ministers, who are endowed with sacred power, serve their brethren, so that all who are of the People of God, and therefore enjoy a true Christian dignity, working toward a common goal freely and in an orderly way, may arrive at salvation.”²⁰

4.1 The development of the Text

The text was developed over the three sessions of the Council from 1962 to 1964. Article no 29 of the document dealt with the diaconate and the controversial issues relating to the diaconate was put to a final vote in the third session of the Council in 1964.

4.1.1 First Session of the Council (1962)

The Second Vatican Council opened on October 11, 1962 and was attended by two thousand five hundred bishops who came to Rome. In the opening address Pope John XIII emphasized the pastoral character of the Council and informed the bishops that the church needed to be brought up to date (Dwyer 1985:385).

When in December 1962 the Council Fathers debated the first draft of the constitution on the church, many objected that the diaconate was not mentioned at all. No decision was taken yet at the end of this first Session of the Council.

The draft constitution was amended by the Conciliar Doctrinal Commission and on April 22, 1963 was sent to the Council Fathers. Medina (1968:45f) concurs that the diaconate is mentioned in this revised text under Section 15:

“Deacons assist the bishops and the priests in the lower rank of hierarchical ministry. They serve at the celebration of the sacrifice, they act as the extraordinary ministers of solemn baptism and Holy Communion, and they can take on various responsibilities of public charity, preaching and administration to the extent that these are assigned to them by competent

²⁰ Lumen Gentium Ch3 no 18

authority. Although the diaconate is considered in the Church today as a simple step like several others on the way to the priesthood, this practice was not always in force nor is it so everywhere today. In fact, in the future the diaconate may be exercised as a proper and permanent rank in the hierarchy wherever the church would decide to make use of it according to the needs of the care of souls whether in certain regions or everywhere. In this case, it would fall to the prelates of the Church to decide whether such deacons should be bound to sacred celibacy or not.”

On June 30, 1963 Pope John XXIII died in Rome and his successor, Cardinal Montini, the Archbishop of Milan took the name Paul VI. Pope Paul VI was committed to continuing the Council and opened the second session of the council²¹ (Dwyer 1985:388).

Hans Küng (1965:23) stated that Pope Paul VI stressed the pastoral nature of the council and set out four purposes for it²² viz.:

- to more fully define the nature of the church and the role of the bishop.
- to renew the church.
- the restoration of unity among all Christians, including seeking pardon for Catholic contributions to separation.
- to start a dialogue with the contemporary world.

4.1.2 Second Session of the Council (1963)

Dwyer (1985:389) stated that the second session of the Council discussion and debates took place from September 29 to December 4, 1963. The discussions centred on three important questions. The first was a new understanding of the Church as the *people of God*. The second was that of *collegiality* and the third was on the renewal of the *diaconate* (Küng 1965:28f).

²¹ Vatican Council II: In light for the church and for the modern world. http://www.vatican.va/jubilee_2000/magazine/documents/ju_mag_01051997_p-21_en.html. [25.03.2008]

²² Second Vatican Council. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Vatican_Council#_note-NCE_S2 [10.03.2008]

Dwyer refers to the diaconate, “a form of the sacrament of orders which endowed its recipients with virtually all priestly functions short of authorisation to celebrate Mass and to grant sacramental absolution”. He goes on to say that they recommended that the diaconate be granted to mature married men (Dwyer 1985:389).

The diaconate became an intensely discussed topic of the Council when it was placed on the agenda for the period October 4 to 15, 1963 (Küng 1965:31).

The debate was characterised by the discussion of pastoral and practical questions “without paying sufficient attention to the theological aspect of the problem.” The opponents were always concerned about the impact and repercussions that married deacons might have on priestly celibacy (Rynne 1964:100; Hurley 2005:46).

Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, pointed out that he did not see any need for the restoration since many religious and laity already carried out the functions of the deacon (Rynne 1964:99; Medina 1968:47-49). Brockman (1976:43) concurs that no theological grounds were put forward for the revival of the diaconate.

On support of the restoration, Cardinal Dopfner²³ approached the topic theologically by pointing out that the threefold division of the hierarchy was of divine institution, that the proposal took up a non-implemented decision of the Council of Trent and that it was a matter of sacramentalising functions already filled by the laity (Rynne 1964:101).

Cardinal Suenens, was a leading liberal voice at the Council and an advocate of reform in the church, advised that the topic should not be considered in the light of what deacons can do, but in the light of the sacramental grace received through ordination, which was helpful for the building up and forming Christian communities. He introduced the idea that the married diaconate could be approved universally, but that its implementation could be left to regional conferences of bishops (Rynne 1964:101; Vorgrimler 1967:116; Echlin 1971:111).

By October 15, all arguments had been exchange and no agreement was reached.

²³ Cardinal Julius Dopfner - Archbishop of Munich, Germany - was one of the four moderators directing the sessions of Vatican II as a representative of Pope Paul VI.

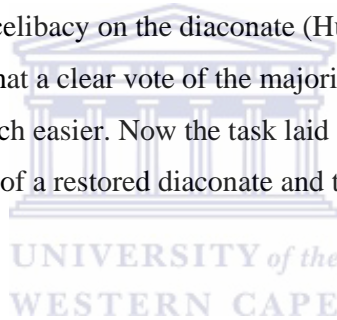
When Cardinal Suenens closed the debate on October 15, he introduced the idea of a test vote concerning the diaconate and other disputed issues of the constitution of the Church. The intention was to find out as exactly as possible the mind of the Fathers. On October 30, 1963 five questions were presented to the assembly by the moderators. Question 5 related to the restoration of the diaconate.

Vorgrimler (1967:116) records the question:

“That the draft should deal with the opportuneness of restoring the diaconate as a special and stable degree of the sacred ministry, as demanded by the needs of the church in various lands”

A test vote was taken regarding the restoration and the council gave an affirmative answer by 1588 to 525 with 7 invalid votes (Kung1965:31; Vorgrimler 1967:116; Hurley 2005:51;). 75% of the 2120 votes cast agreed to the proposal. There was no reference to the question of celibacy on the diaconate (Hurley 2005:51).

Cardinal Lehmann²⁴ stated that a clear vote of the majority of the council made further work on the texts much easier. Now the task laid ahead for the council to work out the details and functions of a restored diaconate and to establish the competent authority in each region.



In the period between the second and third sessions, the proposed schemata were further revised based on comments from the Council Fathers. A number of topics were reduced to statements of fundamental propositions that could gain approval during the third period, with postconciliar commissions handling implementation of these measures.

4.1.3 Third Session of the Council (1964)

The third session of the council took place from September 14 to November 21, 1964. The Constitution on Divine Revelation was the main focus of discussion during this session (Dwyer 1985:390; Hurley 2005:78f).

During this session there were no further debates on the chapters of the Constitution of the Church.

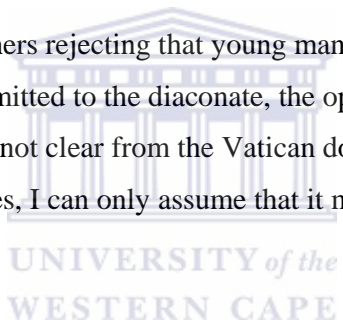
²⁴ From 1964 to 1967 he was a research assistant to Karl Rahner.

Section no 29 of the document dealt with the diaconate and the controversial issues relating to the diaconate was put to a final vote. Approximately 2152 Fathers were present at the voting.

Vorgrimler (1967:130) shares the outcome of the voting that took place over three days:

<u>The vote</u>	<u>The results</u>
• Functions of deacons.	Yes = 2055; No = 94; Invalid 3
• Restoration of permanent diaconate.	Yes = 1903; No = 242; Invalid 3
• Competent authority to restore diaconate.	Yes = 1523; No = 702; Invalid 3
• Admission of Married men – mature age	Yes = 1598; No = 629; Invalid 2
• Young men not bound to celibacy.	Yes = 839; No = 1364; Invalid 8
•	

With the majority of the Fathers rejecting that young man, without being bound by the law of celibacy, could be admitted to the diaconate, the opposite proposition was put into the final document. It is not clear from the Vatican documents and commentaries the reasons for the “No” votes, I can only assume that it must some how be linked to the question of celibacy.



In a public session on November 21, 1964 the final vote was taken about the Constitution of the Church (*Lumen Gentium*).²⁵ The outcome of the vote clearly expressed the full endorsement of the 2156 eligible Fathers. 2151 gave a “YES” and 5 a “NO” vote (Medina 1968:49).

5 The Decree on the Restoration of the Permanent Diaconate

On that same day, November 21, 1964 the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church (*Lumen Gentium*)²⁶ were approved and solemnly promulgated by his Holiness Pope Paul VI (Vorgrimler 1967:137; Hastings 1968:25; Walsh 1979:210).

²⁵ Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Letter *Ad pascendum* (August 15, 1972) Pg 436

²⁶ Dogmatic constitution on the church.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html [10.03.2008]

5.1 The Dogmatic Constitution - *Lumen Gentium*

For this paper, we will continue our focus on text relating to the permanent diaconate in *Lumen Gentium* (article 29).

“At a lower level of the hierarchy are deacons, upon whom hands are imposed "not unto the priesthood, but unto a ministry of service." For strengthened by sacramental grace, in communion with the bishop and his group of priests they serve in the diaconate of the liturgy, of the word, and of charity to the people of God.

It is the duty of the deacon, according as it shall have been assigned to him by competent authority, to administer baptism solemnly, to be custodian and dispenser of the Eucharist, to assist at and bless marriages in the name of the Church, to bring Viaticum to the dying, to read the Sacred Scripture to the faithful, to instruct and exhort the people, to preside over the worship and prayer of the faithful, to administer sacramentals, to officiate at funeral and burial services. Dedicated to duties of charity and of administration, let deacons be mindful of the admonition of Blessed Polycarp: "Be merciful, diligent, walking according to the truth of the Lord, who became the servant of all."

Since these duties, so very necessary to the life of the Church, can be fulfilled only with difficulty in many regions in accordance with the discipline of the Latin Church, as it exists today, the diaconate can in the future be restored as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy. It pertains to the competent territorial bodies of bishops, of one kind or another, with the approval of the Supreme Pontiff, to decide whether and where it is opportune for such deacons to be established for the care of souls.

With the consent of the Roman Pontiff, this diaconate can, in the future, be conferred upon men of more mature age, even upon those living in the married state. It may also be conferred upon suitable young men, for whom the law of celibacy must remain intact.”

5.2 An Analysis of “*Lumen Gentium*” article 29

5.2.1 Hierarchical office

The first sentence of *Lumen Gentium* (article 29) confirms that the diaconate is a hierarchical rank in its own rank, not just only a transition state on the way to the priesthood.

Karl Rahner comments in his article,

*“It is that the deacon does not have those functions that... belong only to priest, as for instance the administration of the sacrament of penance and the consecration at the Eucharistic mystery. ... From this basis, therefore we can easily go on to say that the status of the deacon is lower as compared with that of the priest.... When we think of the ministry on behalf of the poor, and of many other tasks that belong primarily to the deacon, it is no longer easy to perceive how the diaconate could be designated in this connection as a lower degree.”*²⁷

Lumen Gentium offers us another view to the understanding of the hierarchy. The document does not use an ascending perspective (Deacon – Priest – Bishop). *Lumen Gentium* (article 20) describes both priests and deacons as co-workers to the bishops who alone possess the “fullness of the sacrament of orders.” *Lumen Gentium* (article 21). Deacons and priests share in the priesthood of Christ in different degrees.

Vorgrimler (1967:227f) and Wilhelm (1990:135) stated that from the early years of the church there had been a hierarchy that is different degrees of authority: bishops, priests, and deacons. Bishops he said had the full power of the apostles, priests some power, and deacons lesser powers. It becomes clear that, “*At a lower level of the hierarchy*” refers to “sacramental power” and not rank or position.

Cardinal Kasper explains this further.

“Similarly, through the Council a new and important way of thinking was arrived at regarding the relationship of the episcopacy, the priesthood and diaconate. Up until the Second Vatican Council the different levels of ordination were thought of as an ascending career path. In contrast to this the council brought about a

²⁷ K Rahner, “The teaching of the Second Vatican Council on the Diaconate”, In BISHOPS COMMITTEE ON THE PERMANENT DIACONATE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS., Foundations for the renewal of the Diaconate, Washington D.C., United States Catholic Conference, 1993, p 190. Hereafter referred to as “The teaching”.

reversal of previous thinking habits. In line with the old church thinking the Council proceeded from the point that the bishop is granted the fullest extent of the sacrament of ordination. Deacons and priests have a specifically graduated share of the one sacramental ministry, which is granted to the bishop... Deacons and Priest carry out their duties as representatives of the bishop, who because of the overall burden of their duties, cannot perform them without colleagues and helpers.(Concerning the expression 'to a lower degree':) What is meant here is not subordination of the deacon under the priest, but the lesser participation of the deacon in the ministry of the bishop.”²⁸

I must point out that one comes to a conclusion that deacons must develop a positive identity separate from that of priests by assisting the bishops in his service to the community.

I agree with Cardinal Kasper (1997:26f) who concurs that the deacon is no mini-priest neither a substitute where there is a lack of a priest in a community.

He further states that in the same way the ministry of the deacon is no stepping-stone on the road to sacramental priesthood, but an independent ministry on its own.

With the understanding of the deacon in relation to the priest and the bishop it would be prudent to look at the functions of a deacon as mention in *Lumen Gentium* keeping in mind that other functions were added in the Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church - *Ad Gentes*.²⁹

5.2.2 Diaconate functions³⁰

Vorgrimler (1967:229) stated that the Council concurred that deacons, strengthened by sacramental grace, in communion with the bishop and his group of priests are called to service in the Liturgy, the Word and of Charity to the people of God.

²⁸ W Kasper. “The deacon offers an ecclesiological view of the present day challenger in the Church and society”. Paper given at International Diaconate Centre Study conference, Brixen, Italy October 1997, in *Diaconia English Edition Yearbook* 34 (2002) pp 24-26

²⁹ Mission activity of the Church.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_en.html [10.03.2008]

³⁰ Dogmatic constitution on the church.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html [10.03.2008]

The deacon receives the faculty to exercise his ministry at his ordination from the ordaining Bishop.

Flannery (1984:387) concurs that it is the duty of the deacon, in terms of the faculty, as assigned to him by his bishop, the competent authority, to:

- administer baptism solemnly;
- be custodian and dispenser of the Eucharist;
- assist at and bless marriages in the name of the Church;
- bring Viaticum to the dying;
- read the Sacred Scripture to the faithful;
- instruct and exhort the people;
- preside over the worship and prayer of the faithful;
- administer sacramentals; and
- officiate at funeral and burial services.

The duties of the deacons in *Lumen Gentium* were mainly from the field of liturgy.

Vorgrimler (1967:229) points out that it is not possible to give an outline of the theology of the diaconate based merely on the faculties assigned to it here.

Ad Gentes uses a much wider perspective to describe them, in deed; the fruit of further reflection after the initial decision to restore the diaconate had been ‘digested’.

5.2.3 Reasons for restoration

Lumen Gentium (article 29) presents pastoral reason for restoring the permanent diaconate. The list of functions of the deacons’ shows in *Lumen Gentium* (no 29) that for pastoral reason the permanent diaconate was restored, since these functions are so much needed in the life of the Church.

Vorgrimler (1967:230) stated that only the later decree on the church’s missionary activity, *Ad Gentes*³¹ Article 16, provided a more theological argument for the restoration of the diaconate (Hastings 1968:210).

³¹ Mission activity of the Church.
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_en.html [10.03.2008]

5.2.4 Profile of the diaconate

Lumen Gentium (article 29) does not provide a clear profile of the diaconate, nor is it possible to develop a theology of the diaconate based on the functions mentioned in article 29 of *Lumen Gentium* (Vorgrimler 1967:230).

Although the draft was expanded during the Council deliberations, the only significant theological addition is the reference to the sacramentality of the diaconal ordination. One comes to the conclusion that *Lumen Gentium* (article 29) cannot be regarded as the end of theological reflections but should rather see this as an important milestone in the development of the theology of the diaconate.

While *Lumen Gentium* was promulgated and the diaconate was restored, we have to go further and explore the other Vatican Council documents to get a deeper insight in the theology of the diaconate.

6 Other Vatican Council documents: – permanent deacons

6.1 The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy

The Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* was promulgated on December 4, 1963. At the promulgation the decision on the restoration of the Permanent Diaconate had not yet taken place, the topic however was discussed. On October 27, 1962, two Argentine bishops, Kemerer and Devoto, drew attention to the pastoral needs of their country and demand a special liturgy of the Word. They pointed out the functions which scriptural services could fulfill as a substitute on Sundays with a scarcity of priests (Vorgrimler 1967:24).

*Sacrosanctum Concilium*³² Article 35 stated:

*“Bible services should be encouraged, especially on the vigils of the more solemn feasts, on some weekdays in Advent and Lent, and on Sundays and feast days. They are particularly to be commended in places **where no priest is***

³² Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html, no 35.4 [1.04.2008]

available; when this is so, a deacon or some other person authorised by the bishop should preside over the celebration.”

In the instruction of September 26, 1964 more exact directions were given about it (Vorgrimler 1967:25). The “Instruction on the Proper Implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy” took up the matter again:

“When there is a shortage of priest...a bible service is recommended...under the presidency of a deacon or a layman deputed for the task... The person who presided should preach, if he is a deacon; if he is not a deacon he should read a homily chosen by the bishop or the parish priest.”³³

It is quite clear that the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy sees the work of deacons as a result of the shortage of priests. Hornef (1965:284) argues that the shortage of priests is not the basic reasons for the revival of the diaconate and that the deacon can exercise many pastoral functions when there is no priest available.

6.2 Decree on the Catholic Eastern Churches

The decree *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*³⁴ was promulgated on November 21, 1964 – the same day as *Lumen Gentium*. Article 17 refers to the sacrament of Orders, it relates to the Diaconate and Sub Diaconate. The article states that in order that the ancient established practice of the Sacrament of Orders in the Eastern Churches may flourish again this Sacred Council ardently desires that the office of the Permanent Diaconate should, where it has fallen into disuse, be restored (Vorgrimler 1967:325; Flannery 1984:447; Tanner1990:905). Vorgrimler (1967:325) stated that this decree goes a step further than *Lumen Gentium* no 29 which leaves the restoration to the discretion of the bishops. He further records that whether or not a deacon may be married (before his ordination) is of no significance in the East.

³³ Instruction on the proper implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, inter Oecumenici, 26 September 1964, no 37 in : A Flannery (ed), p65

³⁴ Decree on the Catholic Churches of the Eastern rite.
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_orientalium-ecclesiarum_en.html [15.04.2008]

The legislative authorities of each individual church should decide about the Sub Diaconate and the minor orders and the rights and obligations that attach to them (Tanner 1990:905).³⁵

6.3 Decree on the church's Missionary activity

The decree *Ad Gentes*, was promulgated on December 7, 1965, in this decree, a substantial contribution of the Council to the Permanent Diaconate can be found. This decree was promulgated a year after *Lumen Gentium*. The decree points out that the functions of priests, deacons and catechists are necessary for the implanting and growth of the Christian community (Hastings 1968:230).

In Article 16 of the decree it deals with the promotion and formation of clergy. Craig (1966:56); Flannery (1984:832-834); Tanner (1990:26;) concurs that where Episcopal conferences deem it opportune, the order of the diaconate should be restored as a permanent state of life according to the norms of the Constitution "De Ecclesia." For he says that there are men who actually carry out the functions of the deacon's office, either preaching the word of God as catechists, or presiding over scattered Christian communities in the name of the pastor and the bishop, or practicing charity in social or relief work (Craig 1966:56; Hastings 1968:217f)?

It is only right to strengthen them by the imposition of hands which has come down from the Apostles, and to bind them more closely to the altar, that they may carry out their ministry more effectively because of the sacramental grace of the diaconate (Walsh 1967:217; Tanner 1990:1026).³⁶

Wilhelm (1990:137) supports the point that the bishop, by the laying on of hands, shares some of his powers and duties with priest and with deacons. He supports this statement that as Moses was helped by many elders when he led the Israelites through the desert, as priesthood always existed in Israel, as Christ chose other disciples

³⁵Decree on the Catholic Churches of the Eastern rite.
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19641121_orientium-ecclesiarum_en.html article 17 [15.04.2008]

³⁶ Mission activity of the Church.
http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651207_ad-gentes_en.html [10.03.2008] no 16

besides the twelve leaders, so too the bishop is helped particularly by his priest and deacons.

Ad Gentes like *Lumen Gentium* call for the restoration of the Permanent Diaconate, yet at the same time *Ad Gentes* reveals further theological and pastoral reflection (Hastings 1968:210). The functions of the deacons in *Lumen Gentium* were mainly from the field of Liturgy (Hastings 1968:48).

7 Apostolic letters of Pope Paul VI – Implementation

7.1 *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*³⁷

June 18, 1967 Pope Paul VI issued in *motu proprio* form, the Apostolic Letter *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*, by which suitable canonical norms for the Permanent Diaconate was established (Walsh 1979:211). This document gave an overall framework, inside which Episcopal conference and local ordinaries could decide about the restoration of the diaconate in their respective regions.

A brief synopsis of *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*³⁸ is given here:

Chapter 1: Deals with the rights and duties of Episcopal conference and local ordinaries. It states that the diaconate, in view of the good of the faithful, be instituted as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy.

Chapter 2: Concerns young men who are called to the diaconate are obliged to observe the law of celibacy. It highlights that young men be admitted for training for the diaconate who have shown a natural inclination of the spirit to be of service to the hierarchy and of the Christian community and it continues; who have acquired a sufficiently good store of knowledge in keeping the customs of their people and country. Training should be spread over a suitable period of at least three years

³⁷ General norms for restoring the Permanent Diaconate.

³⁸ General norms for restoring the Permanent Diaconate. [online]. Available: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/motu_proprio/documents/hf_p-vi_motu-proprio_19670618_sacrum-diaconatus_en.html. [15.04.2008]

with special training for the various functions, which deacons especially will carry out.

Chapter 3: Pope Paul VI stated that older men, whether single or married, can be called to the diaconate. It is made clear that in the case of a married man there is the consent of the wife, but also there must be the certainty about the wife's "blameless Christian life" and that she does not have qualities which will neither impede nor bring dishonour on her husband's ministry. Mention is made that care must be taken with regards married men who are promoted to the diaconate, who have been married for many years, that they have shown that they are ruling well their own household and who have a wife and children leading a truly Christian life and noted for their good reputation. This chapter in article 16 once again states:

"Once they have received the order of deacon, even those who have been promoted at a more mature age, can not contract marriage by virtue of the traditional discipline of the Church."

Chapter 4: Refers to incardination and sustenance of deacons. A deacon must be incardinated into the diocese. This chapter points out a norm that is in force with regard to caring for the fitting sustenance of priest and guaranteeing their social security. This norm also refers to the permanent deacons, consideration must be taken of the family of the married deacon, keeping in mind that, according to the Constitution of the Second Vatican Council, he has to attend to certain functions that has been authorised by his bishop - referring to chapter 5.

Chapter 5: The duties of deacons:

- Assist the bishop and priest during liturgical actions;
- Administer baptism;
- Reserve the Eucharist and to distribute it;
- Bring Viaticum to the dying;
- Impart to the people benediction with Blessed Sacrament;

- Assist at and bless marriages;
- Administer sacramentals;
- Officiate at funeral and burial services;
- Read the Sacred books of Scripture to the faithful;
- Instruct and exhort the people;
- Preside at the worship and prayers of the people when a priest is not present;
- Carry out, in the name of the hierarchy, the duties of charity and of administration as well as works of social assistance;
- Guide legitimately, in the name of the parish priest and of the bishop, remote Christian communities; and
- Promote and sustain the apostolic activities of laymen.

It is made clear that the above functions must be carried out in perfect communion with the bishop and his priest for they have and are in charge of the care of the souls in that place. Patrick Crowley³⁹ stated that the duties listed above are elaborations of those listed in *Lumen Gentium* and that no fewer than nine are specifically connected with the priestly role –covering everything except the celebration of the Eucharist and hearing confession. Cowley warns us that we have to be careful not to confuse the Second Vatican Councils overall intentions, with regards to the diaconate “as a proper and permanent rank of the hierarchy”.

Jose Hornef⁴⁰ provides us with a clear warning he writes:

“We have insisted repeatedly: the shortage of priests provides an occasion for the revival of the diaconate, it is not the basic reason for this. The deacon is certainly the assistant of the priest and can exercise many pastoral functions when there is no priest available. But the diaconate has its own meaning, its own importance, and its own functions”

³⁹ Crowley, Patrick “The Diaconate for the present age”, in the Clergy Review, December 1974, p.795

⁴⁰ Hornef, Josef “The Return of the Deacon”, in the Clergy Review, April 1965, p.284

Chapter 6: The Spiritual life of deacons. Article 29 of *Lumen Gentium*, reminds deacons that they are not to neglect studies, particularly the sacred ones and that they should devote themselves to ecclesiastical studies in a way that they can correctly explain Catholic teaching. Chapter 6 also speaks of the special character of the ministry entrusted to a deacon, that the deacons are bound to show reverence and obedience to the bishop; the bishops, however, should in the Lord highly esteem the deacons and love them with the love of a father.

7.2 Pontificalis Romani Recognitio. (Instructions on the Revised Roman Rites)

Pope Paul VI promulgated the new rites for the conferral of all three ordained ministries, that is, Diaconate, Presbyter and Episcopate on June 18, 1968 (Walsh 1979:219). With regards to the diaconate Pope Paul VI stated that in the ordination of deacons a few changes had to be made to satisfy the recent prescriptions about the diaconate as a distinct and permanent grade of the hierarchy in the Latin Church (Walsh 1979:217). Walsh (1979:217f) stated that Pope Paul VI also decreed the matter and form for the specific ordinations, that in the ordination of deacons, the matter is the laying on the bishop's hands upon the individual candidates, which is done in silence before the consecratory prayer, of which the following belong to the nature of the rite and are required for validity:

*“Lord,
send forth upon them the Holy Spirit,
that they may be strengthened
by the gift of your sevenfold grace
to carry out faithfully the work of the ministry.”⁴¹*

Wilhelm (1990:370f) concurs that in 1947 Pope Pius XII declared the essential part of the ordination rite to be the laying on of hands and the words invoking the spirit. He also stated that details of the earliest ordination rites are given in the *Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus*.

⁴¹ Paul VI, Apostolic Constitution Pontificalis Romani Recognitio, 17 June 1968 in: Instructions on the Revised Roman Rites, London, Collins, 1979, p217f

7.3 *Ad Pascendum*.⁴² (Norms for the Order of the diaconate)

Pope Paul VI issued an apostolic letter containing the Norms for the Order of the Diaconate on August 15, 1972.

Many of these norms later found their way into the revised Code of Canon Law in 1983.

In the introduction the Holy Father, Pope Paul VI gave his interpretation of the restoration of the diaconate as follows:

*“Christ instituted in the Church a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole body.”*⁴³

It is clear that the church has honoured the diaconate amongst its ministries since the time of the apostles (Walsh 1979:208). Walsh (1979:208) stated that the Apostle Paul gives an explicit testimony of this in his letter to the Philippians, in which he sends his greetings not only to the bishops but also to the deacons (Phil. 1:1). It is in his letter to Timothy, that he illustrates the qualities and virtues that deacons must have in order to be worthy of their ministry (1 Tim 3:8-13).

St. Ignatius of Antioch declared that the office of the deacon is nothing other than *“the ministry of Jesus Christ, who was with the Father before all ages and has been manifested in the final time.”*

St Ignatius also made the following observations where he stated that deacons are ministers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ, should please all in every way; for they are not servants of food and drink, but ministers of the Church of God (Walsh 1979:208). In his apostolic letter Pope Paul VI refers to the first century writers who insisted on the importance of the diaconate ministry, giving examples of the important tasks entrusted to deacons and reflect the amount of authority they held in the Christian communities, describing the deacon as the bishop’s ear, mouth, heart and soul (Walsh 1979:208).

Pope Paul VI points out that the deacon is at the disposal of the bishop in order that he may serve all the people of God and take care of the sick and the poor (Walsh 1979:209f).

⁴² Paul VI, Apostolic Letter Containing Norms for the Order of the Diaconate, *Ad Pascendum*, 15 August 1972, in :Flannery, A (ed), Vatican Council II, The Conciliar And Post Conciliar Documents, pp433-440

⁴³ Dogmatic Constitution of the Church. *Lumen Gentium* no 18, p21f

The pontiff points out that the diaconate flourished in a wonderful way in the Church, and at the same time gave an outstanding witness of love for Christ and the brethren through the performance of works of charity, the celebration of sacred rites, and the fulfilment of pastoral duties.

After much deliberations in the Council, the Second Vatican Council supported the wishes and request that, where such would lead to the good of souls, the permanent diaconate should be restored as an intermediate order between the higher ranks of the Church's hierarchy and the rest of the people of God, as an expression of the needs and desires of the Christian communities (Walsh 1979:210f). And as a sign or sacrament of the Lord Christ himself, who "*came not to be served but to serve*". (Matt 20:28).

The Fathers ratified the principle of the renewal of the diaconate at the third session of the Second Vatican Council in October 1964. In the 29th article of *Lumen Gentium*, it is recorded:

"At a lower level of the hierarchy are deacons, who receive the imposition of hands, 'not unto priesthood, but unto ministry. For strengthened by sacramental grace they are dedicated to the people of God, in conjunction with the Bishop and his body of Priest, in the service of the liturgy, of the Gospel, and of works of Charity'" (Tanner 1990:874).

The restoration of the Permanent Diaconate required that the instructions of the Council be more profoundly examined and that there be mature deliberation concerning juridical status both of the celibate and married deacons.

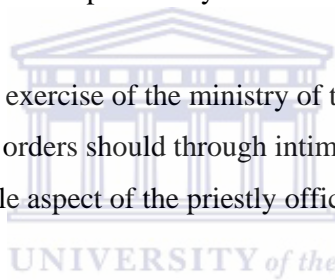
7.4 Ministeria Quaedam. (Certain norms concerning the diaconate)

Concurrent with Pope Paul VI's, apostolic Letter Containing Norms for the Order of the Diaconate, *Ad Pascendum*, issued in August 1972, he promulgated the Apostolic letter *Ministeria Quaedam* containing certain norms concerning the diaconate (Walsh 1979:211).

Walsh (1979:212f); Flannery (1984:431) concurs that the key norms in this apostolic letter are:

- The candidates for the diaconate should know what ministries they are to exercise before sacred ordination and when and how they are to take upon themselves the responsibilities of celibacy and liturgical prayer;

- Entrance into the clerical state is deferred until diaconate;
- Introduction of a new rite, the one who aspires to the diaconate or priesthood publicly manifests his will to offer himself to God and the Church, so that He may exercise a sacred order;
- The aspirant must draw up and present a signed petition to his bishop requesting permission to be accepted into orders. The bishop has the right to acceptance;
- The bishop, accepting this offering, selects and calls him to prepare himself to receive a sacred order, and in this way he is properly numbered among candidates for the diaconate;
- The office of lector and acolyte should be entrusted to candidates for the diaconate or priesthood and should have the desire to devote themselves to God and to the Church in a special way and must exercise them for a suitable length of time; and
- By study and gradual exercise of the ministry of the word and of the altar, candidates for sacred orders should through intimate contact understand and reflect upon the double aspect of the priestly office.



Pope Paul VI concludes that the candidates acceding to sacred orders must be fully aware of their vocation, fervent in Spirit, serving the Lord, constant in prayer and are aware of the needs of the faithful (Rom.12:11-13). With the above understanding the rite of admission for candidates to the diaconate and the priesthood is introduced, that is, the free petition of the aspirant, made out and signed in their own hand, is a requirement including the written acceptance of the competent ecclesiastical superior, in the deacons case the acceptance is the ordinary, the bishop (Walsh1979:213).

By being accepted the candidate must care for his vocation and also acquires the right to the necessary spiritual assistance by which he can develop his vocation and submit unconditionally to the will of God (Walsh1979:213).

The norm also indicates that candidates for the permanent diaconate are to receive the ministries of lector and acolyte (Walsh1979:213).

This Apostolic letter points out a norm that the special consecration of celibacy be observed for the sake of the kingdom of heaven and its obligation for candidates to

the priesthood and for unmarried candidates to the diaconate are indeed linked with the diaconate(Walsh1979:213).

In accordance with the discipline of the Church, a married deacon who has lost his wife cannot enter a new marriage.⁴⁴

8 Code of Canon Law: - permanent deacons

On January 25, 1983, on the 24th anniversary of the first announcement made by Pope John XXIII, Pope John Paul II promulgated the Code of Canon Law. The purpose of which was to formulate in concrete terms the deliberations of the Second Vatican Council. Another purpose was to accommodate Canon law to the new way of thinking of the Second Vatican Council. It expressed clearly the doctrinal and disciplinary thrust of the Council thus bringing the Church's legislation into harmony with the ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council.⁴⁵

The Code of Canon law brings out no new functions for a deacon that has already been mentioned in "*Lumen Gentium, Ad Gentes and Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem.*"

I now explore the Codes of Canon Law⁴⁶ that relates to deacons in their three-fold ministry of Word, Liturgy and Charity.

8.1 Ministry of the Word

Can. 757: ... Deacons are to serve the people of God in the ministry of the Word, in union with the bishop and his presbyterium.⁴⁷

Can. 762 refers to Proclaiming the Gospel to all is among the principal duties of deacons. They have a serious obligation to present solid doctrine, in a manner well prepared and adapted to the people.

⁴⁴ Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Letter *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*, no 16

⁴⁵ Pope John Paul II, Apostolic constitution in the Code of Canon law, in English translation, prepared by the Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London: Collins.

⁴⁶ The Code of Canon law, in English translation, prepared by the Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, London: Collins. Hereafter referred to as "the code"

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p140

Can. 764: Priest and deacons with at least presumed consent of the rector of a church, have the faculty to preach everywhere, unless the faculty has been restricted or removed by the competent Ordinary, or unless a particular law requires express permission.⁴⁸

Can. 767 §1. The most important form of preaching is the homily, which is part of the liturgy, and is reserve to a priest or deacon.⁴⁹ At all Sunday masses and holy days of obligation which are celebrated with a congregation, there is to be a homily which may not be omitted except for a grave reason. This also applies for any solemn celebrations, presided over by a deacon.

We can make an observation concerning the ministry of preaching: namely that a deacon now universally posses the right to preach everywhere, however this faculty can be restricted or removed, referring to canon 764. It goes therefore without saying that both priest and deacons require faculties given by the bishop for the ministry of preaching. Secondly the preaching of the homily during Holy Mass is reserved to the ordained ministers of the Church.

My understanding is that the ministry of the Word not only includes preaching but also catechesis and religious instructions even in schools, unlike the laity a deacon does not need special commissioning from the bishop to give religious instructions in schools since he has received that mission with the sacrament of Holy Orders.

8.2 Ministry of Liturgy

Baptism is the gateway to the sacraments and necessary for salvation. Through baptism men and women are freed from sin, are reborn as children of God and, configured to Christ by an indelible character, and are incorporated into the Church.

“The ordinary minister of baptism is a bishop, a presbyter, or a deacon”. (Can 861 §1)⁵⁰

The Southern Africa Catholic Bishops Conference decrees⁵¹ that permanent deacons are obliged to pray daily the Morning and Evening prayers from the liturgy of the Hours, in accordance with can 276 §2,3.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p140

⁴⁹ Ibid., p141

⁵⁰ Ibid., p159

⁵¹ SACBC Decree no 2: Liturgy of the hours for permanent deacons

Can. 835 §3. Deacons have a share in the celebration of divine worship in accordance with the provisions of the law.⁵²

Can. 910 §1. Confirms that deacons are ordinary minister of Holy Communion.⁵³

Can. 943: The ministry of exposing the Most Blessed Sacrament and of Eucharistic benediction is reserved to a priest or deacon.⁵⁴

Can. 1079 & Can. 1080: Deacons are given rights to dispense from marriage impediments in the same manner as that of priest.⁵⁵ Can.1082 places a condition on the deacon mentioned in Can. 1079 §2 to inform the local ordinary of the dispensation granted for the external forum.

Can. 1108: Explicit acknowledgement for deacons to witness marriages.⁵⁶

Can 1111: Deacons receive general delegation from their bishop to function in solemnizing marriages and it must be noted that in this case all provisions of canon law apply as in the case of priest.

The code reads, “As long as they hold office validly, the local ordinary and the pastor can delegate to priests and deacons the faculty, even a general one, of assisting at marriages within the limits of their territory.” (Can. 1111 §1).⁵⁷

Can. 1168: Administrating Sacramentals.

The minister of sacramentals is a cleric who has been provided with the requisite power.⁵⁸ Deacons are clerics and therefore can administer Sacramentals. Interesting however to note is that Can 1169 §3 states that a deacon can impart only those blessings expressly permitted by law.⁵⁹

During the revision process of the Code of Canon Law it was debated whether deacons should be permitted to administer the sacrament of the anointing of the sick. Whilst *Lumen Gentium* article 29 mentioned as one of the duties of the deacon, “to bring Viaticum to the dying” it did not mention the sacrament of the sick, although viaticum and anointing are often administered together. Many deacons are involved in pastoral care of the sick and dying, often as hospital chaplains. It must be noted that

⁵² *Ibid.*, p154

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p167

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p171

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p192

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, p196

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p197

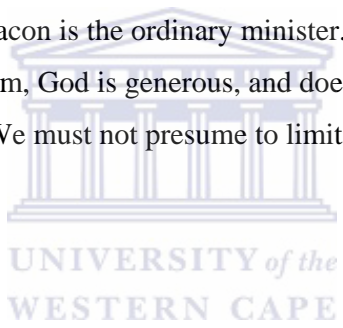
⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p206

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p206

the promulgated Code of Canon law states quite clearly in can. 1003 §1: “Every priest, but only a priest, can validly administer the anointing of the sick.” The 1997 “Instructions on certain questions regarding the collaboration of the non-ordained faithful in the sacred ministry of the priest”, issued jointly by a number of curial dicasteries and approved in *forma specifica* by the pontiff, reiterates this position enshrined in the Code:

*“The reservation of the ministry of anointing of the sick to the priest is related to the connection of this sacrament to the forgiveness of sin (Confession) and the worthy reception of the Holy Eucharist. No other person may act as ordinary or extraordinary minister of the sacrament since such constitutes simulation of the sacrament.”*⁶⁰

I believe the sacramental aid for a deacon to administer to sick and dying Catholics is Viaticum⁶¹ for which the deacon is the ordinary minister. When people have done the best which is available to them, God is generous, and does not deprive the sick and dying of any grace needed. We must not presume to limit God’s merciful help to any one particular action.



8.3 Ministry of Charity

Lumen Gentium article 29 and Pope Paul VI Apostolic letter *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem* chapter 5 speaks of the commitment of deacons “to works of charity and the functions of administration.”

I can find no particular canon in the Code addressing this ministry, except indirectly in can. 288. “Permanent deacons are not bound by the provisions of canons 284, 285 §§ 3 and 4, 286,287 §2, unless the particular law states otherwise.”⁶² Therefore, permanent deacons can assume a public office, which allows them to participate in political parties, trade unions etc.

It must be understood that charity includes the prophetic ministry of justice and peace.

⁶⁰ Congregation for the Clergy , Instructions on Certain Questions regarding the Collaboration of the Non-ordained Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of Priest 15th August 1997, Nairobi, Paulines Publications Africa, Article 9, §2, p31 Hereafter referred to as “Instructions”

⁶¹ Eucharist given to a dying person.

⁶² Code of canon law, “the code”, p49

That is the sharing and brings to life, the social teachings of the church to the people of God.

The involvement of deacons in the above mentioned areas could contribute to the transformation of communities to live according to Gospel values. It must be noted that Can 288 may indirectly forbid deacons such activities.

Deacons however are never exempted from can. 285 § 1 and § 2.

Can. 285 §1 Clerics are to refrain completely from all those things, which are unbecoming to their state, according to the prescripts of particular law.

Can. 285 §2 Clerics are to avoid those things, which although not unbecoming, are nevertheless foreign to the clerical state.

The restoration of the diaconate did not restore the ancient ministry of archdeacon or sub deacon in the administration of the bishop, but the Code nevertheless enabled deacons (including the laity) to be:

- Can. 483 Appointed chancellor or notaries;
- Can. 492 Members of finance council;
- Can. 494 Financial administrators; and
- Can. 512 Members of the Pastoral Council.

A variety of juridical functions are also open to deacons viz.:

- Can. 1421 Judge;
- Can. 1424 Assessor;
- Can. 1428 Auditor;
- Can. 1429 Relator;
- Can. 1435 Promoter of justice or defender of the bond; and
- Can. 1483 Procurator / Advocate must be a doctor in canon law.

8.4 Deacons running parishes

Can. 517 §2 “If, because of a lack of priests, the diocesan bishop has decided that participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish is to be entrusted to a deacon, to another person who is not a priest, or to a community of persons, he is to appoint some priest who, provided with the powers and faculties of a pastor, is to direct the pastoral care.”

The 1997 “Instructions on certain questions regarding the collaboration of the non-ordained faithful in the sacred ministry of the priest”, deals in article 4 with Can. 517 §2. It states that if, because of a shortage of priest the bishop has judged that a deacon should be entrusted with a share in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish, he will appoint another Parish priest, who will direct the pastoral care. The “participation in the exercise of the pastoral care of a parish” does not mean “directing, coordinating, moderating or governing the parish; these competencies, according to the canon, are the competencies of a priest alone...in any event, the preference which this canon gives deacons cannot be overlooked.”⁶³

The 1998 *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* quotes a statement of Pope John Paul II during his catechesis on October 13, 1993: “*When deacons supply in places where there is a shortage of priest, they do so by ecclesial mandate.*”⁶⁴ It is not a function that emanates from the diaconal ordination, but an additional duty entrusted to the deacon by the bishop.

The Decree *Ad Gentes* (no16) of the Second Vatican Council refers to the possibility that a Christian community be entrusted to the care of a deacon on behalf of a parish priest or Bishop. This means that somewhere, owing to distance or to the lack of priest, the bishop may ask a deacon to run his parish community as appointed minister, fulfilling his office in order to promote Christ’s mission.

I can find no reason why a deacon cannot run parishes when there is a genuine shortage of priests.

9 Judicial status of Permanent deacons

Deacons are clerics, therefore all Canon laws referring to all clerics also applies to permanent deacons, unless otherwise reserved for bishop or priest.

9.1 Incardination⁶⁵

⁶³ Congregation for the Clergy (et al), “Instruction”, Article 4 § 1. p23f

⁶⁴ Congregation for the Clergy, *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent deacons*, 22 February 1998. In: *Permanent deacons*, Nairobi, Paulines publications 1988, § 41. p 82 Hereafter referred to as “Directory”.

⁶⁵ Code of Canon Law, “the code”, p45

Can. 265 “Every cleric must be incardinated in a particular church.”

Can. 265 §1 “By the reception of the diaconate a person becomes a cleric, and is incardinated in the particular Church or personal prelature for whose service he is ordained.

A deacon is incardinated into a particular church or another ecclesial body for the rest of his life; unless he loses the clerical state (can 290-293). Change of incardination is possible between two dioceses and is regulated by canons 267 to 270. He also needs the permission of both bishops concerned. Can. 271 allows the cleric to move to another particular church without change of incardination for a specific period of time.

9.2 Obligation and rights of clerics⁶⁶

Obligation and rights of clerics in canons 273 to 289 also apply to permanent deacons except in the case mentioned in canon 288. The obligation to show reverence and obedience to the bishop (can. 273) is also included in the ordination liturgy.

Can 274 § 2 states that deacons are obliged to accept and faithfully fulfil the office committed to them by the ordinary. The 1998 *Directory* makes it clear (§ 8) that the bishop must take the specific state of the deacon (family situation, professional duties etc.) into consideration before assigning duties.

9.3 Right of Association⁶⁷

Can 278 § 1 states that the secular clergy⁶⁸ (which include permanent deacons) have the right of to form associations with others and among themselves for the achievement of purposes befitting the clerical state. This canon specifies for clergy the principle already enshrine for all Christian faithful as outlined in can. 215. The right of association is limited to clerics by the provisions of can. 278 § 3 - “Clerics are to refrain from establishing or joining associations whose purpose or activity cannot be reconciled with the obligations proper to the clerical state, or which can hinder the diligent fulfilment of the office entrusted to them by the competent ecclesiastical authority.”

⁶⁶ Code of Canon Law, “the code”, p46 -47

⁶⁷ Code of Canon Law, “the code”, p47

⁶⁸ Secular clergy are diocesan priests and deacons.

The 1998 *Directory* explains this Can. 278 § 3 by stating that associations which under the guise of representation, organising deacons into a form of trade(s) unions or pressure groups, thus reducing the sacred ministry to a secular profession or trade are completely irreconcilable with the clerical state.⁶⁹

9.4 Remuneration⁷⁰

Can 281 §§1 and 2 apply to all clergy (including deacons).

Can 281 §1: “Since clerics dedicate themselves to the ecclesiastical ministry, they deserve the remuneration that benefits their conditions, taking into account both the nature of their office and the conditions of time and place. It is to be such that it provides for the necessities of their life and for the just remuneration of those whose services they need.”

Can 281 §2: “Suitable provision is likewise to be made for such social welfare, as they may need in infirmity, sickness and old age.”

However, Can 281 §3 provide specific norms for married deacons. “Married deacons who dedicate themselves full-time to the ecclesiastical ministry deserve remuneration sufficient to provide for themselves and their families. Those, however, who receive remuneration by reason of a secular profession, which they exercise or exercised, are to see to their own and to their families’ needs from that income.” Here one can notice a significant change between can. 281 §3 and the ‘*Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*’ of Pope Paul VI, which stated that in §21; “Deacons who exercise a civil profession must provide – to the extent to which it is possible – for their own needs and those of their families with the income from their profession.”

You will have noticed that the Code left out the expression “*to the extent to which it is possible*”

The *Directory* takes up the issue again and refers to the particular canon law:

“It is not easy to draw up general norms concerning the upkeep of deacons which are binding in all circumstances, given the great diversity of situations, in which deacon’s

⁶⁹ Congregation for the Clergy, “*Directory*”, § 11, p 64

⁷⁰ Code of Canon Law, “the code”, p48

work, in various particular churches and countries. ...In such circumstances, a particular law should determine appropriately in the matter.”⁷¹

The Southern Africa Catholic Bishops Conference concurs that before ordination it must be clarified how the deacon will support himself and his family. With self-supporting deacons, the Bishops state that it must be clarified that the Church will have no present or future obligation for the support of the deacons and their families. They do point out that if deacons incur any cost in his ministry he should be reimbursed.⁷²

Particular law may also determine the obligations devolving on the diocese when a deacon, through no fault of his own, becomes unemployed. Likewise, it will be opportune to define the extent of diocesan liability with regard to the widows and orphans of deceased deacons. I want to suggest, where possible, deacons, before ordination, should subscribe to a mutual assurance (insurance) policy, which affords cover for these eventualities.⁷³

Besides legal obligations there are moral obligations of the Church towards her clergy.

If Can. 1350 §2 reminds ordinaries to support even clergy dismissed from the clerical state, if they are truly in need, all the more would such a moral obligation apply to permanent. Can. 1350 §2 qualifies the obligation with the words: “in the best way possible” I am of the opinion that this differs from place to place according to the means and resources of a diocese.

9.5 Widowed deacons

Can. 1087 reminds clerics that those who are in sacred orders invalidly attempt marriage.⁷⁴

‘*Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*’ referred to ecclesiastical discipline. “*Once they have received the order of deacon, even those who have been promoted at a more mature age, can not contract marriage by virtue of the traditional discipline of the church.*”⁷⁵

⁷¹ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 15, p 66

⁷² “Deacons in our Local Church” p18

⁷³ *ibid* § 20, p 68

⁷⁴ Code of Canon Law, “the code”, p194

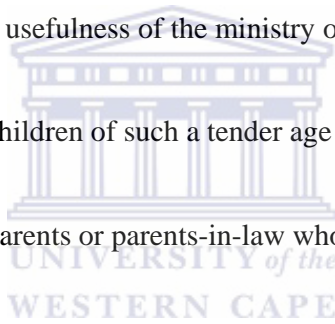
⁷⁵ Pope Paul VI *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*, op cit § 6,

In *Ad Pascendum* Pope Paul VI reiterated the same position: “*In accordance with the traditional discipline of the Church, a married deacon who has lost his wife cannot enter a new marriage.*”⁷⁶

In a circular letter of June 6, 1997, (Prot. N. 263/97), the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments announced that the Holy Father Pope John Paul II had modified the ‘current norm which requires three cumulative and simultaneous conditions to constitute motivating exceptions for the granting of dispensation from the prohibition of canon 1087. In the letter it makes it explicit that any of the three conditions **‘taken singularly are sufficient for a favourable consideration.’**

The conditions are:

1. The great and proven usefulness of the ministry of the deacon to the diocese to which he belongs;
2. The fact that he has children of such a tender age as to be in need of motherly care; and
3. The fact that he has parents or parents-in-law who are elderly and in need of care.



In a letter dated 13th July 2005 (Prot. N. 1080/05), Francis Cardinal Arinze⁷⁷ points out that the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI has directed that in the case of widowed permanent deacons who seek a dispensation from the *impedimentum ordinis* in order to marry and remain in ministry **‘will be taken into consideration only when the following conditions occur together’.**

The conditions are:

1. The great and proven usefulness of the deacon’s ministry;
2. Attestation by the bishop; and
3. The care of minor children.

⁷⁶ Pope Paul VI, apostolic Letter Containing Norms for the Order of the diaconate, *Ad Pascendum*, 15 August 1972, In Flannery, A (ed), Vatican Council II, The Conciliar And Post Conciliar Documents, §

16

⁷⁷ The Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments.

The previous conditions of ‘great and proven usefulness’ and the presence of young children remain in place, while the specific requirement for the *votum* of the diocesan bishop is made explicit, and the former condition of the presence of elderly parents or parents-in-law has been dropped. Perhaps most significant is the requirement that all three of these conditions, as newly articulated, must be present concurrently. Previously any of the three conditions taken would have been sufficient.

9.6 Formation programs for Permanent deacons

The Code of Canon Law assigns in canon 236 to Episcopal conferences the duty to issue appropriate norms for the formation of permanent deacons:

“Those who aspire to the permanent diaconate are to be formed in the spiritual life and appropriately instructed in the fulfilment of the duties proper to that order, in accordance with the provisions made by the Episcopal Conference. Men of more mature years, whether celibate or married, are to prepare for three years in a manner determined by the same Episcopal Conference.”

The minimum age for the ordination of permanent deacons is 25 years for celibate men and 35 years for married men. (Can. 1031 § 2) Liptak (1983:119) points out that Episcopal conferences can demand a higher age (Can. 1031 § 3) and the Bishop can grant dispensation for one year (Can. 1031 § 4).⁷⁸ However any dispensation beyond a year over the age required in § 1 and § 2 is reserved to the Apostolic See.

Concerning the praying of the liturgy of the hours, “permanent deacons are to recite that part of it determined by the Episcopal Conference” (Can. 276 § 3).⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Code of Canon Law, “the code”, p184

⁷⁹ Code of Canon Law, “the code”, p47

Chapter 2

Magisterial teaching about the Permanent Diaconate

With the restoration of the permanent diaconate in the previous chapter, I now turn to the magisterial teaching about the permanent diaconate. The elements below should be by no means seen as so many distinct and isolated components of the restoration of the diaconate; they are all intimately related. This means that in discussing a specific aspect of the diaconate the restoration is always in the background. The emphasis throughout should be on the wholeness and indivisibility of the permanent diaconate. I begin with some reflections on the teachings of Pope John Paul II, the curial documents of 1998 and the year 2000 Jubilee celebrations. The latter will be longer than others, mainly because all the issues that will emerge in subsequent sections are already present here.

1 Teachings of Pope John Paul II about the Permanent Diaconate

The Second Vatican Council did not establish a clear theology of the permanent diaconate. Over a period of time, and in a few programmatic speeches, Pope John Paul II shared his interpretations and his understanding about the permanent diaconate according to Second Vatican Council documents.

In September 1987, during a pastoral visit to the United States of America, the Holy Father gathered with about 2000 deacons and their spouses in Detroit. It was here that he presented his first recorded programmatic talk about the diaconate. The Holy Father describes the deacons as *“a great and visible sign of the work of the Holy Spirit in the wake of the Second Vatican Council which provided for the restoration of the permanent diaconate in the church? The wisdom of that provision is evident in your presence in such numbers today and the fruitfulness of your ministries (Sherman 1991:126).”*

He emphasises the diaconate as a vocation, “a call to service” and makes his own concept of Pope Paul VI in *Ad Pascendum* on the diaconate as a ‘driving force’ for the Church’s service and as a sign or sacrament of Christ, the servant.

In his own words he states:

“The service of the deacon is the Church’s service sacramentalised. Yours is not just one ministry among others, but it is truly meant to be, as Pope Paul VI described it, a “driving force” for the church’s diakonia. By your ordination you are configured to Christ in his servant role. You are also meant to be living signs of the servanthood of his church (Sherman 1991:126f).”

He goes on to emphasize

“the interrelation of the three areas of ministry that are traditionally associated with the diaconate, the areas of the Ministry of the Word, the Ministry of the Altar, and the Ministry of Charity.” A three-fold ministry.

Pope John Paul II says that depending on circumstances, one or another of these may receive particular emphasis in an individual deacon’s work, but these three ministries are inseparably joined together as one in the service of God’s redemptive plan. This is so because the word of God inevitably leads us to the Eucharistic worship of God at the altar; in turn this worship leads us to a new way of living, which expresses itself in acts of charity.

The ministry of charity responds to the spiritual and material poverty of people. Referring to *Gaudium et Spes* 40ff, the Pope stresses that it obliges us to be a positive influence for change in the world in which we live, that is, to be leaven ...so that society may be renewed by Christ and transformed into the family of God.

It is interesting to note that Pope John Paul II at this stage does not yet use the expression. “Evangelisation” in his speech, furthermore one can notice that he describes the ministry of deacons in those categories in which, his predecessor, Pope Paul VI describe the evangelising activity of the church in “*Evangelii Nuntiandi*” not only proclaiming Christ to those who do not know him, but also bring the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within.

During a general audience in October 1993, on consecutive Wednesdays, Pope John Paul II presented catechesis about the diaconate to the assembled pilgrims explaining to them that a deeply felt need to re-establish the permanent diaconate was and is that

of greater and more direct presence of Church ministers in the various spheres of the family, work, school, etc., in addition to existing pastoral structures.⁸⁰

The Holy Father also presented an interpretation of the function of deacons to lead dispersed Christian communities in the name of the parish priest or bishop. This he says is a missionary function where a priest is lacking or not in territories, surroundings, social context and groups where a priest is lacking or not easily available.

He continues to say that this is a supply function, which the deacon fulfils by ecclesial mandate when it is in the case of providing for the shortage of Priest.⁸¹

On November 30, 1995 Pope John Paul II addressed the plenary assembly of the Congregation of the Clergy about the diaconate and new evangelisation. He concurs that reflecting on the ministry and life of permanent deacons, and in the light of the experience acquired so far, it is necessary to proceed with careful Theological research and prudent pastoral sense, in view of the new evangelisation on the threshold of the third millennium. He further emphasized that the vocation of the permanent deacon is a great gift of God to the Church and for this reason is an important field of Pastoral activity in view of the new evangelisation.

He points out that he expects from deacons a

“fidelity to the task of re-evangelisation which the Holy Spirit has brought about in the Church”

and he ends with a request to Our Lady

“to accompany the Church in this important field of pastoral activity in view of the new evangelisation.”

In the Paul VI Auditorium, the Holy Father, Pope John Paul II addressed the deacons at the 2000 Jubilee Celebrations for Permanent deacons in Vatican City

He called upon all Christians to become fervently missionaries and he especially encourages the deacons:

⁸⁰ John Paul II, Catechesis on the diaconate at the General Audience, 6th October 1993, in L'Osservatore Romano, Weekly Edition, 13th October 1993, p11

⁸¹ John Paul II, Catechesis on the diaconate at the General Audience, 13th October 1993, in L'Osservatore Romano, Weekly Edition, 20th October 1993, p11

“Dear Deacons, be active apostles of the new evangelisation. Lead everyone to Christ! Through your efforts, may his kingdom also spread in your family, in your workplace, in the parish, in the diocese, in the whole world?”

Pope John Paul II shares with the deacons that in the current times there are people whom God calls to the martyrdom of blood. Goes on to say that there must be plenty who must endure the “martyrdom of misunderstanding” He encourages the deacons not to be upset by problems and conflicts but to place their trust in Jesus who redeemed humanity through the martyrdom of the cross. He acknowledges that some deacons are tired because of the burden of their duties, their frustration due to unsuccessful apostolic projects; because of misunderstandings. *“Do not lose heart! Throw yourself in Christ arms: he will refresh you.”* The Holy Father concludes that the deacon’s spirituality is essential one of service.⁸²

2 The Curial documents relating to Permanent deacons

2.1 Joint Declaration and introduction

It is thirty years since the permanent diaconate was restored by the Second Vatican Council. Many episcopates have flourished in many parts of the church throughout the world with outstanding results, especially in the area of missionary work. The growth of the permanent diaconate gave rise to a need for certain unity of direction, clarification of concepts, as well as for practical encouragement and more clearly defined pastoral objectives addressing the fundamental doctrinal vision, that of, discernment of vocation, including the life, ministry, spirituality and formation of deacons. This was in order to obtain a global vision for the diaconate worldwide. This study was under taken by the Congregation for Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy which recorded:

“Both Congregations having consulted the Episcopate throughout the world and numerous experts discussed the permanent diaconate at their Plenary Assemblies in November 1995. The cardinal members together with the Archbishop and Bishop members carefully considered the various consultations and numerous submissions made in the matter. As a result, the final texts of the ‘Ratio fundamentalis institutionis diaconorum permanentium’

⁸² Pope John Paul II addressing Deacons at the 2000 Jubilee Celebrations for Permanent Deacons in Vatican City

and the Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons were drafted by the two Congregations and faithfully reflected points and proposals from every geographical area represented at the Plenary Assemblies.”⁸³

The “Directory” pointed out that the work of both Plenaries came together on many points and agreements concerning the clear need for greater uniformity in training to ensure pastoral effectiveness.

2.2 Basic norms for the Formation of Permanent Deacons

Here I would draw your attention to human, spiritual, doctrinal and pastoral formation not forgetting that the deacon should develop a strong missionary sensitivity. What is important for deacons to understand is that formation is an ongoing process that continues for the rest of his life and does not stop at his ordination.

2.2.1 Human formation

The “Directory” makes it clear that men aspiring to become deacons should have formation in the human virtues, that is, “to love the truth, to be loyal, to respect every person, to have a sense of justice, to be true to their word, to be genuinely compassionate, to be men of integrity and, especially, to be balanced in judgement and behaviour”⁸⁴ I can assure you that an important aspect of being a deacon is the capacity to relate to one another. The root of the capacity to relate to others is seen in affective maturity. Hence the deacon, as the canon relates, should be of a mature age before ordination.

The “Directory” points out the “many aspects of human maturity—Human qualities, ability to relate, affective maturity, training in freedom and education of the moral conscience – must be considered, taking into account the age and previous formation of the candidates, when planning programmes tailored to the individual.”⁸⁵

2.2.2 Spiritual formation

I concur that human formation leads one to find its completion in spiritual formation, which constitutes the heart and unifying centre of all Christian formation. Clerics have a special obligation to seek holiness in their lives because they are consecrated to

⁸³ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, p 8

⁸⁴ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 66, p 58

⁸⁵ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 70, p 61

God by a new title in the reception of orders as dispensers of God's mysteries in the service of His people. It is the development of a new life received through the Sacraments of Christian initiation – Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

“Baptism is the beginning of a new life; Confirmation which is its strengthening; and the Eucharist which nourishes the disciple with Christ's Body and Blood for his transformation in Christ (Chapman 1999:289)

When an aspiring deacon begins his journey of formation, he has already had a certain experience of the Spiritual life, that of, recognising the works of the Holy Spirit, reading and listening to the Word of God, meditating on the Word of God. He has a thirst for prayer and a commitment to the service of the people of God. He has a willingness to make sacrifices and a sense of Church, apostolic zeal. He has been involved in the lay ministry within his parish.⁸⁶

I wish to state that my understanding of diaconal spirituality is to discover and share in the love of Christ who came not to be served but to serve. The source of this new capacity to love and service is the Eucharist from which everything flows. Another element of diaconal spirituality according to the “directory” is the Word of God and it goes with a clear understanding that the aspiring deacon must learn to know the Word of God even more deeply and to seek in it constant nourishment for his spiritual life.⁸⁷ At the ordination of the deacon, the Archbishop will present the book of the Gospels to the deacon: *“Receive the Gospel of Christ whose herald you now are. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach.”* The key of the deacons' spirituality is the spirit of service to the people of God (Chapman 1999:352).

In essence the primary sources of a deacon's spirituality are his participation in the sacraments of Christian initiation, as well as his sacramental identity and participation in ordained ministry. For married deacons, their spirituality is nurtured further in the Sacrament of Marriage, which sanctifies conjugal love and constitutes it as a sign of the love with which Christ gives himself to the Church (Chapman 1999:361f).

⁸⁶ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 74, p 63

⁸⁷ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 74, p 63

For the celibate deacon, loving God and serving his neighbor roots his whole person in a total and undivided consecration to Christ. For all deacons, there model must be Jesus Christ, the Servant, who lived totally at the service of his Father, for the good of every person. To live the ministry to the fullest, deacons must know and have an intimately relationship with Jesus Christ so that He may shoulder the burdens of the deacon's ministry.

Deacons are obligated to give priority to the spiritual life and to live their *diakonia* with generosity. To know Christ, is to be fully aware of the person of Jesus in the Gospels. To have an ongoing personal relationship with Christ based on love. Deacons should integrate their family obligations, professional life, and ministerial responsibilities so as to grow in their commitment to the person and mission of Christ, the Servant.

2.2.3 Doctrinal formation

For intellectual formation it is necessary for nourishment of the aspiring deacons' spiritual life and an aid to his ministry.

The "Directory" sets out criteria⁸⁸ (4 points) which must be followed in preparing this formation.

Viz.:

- a) *necessity for the deacon to be able to explain his faith and to bring to maturity a living ecclesial conscience;*
- b) *attention to his formation for the specific duties of his ministry;*
- c) *importance of acquiring the capacity to read a situation and an adequate inculturation of the Gospel;*
- d) *usefulness of knowing communication techniques and group dynamics, the ability to speak in public, and to be able to give guidance and counsel.*

The "directory" also lays out the contents⁸⁹ that must be taken into consideration when looking at the above criteria:

⁸⁸ Congregation for the Clergy, "Directory", § 80, p 65

⁸⁹ Congregation for the Clergy, "Directory", § 81, p 66

- a) *Introduction to Sacred Scripture and its right interpretation; the theology of the Old and New Testament; the interrelation between Scripture and Tradition; the use of Scripture in preaching, catechesis and pastoral activity in general;*
- b) *Introduction to the study of the Fathers of the Church and an elementary knowledge of the history of the church;*
- c) *Fundamental theology, with illustration of the sources, topics and methods of theology, presentation of questions relating to Revelation and the formation of the relationship between faith and reason which will enable the future deacons to explain the reasonableness of the faith;*
- d) *Dogmatic theology, with its various treatises: Trinity, creation, Christology, ecclesiology and ecumenism, Mariology, Christian anthropology, sacraments (especially theology of the ordained ministry); eschatology;*
- e) *Christian morality, in its personal and social dimensions and, in particular, the social doctrine of the church;*
- f) *Spiritual theology;*
- g) *Liturgy; and*
- h) *Canon law.*

In addition to the above candidates should be predisposed to continuing their formation after ordination.⁹⁰

2.2.4 Pastoral formation

Pastoral formation coincides with spiritual formation. It focuses deeper on the diakonia of Christ. This theological discipline is called pastoral theology. The scope of this discipline is the presentation of the principles, the criteria and the methods which guide the apostolic-missionary work of the church.⁹¹

The “Directory” states that the pastoral theology programmed⁹² for the deacons will pay particular attention to those fields which are eminently diaconal, such as:

- a) *Liturgical praxis: administration of the sacraments and sacramentals, service at the altar;*

⁹⁰ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 84, p 67

⁹¹ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 85, p 67

⁹² Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 86, p 68

- b) *Proclamation of the Word in the varied contexts of ministerial service: kerygma, catechesis, preparation for the sacraments, homily;*
- c) *The Church's commitment to social justice and charity;*
- d) *The life of the community, in particular the guidance of family teams, small communities, groups and movements.*

2.3 Directory for the ministry and life of permanent deacons

The diaconal ministry of the deacon has a threefold dimension, viz.:

- diaconia of the Word.
- diaconia of the liturgy.
- diaconia of charity.

I am in agreement with Archbishop Roberto Gonzalez Nieves who stated that the diaconate is a threefold ministry because in the person of the deacon, these three offices are concentric. What he means is that they turn around the pivot of Christ the servant in the person of the deacon. He gives an example that you cannot draw a circle without first fixing the centre where you will lay your compasses. A circle is defined by its centre, just as the three-fold diaconal ministry is defined by Christ the servant.⁹³

2.3.1 Diaconia of the Word

During the rite of ordination the Bishop gives the Book of the Gospels to the deacon:

*“Receive the Gospel of Christ whose herald you now are,
Believe what you read,
teach what you believe,
and practice what you teach.”*

The deacon must always remain a student of God's word, for only when the Word is deeply rooted in his own life can he bring that Word to others.

It is for the Deacon to proclaim the Gospel in the liturgical celebration and to preach the Word of God in accordance with the conditions established by Canon Law.

⁹³ Roberto Gonzalez Nieves, 2000. The Permanent Diaconate: its Identity, Functions and Prospects. Paper delivered at Holy year 2000 Jubilee for permanent deacons. Vatican city

Deacons have the faculty to preach everywhere, in accordance with the conditions established by law. “This faculty is founded on the Sacrament of Ordination and should be exercised with at least the tacit consent of the rector of the churches concerned and with that humility proper to one who is servant and not master of the word of God.”⁹⁴

It is noted that when a deacon presides at a liturgical celebration, the “directory” mentions that depending on the relevant norms the deacon shall give due importance to the homily and supports the statement, since it “proclaims the marvels worked by God in the mystery of Christ, present and effective in the liturgical celebrations.”⁹⁵ Care should be taken in how we train deacons in order that they can prepare their homilies in prayer, in studying the sacred texts, in perfect harmony with the church’s teachings and in keeping with the situation of those to whom they preach. This is to help and assist the Christian faithful to grow in knowledge of their faith in Christ, in order to strengthen it by reception of the sacraments and to express it in their family, professional and social life.⁹⁶

It is important to note that deacons are co-workers who are to collaborate with their bishop and the priests in the exercise of a ministry which is not of their wisdom but of the Word of God, calling all to conversion and holiness.⁹⁷

Deacons are the heralds of the Gospels, who proclaim the Word; I believe that they should always break open the Word when they preside at a liturgy in the absence of a priest.

2.3.2 Diaconia of the liturgy

The “Directory” confirms that deacons receive the Sacrament of Orders, so as to serve as a vested minister in the sanctification of the Christian community in hierarchical communion with the bishop and priests. The liturgical ministry of the deacon differs in essence from that of the laity and is also distinct from that of the ordained priestly ministry.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 24, p 90

⁹⁵ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 25, p 91

⁹⁶ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 25, p 91

⁹⁷ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 26, p 92

⁹⁸ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 28, p 94

The “Directory” explains it clearly:

“In the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the deacon does not celebrate the mystery: rather, he effectively represents on the one hand, the people of God and helps them to unite their lives to the offering of Christ; while on the other hand, in the name of Christ himself, he helps the Church to participate in the fruits of that sacrifice, since the liturgy is the summit towards which the activity of the church is directed and the font from which all her power flows.”⁹⁹

According to the tradition of the Church and provisions of law, deacons are assistants to bishops and priests at liturgical celebrations.

2.3.3 Diaconia of Charity

Being an ordained deacon in the Church’s ministry of charity, the deacon assumes the duties entrusted to him by his bishop with humility and enthusiasm. At the core of his spirituality, a deacon puts on Christ and is guided by the love of Christ in caring for all in his charge.

The Directory stresses in detail the duty of the bishop to confer on the deacons an ecclesiastical office in the proper way:

“In conferring such office, careful attention should be given to both the pastoral needs and the personal, family, and professional situation of permanent deacons. In every case it is important, however, the deacons fully exercise their ministry, in preaching, in the liturgy and in charity to the extent that circumstances permit. They should not be relegated to marginal duties, be made to merely act as substitutes, nor discharge duties normally entrusted to non-ordained members of the faithful. Only in this way will the true identity of permanent deacons as ministers of Christ become apparent and the impression avoided that deacons are simple lay people particularly involved in the life of the Church. For the good of the deacon and to prevent improvisation ordination should be accompanied by a clear investiture of pastoral responsibility.”¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 28, p 94

¹⁰⁰ Congregation for the Clergy, “Directory”, § 40, p 104

3 Year 2000 Jubilee celebration for Permanent Deacons

I now wish to discuss the year 2000 Jubilee celebrations for Permanent Deacons. I was privileged to attend this Jubilee celebration conference and the papers delivered gave a key insight and understanding into the Diaconate. These papers also give us an opportunity to examine them in today's context of diaconal ministry.

3 papers were delivered at the year 2000 Jubilee celebration for Permanent deacons that took place on February 18 – 20 at Vatican City.

3.1 Saint Lawrence the Deacon: a model for our times

A paper delivered by Rev. Prof Francesco Moragila, Director of the office of culture and the university, Archdiocese of Genoa.

In his paper, Francesco Moragila, speaks about the diaconate in the early history of the church and shares how great bishops and priests who have illuminated the profound mystery of the ordained ministry at a pastoral and theological level. He relates that the ministry of deacons becomes clearer when seen in the light of the great deacons of the Church's history. Reference is made to Pope Paul VI, apostolic letter, *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*, where he reiterates that the "diaconate is not to be considered as a mere step towards the priesthood, but it is so adorned with its own indelible character and its own special grace so that those who are called to it can permanently serve the mysteries of Christ and the Church". Francesco Moragila points out that the permanent diaconate constitutes an important enrichment for the Church's mission. He sees the joint declaration of 1998 made by the Congregation for the Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy which prefaces the basic norms for the formation of permanent deacons and the directory on the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons as a clarification and future orientation.

He focuses on the personal adventures of Lawrence, Proto Deacon of the Roman Church and refers to documents recorded by St Ambrose¹⁰¹ who was an earlier writer.

¹⁰¹ St Ambrose died in 397AD.

St Ambrose gives an eloquent account of the martyrdom of St Lawrence in his document *De Officiis*.

Francesco Moragila concurs with St Ambrose that a deacon is one who:

1. Having been sacramentally constituted in the service of offering (Diakonia), lives his diaconal ministry giving supreme witness to Christ in Martyrdom.
2. In virtue of the structural link which binds him to the bishop, lives “ecclesial communion” by specific service to the bishop, beginning with the Eucharist and in reference to the Eucharist.
3. In virtue of the Sacrament, devotes himself totally to the service of an integral charity and not merely to a human or social solidarity, and thereby manifests the most characteristic element of the Diaconia.

Francesco Moragila examined the characteristics of a deacon as one who has been sacramentally constituted in the service of offering (Diakonia) and concludes that the principle characteristic defining a deacon’s ministry is that he is ordained for the service of charity. He then goes on to explain what is meant by the service of charity. Referring to the structural link, he underlines that the deacon is a “man of communion”, precisely through a specific service to the bishop and that in the diaconal ministry; everything revolves around the altar, since in the Church, everything, beginning with charity, has its origins in the Most Holy Eucharist. He points out that the structural relationship between the deacon and his bishop is clearly expressed in today’s liturgy of Ordination that is in contrast with that for the ordination of Bishops and Priests. The diaconate ordination ceremony reserves the imposition of hands to the ordaining bishop alone, precisely to highlight this characteristic, singular bond linking Bishop and deacon. Finally referring to the deacon in virtue of the Sacrament, Francesco Moragila gives St Ambrose’s account of the martyrdom of Lawrence who portrays Lawrence as one who, in virtue of the Sacrament receives is totally dedicated to the service of charity in the specific context of third century Imperial Rome. In that situation Lawrence was called to concrete action before the ecclesial community and before the world. Lawrence’s, actions were transformed into signs of God’s love and charity, from which all things derive and to which all return. It is in this service that the deacon expresses the characteristic ministry of his diaconia which consist in the service of charity, in accord with a sacramental mandate.

Francesco Moragila concluded his paper of the reflection on the ministry of deacons, with the following observations which I quote.

1. *It is necessary to look critically on those positions – which in reality have been superseded – which interpret or present the diaconate as a ministry leading to the clericalisation of the laity and to the laicization of the clergy, thereby weakening the identity of both.*
2. *The deacon, who is distinguished from bishops and priests in that he is not ordained “ad sacerdotium sed ad ministerium”, is constituted in an authentic grade of the hierarchy and cannot be regarded merely as an accessory to the priesthood.*
3. *The deacon is destined for the service of charity in close dependence on the Eucharist and to the privileged service of the poor. He is destined both to the service of the table (Corporal works of mercy) and to the service of the Word (Spiritual works of Mercy).*

3.2 The Permanent Deacon: his identity, role and perspective

(A paper delivered by The Most Rev. Roberto Octavia Gonzalez. Archbishop of Puerto Rica.)

Roberto Gonzalez exams the theological aspect of the diaconate in order to better understand the peculiarity of the diaconate within the Church He first re-examined a number of points about the mystery of the sacramental apostolic ministry which he notes that in it is to be found the diaconate. His remarks on the permanent diaconate – its identity, functions and prospects – he records are based on the apostolic nature of the diaconate.

In his paper he looks at the identity of the laity and the diaconate, in essence he answers his question; “*Who are we*” referring to article 33 of *Lumen Gentium* he stated,

“Gathered together in the People of God and established in the one body of Christ under one head, the laity – no matter who they are- have, as living members, the vocation of applying to the building up of the Church.”

Roberto Gonzalez stated that there are both lay and ordained ministers who work as clerks in their dioceses, running parishes and are responsible for the works of charity in their dioceses.

Referring to the restoration of the diaconate in the Western Church he records that the Church's pastoral needs have driven the Pope and Bishops to call both lay and ordained brothers to fulfil the duties of teaching and sanctifying. Without taking any functions away from the lay ministries, the Second Vatican Council called for the restoration of the diaconate as a permanent ministry in the Church.

Roberto Gonzalez asked the question,

“Why should the diaconate be re-established when all its functions can be fulfilled by lay brothers?”

He argued the point following a business rationale, which he says can also be defined as pragmatism. He concluded his argument that our Lord said that

“the people of this world are shrewder in dealing with their own kind than are the people of light” (Lk 16:8).

He praised managers, not their methods and that in the diaconate we are faced with a mystery, not a business deal. Roberto Gonzalez sees the re-institution of the diaconate, not to replace the presbyterate, not to threaten the laity, but to act as a herald: the angel of the Annunciation - a new Gabriel who proclaims the Good News of Salvation. Like Mary who responded to the angel,

“I am the Lord's servant. May it be to me as you have said” (Lk1:38).

He points out that it was in this context that the Council Fathers restored the diaconate, between the laity and the presbyterate, like a bishop's missing arm and immediately ratifies that the diaconate is not an artificial arm. Rather the arm is a living arm in whose veins flows the blood of Christ the Servant.

Roberto Gonzalez mentions that although theology is not conclusive about the diaconate, the faith in its revealed nature is not in question. He then explores the diaconate from the writings of St Luke and St Paul in the New Testament and brings across the point that like St Stephen and St Philip who preached and catechised, deacons have devoted themselves right from the start solely to serving the Eucharist.

He records that Holy Orders ordains deacons to the ministry of Christ the Servant for the deacon is invested with the sacrament of Order to serve as a minister in the sanctification of the Christian Community in conjunction with the bishop and his body of priests.

Roberto Gonzalez now turns his focus to the three diaconal ministries of the Word, of the liturgy, and of charity. Roberto Gonzalez points out the similarities between the Episcopal and diaconal ordination rites. He stated that it is no mere coincidence that in the Episcopal, priestly and diaconal ordinations of the Byzantine rite, the same formula is used for the all consecration services and that the words “bishop”, “priest”, or “deacon” are interchanged depending on the service.

While Roberto Gonzalez brings out the similarities, he also points out that the office of bishop is to proclaim the Gospel, priests share this office with their bishop, deacons, in contrast, are conferred the office of preaching the Gospel to the assembly of the faithful in their diaconal ordination as minister of Christ the Servant. Moreover, deacons must turn the Gospel into living faith, teach it and accomplish it.

Roberto Gonzalez argued the point that the deacon is the herald of Christ’s Gospel and stresses the aspect of preaching the Gospel:

“When he is ordained, a deacon is commanded by his bishop, the successor of the apostles, to preach the Gospel. This brings about a deep change in his being. The deacon’s physical breath is now inspired by the Holy Spirit so that what he will preach and teach will not sound like a mere human voice. From that moment on, the deacon’s preaching and teaching must be the voice of Christ, true God and true man.”

He also concluded that for deacons to be the means that echo the Word of God, they must receive both human and spiritual training, both theological and practical training. They must acquire the skills to speak in public, to preach and teach. As catechist, they must know the bible, but not as a teacher would: they should be able to experience its precepts and put them into practice on the various occasions of the faithful’s lives. Roberto Gonzalez points out that the ministry of the Word explicitly compels the deacon to know the Gospel, to proclaim it, experience it and disseminate it. He reminds the deacons that training is important so that the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit,

“wisdom, understanding, knowledge, piety, counsel, fortitude, and fear of the Lord” (Is 11:2-4),

which are conferred through ordination should produce rich food in them.

In his conclusion on the ministry of the Word he stressed that though deacons are engaged in baptismal and pre-marriage catechesis these are not their only activities. Deacons, as ministers of the Word, embody the word itself in the service of the liturgy and of charity.

Roberto Gonzalez, referring to the ministry of the liturgy, stated that the deacon manifests his diakonia to the Church when it is sacramentally expressed through the liturgy and that it is important for the deacon to know his office in the liturgy. He pointed out that people tend to limit the deacon’s liturgical function to the sacrament of Baptism or Marriage, as well as to other things the deacon “can” do, forgetting the diaconate office. He goes on to say that the deacon “helps” both inside and outside the liturgy. The deacon must assist the celebrant; he must know “when”, “how” and “why” the celebrant does or say a particular thing at a particular moment. The deacon must be “the celebrant’s right hand” with dignity, humbleness and efficiency, performing his function properly without disturbing and undermining the fluidity of ceremonies.

Roberto Gonzalez stated that if this ministry of liturgy proves to be true, we could wonder why the majority of current deacons play a marginal role in the Roman liturgy. He finds it necessary to analyze the causes and the circumstances that contributed to the creation of such a diaconal inertia.

Firstly he points out that the diaconate disappeared almost totally from the Western Church, the Latin liturgy though maintained the diaconal office in almost all church ceremonies. Since the diaconate did not become extinct within the Church, however, as most of the times no deacons were available their role was played by presbyters who use to wear the dalmatic. He points out that with reforms of the Second Vatican Council the presbyters were not allowed to wear diaconal vestments, but were entitled to wear sacerdotal paraments, since they could perform the diaconal function, especially during celebrations presided by the bishop.

Roberto Gonzalez is of the opinion that it is time they must look at the Ceremonial since years have elapsed between the end of the age-old Solemn Mass, with a deacon and subdeacon, and the restoration of the diaconate. The time frame he believes is long enough to make the clerical community forget, “*Holy Mass said by three priest*” having such an intense diaconal minister.

Secondly, the post-council reform formally establishes lay participation in many liturgical services dating from the days preceding the pontificate of Pope John XXIII which had their origins in the so-called “dialogue mass”¹⁰² as well as in the “community mass”¹⁰³ supported by the liturgical movements. Lacking the deacon and in the absence of a presbyter wearing a dalmatic the functions were given to lay men yet the ideal minister should be the deacon. He points out that in the case of the universal prayer, the same happens to other functions that are truly diaconal and gives examples.

Thirdly, Roberto Gonzalez stated that the diaconate is restored in a world that ignores its meaning. He explains that when a deacon is sent to a parish church that has never had such a ministry before, it seems as if he “deprives” or “steals” other peoples’ office, such as the celebrant, the altar-boys, the extra-ordinary ministers of the Holy Communion and anyone else who is serving mass. His presence is apparently a threat to recently established ministers, which have become age-old and tradition. He points out that the deacon by performing his liturgical function must only do his office and know it well. He says what is true for the deacon is also true for the presbyter and the other ministries. Yet there are still celebrants that do not understand the liturgical presence of a deacon.

Fourthly: Roberto Gonzalez relates that a minister that is not mentioned in any rubrics, institutions and orientations of current rites succeeded in surviving the reforms of the second Vatican Council is that of the Master of Ceremonies, who is apparently so powerful to undermine the role played by other ministers, especially the deacon. In this regard Roberto Gonzalez says we must ask the Lord for a truce, the

¹⁰² During the mass the congregation answered in Latin and read the Ordinary in Latin together with the celebrant.

¹⁰³ During the mass, the congregation used to sing a vernacular paraphrase from the Ordinary of the mass

proverbial peace of God, during which the masters of ceremonies and the deacon could clasp in an embrace of peace, harmony, love and mutual respect.

Roberto Gonzalez gives clarification on the ministry of charity as some people are reducing the diaconate to mere social functions. There are deacons that have been trained for social action and think that all the rest is second and third. Then he says there are others who say that the deacon must not serve on the altar. He makes it clear that the diaconate cannot and must not be limited to social services. On the other side he accepts that in the early Christian communities the “first deacons” appointed by the apostles were called to this ministry, he recalls St Stephen as an example who engaged in this office of love for the poorest. The Church, he says will always have a preferential option for the poor and the outcast. The whole Church is responsible for the diakonia of Charity. However he points out that deacons are agents of justice and peace because through their ministry of charity, they are responsible for always promoting the search for the kingdom of God and justice. He keeps repeating that deacons are the visible signs of Christ the Servant in this world and to him the deacons, ministers of the altar, are the best representation of the relationship between the Eucharist (conversion and communion) and the struggle for social justice.

In closing his paper, and as a future prospect, Roberto Gonzalez quotes the Decree *Ad Gentes* (article no 16) of the Second Vatican Council to the possibility that a Christian community be entrusted to the care of a deacon on behalf of his parish priest, the bishop may ask a deacon to run his parish community as appointed minister, fulfilling this office in order to promote Christ’s missionary activity.

3.3 The ideal family of the Permanent Deacon

A paper delivered by J. Francis Cardinal Stafford, President of the Pontifical Council for the laity.

His paper is divided into three sections namely:

1. The deacon as an ideal husband.
2. The deacon as an ordained minister.
3. Elements of the deacon’s spirituality.

3.3.1 The deacon as an ideal husband

Cardinal Stafford refers to St Paul who gives the description of the wife and husband in his letter to Ephesians. He says that the well known text is foundational for Christian marriage and sexuality. St Paul introduces this unsurpassed instruction on marriage with a general command. "Be subject to one another out of reverence to Christ." Cardinal Stafford explores the teaching of St Paul covering all relations amongst Christians, including husbands and wives.

3.3.2 The deacon as an ordained minister

Cardinal Stafford takes his text from the Rite of ordination of the deacon. He says that it articulates the Church's faith in the Sacrament of the Diaconate. From that flows the deacon's spirituality. He points out that the rite of ordination indicates that the bishop lays his hands in silence upon the man. This gesture, he says, is an ancient sign of the transmission of a charge, quoting in the Old Testament - Moses lays his hands on Joshua, who thereby receives the Spirit to guide his people. Cardinal Stafford analyses the rite and points out that the word "servant" specifies the deacon's sacramental mystery and therefore his spirituality. This he supports by the 1968 Apostolic Constitution of Pope Paul VI, *Pontificalis Romani* where it is written that deacons, "strengthened by sacramental grace, in communion, with the bishop and the presbyterium, ...serve the people of God in the *diaconia* of the liturgy, of the word, and of charity. He stressed that only the bishop lays hands on the deacon and not the priest, this he says, manifest in a negative manner the difference between the 'ministry' of the priest and the 'priesthood' of the priest. The sacramental nature of the diaconate is clear. The deacon is a *sacramentum-persona* of Jesus the servant of God. Cardinal Stafford sums up that the deacon, by sharing in the apostolic mystery of which only the bishop, a total and permanent sign, is in the fullness of the priesthood of Christ, the deacon himself sums up the servant character of the whole church.

3.3.3 Elements of the deacon's spirituality

Cardinal Stafford suggests eleven elements for a deacon's rule of life. He points out that they are complimentary to the instruction found in the 1998 *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* issued by the Vatican Congregation for the Clergy.

1. The spirituality of the deacon is Trinitarian and Incarnational.

2. The deacon and his family heed the exhortation of Pope John Paul II “Family, become what you are!”¹⁰⁴
3. The Sunday Eucharist is the life-center of the deacon and his family.
4. Daily prayer – the divine office.
5. The Sacrament of Baptism configures the deacon in his freedom to the passion, death and resurrection of the Lord.
6. The vocation of a deacon is to be a “confessor” of the faith.
7. The teachings of *Gaudium et Spes* article 37 concerning the things of this world.
8. The deacon to have a Spiritual Director.
9. The deacon and his family to have a deep devotion to the Mother of God.
10. The deacon to celebrate the liturgy of the Hours.
11. The deacon and his family have religious symbols in their home which are integrated into their personal and communal prayer.

In conclusion to his paper, Cardinal Stafford, gives some concrete examples of the ideal Christian family and quotes from the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

“Let everyone revere the deacons as Jesus Christ, the Bishop as the image of the Father, and the presbyters as the senate of God and the assembly of the Apostles. For without them one cannot speak of the church”. (Article 1554)

¹⁰⁴ Pope John Paul II encyclical titled *Familiaria Consortio* article 17

Chapter 3

The diaconate in today's context in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town.

In this chapter, I shall attempt to highlight the diaconate in today's context in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town by firstly tracing the restoration of the permanent diaconate within the jurisdiction of the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops Conference. Secondly, I will focus more specifically on the diaconate in today's context in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town. To understand the diaconate in today's context and to gain a better perspective of the diaconate one needs to understand the processes followed in the training and formation of deacons, the statutes that governs the Council of Deacons, the policy document regarding deacons, the faculty to exercise diaconal ministry and the profile of the deacons in the Archdiocese.

Structure of the Church

The Catholic Church throughout the world is divided into administrative units called diocese. Each diocese is headed by a bishop. In some cases (as in South Africa) those dioceses which are of greater political importance are called Archdiocese and are headed by an Archbishop. In South Africa there are four such Archdioceses, one of which is Cape Town.

Each diocesan bishop in the world is responsible directly to the Pope. In order to facilitate and co-ordinate various matters of national interest such as seminaries, the bishops of South Africa are associated into the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference. The Southern Africa Catholic Bishops Conference has the largest number of Deacons in Africa. In the Conference area the Archdiocese of Cape Town has the largest number under the leadership of Archbishop Lawrence Henry.

1 Southern Africa Catholic Bishops Conference¹⁰⁵

November 21, 1964 the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church (*Lumen Gentium*)¹⁰⁶ were approved and solemnly promulgated by his Holiness Pope Paul VI.

¹⁰⁵ What follows are recordings from correspondence, letters and minutes held in the archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town with kind permission from Archbishop Lawrence Henry.

Three years later on April 13, 1967 Bishop G. Van Velsen addressed the plenary sessions¹⁰⁷ of Bishops on the diaconate.

The following day the conference resolves;

1. That, subject to the approval of the Holy See, it would be opportune to institute the permanent diaconate, involving both married and unmarried deacons, in territories represented by the conference.
2. A committee was set up to make a detail study of the implications of the permanent diaconate for Southern Africa.

The resolution was passed by 28 votes out of 30 members.¹⁰⁸

The committee consisted of Bishop Van Velsen O.P. as chairman, and Bishops Bokenfohr, O.M.I. and Van Hoeck, O.S.B. with power to co-opt other members and to appoint consultants and advisors. Bishop Bilgeri O.S.B., is co-opted as a member of the commission and Fr. A. Scholten, O.P. is appointed secretary.

Owen Cardinal McCann Archbishop of Cape Town, President of the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) in his letter dated April 22, 1967 to Peter Cardinal Agagianian; Cardinal Perfect of the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda fide. Owen Cardinal McCann made a request on behalf of SACBC for approval to implement the Permanent Diaconate in its territories.

“The Conference resolves that, subject to the approval of the Holy See, it would be opportune to institute the Permanent diaconate, involving both married and unmarried deacons in the territories represented by the Conference.”

The bishops confirmed that the resolution was taken in terms of Paragraph 29 of the Constitution of the Church “*Lumen Gentium*” and paragraph 16 of the decree on the missionary activity of the Church “*Ad Gentes*”.

¹⁰⁶ Dogmatic constitution on the church.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html [10.03.2008]

¹⁰⁷ See minutes of SACBC meeting April 11 – 14 , 1967 at Constantia , Cape Town

¹⁰⁸ See letter sent from SACBC to Cardinal Perfect of the Sacred College de Propaganda fide dated April 22, 1976

May 8, 1967, Peter Cardinal Agagianian replied to Owen Cardinal McCann's request for the necessary authorisation that it would be inopportune to do anything at this stage since a document on the Diaconate was to be published shortly.

June 13, 1967 Bishop Van Hoeck submits a memorandum to SACBC and reports on his plans to restore the diaconate in the diocese of Pietersburg.

By August 25, 1967 no document on the diaconate was forthcoming and it was generally felt that the time was ready for the conference to go ahead with the restoration. Bishop Van Velsen stated that the committee would be ready to report at the next SACBC plenary session. He suggested that the restoration of the diaconate be given as study material to various groups, such as Parish Councils in each diocese. These groups were asked in the meanwhile to seek out suitable candidates and to advise the committee.

The Diocesan Council of Kroonstad met on January 29, 1968 in Welkom to discuss the diaconate and issued a report on the outcome of their deliberations.

The Episcopal Committee on the diaconate met in Pretoria February 5, 1968 and passes the following resolutions.¹⁰⁹

1. "A formal application should be sent to Rome for official permission to institute the Diaconate in the territories under the bishops conference;
2. Further clarification be requested from Rome about the possibility of remarriage of widowed deacons;
3. It be left to the Conference to design the intermediate stages which lead to the Diaconate *per modum experimenti*;
4. The principle of pluriformity in training be discussed and accepted by the forthcoming plenary session. A general outline of a syllabus could be prepared;
5. A long and short term policy be followed – if possible, the first deacons to be ordained within 18 months after the forthcoming plenary session;

¹⁰⁹ See minutes of the Episcopal committee dated February 5, 1968

6. The Secretary to be asked to prepare the mind of priest and faithful through issuing a regular bulletin, as well as articles in the Southern Cross and other newspapers.”

The recommendation and the resolutions of the Episcopal committee on the Diaconate were discussed at the SACBC plenary session on February 9, 1968.

On March 2, 1968 Owen Cardinal McCann writes a second letter to the Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelisation of the people for authorisation to institute the Diaconate.

“Further to my letter of April 22, 1967 and your reply thereto (Prot. N.2040/67 of May 8, 1967) in terms of the resolution passed by the Southern Africa Bishops Conference, I hereby formally apply for the necessary permission to institute the permanent Diaconate in the jurisdictions covered by the Episcopal Conference.”

Owen Cardinal McCann received the following reply in a letter dated March 16, 1968.

“Your Eminence, in your esteemed letter of the 2nd inst. You requested, on behalf of the S.A. Catholic Bishops’ Conference, the faculty to institute the permanent Diaconate within the Ecclesiastical territory of the said Conference. Regarding this, I wish to inform Your Eminence that this Sacred Congregation most willingly grants the faculty requested, according to the norms of the Motu Proprio ‘Sacram Diaconatus Ordinem’.”

Attached to the above letter was the Apostolic Letter Motu Proprio – General Norms for restoring the Permanent Diaconate in the Latin Church.

July 16, 1969 the Sacred Congregation pro Institutione Catholica issued a letter¹¹⁰ on the Permanent diaconate addressed to the Pontifical representatives around the world setting up norms for the preparation of candidates for the permanent diaconate.

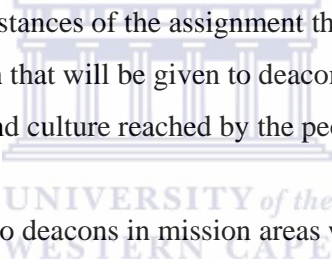
Gabriel Maria Cardinal Garrone stated that the first steps to be taken by each Episcopal Conference is to set up a commission of experts which should study in the

¹¹⁰ See letter of Gabriel Maria Cardinal Garrone dated July 16, 1967

lights of the needs of the particular regions in order to see if there are cogent reasons for the introduction of the permanent diaconate and to decide what may be the best way of establishing it.

He concurs that such a study should be guided by certain fundamental principles that were set out in Pope Paul VI Apostolic Letter by the Motu Proprio “*Sacrum Diaconatus ordinem*” and clearly states that it is necessary to determine the proper functions of a deacon, who is an intermediary between the priest and the faithful.

He states that it must be borne in mind that candidates for the diaconate, as contemplated by the Second Vatican Council may be of two kinds namely young men pledge to celibacy and men of a certain age, already married and engaged in a profession or occupation and Gabriel Maria Cardinal Garrone points out a further distinction arises from:

- 
1. The particular circumstances of the assignment that the deacon will have;
 2. The kind of formation that will be given to deacons will vary according to the level of civilisation and culture reached by the people whom they are destined to serve;
 3. The formation given to deacons in mission areas will be different from that given to them in regions where the church is long established;
 4. That given to deacons in less developed countries will be different from that given to them in more developed regions.

He concludes that due to these distinctions it is for each Episcopal Conference to determine the form/forms of the diaconate and best adapted to the needs of a particular region. This he says will determine the different types of formation and that the courses of studies will vary accordingly.

He points out that any hasty or superficial formation of candidates should be avoided since the duties of deacons are clear from the Constitution “*Lumen Gentium*” (no 29) and from the “*Motu Proprio*” (no 22). The duties are of such a nature that they call for solid and effective formation. He goes on to say that the deacons have to prepare catechumens for baptism; to explain and comment on the Word of God in their preaching; to prepare the faithful for the sacrament of matrimony and to observe the

regulations governing the celebration of the sacrament; to supply for the priest, if he is not available, in preparing the faithful for death and to administer Viaticum to them. Gabriel Maria Cardinal Garrone stresses that all these duties entail a level of doctrinal formation which is different from that of the ordinary catechist and, in some way analogous to that of a priest.

He further points out that it will be for the bishops of each nation to decide the course of studies that will be required of candidates for the diaconate however he states that the course of formation should comprise the following subjects.

- a. *Sacred Scripture: This course should embrace all those elements that enable the deacon to understand the Word of God, so that he may be able to explain it in such away to the people as to help them develop their spiritual life. The deacon in the absence of a priest should be able to give a homily and to preside at the liturgy of the Word.*
- b. *Dogmatic Theology: The level of the course of Dogmatic Theology should correspond to that of the courses given in Institutes of Catechetics to non-clerical Religious or to laypersons of a certain educational level. The whole character of the course should however be more biblical and kerygmatic.*
- c. *Moral Theology: Moral Theology should be presented in such away as to deepen the understanding of the individual, social and political implications of the subject.*
- d. *Canon Law. Special attention should be given to Canon Law regarding Matrimony; the Pastoral theology concerning the preparation for marriage should also be studied.*
- e. *Liturgy: This subject, which could perhaps be studied in conjunction with Dogmatic Theology, should also include some instructions as to the ceremonial aspects of liturgical functions.*
- f. *Further studies that could be usefully studied, in so far as they prepare the candidates for the work of ministry are: psychology, catechetical pedagogy, public speaking, sacred chant, the running of catholic organisations, ecclesiastical administration e.g. keeping of baptismal registers and other such registers.*

1.1 Deacons in our Local Church

In February, 1986 the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops Conference issued a Pastoral directive entitled “Deacons in our Local Church”. In the document the bishop’s states five motives which led them to introduce the diaconate in the region.

1. *To accept existing charisms.*
2. *To promote the diversity of ministries in the Church: We wish to overcome the present situation where almost all responsibilities of a parish are concentrated in the priest alone.*
3. *To clarify the nature of the leadership in the Church: In the parishes of our dioceses a great number of faithful have in recent years fulfilled tasks of service and responsibility which, although they can be lawfully exercised by unordained persons, are more proper to the members of sacred orders. We welcome this widespread involvement, but we also wonder about the meaning of ordination, if so many responsibilities are actually fulfilled without it. The theological nature of responsibility of the Church will be better understood if certain of these responsibilities are fulfilled by deacons.*
4. *To assure the active faithful mentioned under 3 above of the sacramental grace of the diaconate: We feel it is not justified to continue depriving the active faithful who already fulfil many responsibilities normally exercised by deacons, of the spiritual help given by ordination.*
5. *To give an authentic sign of unity to many communities who have no residential priest: Many of the scattered communities who have no residential priest feel isolated and rightfully desire a visible sign of being linked to the structure of the Church. The ordination of some of their own leaders to the diaconate can provide such a sign.*

The Bishops stated that their main emphasis for the Permanent diaconate in Southern Africa was two-fold, viz.:

- be well integrated into the life of the communities.
- be well integrated into all our responsibility for the world around us.

At the time of the document 12 of the 30 dioceses and Prefectures of the SACBC had already begun introducing the permanent diaconate.

Much more space would be needed to do justice to this document of the SACBC. This document is certainly beneficial for the fruitful development of the diaconate. The document covers:

1. The long-term preparation for introducing the permanent diaconate in a parish.
2. The immediate preparation for introducing the Permanent diaconate in a parish.
3. The formation for the Permanent Diaconate.
4. Life and work of the Permanent Deacon.

I believe that it is crucial that an excellent theological foundation is laid since the great majority of permanent deacons will exercise their ministry in the parish in which they live and receive their vocation. The deacon, I have found, becomes the link between the Priest and the people we serve. Priests are transferred from one parish to another and will usually not work in the parish in which they grew up, while many deacons will remain in their parish for their whole life.

I endorse what the SACBC Bishops stated in this worthwhile document “Deacons in our Local Church”. Under the subjects of formation they stated that in order to acquire a sufficient theological knowledge, future deacons should undertake studies in the following areas of theology:

Doctrinal theology: Christology; Ecclesiology; The Sacraments. Church History: The main periods of the Church History; The History of the Church in Africa.

Biblical Studies: Introduction to the old and New Testament; The Gospels; Some Epistles of the Apostles, main themes of the Bible.

Moral Theology: Main principles; Christian life style, especially in Christian marriage.

The Social Teachings of the Church: Main documents. Ascetic Theology: Mental prayer and shared prayer; Spiritual reading.

Relevant parts of Catechetics, Liturgy, Homiletics and Pastoral Theology.

The bishops also addressed the future support of Candidates and is worthwhile noting

- *Candidates, who have been working fulltime for the church and have therefore been supported by the Church, will be supported in the same way after ordination. The fact of ordination does not alter the agreement of employment.*
- *With self-supporting deacons it must also be clarified that the church will have no present or future obligations for the support of deacons and their families.*
- *It is important to clarify the implications of self-support, since some think that all ordained persons must be supported by the Church. Such misunderstanding arose from the fact that until recently there were no self-supporting ordained persons in the Church and therefore ordination meant automatically Church-support.*
- *If deacon's fall into need of any kind, be it through sickness, through unemployment or in any other way, there is only a moral obligation, no legal obligation on the Church to assist them. Again, such assistance will be based on charity, not on ordination as such.*
- *Since this matter is easily misunderstood, it will be important to clarify it thoroughly.*

The document goes into detail about the life and work of the permanent deacon.

This Pastoral Directive “Deacons in our Local Church” becomes an important document later as the diaconate developed in the Archdioceses of Cape Town.

2 Evolution of the Permanent Diaconate – Archdiocese of Cape Town

The work of training candidates for the permanent diaconate for the Archdiocese of Cape Town was pioneered at Stellenbosch under the direction of Fr. Albert Nolan O.P. beginning in 1973.

Bishop Stephen Naidoo formed a commission consisting of Frs. B Gaybba; L. Henry and A. Nolan. The purpose of the commission was to addressing the process, education and training of potential deacons for the Archdiocese of Cape Town. The Commission issued a report which was divided into three sections;

1. Acceptance and ordination of candidates.

2. The syllabus.
3. Notes.

Under the heading “acceptance and ordination of deacons” the following key points were noted:

1. Candidates for the diaconate to be approved by the Archbishop after consulting the opinions of parishioners and priests who are familiar with the candidate. The prospective candidate must be told about the essential obligations connected by church law with the diaconate. The commission felt that it must be made clear that a deacon may not marry after his ordination to the diaconate.
2. Once the candidate is accepted, it must be made clear to him that this initial acceptance does not imply that he will be accepted for ordination should he successfully complete the course. The commission pointed out that the Church reserves its judgement as to the candidate’s fitness for ordination until all factors have been taken into an account.
3. The commission recommended that before ordination, a candidate must be approved of as suitable academically and morally by a council consisting of: those who were involved in his training; one other priest and layman; and eventually a deacon.
4. It is recommended by the commission that should candidate be found acceptable, he should receive the order of lector at the end of his first year of training, and the order of acolyte at the end of his second year.

With regards to the “The syllabus” the commission recommended two alternative systems of training namely;

1. Emphasis on systematic study of theory, but with adequate provision made for Practical side.
2. Emphasis on combined practice and theory.

The training was sub-divided into a Doctrinal course with Kolbe School of Theology, Pastoral course and Spiritual formation over a three year period.

In the section referring to “Notes” the commission stressed that there must be appointed:

- A priest who will be responsible for the overall organisation and co-ordination of the training of deacons.
- A priest or priests to teach and supervise the preaching course.
- A priest or priest whose task it will be to introduce the deacon to practical experience of administering sacraments, conducting meetings etc.
- The commission noted that with regards to the doctrinal part of the deacons training, the following are already in existence. The New Theology Correspondence course and the Kolbe School of Theology.

It is interesting to note that the commission requested that they are consulted in connection with the appointments of the priest or priests.

At this time, Fr. Ernest Manasse, was directing a theology course at the Kolbe School of Theology and the commission felt that candidates could receive their doctrinal training at the school.

Bishop Stephen Naidoo in a letter dated January 29, 1976 wrote to the priests of the Archdiocese of Cape Town wherein he stated that the diaconate training programme was established in the Archdiocese in 1974 and that it was done quietly and tentatively because they were feeling their way, drawing on the years of experience, they were in a position to revise their earlier efforts and to expand the programme. He stipulated that the subjects for the diaconate course are: theology, catechetics, church history, sacraments, preaching, elocution and counselling, worked into a three year programme.

In his letter he mentions that the training team will include. Rev. Frs. E. Manasse (Director), Gaybba, A. Nolan, Ruffel, Hickey, Pathe, Stanton, Kilcullen, Mansfield and Van Rensburg.

He also requested the priests of the Archdiocese to approve men, whom they think are suitable and willing to start the new training programme in March, 1976.

Bishop Stephen Naidoo laid out the conditions to the priests for the candidates and stressed that if the diaconate ministry was going to be effectively carried out amongst the people of God then the Church needed a good standard of candidate. He pointed out the following conditions that must be taken into consideration when looking at possible deacon candidates.

- Mature in age and of exemplary character.
- Respected in the local community.
- Self-supporting.
- Have a good education standard.
- Be seriously recommended by the parish priest.
- Be genuinely desirous of serving the Church and already serving the community well.
- An understanding that initial acceptance does not mean inevitable installation or ordination.
- Be capable of leadership.
- Gets on well with other people in most circumstances.

At the end of 1976, Fr. Manasse left the Archdiocese to join the Franciscan Order.

At the beginning of 1977, Bishop Stephen Naidoo, decided to centralise and systematise the diaconate training course. He appointed the following training team to lead the newly established training ministry programme and all lectures for the diaconate were transferred to St Michaels Parish centre, Rondebosch.

The following training team was now appointed by Bishop Stephen Naidoo and consisted of:

Director:	Rev. Fr. Michael Hulgraine.
Theology:	Rev. Fr. Sean Cahill O.F.M. Cap.
Sacred Scripture:	Rev. Fr. Guy Fraser-Ruffel.
Sacraments (Liturgy):	Rev. Fr. Noel Stanton.
Church History:	Sister Thecla O.P.
Catechetics:	Marist Brothers Michael and Joseph.
Homiletics:	Rev J. Dempsey C.S.S.R.

Candidates had to attend lectures on a Monday and Tuesday evenings from 19h30 to 21h30. The year consisted of two terms from late February to mid June and from mid July to the end of October. Each year candidates receive 30 lectures both in Theology and Sacred Scripture, plus 12 lectures in each of the remaining subjects.

The course extended over a 3 year cycle and was structured to facilitate an intake of new candidates each year.

Candidates were assessed in June and November each year. Successful candidates were duly installed as Lectors in their parish at the end of the first year. Successful candidates in the second year were installed as Acolytes and finally ordained (subject to the Archbishop's calling to diaconate ministry) on completion of the final year.

During the three years it was essential that the candidate did in-service training at the parish level. Much emphasis was placed on the parish priest to give the candidate training at parish level. It was stressed that he had to have an active involvement in his parish and that he emanated from the parish as a natural leader. His apostolate was seen in relation to a specific parish, rather than to the diocese as a whole at this stage in the evolution of the permanent diaconate in the Archdiocese.

The first diaconate ordinations in the Archdiocese of Cape Town took place in 1980.

Deacon	Ordination date	Parish	Ordaining bishop
A. Kay	June 15, 1980	Belgravia Estate	Bishop Stephen Naidoo
P. Prince	June 22, 1980	Retreat	Bishop Stephen Naidoo
G. Payter	July 6, 1980	Parkwood Estate	Bishop Stephen Naidoo
L. Davados	July 13, 1980	Athlone	Owen Cardinal McCann
J. Majavie	July 13, 1980	Lotus River	Bishop Stephen Naidoo
E. Hanson	July 27, 1980	Lavistown	Owen Cardinal McCann
W. Walbrugh	August 3, 1980	Stellenbosch	Owen Cardinal McCann
T. Bergstedt	December 14, 1980	Bellville	Owen Cardinal McCann
R. Brink	December 21, 1980	Kleinvele	Bishop Stephen Naidoo

Ordained deacons and candidates shared four weekend (Saturday / Sunday) retreats each year. Wives shared two of these weekend retreats.

Fr Hulgraine recalled that prospective candidates were to be carefully screened since experience showed that some parish priest had submitted candidates who proved unsuitable. He gave the following examples; marital status, recent converts, insufficient intellectual ability etc. This resulted in a change to the policy for accepting candidates for the diaconate. New candidates were requested to complete a detailed questionnaire and a separate detailed recommendation was also required from the parish priest.¹¹¹

The permanent diaconate grew and became more accepted by the clergy, which was largely due to the excellent standards set by the ordained deacons in their own parishes. Fr Hulgraine stated that at the same time, there was still a need to educate more of the clergy and others regarding the role of the permanent diaconate in the Church.

At a diaconate meeting of November 6, 1981 Own cardinal McCann granted permission¹¹² for the deacons to be represented at the meeting of the Senate of Priest. Dcn. T. Bergstedt was elected by the deacons as their representative for the Senate of Priests. At the meeting Bishop Stephen Naidoo sounded a note of caution to the deacons that they should not regard themselves as another group of clerics apart from the people. This would isolate them from the community. He pointed out that the deacon is the link between the priest and the people and should be seen as such.

Two years after the first ordination, Bishop Stephen Naidoo requested the deacons' secretary to ascertain the problems encountered by deacons in their ministry. A questionnaire was sent to all deacons and candidates. The questionnaire was divided into 4 sections; the first three sections covered the primary areas of the diaconal ministry, namely, Liturgy, Word and Service. The Fourth section contained a number of general questions.

In the memorandum¹¹³ on problems encountered by deacons in the Archdiocese of Cape Town, Dcn. R Letord stated that in the ministry of Liturgy there still appeared to be a lot of uncertainty about the liturgical role of a deacon in spite of some clear

¹¹¹ Archive material relating to training programme for ministry in the church dated 1988

¹¹² See minutes of Diaconate meeting dated November 6, 1981

¹¹³ See Letter and attached memorandum dated August 28, 1982 addressed to Bishop Stephen Naidoo sent by Rev. R. Letord (Deacons Secretary)

directions given in the “General Instructions of the Roman Missal”. He pointed out that from the replies to the questions regarding the exercising of liturgical functions it seemed that some priests had still not acquainted themselves with the functions that are proper to a deacon.

Referring to the ministry of the Word he stated that one deacon reported that he had never been given the opportunity to preach and three others reported that they seldom preached. He also pointed out that all deacons were involved in some form of catechetics.

A number of areas were covered under general and the conclusion reached by the deacons was that the problems they were encountering were not serious and would sort themselves out in time as more priest, and deacons themselves, began to understand and accept the whole new concept of ministry as a shared responsibility in the saving mission of the church. The general feel was that although most of the clergy and laity welcomed the restoration it was more often for the wrong reasons:

- Deacons were seen as a solution to the problem of the present shortage of priests.
- There was a tendency to regard a deacon as a “mini-priest” or an assistant or an adequate substitute to a priest.

The deacons, were of the opinion that there was no sign as yet of the diaconate being seen as a distinctive Office and Function in the church as it was originally founded in the Apostolic times.

Bishop Stephen Naidoo in reply, wrote a letter¹¹⁴ to the Secretary wherein he records that he finds the Permanent Diaconate Memorandum a very balanced and accurate statement of affairs, and promises to implement the recommendations made in the memorandum.

The recommendations in the memorandum were:

¹¹⁴ See Bishop Stephen Naidoo letter to the deacons Secretary, dated October 15, 1982

1. A list of the proper liturgical functions of a deacon should be drawn up, approved by His Eminence, the Cardinal and circularised to all priest in the diocese irrespective of whether they had deacons in their parish or not.
2. The revival of various ministries in the church today and its implications should be discussed at deanery and senate meetings so that it could be properly understood and much of the present confusion cleared.
3. Application for the appointment of a deacon as marriage officer should be made only two years after ordination.
4. With regard to a deacon blessing religious articles and other objects a clear directive should be given as soon as possible.

Then on January 25, 1983, Bishop Stephen Naidoo addressed a letter, "Training programme for Ministries" to all the priests of the Archdiocese of Cape Town. He enclosed a memorandum on the training programme for ministries in the church, pointing out that some of the information contained in the memorandum will change annually, but that much was of a permanent nature. He directed the priest's attention to the section which indicated all the functions of a deacon.

The Archdiocese of Cape Town Memorandum on the training programme for ministry in the Church was produced to clear up any misunderstanding about the diaconate. (I believe that) this was a major document and is an excellent attempt to inform people, especially the clergy, about the development of the diaconate ministry. It was now approximately 10 years since the training of deacons according to the mind of Vatican II (of *Lumen Gentium* no 29) was introduced into the Archdiocese of Cape Town.

In the memorandum the following sections were developed:

1. Restoration of the Permanent Diaconate.
2. Development of the training course in the Archdiocese.
3. The course in outline.
4. The training team.
5. The ordained deacons working in Cape Town.
6. Present membership of course.
7. What is required of prospective candidates?

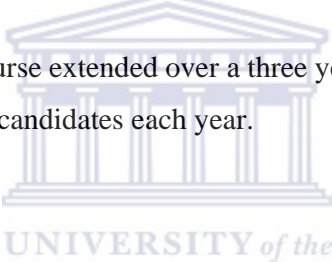
8. Exemplar of faculties granted to a deacon.

Bishop Stephen Naidoo stated that although the course is aimed at training suitable candidates for the diaconate it is not exclusively so. He qualified his statement by explaining why the course was deliberately called a “training course for ministry in the church” and not a diaconate course. He elaborated that during the semi-annual assessments made by the training team those candidates that are suited to being lectors or acolytes will be told that they are suitable only for that ministry. He pointed out that one must not presume that every candidate accepted after careful screening will automatically be ordained a deacon.

For this paper it is essential for us to look at the course in outline as this becomes the standard in the Archdiocese of Cape Town. Secondly the long serving deacons in the Archdiocese are always referring back to this period of training.

Mentioned previously the course extended over a three year cycle and was structured to facilitate an intake of new candidates each year.

Theology:

- 
- 1st Year: Introduction to the study of theology – Role of Scripture – Tradition – Magisterium of Church – Creation – Fall – Christology – Holy Spirit – Holy Trinity – Church – Mary, Mother of Jesus.
- 2nd Year: Virtues – Justice – Prayer – Liturgy – Eucharist – Sacraments – Death – Eschatology.
- 3rd Year: Moral Theology: Introduction – History – Conscience – Sin – Sexuality and Marriage – Medical Ethics – Other contemporary ethical questions.

Scripture:

- 1st Year: Introduction to Scripture and the Old Testament.
- 2nd Year: Old Testament continued.

3rd Year: New Testament.

Church History:

1st Year: The Church in the Roman Empire and early Middle Ages.

2nd Year: The Church in the Middle Ages.

3rd Year: Reformation and Secularisation in Europe. The Church's presence among all nations.

Catechetics: 2 year course.

Experiential learning – Life-centred approach – Link between Religion and Life – Revelation as one pillar of religion – Faith – Structure of Catechesis in the light of the above – Aims of lessons – Psychology and Education – Content of Religious Education based on values, needs and problems of the students – The teacher as a Christian leader – The Gabba Programme: Overview and use of books – Hints, methods and ideas on handling specific topics – Church – Leadership – Scripture – General teaching methods.

Homiletics: 3 year course.

History on the science of Homiletics – Rapid development in the 19th century – Christ-centred – Believers who sow the seed of truth – The Bishop the Principal Homilist – We assist the Bishop – Role of the Deacon in the early Church – Matter of the homily – Moral – Dogmatic – Liturgical – Theological – Preparation of the homily – Healing quality – The living Word – The teaching dimension – Should instruct and uplift – Self-revelation as preacher of the word – Ongoing learning and formation as preacher.

Liturgy:

The deacon received a faculty sheet to exercise his ministry in the Church. All the points made were dealt within the course; however

Bishop Stephen Naidoo pointed out that the practical experience of these faculties must be given in the parish situation.

Marriage Counselling: 1 Year course.

Background to the social problems Cape Town faces – Counselling skills – Social Legislation – Education for Relationships – Marriage Counselling – Other problems such as Alcoholism/ Drug Abuse – Child Neglect – Mental Health – etc.

Public Speaking:

Material supplied by Rita Maas Studio team.

Later the training course for ministry in the church was expanded to a four year programme.

1984 Bishop Stephen Naidoo were installed as the Archbishop of Cape Town.

August 16, 1987 Fr Lawrence Henry was ordained Auxiliary bishop of Cape Town.

In 1988 Fr Micheal Hulgraine retires as Director¹¹⁵ of deacons' formation and Archbishop Stephen Naidoo appointed Fr. Noel Stanton as the new Director of deacons' formation.

July 1, 1989 Archbishop Stephen Naidoo died and his successor was Bishop Lawrence Henry and he was installed as the Archbishop of Cape Town.

September 23, 1990 Fr Noel Stanton, the Director of deacon's formation died.

In 1991 the 4 year diaconate programme drew to a close and the current students awaiting ordinations were advised to continue formation with Fr Andrew Borello, who was the assistant priest at St Mary's Cathedral, Cape Town.

¹¹⁵ Fr Michael Hulgraine played a major role in the training course for ministry in the Church and formation of aspirant deacons

Eleven years after the first Ordination of deacons, a crucial evaluation took place assessing the diaconate in the Archdiocese¹¹⁶. On August 24, 1991 the deacons and their wives gathered together to discuss;

- Positive aspects of the diaconate.
- Problem areas.
- Needs experienced.
- Future developments.

Several major positive aspects of the diaconate emerged out of the discussions.

1. The general feeling from the deacons and wives was positive and in many instances deacons were given scope to exercise their ministry. They felt that there was a high level of acceptance of them. Priests were starting to see their usefulness and they themselves felt that they were fulfilling needs among their parish communities.
2. The deacons reported that they realised that prayer was a necessary aspect of their personal growth and of ministry. The deacons felt that they provided a spiritual input to parishes and communities would be poorer without their ministry.
3. Deacons indicated that they provided an insight into the actual reality of people's lives through their ministry.
4. The deacons felt that their emphasis on the call to service and being able to give their lives in this service (not wanting something in return) was an important aspect of the spirituality of a deacon.
5. The diaconate is a family vocation and involves the whole family and not just the deacon in ministry. The family support, advice and help were a really positive dimension for deacons. The caring experience in the family needed to be the care of the church in the whole area of ministry.
6. They were of the opinion that the sacrifices that deacons made brought many blessings to their communities and themselves.
7. The wives felt that they too had grown through the diaconate. It had been a spiritual growth as well as a growth in their knowledge of faith. The fact that they discussed the faith with their husbands had been a great help. They

¹¹⁶ Minutes of the meeting of deacons and their wives at St Francis Xavier

pointed out that they had become more involved in the life of the church and in ministry. They also felt that their marriages had been enriched and helped by the diaconate. Qualities that they had drawn on were responsibility, patience, consideration and understanding. They said that there was a need to contact people and this could be a very effective form of ministry.

Turning to problem areas the deacons were of the opinion that priests are not sure of the duties of deacons (the do's and the don'ts). This related to the whole question of the diaconate – What are deacons? What are their functions? Not knowing what the diaconate was at times led to non-acceptance and under utilisation of deacons. Sometimes the deacon was seen as a glorified altar boy or as a “lay minister”. Problems arose because of a lack of ongoing discussion about the diaconate and a clarification of the nature of the deacon.

The deacon was not seen as a member of the clergy in some parishes.

When a deacon moved from one parish to another, he was not always readily accepted in the new community. The deacon was sometimes called to services for which they are not equipped.

The gifts of an actual deacon are not always recognised or utilised and therefore there was a need for discernment of gifts. Another area of concern was that the activities of deacons were seldom reported to the parish communities and the archdiocese.

The question was raised concerning the ordination of priest, are deacons welcome?

There was poor communication with regard to the diaconate.

There was distinction between classes of people within the parish.

A major area was that the view of the priest with regard to the deacon had considerable influence in the parish community.

The wives themselves presented other problem areas – disruption of the family, separation of the family in liturgy, loss of togetherness and doing things together, children get left out of the consideration. The wives felt that some priests were anti-deacon, that they were taking advantage of the deacon, impossible demands were sometimes made of them, there was lack of consideration, and time demands were great. Deacons' anniversaries are not kept in the parish or the Archdiocese. Some

wives also felt the need for their husbands to have a holiday time from duties and just be able to be with the family.

The deacons and their wives proceeded to address the needs they felt they needed to experience.

- Quarterly meetings.
- A committee to organise and liaise between the Archbishop and the deacons and to improve communications. This body would be consultative and could express the views and issues of deacons. A voice for the deacons.
- Means of identification.
- Formation of special ministries.
- A record of anniversaries to be kept.
- More training in liturgy, counselling, spiritual guidance and marriage guidance.
- A day off / holidays.
- The diaconate to be explained fully to the people.
- Expenses to be met.
- Retreats for deacons' wives.
- Deacons' duties to be clearly stated. A directive to be issued to priests as to what deacons were and what their role should be.

The wives expressed further needs – association of wives, days of recollection for them to meet their spiritual needs, marriage encounter for deacon and wives, ongoing spiritual formation and direction.

Finally the deacons and their wives looked at future developments and concurred that:

- Deacons were to give their full support to the Renew program as a means of developing the faith commitment of parish communities.
- Deacons and wives were to be consulted in all parish functions.
- Ongoing development of deacons in their spiritual life and in theology / pastoral skills. A movement towards a more effective ministry and the possibility of becoming married priests in the future.

- With the shortage of priests, the role of the deacon in the future needed to be looked at. How will they function with a full-time job and being a family person?
- Revival of diaconate training.
- What happened to wives of deacons' when a deacon dies? There needed to be some consideration given to this.
- How can deacons from other parishes help out where there is a need, especially when they are not used or are under utilised in their own parish?
- Holidays for deacons.
- Learning how to identify better with people and their needs. Show care and concern.
- Formation of a Council of deacons. Help a better flow of information. Where necessary inform people of the death of a deacon and work out a way of joining in prayer or requiem for that deacon.

A general comment from the meeting was that a Council of deacons to be established. This body would look through the areas of concern together and with the Archbishop as suggestions were made so that some sort of policy for deacons and for their ministry in the Archdiocese could be established.

Fr. Andrew Borello¹¹⁷ stated that it would be useful to have further reflection on these issues that were raised. He felt that from the reflections and comments made, it would be possible to gradually develop policies which would address the real issues that deacons were facing. In his opinion, which I agree with, there would be a development of the diaconate in the archdiocese as well as a deepening sense of ministry.

He stressed that one of the important issues to be looked at was the whole question of community.

“The deacon comes from a family and emerges from the faith community in which that family finds itself. If the community wishes to have ministers, deacons and presbyters, then the community has to take responsibility for the financial aspects of ministry and for the upkeep of those who serve. Until the

¹¹⁷ Spiritual director of the deacons in the Archdiocese of Cape Town.

community has a sense of itself and of its responsibilities it will expect others, especially the Diocese, to provide the support.”¹¹⁸

Fr. Andrew Borello was hopeful that with a process of evangelisation the sense and responsibility will emerge. He pointed out that the deacons’ themselves would have to be part of the process of evangelisation, so as to help to form community. For him, this seemed like the area of diaconal ministry and the area in which the development of the diaconate had to take place.

Flowing out of the meeting, the deacons under the leadership of Dcn Anster Kay immediately set out with the assistant of Fr Andrew Borello to draft a constitution for a Council of Deacons.

1992 Fr Andrew Borello opened up a Pastoral Institute in Cape Town. All potential deacon candidates had to complete a three year theological course with the Pastoral Institute.

The first year presented an overview of all aspects of theology.

The second year the following topics were covered:

- Dogma – Salvation History/Revelation.
- Dogma – Christology.
- Moral Theology – basic moral principles.
- Liturgy – Eucharist.
- Scripture – The Gospels.
- Church History – Pentecost to the Middle Ages.

Third year the following topics were covered:

- Dogma – Ecclesiology.
- Dogma – Sacramentology.
- Moral theology – moral issues.
- Liturgy – Sacraments.

¹¹⁸ Extract of the minutes of the meeting of deacons and their wives at St Francis Xavier dated August 22, 1991

- Scripture – Pauline Theology.
- Church History – Middle Ages to the present.

May 11, 1992 Archbishop Lawrence Henry promulgated the Constitution for a Council of Deacons.

The constitution consisted of 9 articles.

- | | |
|------------|---|
| Article 1 | Name. |
| Article 2 | Purpose. |
| Article 3 | Role of the council. |
| Article 4 | Composition of the council. |
| Article 5 | Election of deacons to the council. |
| Article 6 | Office bearers. |
| Article 7 | Meetings. |
| Article 8. | Amendment and interpretation of the constitution. |
| Article 9 | The coming into force of the constitution. |

It is interesting to note that the role of the council of deacons would be an advisory body to assist the Archbishop in formulating policy with regard to permanent deacons and to ensure that such policy would be communicated to all priests, deacons and parish communities.

It is prudent to understand the purpose of this advisory body viz.:

- to provide a forum for the discussion of issues of particular concern to permanent deacons;
- to foster a spirit of support, caring and concern among permanent deacons for each other;
- to facilitate the development of the identity and role of the permanent deacon as an ordained minister;
- to resolve areas of conflict in the ministry of permanent deacons so as to ensure that they are used more effectively in ministry;
- to reflect the needs of permanent deacons in their ministry and to seek to address these needs in ongoing spiritual and theological formation;

- to assist in the formation of those discerning the diaconate and those admitted to candidacy. Such help would be given in the process of discernment. In the sharing of growth experiences within the diaconate and in presenting the idea of the diaconate in parishes where there are no deacons or were a new deacon is to be ordained;
- to ensure that effective channels of communication are established and kept in operation between the deacons and all other parties or groups in the Archdiocese and nationally with the Board of deacons of the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference.

March 10, 1993 Archbishop Lawrence Henry conducted his first permanent diaconate ordination at Our Lady of the Rosary parish, Hanover Park. He ordained Norman Schloss and Romeo Bissolati to the diaconate.

March 17, 1993 Archbishop Lawrence Henry ordained me as a permanent deacon. I am the youngest deacon at age 35 to be ordained in the Archdiocese of Cape Town. Canon Law stipulates the minimum age of 35 for diaconate ordination.

In 1993 under the leadership of Dcn. Anstey Kay preliminary discussions with regards to drafting a policy document for Deacons of the Archdiocese of Cape Town began.

September 15, 1994 the policy document regarding deacons was presented as a proposal to all deacons for consideration.¹¹⁹

Flowing out of discussions at the Presbyteral Council meeting, on October 14, 1994 Bishop Reginald Cawcutt notified deacons,¹²⁰ that the council discussed, that some parishes have no deacons and others have more than one deacon. They discussed the matter of deacons working in parishes which are not their residential parish, and the parishes by which they were proposed and supported during their training. A request was made by the Archbishop and the Presbyteral council that this matter be discussed

¹¹⁹ See letter from Fr. Andrew Borrello dated September 15, 1994

¹²⁰ See letter of Bishop Reginald Cawcutt sent to all deacons and council of deacons Titled "Place of work of deacons." dated October 14, 1994

with all deacons and the Council of deacons, so that they could gauge the feeling of the deacons on this matter.

Subsequent discussions took place between the Archbishop and Fr. Andrew Borello at a meeting where the issue of deacons working in parishes other than their own was discussed.

December 30, 1994 a further development arose from the Personnel Board¹²¹ regarding deacons working fulltime, running and living in a parish (their own or another parish). The Personnel Board wanted to hear from deacons, probably retired and with the necessary time available, who would undertake this specific ministry of running and living in a parish. The Board pointed out that currently this situation has not yet risen in the Archdiocese nor have they any details of how this would operate. At this stage, they were exploring the feasibility of deacons becoming involved in this way. In the not too distant future the Archdiocese may be faced with this scenario and that the personnel board felt it would be good to know whether the deacons would be ready to step into this task.

Archbishop Lawrence Henry addressed the deacons at a general meeting of deacons and stated that the work of a deacon is one of service and that the deacon should strike a balance between marriage and the church.

He had mentioned this fact many times in the past that the deacon's first duty was to his wife and family. He said that he was aware that there are some deacons who were not being used as they should be and he knew the problems they are confronted with. The problems were to be first dealt with and then only swept under the mat. Deacons he said should also learn to involve others in the parish work.¹²²

With little progress on having the policy document regarding deacons in the archdiocese approved a meeting was arranged by Deacons Anstey Kay and Leonardo Bredeveldt with Archbishop Lawrence Henry.

The meeting took place on Jan 30, 1996 and the following matters were discussed.

- Policy document for deacons.

¹²¹ See letter sent by Personnel Board dated December 30, 1994

¹²² Archbishop Lawrence Henry addresses the deacons at a general meeting on December 13, 1994.

- A directive from the Archdiocese with regard to compensation to deacons for expenses incurred in the performance of their parochial duties.
- Cost of Retreat for deacons wives to be paid by the parish.
- The possibility of deacons joining the Archdiocesan Sick Fund on a voluntary basis without the Archdiocese making any contributions. This is on behalf of deacons who are not in fulltime employment.
- The constitution for the Council of Permanent Deacons.

June 14, 1997 Archbishop Lawrence Henry addressed an Executive Meeting of the Council of Deacons. He recorded that ministers including himself were called to serve. That there were many good things happening in the Archdioceses like the service rendered by Deacons. Equally he stated that there were areas of concern which caused worry and stress. He gave an example regarding relationships between some deacons and their parish priest.

The primary discussion at the meeting¹²³ related to the sensitivity of deacons and relationship with priests. Fr Andrew Borello pointed out that historically the deacon was not seen as the right hand man of a priest but the priest tended to see the deacon as a summation of lay ministries. The Archbishop expressed his concern and worried that deacons were also, “Perceived as a lesser breed”.

The issue concerning joining the sick fund and cost of deacons’ wives retreat was tabled. The Archbishop requests a motivational letter¹²⁴ to be forward to him for discussion with his consultants on June 19, 1997.

June 17, 1997 in a letter to the Archbishop Fr Guy Fraser-Ruffle¹²⁵ wrote that he informed the deacons that it would be possible for them to be covered for medical and allied expenses under the Archdiocesan Sick Fund. He recorded that he had heard nothing further and that no deacons was then presently covered by the scheme. He shared what the cost would be if any deacon who would join and pointed out that only the deacon and not his wife or dependants would be covered under the scheme.

¹²³ See minutes of executive meeting held at St Patricks, Mowbrary on June 14, 1997

¹²⁴ See motivational letter dated June 18, 1997 handed to Archbishop Lawrence Henry.

¹²⁵ Fr. Guy Fraser-Ruffel is the Financial Administrator of the Archdiocese of Cape Town

July 19, 1997 Archbishop Lawrence Henry gave his approval for deacons to join the sick Fund.¹²⁶ A year later, Bishop Cawcutt argued that due to lack of funds and because the sick fund is for priest only, deacons cannot be members of the sick fund.¹²⁷ Bishop Cawcutt informed the deacons that their sick fund membership is cancelled.

March 20, 1997 Archbishop Lawrence Henry advised the clergy that he had promulgated the Statutes of the Council of Deacons and Policy document regarding deacons in the Archdiocese of Cape Town.¹²⁸ The Statues for the Council of Deacons was temporary approved for an interim period. The Archbishop appointed Dcn. Leonardo Bredeveldt as the co-ordinator of deacons.

During the Holy Year 2000 – Jubilee for permanent deacons’ conference took place in Vatican City, Rome during February 18th to 20th. Deacons Lester May, Norman Schloss, Leonardo Bredeveldt and I, attended the permanent deacons’ conference. Pope John Paul II had a brief one-to-one discussion with Deacons Lester May, Norman Schloss and I in Paul VI Auditorium on February 19th.

September 19, 2000 Archbishop Lawrence Henry promulgated the Statutes of the Council of deacons of the Archdiocese of Cape Town. The Statutes replaced the Constitution for the Council of Deacons.

At an Executive Meeting of the Council of Deacons on May 12, 2001, in my capacity as chairman, I presented a paper requesting a workshop for deacons to evaluate the diaconal ministry to date within the archdiocese and to formalise a vision / mission statement for the deacons.

On June 14, 2001, Archbishop Lawrence Henry wrote a letter to deacons informing them that an indaba for priest was put on hold because of the introduction of the Pastoral Consultation. He advised that in the early stages they, he and his consultors, thought that some time would be given for the deacons to join the priests in discussing issues of mutual concerns, especially the working relationship of priests and deacons. The archbishop advised that the Pastoral Consultation had taken life and that the

¹²⁶ See letter dated July 19, 1997 titled “Sick Fund”

¹²⁷ See letter sent to Archbishop from Co-ordinator of deacons dated May 12, 1998

¹²⁸ See letter from Archbishop Henry to Clergy dated March 20,1997

priests have increasingly realised the need to look at themselves in order for them to be enthusiastic evangelisers. In his letter he supported and encouraged the deacons to make every effort to attend a deacons visioning day on August 25, 2001.

2.1 Visioning Day

The Visioning day was well attended by deacons and the cluster group sessions were facilitated by priests. The day started with a liturgical celebration and an overview of why the deacons were having this workshop and what were their expectations.

To achieve these objectives the deacons came to an understanding of the past 20 years of the diaconate ministry within the Archdiocese of Cape Town. They worked out both the positive and negative experience that they have encountered within their diaconal ministry. After much discussion they analysed the gaps¹²⁹ where the following themes emerged.

- **Evangelisation.** (Administering to the community; bringing people closer to God; serving humanity; convert classes.)
- **Communication.** (Are we informed?)
- **Training and development.** (Have we got the tools to do our work? Aids/HIV awareness; poverty?)
- **Collaboration.** (Deacon/priest relationships; inter-parish relationships.)
- **Finance.** (Are there funds available to do the work of a deacon; what can be done to raise funds?)
- **Social.** (arrange socials.)

The above themes were overwhelmingly accepted by all present and the question was raised where do deacons go from here? A conclusion was reached that the Chairman of the Council of Deacons will present the visioning days workings with the Archbishop and requested his approval for a deacons' indaba.

On August 28, 2001 I approached Archbishop Lawrence Henry for an approval for the deacons to hold an Indaba. The same day, he gave his approval and the date for the Deacons indaba was set for October 5 - 7, 2001.

¹²⁹ Current experiences versus a future reality.

The deacons' indaba, twenty years since the first permanent diaconate ordination, became a historical event for the deacons in the Archdiocese of Cape Town. All active deacons attended the Indaba and in the context of the discussion it is prudent that I share with you my opening address¹³⁰ in my capacity as the chairman of the council of deacons. I shared with the deacons the context of the diaconate in the archdiocese and also gave hope to the deacons as to who they were; acknowledging their concerns; addressing the service of charity that was lacking; the feeling of isolation; collaboration within relationships and thanksgiving.

The deacon's indaba was a major milestone for the diaconate in the Archdiocese of Cape Town. 49 deacons (94%) assembled for the deacons Indaba that took place at Schoenstatt in Constantia. 3 deacons (6%) were unable to attend due to health reasons. The Indaba allowed the deacons to examine themselves in the light of their ministry as deacons. Intense discussions took place as they came to a point of self realisation as to their identity as deacons. They accepted their limitations and recognising a need to grow both spiritually and socially as a council of deacons. Excellent participation was noted as well as a building up and forming a community of deacons.

The prime task at the Indaba, flowing out of the visioning day was for the individual deacons to own and formulate a vision statement for the council of deacons. The second task was to achieve action plans, in a positive manner, which would address the current obstacles, issues and problems facing deacons, as they proceeded towards implementing the vision statement. It was the opinion of the deacons that the action plans were to be the nucleus for the new executive body to focus on as they led all the deacons as a transformed diaconate towards their vision.

To achieve the above the deacons addressed the following.

- Current reality of the present situation of the diaconate.
- What the diaconate is all about and its future vision.
- Analysing the gaps.(the gaps between the current reality and the vision.)
- Agreement of the gaps.

¹³⁰ See appendices (D) - Chairman's address to deacons at the indaba

- Elements of vision.
- Formulation of a vision statement.
- Action plans for the way forward.

With full participation, prayer and guided by the Holy Spirit, On October 6, 2001 the Council of Deacons formulated a vision statement that was agreed to, accepted and owned by all.

The vision statement for the Council of Deacons for the Catholic Archdioceses of Cape Town;

*“A community of Servant Leaders,
called by God, to live and proclaim
the Good News of Jesus Christ,
by nurturing and developing
individual charisms and fulfilling
our role in harmonious collaborative ministry.”*

The Council of Deacons recognised the sensitive of the nature of the issues surrounding their action plans and recorded that for them to work towards harmonious collaborative ministry, they were compelled and believed that the time was ready to address their action points in a mature way as Christ would expect of those whom he called to serve, to live and to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

The action plans covered the major issues.

- The training of aspirant deacons was a major issue. A need was recognised for a complete restructuring of aspirant deacon training.
- Ongoing formation training did not meet the current reality. A needs analysis was to be carried out to establish the training requirements of all deacons.
- Evangelisation. There was a call to have a Spiritual Director for the Council of Deacons.
- Communications. A portfolio of a Media Officer was to be established to address the issues surrounding communications.

- Clarity of roles. The clarity of roles of the function of a deacon to be addressed.
- Social. A social committee to be established to address the social needs of the Council of Deacons.

At the annual general meeting of the Council of Deacons held on October 9, 2001 at the Cape Town Diocesan Seminary. The Council of Deacons elected a new executive body in terms of the statutes of the Council of Deacons.

Archbishop Lawrence Henry informed the Council of Deacons at the annual general meeting that Deacon Leonardo Bredeveldt's term of office, as the co-ordinator of deacons, came to an end and following out of consultation with his consultors he then official appointed myself as the new Co-ordinator of Deacons.

September 22 - 25, 2005 I attended an International Diaconate study conference in Freising, Germany. For this paper I will not be elaborating on the study conference however will give a brief synopsis.

The theme of the conference was "Diaconate as a prophetic Ministry in a globalised world". The conference was organised by the International Diaconate Centre. During the conference there were presentations of interesting diaconal projects worldwide viz.:

- a report on the studies conference of the deacons in the Mediterranean countries in Santiago de Compostella;
- report of Deacons' Wives network;
- report on the "Pro Diaconia" project.

A Paper was delivered by Cardinal Erazuriz Ossa of Chile, titled "Diaconate as a prophetic ministry faced with the present day challenges".

A Paper was delivered by Archbishop Pius Ncube of Zimbabwe, titled "Human rights as an ethical and religious challenge to the mandate of the Church in a globalised world".

A brief statement based on the theme was expounded regarding the:

- Situation in Argentina – Deacon Jose Espinos
- Situation in Cuba – Auxiliary Bishop Alfredo Petit
- Situation in Latvia – Inara Uzolina

- Situation in Anglo – Bishop Gabriel Mbilingi

The conference concluded with a panel discussion with the group leaders and Bishop Dr. Gebhard Furst on the theme, “Is it possible to learn prophetic acting?”

April 17, 2006. The Finance Council of the Archdiocese of Cape Town made a statement that they were in full agreement that the deacons’ pastoral expenses be reimbursed by the parish and stated that this as a policy in the Archdiocese. Deacons they said must discuss the matter of reimbursement of pastoral expenses with their parish priest¹³¹.

This issue of reimbursement is ongoing since the early days of the diaconate in the Archdiocese. Archbishop Lawrence Henry insisted that the deacons should not be out of pocket and that the parishes should cover the cost. No directive has been sent to the priests of the archdiocese who are simply are not responding to deacons’ requests. The issue of reimbursement, in time can or may lead to a deacon losing his initial zeal and could impact his ministry due to financial constraints.

March 26 - 29, 2009 I attended an International Diaconate study conference in Vienna, Austria. For this paper I will not be elaborating on the study conference however will give a brief synopsis.

The theme of the conference was “Diaconal Spirituality yesterday – today – tomorrow”. The conference was organised by the International Diaconate Centre. During the conference there were presentations of interesting diaconal projects worldwide viz.:

- report about the Latin American sector of the International Diaconate Centre;
- report of Deacons’ Wives network;
- Meditation: “How the diaconate re-emerged as a result of the Second Vatican Council” by Dr Annemarie Fenzl, diocesan archivist, Vienna.

The following papers were delivered during the conference:

- “Diaconal Spirituality, A mystic of the open eyes, of the wide open heart and of hands reaching out” - Deacon Prof. Dr. Klaus Kiebling. (Germany)
- “Spirituality as a source of strength as we face global challenges” - Cardinal Wilfred Fox Napier OFM. (South Africa)

¹³¹ See letter sent to deacons dated April 17, 2006 by Msgr. Andrew Borello

- “The Church in India and the permanent diaconate. A challenge for the Church and for India’s inter-religious perspective’ - Cardinal Oswald Gracias. (India)
- “The Bishop and his deacons” – Cardinal Christoph Schonborn. (Austria)
- “On what and how can the deacons of tomorrow live spiritually” – Bishop Dr. Gebhard Furst. (Rottenburg)

Brief statements were made regarding Ecclesial challenges for deacons worldwide on the situations in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and North America.

Panel discussions took place on the worldwide visions for the diaconate of the future.

In what follows, I shall address the Statues of the Council of Deacons, the policy regarding deacons and the faculty to exercise diaconal ministry. These three documents are an essential element of the diaconate ministry in the Archdiocese of Cape Town. It is important to have an understanding of these documents when carrying out an assessment of the diaconate ministry in the Archdiocese.

3 Statutes of the Council of Deacons

Once the archbishop has ordained the aspirant deacon to the order of permanent deacons, the deacon automatically becomes a member of the Council of Deacons. I am in full agreement with the statutes of the Council of Deacons as promulgated by his grace, Archbishop Lawrence Henry on the 19th September 2000.

What follow is the actual Statues of the Council of Deacons as promulgated by the Archbishop.

3.1 Name

The name of the body shall be THE COUNCIL OF DEACONS OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF CAPE TOWN, hereafter referred to as the Council.

3.2 Purpose and function

The purpose and function of the Council are:

- a) To unite the permanent deacons of the Archdiocese into a viable association to further the spiritual and corporal works of the people of God under the guidance of the Archbishop in every area encompassed by the word *Diakonia*.
- b) To provide a forum for the discussion of issues of particular concern to permanent deacons.
- c) To foster a spirit of support, caring and concern for each other among permanent deacons.
- d) To facilitate the development of an identity and role for the permanent deacon as an ordained minister.
- e) To ensure that all permanent deacons are recipients of spiritual and ongoing pastoral / theological formation.
- f) To establish and maintain effective channels of communication between permanent deacons and all other church bodies in the Archdiocese, as well as with permanent deacons in the territory of the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops Conference.

3.3 Role

The Council is a consultative body whose role is to assist the Archbishop in formulating policy with respect to permanent deacons and to ensure that such policy is communicated to all priest, deacons and parish communities.

3.4 Meetings of the Council

The council shall meet twice a year in February and September.

The quorum for these meetings shall be fifty per cent plus one of all active permanent deacons in the Archdiocese.

At the September meeting every second year, the Chairman shall report on the state of the Council and the achievements of the past two years.

3.5 The Executive of the Council

Elections for the Executive of the Council will be held at the September meeting every second year.

The executive of the Council comprises:

- a) The Archbishop, in his absence, the Auxiliary bishop, or an alternative appointed by the Archbishop shall represent him.
- b) The Vicar General with particular responsibility for pastoral development.
- c) The Co-ordinator of permanent deacons, appointed by the Archbishop.
- d) Five permanent deacons elected for a period of two years by the body of permanent deacons in accordance with the procedure laid down below. A permanent deacon may not be elected to the Executive for more than two consecutive terms.
- e) In the case of necessity, the Executive may co-opt extra members with special areas of competence for a specific period of time or for specific tasks.

The procedure for the election of the five permanent deacons to the Executive shall be as follows:

- a) At the September meeting every two years, nominations will be called for. A permanent deacon may be nominated in absentia, provided he has indicated his willingness to accept nomination prior to the meeting.
- b) Elections will be by secret ballot and be supervised by two scrutineers elected at the same meeting.
- c) The five nominations with the highest number of votes would be deemed elected to the Executive for a period of two years. If only five permanent deacons are nominated, they are deemed automatically elected.
- d) In the event of a tie a second election will be held between those receiving an equal number of votes.
- e) In the case of a permanent deacon vacating his position on the Executive, a new election to fill the vacancy must be held. If only five permanent deacons were originally nominated, the Executive may co-opt a new member to fill the vacancy for the term remaining until the next election.

The office bearers of the Executive are the Chairman and the Secretary, They are elected by a simple majority for a two year term by the members of the Executive at the first meeting of the Executive.

The Chairman shall call meetings of the Executive to plan and evaluate the two annual meetings of the Council and to deal with whatever matters may arise. The

quorum for the executive meeting shall be the Archbishop or his representative and three permanent deacons.

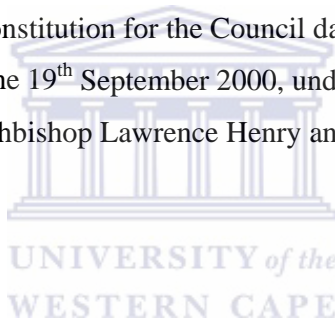
3.6 Amendments and interpretation of the statutes

The statutes may be amended by a vote of two thirds of the members present at a meeting of the Council, provided that the proposed amendment is submitted to the Executive through the Secretary at least three weeks before a meeting. All amendments require the approval of the Archbishop.

The Archbishop has the authority to interpret the meaning and application of these Statutes according to the norm of the law, in all situations in which their meaning or application is doubtful.

3.7 The coming into force of these statutes

These statutes replace the Constitution for the Council dated May 11, 1992 and were permanent promulgated on the 19th September 2000, under the seal of the Archdioceses, signed by Archbishop Lawrence Henry and the counter signature of the Chancellor, Sr. Sheila Bell.



Changes

Changes to the document were mainly in the area of the Purpose and Role of the Council of Deacons. The Vicar General with responsibilities for pastoral development and the Co-ordinator of Permanent deacons was added to the Executive of the Council in the statutes.

Section 4 and 6 relating to the Purpose of the Constitution for the Council is removed from the Statutes of the Council of Deacons.

Section 4: To resolves areas of conflict in the ministry of permanent deacons so as to ensure that they are used more effectively in ministry.

Section 6: To assist in the formation of those discerning the diaconate and those admitted to candidacy. Such help would be given in the process of discernment. In the sharing of growth experiences within the diaconate

and in presenting the idea of the diaconate in parishes where there are no deacons or where a new deacon is to be ordained.

The Purpose of the Statutes of the Council of Deacons now includes a condition to unite the deacons into an association to further the spiritual and corporal works of the people of God.

- a) To unite the permanent deacons of the Archdiocese into a viable association to further the spiritual and corporal works of the people of God under the guidance of the Archbishop in every area encompassed by the word *Diakonia*.

The Constitution for the Council reflected the role of the council as an advisory body with the promulgation of the Statutes of the Council of Deacons we seen the role been changed to that of a consultative body.

4 Policy document regarding deacons – Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town

With the statutes of the Council of Deacons in place, it became equally important that a policy regarding deacons be drawn up. Under the leadership of Deacon Anstey Kay and after much deliberation and discussion with various parties including the pioneer deacons of the Archdiocese of Cape Town late in 1993, the following policy document regarding deacons as accepted and approved by Archbishop Lawrence Henry as policy for diaconate ministry.

I concur with the policy document regarding deacons that was promulgated by the Archbishop which sets out policy to be followed by all the deacons in the Archdiocese of Cape Town.

What follows is the actual policy document as promulgated by Archbishop Lawrence Henry.¹³²

4.1 Co-ordinator of Deacons

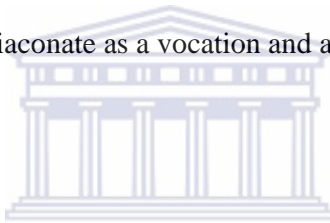
A Co-ordinator for Deacons is appointed by the Archbishop to have care for the deacons of the Archdiocese. He is an ex officio member of the Executive of the

¹³² See Archbishop Lawrence Henry letter promulgating the policy document dated March 20, 1997

Council of Deacons. He is appointed for a five year period, renewable for a further five years.

The Co-ordinator is responsible for the following activities:

- Liaise with the Archbishop on issues of concern to deacons and has ready access to the Archbishop.
- Report back to the Archbishop from working meetings of the Executive of the Council of Deacons.
- Would participate in the screening of candidates for the diaconate.
- Would discuss with the personnel Board the placement of deacons.
- Would monitor their pastoral project and would evaluate their ministry annually so as to create a sense of accountability.
- Would work with the Executive and the Archbishop to alleviate problem situations involving deacons.
- Would promote the diaconate as a vocation and a ministry of importance to the church.



4.2 Council of Deacons

This Body is governed by a specific Constitution that determines membership and functioning of this body and its Executive. This is also governed by canon 266.

4.3 Personnel Policies

4.3.1 Assignments

While the deacon is ordained for the Archdiocese, he is assigned to a parish to function as a deacon. This will be the parish within which he lives and has functioned in ministry until ordination. This does not exclude the possibility of a parish assignment outside of his own parish, should a pastoral need exist in another parish. Even in the situation of a deacon being given a specific ministry (for example a chaplaincy), he will still be associated with a parish.

It is understood that for deacons receiving their first assignment (straight after ordination) there should be some form of supervision and help given by the Co-ordinator of deacons.

4.3.2 Transfers

Deacons, who wish to be transferred to another parish or want to undertake a specific ministry, should follow the procedures laid out below:

- Notify the Co-ordinator of Deacons, in writing, of the intention to seek another assignment.
- Discuss the matter with the present and future pastors, if this is a parish assignment. Should it be a ministry assignment, then discussions should take place between the present pastor and those involved in ministry.
- The Executive and the Personnel board will need to look at the request and recommend the assignment to the Archbishop. A letter, detailing the matters discussed and the conclusions reached, should then be sent to the Archbishop. He would be free to make his final decision apart from the recommendations of the Executive.

4.3.3 A new pastor in the parish

When a new pastor is appointed to a parish, the deacons/s in that parish will continue to function according to their existing schedule of duties. The pastor and the deacon/s would then work out a new schedule of duties in a process of dialogue. Should a deadlock arise in this situation, the Co-ordinator could help to mediate a resolution of the situation.

4.3.4 Leave of absence

This should be determined by the Archbishop. Application should be made in writing. A leave of absence will be granted for reasons of health, personal problems, family commitments, temporary transfer in occupation or temporary absence will be determined and if longer than a year will be reviewed on an annual basis.

4.3.5 Inactive deacons

An inactive deacon is defined as not functioning in assigned ministry or parish ministry for at least six months. Such a deacon has not requested a leave of absence nor has sought laicization. Either a leave of absence will be granted, or the situation causing the inactivity will be looked into. Should there be a situation that cannot be resolved, the parish assignment will be terminated and an alternate be sought by the Archbishop.

4.3.6 Suspension

Only for a very grave reason would suspension be imposed on a deacon – attempted remarriage after a valid marriage, public crime, scandal, etc are considered grave reasons.

4.3.7 Loss of the clerical state

Ordination validly received, never becomes invalid. A cleric, however, can lose the clerical state:

- By means of a judicial sentence or administrative decree which declares the invalidity of ordination.
- By means of the legitimate infliction of the penalty of dismissal.
- By means of a rescript of the Apostolic See.

A cleric who has lost his clerical state cannot gain it again without a rescript of the Apostolic See.

4.3.8 Transfer of a deacon to another Diocese

The deacon intending to change diocese should approach the Archbishop in order to indicate his intentions. A document detailing the skills, talents, qualifications, diaconal work and experience should be drawn up. The Archbishop would then need to add an evaluation of the deacon to send to the Ordinary of the host diocese. The deacon must also indicate his intention of incardination so that the two ordinaries can exchange letters of excardination and incardination. Once transfer is agreed upon, the deacon would meet with the new ordinary to determine the ministry assignment that will be undertaken.

4.3.9 Deacons and the state of their married life

For married deacons, a stable and solid marriage is of primary importance to a successful and effective diaconal ministry.

Deacons and their spouses are not immune to stresses, problems and temptations that effect married couples. Should such a situation exist in the marriage of a deacon, his ministry is affected by the obvious contradiction in terms of his life and what he is to preach on marriage.

4.3.9.1 A problem marriage

When a deacon and his wife sense that they are facing a marital problem, they should:

- Approach the Archbishop together or separately and discuss with him the problem and seek a resolution.
- Should the problem persist, the Archbishop will discuss with the deacon whether he should continue in active ministry or not.
- Where necessary, the Archbishop will grant leave of absence so as to allow the deacon and his wife to focus on the resolution of their problem. This would have to be reviewed after an appropriate period.

4.3.9.2 Separation

When a separation occurs, the following procedure is adopted.

- The deacon will inform the Executive of the Council of Deacons of the separation.
- The wife has a right and duty to bring this matter to the attention of the executive should this not have been done by the deacon himself. All concerned parties need to be informed of the situation, if this has not been done.
- Some assessment of whether the deacon should continue in ministry needs to be determined.
- The couple should enter into a process of dialogue with the Archbishop to determine the extent of the problem and ways of solving it. Counselling for the deacon, wife and children should be provided, if necessary.
- The deacon should remain faithful to his marital vows and diaconal ordination.
- If the deacon is determined to have been responsible for severely grave marital problems, the Executive should inform the Archbishop and follow the route of Leave of absence, inactive status, suspension or laicization.

4.3.9.3 Divorce

If a divorce occurs, the procedure for separation is followed. However a six months leave of absence would be required. If the deacon were to return to the parish or ministry assignment, he should be reassigned to another parish or ministry. The

deacon must fulfil all financial and paternal responsibilities as required by the civil court and must be committed to a celibate life and the diaconate.

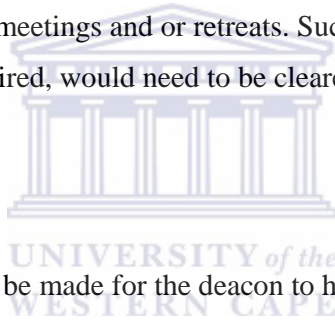
4.4 Compensation

It is understood and a matter of agreement between the Archdiocese and the deacon that the service of the deacon is a donated service. The deacon waives the right to any salary or compensation.

Some expenses are incurred in exercising this service to the parish or the wider church community and it would be just that such expenses would be covered by the parish in which that service is rendered or by the group who benefits from that service.

Retreats and Ongoing formation sessions are already specified as covered by the parish.

Other areas of compensation would be Dalmatics, books/magazines, the cost of materials for running parish meetings and or retreats. Such expenses, for which compensation would be required, would need to be cleared with the parish priest prior to spending that money.



4.5 Time of leave

It is important that provision be made for the deacon to have annual leave so as to go away on holiday with his wife and family. The deacon and his parish priest should determine when that leave would be taken.

4.6 Funeral policy

In the event of the death of a deacon, the parish priest should notify the Chancery and the Co-ordinator of deacons.

The Chancery will, in turn inform the Deans and through them the priests.

The Co-ordinator will have the responsibility of informing the deacons and also all those who work in the area of the diaconate. A similar procedure is followed with the death of a wife of a deacon.

The funeral takes place in the parish in which the deacon worked or in the parish chosen by the next of kin. It is arranged by the parish priest of that parish. He should work with the family, the Archbishop (who will be the main celebrant, if he is available) and the Co-ordinator of deacons. The expenses of the funeral are covered to a limited extent by the Archdiocese.

4.7 Candidates for the Diaconate

4.7.1 The Director of formation

The director is appointed for a renewable five year term. The areas of responsibility are:

- Overall spiritual formation programme, including discernment retreats and days of prayer for those discerning the diaconate and deacon candidates.
- Provision of theological and pastoral formation for those discerning and the candidates, including assessment of knowledge and skills.
- Discernment and guidance of the process to ordination.
- Formation, discernment and guidance of the wives of those discerning the diaconate and deacon candidates as well as encouraging personal growth for them.

The Director of Formation may appoint others to help in this process as such skills required. A person may be appointed as a consultant or to administer a specific area of concern. The director will also make use of such programmes and courses as are available within the archdiocese.

The Executive of the Council of Deacons could be consulted by the Archbishop regarding this appointment, but he is ultimately responsible for making the appointment.

4.7.2 General principles regarding formation

The deacon is an ordained cleric who shares the order of priesthood with Bishops (bishops) and Presbyters (priest). He is called to serve and lead the community, by proclaiming the Word, celebrating liturgy, forming the community in ministry and inspiring them to be all that they are called to be as a community. Because of this, the deacon exercises a great responsibility to God, the Church and the people he serves. In the light of this, it becomes essential that proper formation is given and that the suitability of candidates is thoroughly determined.

The fact that a person is accepted into the formation programme does not mean that ordination follows automatically. There are many ministries in the church that could benefit from the education gained in the formation programme. It is ultimately a

question of discerning a vocation so that God's will is responded to rather than our own.

4.7.3 Formation of those discerning and candidates for the diaconate

A clear distinction is made between those who are discerning the diaconate and the candidates for the diaconate. Those discerning the diaconate are required to do the three year theology course as a minimum requirement. This course is offered to all interested parties in the Archdiocese.

Once the man is called to candidacy, he enters into an intense theological and pastoral formation programme which last for a year or two. During this time there will also be spiritual formation and a formal process of discernment.

4.7.3.1 Theological formation

The candidate has to complete a three year theological course. The first year presents an overview of all the aspects of theology. It is around this foundation that the following two years look and explore at specific subjects of this overview.

The first year consist of thirty evenings with sixty lectures.

Second year consist of thirty six evenings with seven two lectures. The following topics are covered:

- Dogma – Salvation History/Revelation
- Dogma – Christology
- Moral Theology – basic moral principles
- Liturgy – Eucharist
- Scripture – The Gospels
- Church History – Pentecost to the Middle Ages

Third year consist of thirty six evenings with seven two lectures. The following topics are covered:

- Dogma – Ecclesiology
- Dogma – Sacramentology
- Moral theology – moral issues
- Liturgy – Sacraments
- Scripture – Pauline Theology
- Church History – Middle Ages to the present

No specific scholastic requirements for the theology course are laid down. Through a system of assignments, it is determined the competence of the person in this discernment phase. This is taken into account when looking at the person being admitted to candidacy for the diaconate.

During the three year theology course, the person discerning a vocation is encouraged to be involved in the pastoral life of his home parish. The parish priest will need to express this person's sense of the pastoral life.

4.7.3.2 Pastoral formation

Once the Archbishop has given the "call to candidacy" the aspirant deacons do a further two-year training focussing much deeper on the ministry and function of a deacon. The Pastoral year consist of thirty sessions of two lectures each and includes the following subjects:

- Catechetics
- Homiletics
- Running a parish
- Counselling – Group skills
- Preparation for Sacraments
- Rite of Christian initiation of Adults
- Liturgy
- Youth ministry



4.7.3.3 Spiritual formation

This takes place around the separation of the two segments of theological and pastoral formation. During the three year phase of discernment, an annual discernment retreat is held, there are occasional information sessions regarding discernment with those in discernment and their wives. Each person is encouraged to continue this process in a daily spiritual journey with direction where possible.

Once the person is admitted to candidacy, the emphasis of the annual weekend retreat is on deepening the spiritual life in preparation for ordination. Canon law requires that before ordination takes place the person has to do a retreat. At this time every effort is made in terms of formation to draw out the spiritual dimension of the pastoral

ministry. In this way it is hoped that spirituality will be rooted in ministry and vice versa.

4.7.4 Process of discernment

Evaluation is an integral part of the discernment of a vocation. A vocation is a call from God, but it must be validated by the Church. She has the responsibility of determining the authenticity of the call through the various means specified below. An individual must have positive recommendations in all those areas before being called to candidacy. Even once the major evaluation has taken place; it will be repeated in the stages leading to ordination.

During the third year of the theological formation, the process of discernment reaches its peak. The director of formation organises a discernment workshop for those persons considering the diaconate and their wives. The workshop spells out the nature of the diaconate and what is to be considered in terms of the diaconate discernment. The persons considering the diaconate are asked to formally indicate their reasons for being a deacon in writing. The wives too are asked to put in writing their feelings and support or lack of support for their husband's to become deacons. They are both then interviewed by the director of formation who will note the relevant issues of these interviews.

The director will also approach the parish priest, pastoral council of the parish, other priest with whom the person has worked with, people who he feels are competent to comment on the suitability of the person, and those involved in formation. The person will also do a growth assessment with a clinical psychologist. The co-ordinator of deacons and the executive of the Council of Deacons will also interview the potential candidate and put forward their views.

The Director of Formation will put together all this information and will produce a report on the basis of this material which will be submitted to the Archbishop and his consultants. This report will indicate whether this person should be ordained or not. It can also indicate that a person should go into spiritual direction or therapy with a specific issue needing to be resolved. In such a situation the person is placed on hold until the issue is resolved and a favourable outcome is possible. Again the seriousness

of ordination demands that the utmost care is taken at this stage of discernment. The report could also recommend that a person be installed in a permanent lay ministry such as a lector, acolyte or any other permanent ministry that might be developed.

4.7.5 Steps to the diaconate

Admission to candidacy - Upon acceptance by the Archbishop and his consultors, the person is admitted as a candidate. This is done in a public ceremony, presided over by the Archbishop.

Ministry of Lector / Acolyte – During the Pastoral year the candidates are installed as Lector and Acolyte. There is to be a period of at least six months between these two installations so that ministries can be exercised for the benefit of the communities that these future deacons will serve.

Ordination to the diaconate – After a final consideration and upon completion of the Pastoral course, the necessary documents will be drawn up; the candidate will do the required retreat for ordination and will be ordained.

4.7.6 Marital status of candidates for the diaconate

In order to apply for consideration as a deacon candidate, the person must divulge his marital status. Since the sacrament of marriage has to be safeguarded and at the same time to be a living witness of what all couples are called to strive towards, the person considering the diaconate must demonstrate evidence of a stable marriage for a minimum period of five years.

If an applicant is divorced, he must comply with a three year waiting period and the following procedure would apply:

- He must fulfil all financial and paternal responsibility required by the civil court.
- He must be living a celibate life and must be committed to remaining celibate.
- If it is determined that causal responsibility is severely grave such as abuse, infidelity, criminality, pathology, he will not be accepted as a candidate.
- If accepted for ordination, he must serve in a parish different from the one in which he served while married.

In the case of a remarriage when an annulment has been granted, the person wanting to be considered as a candidate must:

- Submit the Marriage Tribunal Judgement for review.
- Submit a written marital history.
- Be married at least three years from date of annulment before becoming eligible for consideration.

Should the person be in discernment or in the period of candidacy for the diaconate experience marital problems, then a time of absence from the programme will be taken so as to be able to resolve the difficulties. When a separation or divorce takes place, then the person likewise will take leave of absence. If the person is found to be responsible for severely grave actions, then they would be asked to leave the programme.

4.7.7 Unmarried candidates

Those who are accepted as candidates for ordination as a bachelor, do so with the understanding that they are accepting celibacy as a present and future reality. Such an acceptance will require an understanding of celibacy and its consequences.

4.7.8 Further requirements for admission to candidacy

- The candidate must be at least thirty five years of age at the time of ordination.
- He must be sponsored by the parish in which he lives, worships and he has ministered in some capacity for a minimum period of at least three years.
- He should be physically, emotionally healthy and free of any substance dependency.
- He must be economically stable and self-sufficient. It is expected that the diaconate will be part-time for most permanent deacons and he must have a regular source of income for support himself and his family.

4.8 Ongoing formation

4.8.1 Spiritual formation

This formation needs to begin in the formation programme and to be ongoing throughout the deacon's life. The primary vocation of the deacon is to holiness which demands that he be open to and actively engaged in spiritual development. The deacon is encouraged to have a spiritual director and to meet with him at least every three months. A deacon is expected to attend at least one week-end retreat a year. Two retreats a year are provided. This does not limit the deacon to only one retreat per year. Rather he should prevail himself of whatever possibilities are available. It is optional for the deacon's wife to attend an annual retreat. The cost of the retreats for the deacon and his wife are borne by the parish where the deacon serves. The deacon is obliged to observe morning and evening prayer from the breviary. He should also maintain a daily period of mental prayer.

4.8.2 Theological / Pastoral formation

At least three sessions of ongoing formation are to be organised by the co-ordinator of deacons with the Director of formation. These sessions will deal with subjects specified by the deacons themselves. This should be seen as a minimum requirement for all deacons. In addition the co-ordinator should make available to all deacons books and articles of interest. He should publicise courses available that would benefit the deacon in ministry. Expenses involved in such formation should be borne by the parish.

4.8.3 Wives of deacons

The wives of deacons are called to support their husbands in their ministry as deacons. This will often not be easy and demands sacrifices, understanding and generosity on the part of wives. To help support and affirm wives, days of prayer and a week-end retreat is organised. The wives are encouraged to form and maintain a network of association among themselves and to organise an outreach to the widows of deacons. The wives are also encouraged to take advantage of ongoing formation opportunities. Where possible there should be a person appointed to oversee the wives of the deacons.

4.8.4 Evaluation of deacons - Assistant Pastors

The Co-ordinator of Deacons should give direction to those deacons who show particular skills and an interest to specialise in specific areas of pastoral care. If training is available in the area under question, then the deacon should be given help to pursue this.

One area of such ministry would be the running of parishes as an assistant pastor. In the case of a priest dying, being moved and not being replaced or being seriously ill, the Archbishop would be able to appoint a deacon to administer the parish. In this situation, as in all others, the deacon of the parish should be consulted.

5 Faculty to exercise diaconal ministry

A requirement to exercise ministry in the Archdiocese is subject to the deacon receiving a Faculty from the Archbishop. This faculty is given at the deacon's ordination and thereafter when or if he is incardinated into another diocese. The incardinating diocese bishop will issue the deacon with a Faculty to exercise ministry within his diocese. The Faculty gives the deacon the right to exercise his diaconal ministry within the effective diocese. It must be noted that a deacon is ordained for the Archdiocese and not for a particular church within a diocese.

What follows is the standard faculty to exercise diaconal ministry however the faculty may be limited according to the needs of the diocese and or the capabilities of the deacon.

5.1 Preach and catechize

- To preach the Word of God in churches and oratories throughout the Archdiocese.
- To preach to religious in their churches and oratories with the permission of the competent superior.
- To preached the Word of God, when invited, in churches of other Christian communities at funerals and at ecumenical services.
- To teach the faith on behalf of the Catholic Church.

5.2 Celebrate the sacraments of Baptism and Matrimony

- To confer the sacraments of baptism when requested and having followed the instructions prescribed in the Diocesan Directives.
- To confer the sacrament of baptism within the territory of the parish, and in other parishes of the Archdiocese.
- To assist at marriages, taken couples on marriage preparation course and counselled married couples.
- Grant, for a just and reasonable cause, the permission for the celebration of a marriage between two baptised persons, one of whom was baptised in a Catholic church or received into it after baptism and has not defected from it by formal act, the other of whom belongs to a church or ecclesial community not in full communion with the Catholic Church.
- To grant dispensations for mixed marriages.
- To instruct both parties about the purpose and essential properties of marriage and take them on a 6 weeks of 1-hour marriage preparation course.
- To grant dispensation from the impediment of disparity of worship.
- To grant dispensations from all other invalidating impediments whose dispensation is not reserved to the Apostolic See.

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5.3 Preside over communion services outside of mass and bring Holy Communion to the faithful

- To celebrate the rite for the administration of Holy Communion outside mass in a church.
- To celebrate the rite for the administration of Holy Communion outside mass in a place of worship of another church or ecclesial community that does not have full communion with the Catholic Church.
- To celebrate the rite for the administration of Holy Communion to the sick and infirm and the rite for the administration of Viaticum to the dying in homes and in hospitals.
- To assist the dying and those with them by reciting the prayers of commendation; once death has occurred.
- To expose the Blessed Sacrament, preach and impart Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament upon the people of God.

5.4 Sacramentals

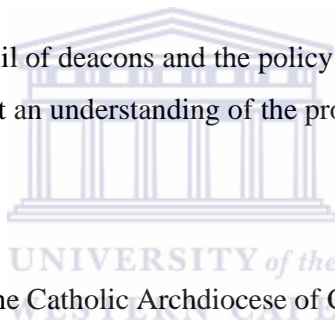
- To administer all sacramentals of the church, (eg blessings of rings at a wedding, ashes, water, candles, homes, vehicles, and holy objects) according to the prescribed form, except those, which are reserved to the Roman Pontiff, a bishop or specially delegated priest.

5.5 Funeral and burial services

- To officiate at funeral and burial services according to the approved rites.
- To officiate at crematorium services.
- To allowed church funeral rites to children whose parents had intended to have baptised, but who died before the conferral of baptism.

6 Profile of deacons

With the statues of the council of deacons and the policy regarding deacons in place, it would be appropriate to get an understanding of the profile of the deacons in the archdioceses.



6.1 Married deacons

The majority of deacons in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town are married men. The deacons bring to the Sacrament of Holy Orders the gifts already received and still being nurtured through their participation in the Sacrament of Matrimony.

This sacrament of matrimony sanctifies the love of husband and wife, making that love an efficacious sign of the love of Christ for his Church. Marriage requires an “interpersonal giving of self, a mutual fidelity, a source of and openness to new life, and a support in times of joy and sorrow.”¹³³ Lived in faith, this ministry within the domestic Church is a sign to the entire Church of the love of Christ. It forms the basis of the married deacon’s unique gift within the Church.

6.2 Celibate deacon

There is one celibate deacon working in the Archdiocese.

6.3 Number of deacons

¹³³ Congregation for the clergy, “Directory”, § 61, p 124

There are 60 active deacons working in the archdiocese.

There are also 5 inactive deacons due to ill health, old age or have requested and given permission by the Archbishop to be released from active diaconal ministry within their parish.

6.4 Parishes¹³⁴ in which deacon's minister

There are 74 parishes within the archdiocese of which 63 have deacons ministering in those parishes.

Area – name of parish

1. Atlantis – St. John the Baptist.
2. Belgravia Estate – Regina Coeli.
3. Belhar – Sts. John and Paul.
4. Bergvliet – Holy Redeemer.
5. Betty's Bay – Our Lady of Montserrat.
6. Bonteheuwel – St. Matthew.
7. Bothasig – Good Shepherd.
8. Bridgetown – Our Lady of Good Counsel.
9. Constantia – Our Lady of the Visitation.
10. Cloetesville – All Saints.
11. Crossroads (lower) – Our Lady Queen of Africa.
12. Crossroads (old) – St. Joseph Bakhita.
13. Durbanville – Our Lady of Perpetual Help.
14. Elsie's River – St. Clare.
15. Facticeon – St. Luke.
16. Fish Hoek – St. John the Evangelist.
17. Goodwood – St. Joseph.
18. Grabouw – Our Lady of Grabouw.
19. Grassy Park – Our Lady Queen of Peace.
20. Hanover Park – Our Lady of the Rosary.
21. Harare – St. Therese of Lisieux.
22. Ida's Valley – St. Mark.
23. Khayamandi.
24. Khayelitsha – Site B.
25. Khayelitsha – St. Raphael.
26. Khayelitsha – St. Kizito.
27. Kleinvele – St. Catherine of Siena.
28. Kommetjie – St. Norbert.
29. Kuils River – St. Ninian.
30. Laaiplek – St. Helena.
31. Laingville – St. Peter the Fisherman.
32. Langebaan – Star of the sea.

¹³⁴ Cape Town Archdiocesan Directory 2009, pg 57f

33. Lavistown – St. Martin De Porris.
34. Lentegeur – St. Mary Magdalene
35. Lotus River – St. Clement.
36. Macassar – St. Stephen the Martyr.
37. Makhaza – All Saints.
38. Masiphumelele.
39. Matroosfontein – Holy Trinity.
40. Mbekweni – St. Charles Lwanga.
41. Mfuleni – St. Matthias.
42. Milnerton – Our Lady of the Annunciation.
43. Mowbray – St. Patrick.
44. Newlands – St. Bernard.
45. Ocean View – St. Andrew.
46. Overberg – Our Lady Queen of the Apostles.
47. Paarl – St. Augustine.
48. Parkwood Estate – St Gerard
49. Pinelands – Christ the King.
50. Retreat – Our Lady of Perpetual Help.
51. Rocklands – St. Stephen.
52. Rondebosch – St. Michael.
53. Ruyterwacht – Our Lady of the Rosary.
54. Saldanha – Mother of Mercy.
55. Stellenbosch – St. Nicholas.
56. Strandfontein – St. Philip.
57. Sun Valley – St. Brendan.
58. Tableview – Church of the Resurrection.
59. Villiersdorp – St. Barnabas.
60. Vredenberg – St. Jude.
61. Welcome Estate – St. Theresa.
62. Westridge – St. John Bosco.
63. Wynberg – Corpus Christi.

6.5 Deacon's age

The active deacons range from the age of 40 years to 82 years.

In the early days of the development of the Diaconate in the Archdiocese, deacons were ordained round about the age of 45 years or later. To date over 40 deacons have passed on to eternal life.

With the growth of the Diaconate, there developed an understanding of the deacon's ministry within the parish communities resulting in an increase in young men discerning the call to diaconate ministry. Today we are experiencing a growth in younger men in ministry training, in the areas of human, spiritual, doctrinal and pastoral formation and with the grace of God will be called to diaconate ministry.

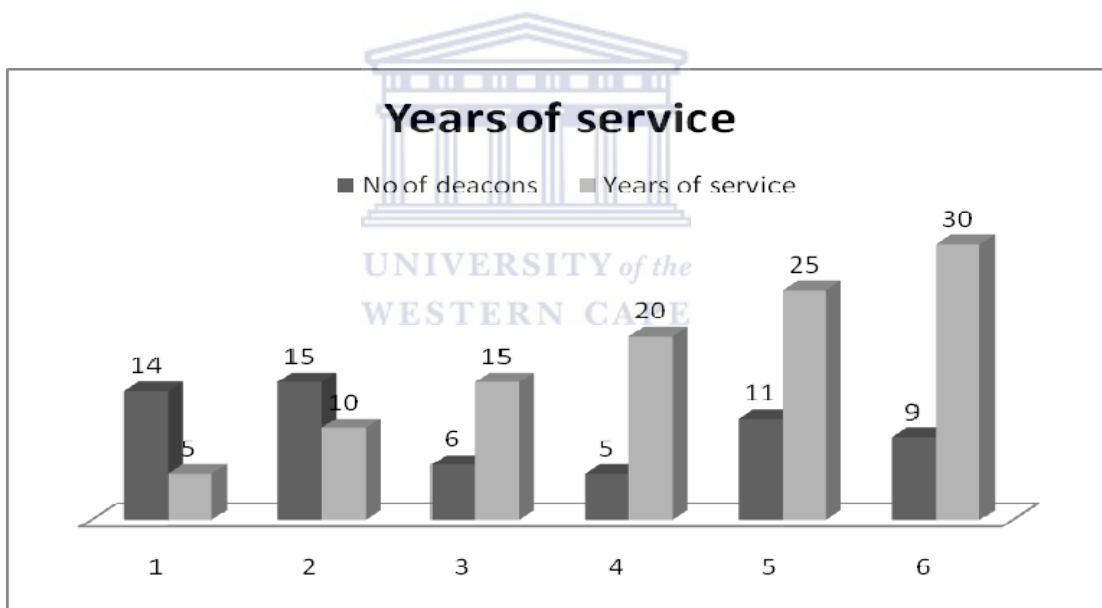
I was the youngest deacon to be ordained at age 35 while the oldest was 70.

6.6 Years of diaconate service

60% of the current active deacons have less than 15 years of diaconal service.

33% of the current active deacons have between 20 and 30 years diaconal service.

Deacon's	Years of service
14	0 – 5 years
15	6 – 10 years
6	11 – 15 years
5	16 – 20 years
11	21 – 25 years
9	26 – 30 years



6.7 Relationships of the deacons

6.7.1 Relationship with the Archbishop

The deacon exercises his diaconate ministry within a specific pastoral context, that of the communion and mission of an archdiocesan church. He is in direct relationship with Archbishop Lawrence Henry with whom he is in communion and under whose authority he exercises his ministry. In making his promise of respect and obedience to the archbishop and his successor, at his ordination, the deacon takes as his model

Christ, who became the servant of his Father. The archbishop also enters into a relationship with the deacon since the deacon is his co-worker in the priesthood of Jesus Christ and in the service of God's people. It is, therefore, also a responsibility of the archbishop to provide for the pastoral care of the deacons of his archdiocese. The archbishop discharges this responsibility both personally and through the director of formation and the co-ordinator of deacons.

6.7.2 Relationship with the Archdiocese

While assuming different forms of diaconal ministry, a deacon exercises his service in both an archdiocesan setting and at the parish in which he resides.

The deacon may be given specific responsibility, if he meets the necessary requirements, in an administrative position at an archdiocesan or parochial level.

I believe that when a deacon carries out these administrative responsibilities, he should bear in mind and recall that every action in the Church should be informed by charity and service to all. In order to preserve the integrity of the diaconal ministry, it is essential that any deacon called to such responsibilities should be placed in position to discharge duties which are proper to the diaconate.

In the Archdiocese deacons are ex officio members of parish pastoral councils.

Deacons who possess the necessary requirements and experience may be appointed members of the archdiocesan pastoral council, finance council, or commissions.

They may be assigned to diocesan pastoral work in specific social contexts:

e.g., the pastoral care of the family. They may participate in a diocesan synod, exercise the offices of chancellor, judge, assessor, auditor, promoter of justice, defender of the bond, and notary or may serve as the diocesan finance officer. They may work for justice and peace thereby promoting the social teachings of the church.

Deacons and priests attend deanery meetings and are eligible to be appointed secretary in his deanery. A deacon cannot be nominated as a Dean. The dean by virtue of his office becomes a member of the presbyteral council, a body exclusively representing the council of priests.

Deacons may not "be constituted judicial vicars, adjunct judicial vicars, or vicars forane, since these offices are reserved for priests."

In my opinion, to strengthen the diaconal character of the archdiocesan church, care is to be taken, to include, as much as possible, a diaconal presence within archdiocesan structures, as well as within parish communities.

I firmly believe that deacons who have parochial administrative training and experience should be entrusted, under a canonically appointed priest supervisor or judicial vicar, to assist in the pastoral care of a parish or to temporarily guide a parish that lacks the immediate benefit of a parish priest due to the priest being on sabbatical or because of a shortage of priests.

6.7.3 Relationship with the Priests

Deacons exercise their ministry in communion not only with their archbishop but also with the priests who serve the archdiocesan Church.

As co-workers of the priesthood of Jesus Christ, in ministry, priests and deacons are two complementary but subordinate participants in the one apostolic ministry bestowed by Christ upon the apostles and their Successors, the bishops.

I wish to bring to your attention that the diaconate is not an abridged or substitute form of the sacramental priesthood, but is a full permanent order in its own right. Permanent deacons therefore ought to foster fraternal bonds with transitional deacons; this is an area – an opportunity for shared study and prayer, in this way the order of deacons can be better understood and appreciated amongst those to be ordained to the order of priest.

The archdiocesan bishop assigns a deacon to assist a priest entrusted with the pastoral care of one or several parishes. Deacons who possess administrative experience and have received pastoral theological training may be called to guide Christian communities that do not have the immediate benefit of a parish priest.

Where parish pastoral councils are constituted, the deacons are ex officio members of the parish pastoral council.

Deacons and priests, as ordained ministers, should develop a genuine respect for each other, witnessing to the communion and mission they share with one another and with the Archbishop in mutual service to the People of God. To foster this communion, it is important for the archdiocese to offer opportunities annually for shared retreats, days of recollection, deanery meetings, continuing education study days, and mutual work on archdiocesan councils and commissions, as well as regularly scheduled occasions for socialising.

Priests should be informed about the sacramental identity of the deacon. They are to be aware of the nature of diaconal spirituality and the specific functions the deacons will perform within the archdiocesan Church. Priests need to catechise the people on

the ordained vocation of the deacon and to actively seek out, with the assistance of the parish community, competent nominees for this ministry.

6.7.4 Relationship with Deacons

Deacons are called to foster a fraternal bond to better understanding of the diaconate. Deacons have the opportunity to come together twice a year on a week-end retreat, for shared study and prayer. The deacon's wife has an opportunity to go on an optional week-end retreat for her spiritual formation, which usually takes place in November each year. Deacons come together annually twice a year for a council of deacons meeting. The deacon and his wife come together to a social function, currently on an annual basis allowing all deacons with their spouses to interact and to form relationships.

Deacons are expected to attend three ongoing formation courses within a year.

6.7.5 Relationship with the Laity

By ordination, deacons are members of the clergy. The deacons in the Archdioceses of Cape Town are married, have secular employment and do not engage exclusively in specific church-related ministries. This combination of an ordained minister with a secular occupation, personal and family obligations can be a great strength, opportunity, and witness to the laity on how they too might integrate their baptismal call and state in life in living their Christian faith in community.

The laity, as members of the Church, has an obligation and right to share in the communion and mission of the Church. Through his ordination to service, the deacon promotes, in an active fashion, the various lay apostolates and guides these in communion with the bishop and local priests. In his works of charity, the deacon should guide and witness to the Church, the love of Christ for all humankind instead of personal interests and ideologies which are injurious to the universality of salvation.

6.7.6 Relationship with Community

The deacon is a working man supporting his family in a secular profession.

The deacon's way of life enables and helps him to bring back to the Church an appreciation of the meaning and value of the Gospel as he discerns it in the lives and questions of the people he has encountered. This awareness allows the deacon to

articulate the needs and hopes of the people of God, in his proclaiming of the Word and teaching. The deacon is the herald of the Gospel who has an important pastoral responsibility in serving God's people.



Chapter 4

Empirical Research

Relevance for the research

Being the coordinator of Deacons in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town, the liaison between the Archbishop and deacons, it is essential to obtain a deeper theological understanding and framework of the Diaconate in the Catholic Church and how it impacts the deacon on the local level. It is important to understand, identify issues and problems at an early stage, why deacons have a lack of zeal and passion for their diaconate ministry after a few years. In my opinion the diaconate ministry is not clearly understood by both the clergy and the laity. This lack of understanding is creating problems and issues that are not timeously resolved.

There is a need for clarity of the roles and functions of deacons in the local church. I believe there is a need to revisit the diaconate education with regard to the profile and ministry of a deacon.

It is just over forty years that the Catholic diaconate was restored by the Second Vatican Council and less than 31 years in the Archdiocese of Cape Town. As the diaconate is relatively young in the Church in the Archdioceses of Cape Town the time is an opportune moment to do a critical assessment of the Profile and Ministry of the deacons in the light of the restoration and implementation of the diaconate. This is pioneer research in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town.

This critical assessment will be made against an investigation of the current diaconate in the Archdioceses of Cape Town.

At a general meeting of the council of deacons, I explained my proposal to conduct a research questionnaire. The deacons were advised that the questionnaire was optional.

- See Appendix (B) for letter to deacons - research.
- see Appendix (C) for diaconate research questionnaire.

1 Research results

1.1 Quantitative Results

This section reports the numerical results of the exercise, how many deacons responded.

1.1.1 Statistical breakdown of responses

At the beginning, 60 questionnaires were sent out to all active deacons. Normally, the feedback rate to a written survey is about 30%. Due to the importance given to this first survey, conducted amongst the deacons in the Archdiocese of Cape Town, by the Council of Deacons, the feedback amounted to 40 returned questionnaires (67%). This is an enormous success.

1.1.2 Nature of quantitative data

It is indicative of nature and not precise since respondents did not need to identify themselves. There was a need to preserve anonymity of respondents. Consequently it is fit for purpose data therefore – to identify trends, generic classes of response to attribute importance, as an essential aid to the qualitative analyses and need to establish levels of significance. The data attempts to be objective and impartial.

1.2 Qualitative results

Here I deal with the content of the responses, what the many respondents said in their replies, what they regarded as important, their aspirations as deacons and their concerns.

1.2.1 Nature of qualitative data

There is a richness and passion in many of the responses. It presented a fascinating yet highly challenging analytical task. The challenge has been to reflect an impartial summary of the many responses, their depth and diversity, while also identifying the convergence of opinion in many cases and also preserving the divergence of opinion and minority views that must also be taken into consideration. Inevitably there is a danger of losing meaning and importance with cryptic summaries so the analyst has erred on the side of reporting as fully as possible much of the unique feedback. As is to be expected there is also much repetition of certain opinions and these have been represented with the following approximate indicators of how often they occurred in different responses:

Levels of significance / Weight of opinion

Dominant: - Number of responses greater than 75% of total responses.

Significant: - Number of responses greater than 50% of total responses.
Important: - Number of responses greater than 25% of total responses.
Minority view: - Number of responses greater than 10% and less than 25 %.

In no way is it suggested that this is a poll or customary opinion survey. I feel it is important to be able to give some indication of the weight of different opinions regarding various matters.

It should be noted that the majority of respondents replied within the framework of the existing headings as sent out in the Questionnaire. It was clearly evident from many of the responses that each of the existing headings is not exclusive or precise enough and that there was therefore an important degree of interpretation by respondents and considerable overlap.

I have summarised and reported the various feedbacks as received under the headings under which the feedback was provided. As will be evident, this is not an exact science and nor should it be.

Another challenge for me was the huge diversity of the responses.

It has been difficult to summarise everything reported with every nuance although every attempt has been made to capture the main feedback in a comprehensive, impartial and meaningful fashion as possible. Where the words dominant, significant, important and minority view are shown in italics this signifies that a number of respondents made the same or similar comments together with a general indication of the importance or weight of such commentary.

1.3 Summary analysis of responses

A) Functions

❖ Administer baptism.

A *dominant* view expressed that they were alternating with their parish priest in administering baptisms in their parish. While 14% of the respondents indicated that they assisted their parish priest. 3 deacons did not administer baptism in the past year.

One deacon commented that only he was only doing baptisms at their parish. While another stated that when he is contacted by the laity or the priest refers them to him, he gives baptismal instructions and then administrates the sacrament of Baptism.

❖ **Baptism Class**

Overall a *significant* number of deacons are giving Baptismal instruction classes to the laity of which 47% were deacons only giving classes.

22% indicated that they have a parish group that is giving baptismal instructions.

A deacon and his wife indicated that they do the baptism instruction class at their parish.

❖ **Custodian and dispenser of the Eucharist at Holy Mass**

The *Dominant* view was that the deacon, priest and extra ordinary ministers of Holy Communion were the custodians and dispensers of the Eucharist at Holy Mass.

Every respondent indicated that they were dispensing Holy Communion.

❖ **Assist at and bless marriages in the name of the Church**

14 deacons (39% of respondents) indicated that they have a marriage license to officiate at marriages. With an exception of one deacon who has never been given an opportunity to assist at and bless a marriage, the others have conducted, assist at and bless marriages within the pass year.

A *significant* amount of deacons do not have a marriage license, while 9 deacons (25% of respondents) indicated that they would like to have a marriage license to officiate at marriages.

❖ **Do you conduct Marriage preparation classes?**

A *significant* number of deacons conduct marriage preparation classes. 53% of the respondents but as noted above only 39% have a marriage license. One deacon stated that he usually give a couple of classes himself and also expects the couple to attend the official deanery marriage courses that are made available by the Archdiocese. He always recommends “Engagement Encounter” as a preferable option.

❖ **Bring Viaticum to the dying**

In total, it is a *dominant* view that deacons are taking Viaticum to the dying, while it must be noted that a *significant* amount of deacons seldom take Viaticum to the dying. 8 % indicated that they have not had an opportunity to take Viaticum to the dying.

❖ **Do you visit the sick, house bound and hospitalised.**

It is clear from the response that all deacons visit the sick, house bound and hospitalised.

❖ **Proclaim the Sacred Scripture (Gospel) to the faithful.**

- 56 % of respondents - At every Eucharistic celebration;
- 25 % of respondents - At Week-end Eucharistic celebrations;
- 3 % of respondents - Once a month;
- 11 % of respondents - Twice a month;
- 6 % of respondents - Only when the deacon is preaching;

This responds raises an area of concern since it is the deacons' explicit function to proclaim of the Gospel of the Lord at every Eucharist celebration at which he is diaconising.

❖ **Instruct and exhort the people (Preaching).**

- 17 % of respondents - At every Eucharistic celebration when they diaconising
- 17 % of respondents - At Week-end Eucharistic celebrations when they diaconising
- 47 % of respondents - Once a month
- 14 % of respondents - Twice a month
- 6 % of respondents - Never given the opportunity to instruct and exhort the people

The deacons are the herald of the Good News and are given the faculty to preach. It is a concern that 6% of respondents were never given the opportunity to instruct and exhort the people.

❖ **Involved in Catechism class, adult instruction class and/or RCIA.**

A *dominant* number of deacons are involved in Catechism class, adult instruction class and/or RCIA.

❖ **Preside over the worship and prayer of the faithful in the absence of a priest.**

A *significant* amount of deacons preside over the worship and prayer of the faithful in the absence of a priest. 33% indicated that sometimes the deacon presides and at other times a non-cleric.

A deacon is an ordained cleric and should always preside in the absence of a priest.

❖ **Administer sacramentals. (Blessings of cars, homes, religious objects etc.)**

61 % of respondents – Often
33 % of respondents – Seldom
6 % of respondents – Never

❖ **Officiate at funeral and burial services in the parish.**

50 % of respondents – Often
39 % of respondents – Seldom
8 % of respondents – Never



❖ **Officiate at funeral and burial services at the cemetery.**

47 % of respondents – Often
39 % of respondents – Seldom
11 % of respondents – Never

❖ **Do you attend Deanery meetings?**

50 % of respondents – Often
28 % of respondents – Seldom
22 % of respondents – Never

The 22% of the respondents who never attend deanery meetings shared the following.

- I am unable to attend due to work commitments
- Meetings held during working hours
- Meeting times are inconvenient
- Not anymore due to health reasons

❖ **Do you attend Archdiocesan events, gatherings, and celebrations?**

44 % of respondents – Often

39 % of respondents – Seldom

14 % of respondents – Never

The 14% of the respondents who never attend deanery meetings shared the following.

- I am unable to attend due to work commitments
- Not anymore due to health reasons
- Travel cost is always a problem

B) Chaplaincy.

❖ **Are you a Chaplain?**

7 deacons (19%) respondent that they do chaplaincy work.

They are working as chaplains in the following ministries:

- Apostleship of the sea since 1992. To date the archbishop appointed a priest however they are working alongside the priest in the chaplaincy.
- Padre Pio group at the parish
- Pontifical missions
- Parish: Catholic Women's league; Saint Vincent de Paul society and Alpha.
- Parish Legion of Mary; Senior Choir and Junior Choir.

A *dominant* number of respondents indicated that they are not involved in chaplaincy ministries. 7 deacons indicated their preference to minister in one of the following chaplaincies.

- Prison chaplaincy
- Prayer groups chaplaincy
- St Anne's sodality chaplaincy
- Sacred Heart Soldaitary chaplaincy
- Hospital Chaplaincy
- St Vincent de Paul chaplaincy
- Catholic School's chaplaincy
- Any Chaplaincy

C) Ministry

The following responses are reported 'as is' without any further comment. They are also reported in a random manner. In most cases they are self explanatory and require no further explanation. The anonymity of the respondent has been protected.

1. What is going well?¹³⁵

1. The diaconate ministry at our parish is doing excellent.
2. The baptism instruction classes and my involvement at week-end liturgies.
3. Being the co-ordinator of the Alpha course in our parish.
4. My involvement in parish activities and Archdiocese events.
5. My diaconate ministry is going well at this stage and I am enjoying my ministry.
6. Baptisms and Marriage preparations, liturgical celebrations with my parish priest. Conducting communion services within the parish and at outstations, assisting at funerals, visiting the sick and our prayer meetings.
7. Caring for the sick and the poor, home visitations, co-ordinating the extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, the ministers of the Word, Alpha group and the rite of Christian initiation of adults group.
8. Our liturgical celebrations are going well.
9. Doing all my diaconate functions according to the faculties given to me by the Archbishop at my ordination.
10. I enjoy the preaching, giving marriage preparation classes and officiating at weddings. The interactions at parish pastoral meeting are good and I have a good rapport with my community.
11. I feel that I am sufficiently involved as a deacon in the parish.
12. Our relationship as deacons with our parish priest is very good. If we want to be further involved in ministry, we only need to discuss our wishes with our parish priest.

¹³⁵ 25 respondents shared their views on what is going well

13. The teachings of the church in the area of spirituality and evangelization are going well at our parish. As there are two deacons at our parish we are able to instruct and exhort the people twice a month.
14. Everything is going well in my diaconate ministry; we are afforded the opportunity to exercise our diaconate role with freedom but always in consultation with our parish priest.
15. Benedictions, funerals and baptism instruction classes conducted by my wife and I.
16. It is always wonderful to do the benediction for the community in “All Saints” on a Tuesday evening. We have a theme, “Do away with drugs” for the next nine weeks. The benedictions are well attended by the community. Going well too, are the visits to the two homes for the aged, one in Ida’s valley and the other at Cloeteville bi-monthly. Equally the visitations to parishioners that are sick, when I am notified, is greatly appreciated. Going well but still needs to improve is the deacon-priest relationship that was lacking for some time. There are plans afoot to get a parish pastoral council in place as a result of consultation with my priest. I also insisted that I, as a cleric, want to be more informed of meetings.
17. The relationship between my parish priest, assistant priest and myself is excellent. It is on a very good level. I am acknowledged as a deacon in the parish and many responsibilities have been assigned to me. We communicate on a regular basis and I am trusted by both of them. I can go at anytime to talk to them.
18. My entire ministry. I work well with my parish priest. Having regular meetings with the parish priest. Also ex-officio on the Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Finance Council.
19. My involvement with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults group.
20. I am fortunate that our Parish Priest encourages us deacons to partake fully in the liturgy and all aspects of Church and parish life. My experience is one of growth and understanding. Preaching is going well with positive feedback. I am fully involved in administrative running of the parish as well, which gives one the opportunity to interact with parishioners at all levels.
21. Teaching, preaching, counseling and mentoring.
22. After 29 years services, all is going well.

23. Parish Priest and 3 parish deacons have monthly clergy meeting, to sort out any problems, work on suggestions, work out planned events like Easter Celebrations etc and draw up duty rosters. We receive our stipends on time and the community is encouraged to support deacons.
24. In general all is going well with the exception of communication amongst clergy.
25. Generally my ministry as a deacon is well balanced because the workload is shared between the parish priest and two other deacons. We have a roster for diaconising at Holy Mass and preaching at week-end masses. Funeral services are shared amongst the clergy. All other parochial activities we discuss at monthly meetings and handle as needs arise. e.g. Tuesdays sick visitations, Holy Trinity and Marian High schools, confirmation interviews and spiritual initiatives (retreats, pilgrimages and rosary rallies).

2. **What is not going so well?**¹³⁶

1. The communication between my parish priest and myself.
2. The parishioners at our parish still need to be educated on the role of the deacon in the parish.
3. There is no priest-deacon relationship and no monthly meetings are taking place between the priest and deacon.
4. It is not going so well in the area where I am not being able to be part of the clergy of the parish in the sense of planning or leading any activity. I am told what to do, handed down to me and made to feel as though I am on par with the parishioners / laity.
5. The fact that our parish does not have a proper church building, structure or even a site, distorts the growth of the parish community.
6. For me, what is not going so well is not having regular parish clergy meetings. Even when decisions are reached, the actions are not always executed. Parishioners are not informed of what the clergy agreed upon. For example it was agreed that the parish priest will inform the community about the role of the parish pastoral council and to date this has not happened. Equally, I have

¹³⁶ 12 respondents shared their views on what is not going so well

not been very eager to serve the parish due to family constraints at this moment. However I would love to do more in this regard. I also feel spiritually hamstrung because of my work commitments and somehow find it difficult to deal with certain people who have the know-it-all attitude in their approach to others at the expense of the spiritual growth of the parish and self.

7. At present all is well.
8. I am not given enough opportunities to preach. I have a marriage license yet have done no marriages in my parish, this is rather very disappointing. I have also done no funerals.
9. What is not going so well for me is getting the balance between my work, Church and family life.
10. Being physically handicapped and not able to do as much as I would like too.
11. The communication between clergy.
12. What is concern to me is the safety aspect especially at night as the criminal element is high in our area. When having a meeting there was a hold-up by gangsters – This kind of activity can disrupt parish activity because adults and children fear to come to church activities. Getting into the church grounds unannounced at night is difficult.

3. What can be improved?¹³⁷

1. Our parish priest needs to explain the diaconate, the roles and functions of a deacon to the parish.
2. Priest-deacon relationship and working together in collaboration as a team sharing our ministry.
3. Having to keep on advising other deacons to perform their duties as required by the church's teachings.
4. More sharing at clergy level as to what is needed in the parish. How can we improve our diaconate ministry in liturgy, charity and pastoral action?
5. There is always room for improvement in any environment.
6. The Archbishop should instruct each and every parish priest on the functions and duties of a deacon. The parish priest should support the deacon in

¹³⁷ 16 respondents shared their views on what can be improved

fulfilling his duties as an ordained without any interference from the laity, for example: the extra-ordinary ministers of Holy Communion or sacristans.

Deacons should always support the parish priest thus preventing any of the laity from using divide and conquer tactics.

7. My personal approach to life in the parish. Be more prayerful and positive. A more vigorous drive from my parish priest to keep parishioners informed of parish and archdiocese developments. An “open” agenda at regular clergy meetings, where timetables are discussed and not just placed on the table especially with regards to homilies. Embracing the community of Khayamendi with more regular Sunday communion services as was the case in the past. Better communication and relationship building between: priest and deacon; priest and parishioners; deacon and parishioners.
8. The community needs to be informed properly about what is the role of the deacon. This is in order that the parish community may realise that the deacon is there to serve them and not serve the priest.
9. Knowledge of how to run a parish. More preaching opportunities. Administering of Sacraments.
10. One can never stop learning and growing in understanding the scriptures, reaching out and serving the Church and its people.
11. Better understanding by the laity of the sacrament of Holy Orders especially in the area of the diaconate.
12. Need to recruit younger men and speed up the process. If the diaconate is a calling, then we must believe that God will give the graces that are necessary. Give the best training and leave the rest to God!!
13. Notice that many “official” statements leave out the existence of the Diaconate. Example: refer to Bishops, priests and religious. (Why no deacons?)
14. The liturgy as prescribed by “Power” outside the parish. Currently the Parish priest and the deacon are working to improve the operations of the parish, which can always be improved.
15. There is a lack of communication between clergy.
16. I am not sure how to answer this question but from a general perspective – more security would help (People patrolling the church grounds) visible policing in the area. Better attendance at prayer cells. Small confirmation

groups therefore we need more teachers. Catechism classes are too crowded; need more catechists, really more brothers and sisters in all areas of church life (e.g. Legion of Mary, Choir, St Vincent de Paul society and various parish committees.)

D) Compensation

❖ Do you receive any disbursements from your parish?

A *minority* of deacons are receiving disbursements from the parish, in most case it is from parishioners who indicate that disbursement is for the deacon when he has conducted, baptisms; weddings or funerals. 3 deacons’ responded that they have always received a disbursement whenever they conducted, baptisms, weddings and funerals. It is interesting to note that the other respondents only receive disbursement in one area of ministry.

No receiving	Areas of ministry
6 deacons	Baptism
4 deacons	Weddings
7 deacons	Funerals
0 deacons	Instruction classes
0 deacons	Visits to hospitals and homes
0 deacons	For administrative services provided
2 deacons	Motor vehicle expenses
3 deacons	Deanery and Diocesan functions



While a *dominant* number of respondents do works of charity, visiting hospitals and homes they are however not receiving any disbursements to cover the cost incurred in their ministry.

❖ Do you receive an allowance to cover cost from your parish?

1 deacon is receiving R1600 per month to cover his travelling cost to outlying areas; 3 deacons are receiving R500 per month to cover cost and 2 deacons indicated that they received an annual amount of R200 and R300 to cover cost.

A *dominant* number of respondents indicated that they are not receiving any allowance to cover the cost incurred in their ministry.

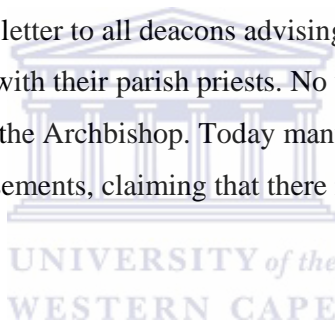
Actual deacon retreats cost are paid by the Archdiocese and recovered from the parish in which the deacon ministers. Deacons must find their own way to the retreat centre.

Comment

A conclusion can be formulated as follows: The diaconate has much influence on the amount of time that the family can spend together. This is particularly so when the deacon is in a non-stipendiary ministry and also needs much time for his principal secular employment. There is a great willingness and sacrifices made by families to understand and support the diaconate.

Archbishop Lawrence Henry has repeated stated, on a number of occasions, to priest and deacons that deacon's should not be "out of pocket" and should approach their parish priest for disbursements.

Msgr Andrew Borello sent a letter to all deacons advising them that they must address the matter of disbursements with their parish priests. No written communications was sent direct to the priest from the Archbishop. Today many priests are simply ignoring deacons' requests for disbursements, claiming that there is no official policy in writing.



E) General

- ❖ **The questions in this survey may not be all embracing and comprehensive and may not therefore had afforded you an opportunity to report some things you may want to say about the diaconate or about yourself.**

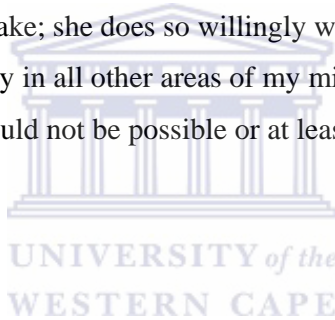
The following responses¹³⁸ are reported 'as is' without any further comment. They are also reported in a random manner. In most cases they are self explanatory and require no further explanation. The anonymity of the respondent has been protected.

1. My gift is teaching the Word of God so I enjoy preaching and opportunities to teach and attending small faith sharing prayer meetings which is a forum for discipling and shepherding people, otherwise I do not have much calling or interest.

¹³⁸ 15 respondents shared their views about the diaconate under section E.)

2. I am grateful for my wife, most of the time she will answer the phone, relieving me of some of my family duties and to give me encouragement. Quite often she has to slow me down so as to not overwork and to remind me of my duties as husband, father and my own health.
3. I usually give a couple of marriage classes and expect couples to attend the official classes as offered by the archdiocese. I can also recommend “Engage Encounter”.
4. I do not want to complain because my parish priest is a good priest and means well but a lot of what is happening in our parish is “his” way. He follows the rules and he will allow voting by parishioners but the options that are available are “his”.
5. I wanted to take time out of the diaconate ministry in the parish because of my parish priest behavior and rudeness to the faithful. When people complain to me about our priest rudeness and speaking in an abrupt manner it hurts me a lot. The parish priest has no right to tell a deacon not to come to the 8.00am Holy Mass.
6. Like all parishes, we do not have a perfect parish. Some changes can be made in the way things are done, the way to encourage our people to do more and to get personally involved in the life of the parish.
7. I have little free time. I work in a demanding job and in the ministry. This places a big strain on me because the demands made by my job, family and priest are much too high.
8. Would like to be updated as to the whereabouts of certain deacons that are not visible or active in the ministry in our quarterly booklet.
9. My wife supports my diaconate and the projects that I undertake.
10. I think that the crux of the matter is that the deacon should always support the priest thus becoming a good cohesive team that is able and willing to offer their best service to God and the laity. Especially in the light of our present predicament of a dire shortage in vocations to the priesthood. Priests and deacons should always imitate Abraham, Moses and Jesus in standing in the gulf between God and man, pleading our case.
11. If it had not been that I am the Archdiocesan Master of Ceremonies, I would want to get involved in a chaplaincy.

12. Re-compensation. For years I did not take an allowance to cover cost for purchase of petrol, ink for cartridge, copy paper, cost of faxes and sms's sent on behalf of parish, Last year, with the steep rise in the price of petrol, I indicated that I would accept the R200 per month offered to me.
13. Wives of deceased deacons must be invited to the Re-commitment mass and given special treatment. If there is a child of a deceased deacon who needs assistance in furthering their education, maybe a fund could be started to support selected pupils.
14. Generally, we at parish level have a good atmosphere of co-operation amongst the deacons and the priest.
15. I am at peace with my ministry as a deacon just because I have a wife who supports me constantly. The ministry can be very demanding on one's time – for instance – my wife has to beg a lift home after Sunday mass because I have a catechism class to take; she does so willingly without complaining. I thank God for her generosity in all other areas of my ministry, without which a deacon's ministry would not be possible or at least severely curtailed. God bless them.



Comment

The responses reflect to what extent deacons appreciate the support and collaboration given to them by their wives. The collaboration and care is outstanding. It is important that in the parish and at diocesan level, the role of the wife of a deacon is appreciated.

Chapter 5

Proposal and recommendation

1 Theology of Mission

In today's context I wish to stress that it is essential that deacons are trained in the Theology of Mission as the Church is missionary.

The "Directory" reminds us that the deacon's ministry of service is linked with the missionary dimension of the Church. The missionary efforts of the deacon will embrace the ministry of the Word, the Liturgy and works of Charity which, in their turn, are carried into daily life.¹³⁹

Hurley (2005:93) stated that Archbishop Owen McCann¹⁴⁰ at the third session of Vatican II emphasised the importance of proper training of the clergy to make them capable promoters of the lay apostolate.

At a deacons meeting¹⁴¹, November 6, 1981 Bishop Stephen Naidoo pointed out that the deacon is the link between the priest and the people and should be seen as such. If we are to be the link, it is essential that we need to first be evangelised before we can evangelise others. It is therefore pertinent that the deacons training program address the theological issues concerning the understanding of evangelisation, as well as the relationship between evangelisation and mission.

The five models of the church identified by Dulles (1988:34-102) and Burrows (1981:38) points out the church as institution, mystical communion, sacrament, herald and servant. They point out that the church is a community focussed with mediating eternal salvation to individuals and that the ordained ministry is a vehicle for that work.

In today's context I wish to emphasise the deacons role in the aspect of Peace-making which is linked to the Church's missionary activity.

Bosch (2008:118) stated that in Josephine Ford study of Luke, she draws attention to a neglected aspect of the mission of Jesus according to Luke. She refers to that of peace-making, of non-violent resistance to evil, of the futility and self destruction

¹³⁹ Congregation for the Clergy, "Directory", § 27, p 93

¹⁴⁰ Archbishop of Cape Town, South Africa

¹⁴¹ See minutes of deacons meeting dated November 6, 1981

nature of hatred and vengeance. I concur with Bosch that today few Christians would doubt that peace-making is an intrinsic aspect of the church's missionary message. He emphasizes that "in the contemporary world, where terrorism, violence, crime, war and poverty, often intimately related to and caused by one another, are the most important issues of the day. This aspect of Luke's gospel is acutely pertinent (Ford 1984:137)." Bosch points out that our missionary involvement may be successful in other aspects. However should we fail in this major ingredient of Luke's missionary aspect of peace-making, we will stand guilt before the Lord of mission (Bosch 2008:118).

2 Comparative study

A comparative study should be undertaken between the current training in ministry course and the 1983 memorandum on the training programme for ministry in the Archdiocese of Cape Town in conjunction with the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference Pastoral directive, "Deacons in the Local Church" issued in 1986.

It is important to understand that the diaconate training should lead the deacon to service and not an office. It is not justified to deprive the people of God who already fulfill many responsibilities normally exercised by deacons, of the spiritual help given by ordination. The deacon should be well integrated into the life of the community and for the world around us. In fact he should be forming the community to be what they are called to be. The deacon is a "servant leader called by God, to live and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ, by nurturing and developing individual charisms and fulfilling his role in harmonious collaborative ministry."¹⁴² This presupposes that he has received adequate human, spiritual, doctrinal and pastoral theological formation.

I suggest that the deacons' lack of zeal and passion in their diaconate ministry, which is becoming more prevalent, is related to their lack of understanding of their identity as deacons, the difficulty in dealing with the problems and issues deacons are face with. This can be attributed to their theological formation training that they received in the current ministry course.

¹⁴² Vision statement of the Council of deacons of the Archdioceses of Cape Town.

3 Deanery forums

I recommend that the diaconate is discussed at deanery level so that it can be properly understood and a list of the proper liturgical functions of a deacon be drawn up.

It is 30 years since the establishment of the Diaconate in the Archdioceses of Cape Town, yet there still appears to be uncertainty about the liturgical roles, functions and identity of a deacon. It seems that some priests have still not acquainted themselves with the functions that are proper to a deacon. While it is apparent to me that most of the problems presently encountered are not serious and I hope the problems will sort themselves out in time as more priests and deacons themselves begin to understand and accept the diaconate ministry as a shared responsibility in the saving mission of the church. Deacons are not assistants of the priest but assistants of the bishop, working in collaboration with the priest. All priests should be reminded that when a deacon participates in a liturgical celebration, the functions of a deacon are to be done by a deacon and not a priest who has his own ministerial function within the liturgical celebration.

4 Deacon wife survey

In the course of this research, the deacons were asked certain questions. It would be interesting in the future to analyse the ideas and experiences of the wives of deacons and of their children concerning:

- Influence of ordination on the family.
- Expectations from the family.
- Support and collaboration.
- Positive effect on the family.
- Problems for the family arising from the diaconate.

5 Recommendation needing immediate attention

Further development of the profile of the deacon's ministry is important. This stresses the primary task of *diakonia*, Service of charity flowing from the Eucharist, which supercedes his liturgical role. It is important to give full attention to the fact that too many administrative and liturgical duties demand much time and so the real charitable diaconal work, with people who need help, does not get enough attention.

The following areas of current areas need to be addressed.

- Deacons' disbursements.
- Selection of prospective deacons.
- Marriage and family life ministry including Pope John Paul II apostolic exhortation "*Familiaris Consortio*".
- The Social teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Justice and Peace ministry.

5.1 Deacons' disbursements

There is a clear understanding that deacons are not paid a salary. Any cost incurred in their ministry would be refunded but this is not adhered too. I am concerned that financial constraints could impact the deacon's ministry.

A brief history of deacon's disbursement discussions.

- August 24, 1991 deacons requested that expenses incurred in their diaconate ministry are reimbursed.
- January 30, 1996 Dcns. Anstey Kay and Leonardo Bredeveldt requested Archbishop Lawrence Henry to issue a directive regarding compensation for expenses incurred in the performance of deacon's parochial duties.
- March 20, 1997 The Policy document regarding deacons is promulgated by Archbishop Lawrence Henry, Article 4 refers to compensation.
- August 25, 2001 deacons requested finance to be made available to cover the deacons cost.
- April 17, 2006. The Finance Council of the Archdiocese issued a statement that they are in full agreement that the deacons pastoral expenses be reimbursed.
- Msgr Andrew Borrello addressed a letter to deacons informing them that they should speak to their parish priest about disbursements.
- At the annual general meeting of deacons in 2007 deacons raised the issue about disbursements with the Archbishop who re-iterated that deacons should not be incurring costs in their ministries and should be refunded by their parish priests.

- At the annual clergy meeting of 2009 the Co-ordinator of deacons addressed the clergy with regard to deacons' disbursements. Our Archbishop re-iterated that deacons should not be incurring cost in their ministries and should be refunded by their parish priests.

Deacons have been working in the Archdiocese for 30 years and this matter has been raised for 19 years and has not been adequately resolved.

The Archbishop needs to issue a directive to all priests with regard to disbursements to deacons for expenses incurred in the performance of their parochial duties. It would also be a good idea to include an endorsement to this effect in the annual updated list of the stipends sent to parishes.

5.2 Selection of prospective deacons'

I concurred with Bishop Stephen Naidoo that if the diaconate ministry was to be effectively carried out amongst the people of God, then the Church needed a good standard of candidates. I recommend that the conditions¹⁴³ set out by Bishop Stephen Naidoo in his letter dated January 29, 1976 be re-implemented.

The deacon comes from the community to leader the community and therefore needs to understand the community that he will be serving. He must be capable of being a servant leader and be accepted by the community.

5.3 Marriage and family life ministry

Pope John Paul II writes in his Apostolic Exhortation "*Familiaris Consortio*" (On the role of the Christian family in the modern world.) "Pastoral activity is always the dynamic expression of the reality of the church, committed to her mission of salvation. Family pastoral care too – which is a particular and specific form of pastoral activity – has as its operative principle and responsible agent the church herself, through her structures and workers". (John Paul II 2005:1150)

Himes (2005:363) confirms through the work of Lisa Sowle Cahill in these words referring to "*Familiaris Consortio*":

¹⁴³ See Pg 80. selection of prospective deacons

“This document attempt to address modern social challenges to family life, such as the increase in divorce, changing roles of women, models of marriage and family in different cultures and economic pressures on families.”

Why I feel this apostolic exhortation is an essential learning document for deacons especially in today’s social and economic challenges that impact our people’s lives. Pope John Paul (2005:1144f) stated that there are three main stages of preparation that are important for deacons to understand as they are becoming more involved in family disputes and marriage preparations.

1. Remote preparation.

Remote preparation begins in early childhood in family training which leads children to discover themselves as beings endowed with a rich and complex psychology and with a particular personality with its own strengths and weaknesses.

2. Proximate preparation.

The proximate preparation at a suitable age and with adequate catechesis, as in a catechumenal process involves more specific preparation for the sacrament of marriages. A renewal catechesis of young people and others preparing for Christian marriage is necessary. Marriage needs to be presented as an interpersonal relationship of a man and woman that has to be continually developed.

3. Immediate preparation.

Immediate preparation for the sacrament of marriage should take place in the months and weeks immediately preceding the wedding.

The Church accompanies the Christian family on its journey through life and has responsibility to promote better and more intensive programmes of marriage preparation, in order to eliminate the difficulties that many married couples find themselves in and turn to deacons for guidance (John Paul II 2005:1153f). Aspirant deacons should be give training by the Marriage and Family life office.

5.4 The Social Teachings of the Catholic Church

A call to action by Pope Paul VI notes that a responsibility of the Christian Community is to:

- Be aware of the signs of the times and the changes that are taking place in the world around it.
- Analyse the situation in the community.
- Use the Gospel and the Church's Social Teachings to guide this analysis.
- Decide what you should and can do about the situation.
- Implement the plans and put the ideas into action.

I believe it is an essential element in the deacon's ministry of charity to know, understand and implement the Church's social teachings. It will help all deacons to better focus and serve the communities in which they are resident.

The Church's social teaching is based on the example of Jesus we read about in the Gospel. Pope John Paul II reminds deacons that they are heralds of the Gospel. In essence the social teachings are there to support people spiritually and in the world as they go about their daily lives. The teachings deal with all aspects of daily life. We need to accept that we live in a changing environment and that the teachings are a guide to help us to respond in an appropriate manner to these changes (Dorr 1992:366f; Chapman 1999:514f).

Dorr (1992:288-314) and Sirico (2000:21-196) elaborates on the Church's Social teachings.

The ten themes are:

I. Dignity of every person

The human dignity of all people can only be recognised and protected in a community. All people must be treated with dignity and respect because they are special creation of God.

II. The common good

The "common good" is the good of the majority of people and not the minorities. It teaches us to make choices and do actions that enable us to meet the needs of the majority and enabling people to meet their needs. The common good is the meeting of individual needs and the needs of the community at the same time. The good of all is to be observed.

III. **Solidarity**

We need to understand and be concerned with other's needs and problems.

Solidarity is standing with others, especially the poor and marginalised, and view their needs and problems as important as our own.

IV. **Option for the poor**

The poor are people with skills, abilities and energy who are also able to, and must, stand together in solidarity and work for the common good. The option for the poor is a call to all people, and I believe especially deacons, to focus on working together with the poor, the disadvantage and marginalised for their common good. More so today in the social and economic climate people find themselves in, the gap between the poor and the rich is constantly growing larger. The option of the poor is to work to make the gap smaller.

V. **Integral development**

Often we see people's needs and problems in terms of things such as food, housing, water, electricity, schools and community halls and so on. There is much more to people than just their physical and material needs. People also have spiritual needs, emotional needs and mental needs. There is a need for people to understand (education), to love and be loved, to work (jobs) and achieve something, to be creative and to live happily. Integral development is about building up the whole person not just about things and buildings.

VI. **Subsidiarity**

The principles of subsidiarity are that people can make decisions for themselves; they know their own needs and understand their own problems better than those that are far removed from the situations. Subsidiarity teaches us not to make decisions for people who can make these decisions for themselves.

VII. **Justice**

The Church's Social Teaching provides us with guidelines to love ourselves and our neighbours in practical ways. When there is justice, each person is dealt with equally and receives what is rightfully theirs.

VIII. **Peace**

Peace is a state when each person is treated with dignity, has what is needed to live a fruitful life and has the space to develop as a whole person.

IX. **Reconciliation**

Reconciliation is not about revenge or retaliation, but it involves exploring forgiveness. The teaching helps us that putting energy into conflict will destroy us and the fabric of our community. The only way to end a conflict is through a reconciliation process.

X. Integrity of creation

God created the world and made us its stewards. The teaching on the integrity of creation teaches us that it is our responsibility as to what happens to the environment and our duty to protect our environment.

5.5 Justice and Peace ministry

The ministry of Justice and Peace is one practical way in which the works of charity are carried out in the Archdiocese. There is one deacon involved in Justice and Peace. I believe this lack of involvement can be attributed to a lack of understanding of the spirituality and functions of Justice and Peace commission in the Archdiocese.

Aspirant deacons, in my opinion, should dedicate their time in works of charity to obtain a better understanding of being a minister of charity. This internship work will help the aspirant deacons in his discernment process towards the diaconate.

The policy documents for deacons of the Archdiocese stated that deacons are called to serve and lead the community, forming the community in ministry and to inspire them to be all that they are called to be as community. An element of the deacon's spirituality that is also prevalent in the deacons' vision statement.

When compared to the spirituality of Justice and Peace one can see the similarities.

The spirituality of Justice and Peace contains four major steps.¹⁴⁴

1. It is a way of life.
2. It is modelled on the example of Jesus, and it is rooted in the Scriptures and Social teachings of the Church.
3. Its purpose is to transform society.
4. It is carried out by committed Christians.

¹⁴⁴ Justice and Peace annual report 2009 p3

The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission of the Archdiocese of Cape Town has the following vision statement:

“As Catholics we are all called to share in Christ’s mission to bring life in its fullness to all. We recognize that we live in a society in which there are great disparities and injustices. Transformation of society in which there will be human dignity, freedom and equality, lies at the heart of our country’s constitutional order.”¹⁴⁵

Their mission statement reads:

“We contribute to Christ’s mission and the mission to transform our country by seeking to build justice and respect for human rights and by confronting injustice wherever they may find it.”¹⁴⁶

Their aim is to empower disadvantaged communities in the Archdiocese of Cape Town to access their basic human rights.



¹⁴⁵ Justice and Peace annual report 2009 p3
¹⁴⁶ Justice and Peace annual report 2009 p3

Conclusion

My objective was to do a critical assessment of the Profile and Ministry of the Catholic Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Cape Town.

In the first two chapters I examined the restoration of the Permanent Diaconate and how it was implemented and developed. I examined the Second Vatican documents especially *Lumen Gentium*, the apostolic letters and the Code of Canon Law. An analysis was done of the key Curial documents, by studying the ideas behind the statements and its impact.

A detail critical analysis of the basic norms for the formation of Permanent Deacons and the directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons was undertaken. A detailed analysis was done on the papers delivered at the year 2000 Jubilee celebration for Permanent Deacons that took place at the Vatican.

Chapter three addressed the restoration of the Permanent Diaconate within the jurisdiction of the Southern African Catholic Bishops Conference, the Diaconate policies, the profile of the permanent deacons, the growth and evolution of the diaconate in the Archdiocese of Cape Town.

Chapter Four addressed the empirical research; a questionnaire was designed to study aspects of the life of a deacon at work. This was done by means of a questionnaire, sent to all active deacons in the Archdiocese of Cape Town. The information gathered gave an insight and better understanding of the work/life balance of the deacons. The questionnaire was devised in a way that allowed the deacons, to contribute their ideas and experience in detail as a result of posing open-ended questions regarding their ministry. Provision was also made for General views.

The questionnaire was an enormous success with a respondent's rate of 67%. If you view the answers in their totality, you get a very varied picture of the situation of the deacon in respect to the functions and ministry of the diaconate. Not only does

the diaconate affect the deacon, but it also affects his relationships with his family, wife and parish priest.

The consequences and the effects of the diaconate are often experienced as positive. But they are also felt as negative, because of demands and disappointments which can be attributed to a lack of understanding of the role, functions and identity of the deacon. The results of the survey could give our Archbishop – and those responsible for formation on his behalf – ideas and suggestions that could be important for the further development of the diaconate.

I trust and pray that this thesis of mine will result in the deacons obtaining a deeper theological understanding of the diaconate. Furthermore it is my heart's desire that through this document the deacons are able to restore their original zeal and passion that was prevalent at their ordinations.

I also hope that my proposal and recommendations based on my findings will be explored by those responsible for the growth and future development of the diaconate in the Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town and that this document can become resource material for the training of aspirant deacons.

This research paper is a critical assessment of the Profile and Ministry of the Catholic Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Cape Town and through this paper deacons will be able to discover their identity, role and the perspective of their ministry.

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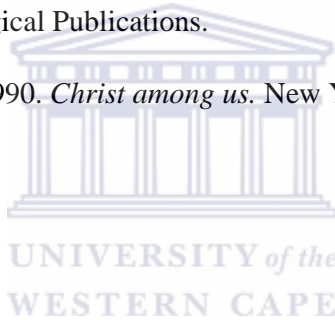
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Appendices

(A) Chronological order of events

<u>Year</u>	<u>Activity</u>
0-500	Scripture and Tradition.
500	Decline of the permanent diaconate in the western Catholic Church.
1554 – 1563	Council of Trent: An attempt was made to restore the diaconate.
1950 – 1965	Owen McCann. Archbishop of Cape Town.
1958 – 1963	Pope John XXIII.
1958	A decision to celebrate an Ecumenical Council.
1959	Institution of an Ante-preparatory Commission.
1960	Institution of a Preparatory Commission.
1962 – 1965	2 nd Vatican Council.
1962	First Session of the Council.
1963	Second Session of the Council. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy.
1963 – 1978	Pope Paul VI.
1964	Third Session of the Council. The Decree on the Restoration of the Permanent Diaconate. The Dogmatic Constitution - Lumen Gentium. Decree on the Catholic Churches of the Eastern rite.
1965	Decree on the Church's Missionary activity.
1965 – 1994	Cardinal Owen McCann. Archbishop of Cape Town.
1967	Pope Paul VI. – Canonical document, " <i>Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem.</i> "

- Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference request permission to institute the Permanent diaconate in its region from the Sacred Congregation de Propaganda Fide in Rome.
- 1968 Pope Paul VI. – Apostolic Constitution, “*Pontificals Romani Recognitio.*”
- Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference receives the faculty to institute the Permanent diaconate in its region from the Sacred Congregation for the evangelisation of the people in Rome.
- 1972 Pope Paul VI. – Apostolic Letter, “Ad Pascendum.”
- 1974 – 1984 Stephen Naidoo. Bishop of Cape Town.
- 1977 Archdiocese of Cape Town introduced a diaconate program.
- 1978 – 2005 Pope John Paul II.
- 1980 First deacons as ordained in the Archdiocese of Cape Town.
- 1983 Pope John Paul II promulgated the Code of Canon Law.
- 1984 – 1989 Stephen Naidoo. Archbishop of Cape Town.
- 1986 Southern African Bishops Conference issues a Pastoral directive, “Deacons in our Local Church”.
- 1987 Pope John Paul II talks to deacons gathered in Detroit.
- 1987 – 1990 Lawrence Henry. Auxiliary Bishop of Cape Town.
- 1990 – Lawrence Henry. Archbishop of Cape Town.
- 1992 Archbishop Lawrence Henry promulgates the Constitution of the Council of Deacons for his archdiocese.
- 1993 Pope John Paul II – Catechesis during a general audience.
- 1995 Pope John Paul II addressed the Congregation for the Clergy at their plenary Assembly.
- 1996 Archbishop Lawrence Henry approves, the policy document regarding deacons and the status of the Council of Deacons.
- 1998 The Congregation for Catholic Education and the Congregation for the Clergy- “Directory for the ministry and life of Permanent Deacons.”

- 2000 Year 2000 Jubilee celebration for Permanent Deacons.
Archbishop Lawrence Henry promulgates the Statutes of the Council of Deacons.
- 2001 Deacons in the Archdiocese of Cape Town have a visioning day.
Archbishop Lawrence Henry approves a Deacons Indaba.
Deacons of the Archdioceses of Cape Town issue a vision statement.
- 2005 – Pope Benedict XVI.
- 2005 International Diaconate Study conference in Freising, Germany.
“Diaconate as a prophetic Ministry in a globalised world”
25th Anniversary of deacon’s ordination in the Archdiocese of Cape Town.
- 2009 International Diaconate Study conference in Vienna, Austria.
“Diaconal Spirituality yesterday – today – tomorrow.”



(B) Letter to deacons - research

Co-ordinator of Deacons

Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town
P.O. Box 2910
Cape Town
8000
September 25, 2008

Dear Brother Deacons

Peace and blessings in the Lord.

In fulfillment of a requirement for a Masters in theology degree I am researching and doing a critical assessment of the Profile and Ministry of the Catholic Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Cape Town.

The research questionnaire is designed to study aspects of life of a deacon at work. The information that you will provide will help me better understand the quality of our work/life balance as deacons.

Because you are the one who can give me a correct picture of how you experience your work life, I request you to respond to the questions honesty and frankly.

Your participation in this research questionnaire is optional.

Your response will be kept strictly confidential. Only I will have access to the information you give, in order to ensure the utmost privacy, I have provided an identification number for each deacon. This number will be used by me only for follow-up procedures. The numbers, names or completed questionnaires will not be made available to anyone.

A summary of the results will be mailed to you after the data are analysed.

Thank you very much for your time and co-operation. I greatly appreciate your help in furthering this research endeavour.

Yours in Christ
Rev. Eugene Tito

(C) **Diaconate research questionnaire**

Catholic Archdiocese of Cape Town.

Diaconate research questionnaire no

Please circle the numbers which represents the most appropriate response.

A) Functions.

❖ **Administer baptism.**

- 1) None in the past year.
- 2) Parish Priest only administers baptism.
- 3) Alternate with parish Priest.
- 4) Assist the Parish Priest.

❖ **Baptism Class**

2. Deacon takes baptism class.
3. Parish Priest takes baptism class.
4. Deacon and Priest takes baptism class.
5. Parish group takes baptism class.
6. Clergy and parish group takes baptism class.

❖ **Custodian and dispenser of the Eucharist at Holy Mass**

1. Deacon and Priest distribute.
2. Priest only distributes.
3. Priest and Extra ordinary ministers of Holy Communion distribute.
4. Deacon, Priest and Extra ordinary ministers distribute.

❖ **Assist at and bless marriages in the name of the Church**

1. Yes - I have a marriage licenses to officiate at marriages?
2. When last did you officiate at a marriage? Date.....
3. No - I do not have a marriage licenses to officiate at marriages?
4. Would you like to have a marriage licenses to officiate at marriages?

❖ **Do you conduct Marriage preparation classes?**

1. Yes

2. No

❖ **Bring Viaticum to the dying**

1. Often
2. Seldom
3. Never

❖ **Do you visit the sick, house bound and hospitalised.**

2. Often
3. Seldom
4. Never

❖ **Proclaim the Sacred Scripture (Gospel) to the faithful.**

1. At every Eucharistic celebration.
2. At Week-end Eucharistic celebrations.
3. Once a month.
4. Twice a month.
5. Only when the deacon is preaching.
6. Never.

❖ **Instruct and exhort the people (Preaching).**

1. At every Eucharistic celebration when you diaconising.
2. At Week-end Eucharistic celebrations when you diaconising.
3. Once a month.
4. Twice a month.
5. Never.

❖ **Involved in Catechism class, adult instruction class or RCIA.**

1. Yes
2. No

❖ **Preside over the worship and prayer of the faithful in the absence of a priest.**

1. Yes, deacon always presides.
2. Sometimes, deacon presides and at other times a non-cleric.
3. No, deacon do not presides but a religious brother or sister.

❖ **Administer sacramentals. (Blessings of cars, homes, religious objects etc)**

1. Often
2. Seldom

3. Never

❖ **Officiate at funeral and burial services in the parish.**

1. Often

2. Seldom

3. Never

❖ **Officiate at funeral and burial services at the cemetery.**

1. Often

2. Seldom

3. Never

❖ **Do you attend Deanery meetings?**

1. Often

2. Seldom

3. Never

4. If never, would you like to share?

❖ **Do you attend Archdiocesan events, gatherings, and celebrations?**

1. Often

2. Seldom

3. Never

4. If never, would you like to share?

B) Chaplaincy

❖ **Are you a Chaplain?**

1. Yes

2. Which group?

3. No

4. Would you like to be a chaplain? If yes, what is your preferred chaplaincy?

C) Ministry.

1. What is going well?

2. What is not going so well?



3. What can be improved?

Please circle the numbers which represents the most appropriate response.

D) Compensation.

❖ **Do you receive any disbursements from your parish?**

1. Baptism
2. Weddings
3. Funerals.
4. Instruction classes.
5. Visits to hospitals and homes.
6. For administrative services provided.
7. Motor vehicle expenses
8. Deanery and Diocesan functions.

❖ **Do you receive an allowance to cover cost from your parish?**

1. Monthly...R.....
2. Yearly:.....R.....

E) General.

❖ **The questions in this survey may not be all embracing and comprehensive and may not therefore had afforded you an opportunity to report some things you may want to say about the diaconate or about yourself. Please make additional comments needed in the space provided.**

I sincerely appreciate your time and co-operation. Please check to make sure that you have not skipped any questions inadvertently. Thank you.

(D) Chairman's indaba address to the deacons

“We are here in the spirit of this deacon’s indaba; by its very nature it is a call to conversion. ‘Be converted and believe in the Gospel’ (Mk 1:15) the conversion of God ask of us is this inextricably linked to the truth; more than the acquisition of something absolutely new, it is about recovering the original status that was conferred upon us by the sacrament of baptism and ordination as deacons.

It is now an appropriate time to turn our thoughts to the theological essence of the diaconate, in order to reflect upon the consequences on the existential level. For the Catholic faith the diaconate ‘is in the church a specific sacramental sign of Christ the servant’,¹⁴⁷ in which we have been incorporated with the conferring of Holy orders. We therefore have a special status, different from the laity, with Jesus Christ in the service of the church, and we deacons have the task of being ‘interpreters of the needs and desires of the Christian community’ and ‘animators of service, in other words of the diaconship’,¹⁴⁸ the spirit of service, key of the deacons spirituality, is therefore conceived of not as a mere exhortation, but rather as something that necessarily follows from theological identity.

Our identity as deacons is also marked by the permanent aspect of our ministry. For a permanent deacon, conversion also involves reflecting on the meaning of the permanent character of the diaconate. While this will mean a stable status, not as an in transit deacon, as a stage to the sacramental priesthood, there must be an awareness that we are always deacons.

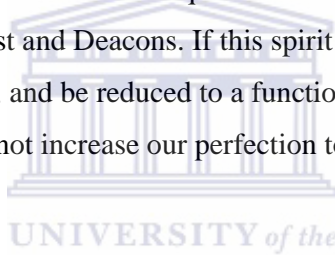
The character of the diaconate remains lively, permeating all the aspects of our life, both in the specific exercising of the diaconal ministry and in our professional, civil, family and social life. The diaconate vocation has what I call an all-inclusive character: it is not a matter of exercising it ‘Part-time’ but a specific mode of our entire existence, lived in favour of the mission of the church. Our entire life acquires value in the diaconate, and somehow this must be reflected in our way of praying, our profession relationships, our work life, our family life, collegiality, our social relationships and friendships, way of behaviour and attitudes towards ministry.

¹⁴⁷ Congregation for the Clergy, Directory for the ministry and the life of permanent deacons § 5

¹⁴⁸ Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Letter Ad Pascendum, Introduction

Brothers our eyes should be open to the needs of those who live in poverty and the marginalisation in our archdiocese. In this sense, the function of a deacon takes on a frontline role, since it is a service of charity which has the purpose of helping and promoting all the members of the church in our archdiocese so that they may participate, in a spirit of communion and according to their charisms, in the life and mission of the church.

For the fruitful ministry of charity, there must be a close link with the pastoral authority, our Archbishop Lawrence Henry. Our diaconal ministry is an aspect of the authority with which we are endowed by the sacrament of ordination; it must be exercised in hierarchical communion with the Archbishop, auxiliary bishop and the priests. Charity which we try to practice through the ministry is also a condition within the ministry, as communion with the priest. Therefore, the service of charity provided to the faithful is anchored in the requirement of charity between the clergy who consist of Bishops, Priest and Deacons. If this spirit of collaboration is lacking, our life of service would fail, and be reduced to a functional task that might fulfil our duties externally, but would not increase our perfection towards holiness or the true ecclesial communion.



It is true that at time we are made to feel isolated in the archdioceses. Some have indicated that they are walking the tight rope between the community and their priest, There is a lack of understanding of the role of deacons amongst the clergy and the laity, no matter what the issue. Do not act in isolation but rather join in the ‘ministerium’ of the church. The function of a deacon must never be considered as a private, freely planned activity.

Finally, I want to urge you brothers, ‘Give thanks to God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ’ (Eph 1:3). Who, ‘through being of divine nature, did not consider a jealous treasure his equality with God, but divested himself, taking on the condition of servant and becoming like man.’ (Phil 2:6-7). Our thanksgiving as deacons therefore includes the fact that the redemption has been offered to God as a gift to men come in Christ, who ‘has not come to be served but to serve and give his life for the redemption of many.’ (Mt 20:28)

This is also the context of thanksgiving for the gift of our vocation the service of being a deacon; thanksgiving that, in order to be sincere, presupposes acceptance as an undeserved gift, not derived either from personal qualities or from mere desire – however commendable – to better serve the church, but from the providential plan of God, who wished to take us on as privileged instruments to establish the service of Jesus Christ amongst men. The awareness of the diaconate vocation understood not as an earned gift but as one received gratuitously, requires us to undertake our task in faithfulness to the charism of the diaconate.

Pray to God that during this week-end of our deacon Indaba. We will come to the realisation of who we are. That we may become a stimulus for transforming our thankfulness into a desire to be faithful to our vocation and by becoming self evangelised in order that we can go out to preach and live the Gospel.”

