



# ANSWERING THE CALL: **DEACONS** IN THE DIOCESE OF TYLER

## ABOUT DEACONS

A deacon is an ordained minister of the Catholic Church. There are three groups, or "orders," of ordained ministers in the Church: bishops, presbyters and deacons. Deacons are ordained as a sacramental sign to the Church and to the world of Christ, who came "to serve and not to be served." The entire Church is called by Christ to serve, and the deacon, in virtue of his sacramental ordination and through his various ministries, is to be a servant in a servant-Church.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

- ✓ What is my prayer life like? Do I read the Sacred Scriptures? Do I pray the Holy Rosary and other devotions? Am I currently involved and active in ministries in my parish?
- ✓ How often do I attend Holy Mass and receive the Eucharist? How frequently do I receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation?
- ✓ Have I spoken to my pastor, another priest, or spiritual mentor about a vocation? Have I spoken with my family about this call?
- ✓ Do I have any physical, emotional or psychological restrictions that might prevent me from serving as a permanent deacon?
- ✓ Am I willing and able to commit myself to attend the full schedule of classes, small group meetings, days of spiritual reflection and retreats as required?

## THE ROLE OF A DEACON

### LUMEN GENTIUM: VATICAN II

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."

### ECCLESIA IN AMERICA: JOHN PAUL II

We see with joy how deacons "sustained by the grace of the Sacrament, in the ministry (diakonia) of the Liturgy, of the word and of charity are at the service of the People of God, in communion with the Bishop and his priests".

## THE NEXT STEP

We invite those Catholic men who are at least 35 years old and would like to discern a call to serve Jesus Christ and His Church as permanent deacons to take the next step and contact us for more information.

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