

**DIOCESE OF DELAWARE DIACONATE PROGRAM  
COMPETENCY SYLLABI  
As of April 2010**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Holy Scriptures.....	Page 2
Theology.....	Page 3
Ethical and Moral Theology .....	Page 5
Church History .....	Page 7
Liturgy .....	Page 9
Theory and Practice of the Diaconate .....	Page 10
Human Awareness and Understanding .....	Page 12
Spiritual Development and Discipline.....	Page 12
Practical Training and Experience.....	Page 14

## **HOLY SCRIPTURE**

The Rev. Russell Bohner, TSSF, Examining Chaplain

Through one or more written and/or oral statements, candidates will show competency by demonstrating how they read, understand, and use the Bible. In other words, candidates will show how they draw, interpret, and implement meaning from the Biblical text.

Each candidate and I will choose together a passage from Holy Scripture or a Biblical theme for the candidate to address. As much as possible, we will strive to pick passages or themes that relate directly to the Candidate's area of ministry. With passages from Holy Scripture, the candidate will interpret the passage (what do they think it means?) and explain their interpretation (why do they think it means this?). For Biblical themes, the candidate will choose relevant passages from Holy Scripture and then interpret the passages and explain what they think the passages say about their particular theme. Whether with a Biblical passage or theme, the candidate will engage with at least three other sources, choosing one who supports and one who disagrees with their position and then a third source.

In evaluating the candidate's statements, I will not be looking for a particular interpretation but instead will be looking to see by what process the candidate arrived at their interpretation and what resources the candidate used both to arrive at their interpretation and to support their interpretation. As each candidate considers other voices and interpretations of a specific Biblical text of theme, I will be looking to see how the candidate engages with and responds to these other voices, especially to those with whom they disagree.

My commitment is to help each deacon candidate either to learn or to better learn how to read and use the Bible both personally and professionally, and my hope is that, in this experience, both the deacon candidates and I will learn from each other and together grow closer to God through study and reflection on the Biblical text. When a candidate is ready to proceed with competency in Holy Scripture, the candidate and I will meet at a mutually agreed upon time and place. This meeting will be a time for getting acquainted and for deciding how to begin. The specific needs of each deacon candidate will determine how we proceed.

## **RESOURCES**

### **The New Church's Teaching Series**

*Opening the Bible, Roger Ferlo, Volume Two*

*Engaging the Word, Michael Johnston, Volume Three*

### **Bible Commentaries**

*The New Interpreter's Bible*

*Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching*

*Sacra Pagina*

*The Anchor Bible*

*The Oxford Bible Commentary*

*The People's Bible Commentary*

### **Bible Dictionaries**

*The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*

*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*

*The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*

## **Other Bible Resources**

*Overtures to Biblical Theology Series, Fortress Press*

*The Writings of the New Testament, Fortress Press, Luke Timothy Johnson*

*Handbook of Biblical Criticism, Third Edition, Soulen and Soulen*

*Anything by Walter Brueggemann, Old Testament scholar*

*Anything by Luke Timothy Johnson, New Testament scholar*

## **THEOLOGY**

The Rev. Carl N. Kunz, Jr., Examining Chaplain

Theology is a large area of inquiry that encompasses many different areas of exploration. There is revealed Theology, natural or rational theology and mystical theology. In a way everyone is a theologian. So, I ask: “What is your personal experience of God?”

**Theology** is, of course, the dialogue about God. So, let’s begin there. What is the unity and nature of God? God is both immanent and transcendent in nature. Explain. We speak about the Holy Name of God? What is that about? People talk about the “Silence of God”; what does this mean? What is the nature of the Trinity? We speak of the three “Persons” of the Trinity. What is their dance? How do they interact or intertwine? What is the work of each?

**Cosmology** is the understanding of the Universe. What is the doctrine of creation? What do the two stories of Genesis 1-2 tell us about the understanding of creation? What about Creation and Evolution?

**Anthropology** is the understanding of humankind. What is humankind’s nature? What about Body, Soul, and Spirit within the individual? How does Heart and Mind fit into this? What is essential Goodness? What is the “Fall?” Was it really a “Fall” downward or upward?

**Christology** is the “word” about the Christ. Who is Yeshua? Who is Jesus? Who is the Messiah and what is his work? Look at this from the Old Testament and New Testament points of view. Is Virgin birth essential to Incarnation? Wrestle with what incarnation means. What does it mean in the Nicene Creed when we say: “Very God and Very Man? Begotten, not made?” As we continue to evolve as human beings does the creed prevent us from being open to continuing revelation and expanding our thinking. Does it keep us in a box?

**Numenology** is the study of the Divine Spiritual force or influence in the world. The Gospel of John states that “God is Spirit.” Thus, the question, “Who is the Holy Spirit?” What is the work of the Spirit and how is the Spirit manifested in the world, at a certain locale, or within humankind? What does it mean in the Nicene Creed when it says, “who proceeds from the Father and the Son?” Why do all of our Eastern Orthodox friends disagree with the western churches on this?

**Soteriology** is the dialogue about Salvation. It involves words like Messiah, deliverer, preserver, and savior. What are we to be saved from or for? Is it from the human condition as we now experience it? Is it from Adam and Eve’s misbehavior in the Garden of Eden? What does Original Sin mean? How are we saved? What is the work of Jesus in this area? Check out Brian D. McLaren’s [A Generous Orthodoxy](#) to get an idea of how different Christian Denominations interpret the work of Jesus and how he “saves.” What do we mean by Atonement?

**Ecclesiology** is about the church. What is the Church? Who is the Church? What defines the Church? What about the Institutional Churches vs. the Universal Church? What is the Mission of the Church? Must it be inclusive or exclusive to appeal to the unchurched or to preserve its “truth” in the midst of heresy? The Episcopal

Church speaks of two major Sacraments and five lesser Sacraments. What is the Sacramental aspect of each of these? How do they each serve the believer and the world?

**Eschatology** is the word about “the end of time” and I have included here some issues about the end of each of us. Will God bring an end to history? St. Paul thought the “end” would come very soon as did many within the early church. What does it mean to say “Christ will come again?” Is the apocalyptic vision still relevant to modern Christian thought? Today in the culture there seems to be a strong belief in “reincarnation” and “immortality” if we listen carefully to the pastoral tone of many funeral homilies. The Nicene Creed says, “We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.” Can you speak clearly on the difference between death, resurrection, reincarnation, and immortality?

### **Theology Book List**

The following books are not a required reading list but, a suggested list. It might be helpful to start with the volumes in the New Church’s Teaching Series. I would suggest that during this formative period the “persons in training” might try to take a one, one and a half hours per week, course in a small group. I would suggest “Living the Questions” or its sequel, “Saving Jesus.” These are the type of courses that raise those sticky questions that people often ask clergy. They should be intellectually stimulating for you. You don’t have to be theological answer persons but, my hope is that you will be comfortable conversing with both the church and unchurched that you encounter in your Diaconal ministries.

My plan is that when you have been accepted as Postulants, we will begin one on one conversations about some of the theological issues I have listed above. Recognizing that each of you is at a different place in both your spiritual and academic development, such a conversation should help you and me determine what direction would be most helpful for you. I will call each of you and set up a time for us to meet.

Alister E. McGrath (Ed.)	<u>The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Modern Christian Thought</u> (This is a good reference to have)
William Temple	<u>Nature, Man, and God</u>
Michael Johnston	<u>Engaging the Word</u> (Volume 3 - New Church’s Teaching Series 1998)
Rebecca Lyman	<u>Early Christian Traditions</u> (Volume 6 - New Church’s Teaching Series 1999)
Mark McIntosh	<u>Mysteries of Faith</u> (Volume 8 - New Church’s Teaching Series 2000)
Paul Tillich	<u>The New Being</u>
Martin Buber	<u>I and Thou</u>
Geoffrey Lampe	<u>God as Spirit</u>
Brian McLaren	<u>A Generous Orthodoxy</u>
Maurice Wiles	<u>The Remaking of Christian Doctrine</u>
Karl Barth	<u>Dogmatics in Outline</u>
John Macquarrie	<u>20<sup>th</sup> Century Religious Thought</u>
David Bowden	<u>A Comprehensive Guide to Christianity</u>

## **CHRISTIAN ETHICS AND MORAL THEOLOGY IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY**

The Rev. Canon Lloyd S. Casson, Examining Chaplain

### **Course Description**

This is an introductory course in Christian Ethics and Moral Theology for Diaconal Postulants in the Episcopal Diocese of Delaware. It seeks to focus on our task as Christians, to make moral decisions—deciding what is right and wrong, or put another way, determining what is the good—in personal behavior in our life in the Church and in the world. Christian moral theology is centered in God. How we view our relationship with God and God's involvement in our lives begins to provide a focus for how we will live. As Stephen Holmgren, the author of *Ethics After Easter*, the primary text assigned for this course, puts it, "the vision of God is...the vision of our humanity restored and renewed by a decisive act of God...one continuous act of being born as one of us, living in our midst while serving and teaching us, dying for us on the hard wood of the cross, and rising again in a resurrection that triumphed over the powers of evil, sin and death. This resurrection transforms not only us, but also the whole order of the world, back to its intended pattern in creation, and toward its final end in the fulfillment of all things in Christ at the end of the ages. Among the things that are renewed and transformed by God's work of redemption is the world of human action. Christian moral theology seeks to describe this renewed and transformed world."

It is hoped that by the end of this study, the postulant will be able 1) to articulate an understanding of the world and humanity in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and 2) to articulate the significance of this understanding for personal human action, as well as for the Church's apostolic witness and mission amidst the issues facing the church and the world today.

As a potential Deacon, charged with interpreting to the church the needs, concerns and hopes of the world, throughout the course the Postulant will be considering and eventually practicing her/his role in enabling members of the congregation to fulfill these tasks.

At the outset is a review of the Baptismal Rite for a glance through the church's lens, at the world and human condition, God's action to create the world and to redeem it through Christ, God's ongoing presence and activity in the Church and the world through the Holy Spirit, and the Apostolic resurrection life to which those being baptized and those witnessing their baptism commit themselves.

The course also involves a cursory exploration of how theology has informed ethical decision making and the identification of moral standards at significant points in the church's history, and how Anglican moral theology in particular relies on a process that involves reflection (reason) upon nature, scripture and interpretations and actions through the ages (tradition). This will include consideration of ethical issues related to authority (who or what ultimately says what is right?). Finally, The course explores contemporary issues such as human relations, racism and group discrimination and exclusion, human sexuality, war and peace, bioethics, economic and environmental justice, etc., for the purpose of identifying and analyzing the moral and ethical issues involved, how the Episcopal Church has responded to such issues through its history, ways in which it responds today, and identifying some of the ethical/moral and mission imperatives at stake in such issues.

### **Course Goals:**

- (1) To provide a basic understanding of classical and contemporary concepts of Christian Ethics and Moral Theology.
- (2) To demonstrate how tradition, scripture and ongoing human reason historically and currently inform Anglican ethical decision making and identification of moral standards.
- (3) To enable the Postulant to discover and articulate the moral and ethical standards implied in the Baptismal Covenant.
- (4) To enhance the Postulant's ability to make theologically informed ethical discernment and moral judgments in personal life and regarding contemporary issues facing society and the church, and to lead congregants in doing the same.

(5) To equip the Postulant as potential Deacon with leadership skills for empowering the congregation in efforts to deliberate and act ethically on critical societal issues, and from the perspective of the Gospel to participate in the arena of public discourse and action regarding standards of ethics and morality for such issues.

### **Course Requirements**

#### **(1) READING**

It is expected that the following will be read in their entirety:

-Holy Baptism, *The Book of Common Prayer*, pp. 298-310.

-(Stephen Holmgren, *Ethics After Easter*, in *The New Church=s Teaching Series*, ed. James E. Grifiss, Volume Nine, Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 2000.

-Harold Lewis, *Christian Social Witness*, in *The New Church=s Teaching Series*, ed. James E. Grifiss Volume Ten, Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 2001.

#### **(2) OCCASIONAL AND BRIEF WRITING**

The Postulant is asked to write a series of one or two page essays to stimulate discussion with the Examining Chaplain, commenting on assigned Axioms of Moral Theology, found in *Ethics After Easter*, pp.172-176, based upon study during this course and the Postulant=s own experience and reasoning. The Examining Chaplain and Postulant will confer as to which Axioms will be discussed and the due dates of the essays.

The Postulant is also asked to write a series of one or two page essays to stimulate discussion with the Examining Chaplain, responding to assigned Questions for Group Discussion, found in *Christian Social Witness*, pp.159-162, based upon study during this course and the Postulant=s own experience and reasoning. The Examining Chaplain and Postulant will confer as to which Questions will be discussed and the due dates of the essays.

#### **(3) PRESENT A REASONED MORAL/ETHICAL POSITION**

The Postulant will be prepared to articulate his or her own ethical and moral perspectives, based upon study during this course and the Postulant=s own experience and reasoning, on at least two issues facing the church and society today. The Examining Chaplain and Postulant will confer as to the issues to be discussed and the form and time frame in which the discussion will be presented.

#### **(4) PLAN AND CONDUCT A CONGREGATIONAL PROJECT**

The Postulant, conferring with the Examining Chaplain and with the advice and consent of the Rector of her/his congregation, will select a project and time frame in which the potential Deacon provides leadership for enabling congregants to deliberate and act on ethics and moral standards regarding one or more societal issues. Such a project may be teaching a class, conducting a workshop, preaching a sermon, leading an action in the congregation or community, community organizing, etc. Debriefing and critiquing of this experience will involve the Postulant, Examining chaplain, Rector, and/or other mentor, as appropriate and agreed upon by all concerned.

#### **(5) WRITE A FINAL PAPER**

-The Postulant will submit a final paper reflecting upon the content and the personal contemporary societal , theological/spiritual significance of his/her learning experience in this course.

### **Course Methodology**

This course, at least for the initial class of Deacon Postulants, is designed to be a one-on-one discussion class. The Postulant and Examining Chaplain agree on meeting dates and times, which may be changed by either party with ample notice, except in a clear emergency. From time to time, the Examining Chaplain may invite a person with particular experience or expertise to join the discussions.

During the interim between meetings, it is expected that the Postulant will be accomplishing reading assignments. The brief essays are not intended to be polished papers, but rather very brief, narrative thoughts for the purpose of stimulating discussion with the Examining Chaplain. However, the final paper is intended to be a well crafted paper, properly attributed and footnoted using Turabian or other standard for writing. The proposed direction of its content may be discussed with the Examining Chaplain.

The purpose of the Field Work project is to provide the student hands-on experience in the congregation, for providing thoughtful leadership in deliberating about moral standards and in taking concrete action regarding

societal issues. It is very appropriate to consider joining forces with a community organization, another congregation, or other persons in carrying out the project.

### **Course Timetable**

Depending upon the Postulant's other obligations and the Commission on Ministry's planned timetable of the expected period of postulancy, this course should be completed within three to six months. If it appears that more than nine months are required, consideration should be given to postponing taking this course until a more opportune time. Exceptions may be made for cogent reasons.

### **A Final Hope of the Examining Chaplain**

That this will be a richly rewarding, enjoyable, fun albeit a serious, educational experience.

## **CHURCH HISTORY**

Dr. William Innes, Examining Chaplain

### Course Objectives:

- Trace the development of Christian doctrine within its historical context and understand its implications for your ministry.
- Describe the growth of the Episcopal Church and its distinctive characteristics.
- Understand the Church in the developing world, what unites and separates us, and where we might all be headed in our lifetimes.

### Course Milestones:

1. The historical method and its challenges
  - a. Does history belong only to the winners and the writers?
  - b. Does history have a defined path or do we impose it backwards?
  - c. *Recommended reading:* Azar Nafisi, Reading "Lolita" in Teheran, and Michael Wise, Martin Abegg, Jr, and Edward Cook, The Dead Sea Scrolls.
2. Trinitarian heresies were defined and condemned by the catholic/universal Church at Nicea (325). In 2-3 sentences, define what these are and why they were condemned:
  - a. Docetism
  - b. Gnosticism
  - c. Modal Monarchianism
3. Christological controversies were defined and condemned by the catholic/universal Church at Chalcedon (451). In 2-3 sentences, define what these are and why they were condemned:
  - a. Arianism
  - b. Nestorianism
  - c. Adoptionism
4. In the Nicene Creed, select any three statements you like, and describe what specific error of doctrine each statement is attempting to deal with.

5. Christianity and Islam see the role of Jesus quite differently. 2-3 paragraphs.
6. Why did the Eastern and Western Church separate from each other in 1054? (What was theological and what was political?).
7. Explain in 2-3 paragraphs each:
  - a. Why the Papacy gained pre-eminence in the former Western Roman Empire from 500-800.
  - b. Where did monasticism come from, starting with Egypt & Anthony.
  - c. Why was the celibate clergy created in the West as an 11<sup>th</sup> Century reform
  - d. What was the specific focus of these orders:
    - i. Benedictines, Dominicans, Franciscans
  - e. High Middle Ages: Describe key points of theology of:
    - i. Anselm
    - ii. Aquinas
  - f. Describe the fringe/protest movements to the Medieval Church
    - i. Francis of Assisi
    - ii. Peter Waldo/Waldensians
    - iii. Jan Hus
    - iv. John Wycliffe
8. Describe the key theological issues that drove the Reformation and separated the Reformers from Rome, 1 paragraph on each. You can use Luther's theology for simplicity.
  - a. Source of authority in theological matters
  - b. Salvation, justification and grace
  - c. Doctrine of the Church
  - d. Role of lay & clergy people
  - e. Church and State relations
9. The Reformation in Britain created the Anglican tradition as we have inherited it. Two paragraphs each on:
  - a. What was the role of Henry in creating Anglican *theology* (versus Rome).
  - b. What was the Elizabeth Settlement?
  - c. Write a paragraph each on the role of reason in theology as described by Richard Hooker; and who were the Caroline Divines?
  - d. Describe Anglicanism's unique theological and polity characteristics as the Reformation era ended, about 1700.
10. Describe the development of the Episcopal Church in the USA from the colonial period to the present. Two paragraphs each.
  - a. Describe why the Churches in New York and New England were different in liturgy and polity from the Mid-Atlantic States.
  - b. Explain the issues and process behind the Bp. Seabury & Bp. White consecrations.
  - c. What happened to the Episcopal Church in the Civil War era?
  - d. What was the "Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral" and how did it help define what made Anglicanism?
  - e. The Episcopal Church entered the 20<sup>th</sup> Century as the Church of the wealthy establishment, and left the Century with severe internal dissension about doctrine and a declining membership. What happened during the Century to cause this?
11. Catching up with the Church Universal, 2-3 paragraphs on each.

- a. What were the major Roman Catholic doctrines created at the Councils of Trent (1563), Vatican I (1870), Vatican II (1962-5). Are hopes for unity closer or further away in your estimation?
- b. Describe the World Council of Churches Movement and the Ecumenical movement in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.
- c. The Church in the Developing World, especially the Anglican Churches, are 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Christians who see themselves living in the New Testament Church. What do we share and how we see things differently? What would your suggestion be for trying to bring the Anglican “north” and “south” hemispheres back together?

Course texts could include the following:

Justo Gonzalez’ The Story of Christianity, vols. 1 & 2. This will be the text for tracing the development of theology and Church history. An excellent reference source is: <http://en.wikipedia.org/> and Eerdman’s Handbook to the History of Christianity which is equally good and a good reference book for the future. Eerdman’s Introduction is an excellent summary of Church’s history.

Provided: William Innes, Social Concern in Calvin’s Geneva, Chapters 4 (“Renaissance Thought and the Dignity of Man”) and Eight (“The Diaconate”).

Please read:

Barbara MacHaffie, Her Story. A review of women’s role in Christianity and an excellent social history of Christianity.

Robert Pritchard, A History of the Episcopal Church. Basic text on our denomination.

Samuel Escobar, A Time for Mission, pp 96-180. Good explanation of Christianity and its explosive growth in the Third World; explains how it differs from mainstream US Christianity. It is important that we understand it, because it affects the Anglican Communion today.

## **LITURGY**

The Rev. Edward E. Godden, Examining Chaplain

Vocational Deacons should know and understand the basic origins and the general historical development of daily and Sunday Christian liturgies.

Vocational Deacons should have a general knowledge and understanding of the liturgy in the Anglican tradition, including liturgical space, music, and vestments.

Vocational Deacons should have a comprehensive knowledge of the 1979 revision of the American Book of Common Prayer, and have an awareness of all rubrics and instructions pertaining to the ministry and function of deacons.

Vocational Deacons should be prepared and able to enter into dialogue with other parish clergy and lay leaders to plan for their liturgical functioning in the congregations to which they are assigned.

Vocational Deacons should show a high degree of competence in performing the traditional roles of deacons in the Sunday liturgy, *and* in leading, training and preparing others in the work of proclamation, hospitality,

intercessory prayer, and social witness.

- READING LIST: The Book of Common Prayer especially—  
Ordination of a Deacon  
all segments mentioning Deacons in the rubrics
- Commentary on the American Prayer Book; Marion J. Hatchett, Seabury Press, 1980,  
especially –  
Ordination of a Deacon  
all references to Deacons  
ceremonial functions of a Deacon in the Eucharist
- A Guide to Celebration; Howard E. Galley, Cowley Pub., 1989
- Deacons in the Liturgy; (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) Ormande Plater
- Being a Deacon Today: A Theological and Practical Exploration; Rosalind Brown
- The New Church's Teaching Series: "Theology of Worship", Volume 12 ; Louis Weil
- Optional but desirable*
- The Exsultet from the Musical Appendix of the Hymnal 1982
- "Seven Pre-Reformation Eucharistic Liturgies" from Education for Ministry

## **THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THE DIACONATE**

The Rev. Dr. JoAnn Barker – Examining Chaplain

Those seeking to become an ordained deacon will show competency of the following:

1. History of the Diaconate
2. Understanding of the four orders of ministry
3. Understanding of the Diocesan and National Canons pertaining to the Diaconate
4. The Role of the Deacon in the Church and in the world

### ***History of the Diaconate***

The bibliography includes books that outline and give insight into the church's journey of incorporating the permanent diaconate into the order of ordained ministers. Each diaconal aspirant needs to have these books in his/her personal library, well read and available for future reference. The examining chaplain will lecture on this topic, lead discussion, and help answer questions.

### ***Understanding of the Four Orders of Ministry***

Beginning with the Book of Common Prayer, all will show a clear understanding of the function and role of the laity, the deacon, the priest, and the bishop, as well as a clear understanding of why he/she is called to this particular order and not another. The chaplain will affirm that the aspirant is knowledgeable in this area.

## ***Understanding of the Canons of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Delaware***

Those called to the diaconate must know the rules of the church according to their order and be willing to follow them. An exam will determine this knowledge.

### ***The Role of the Deacon in the Church and in the world***

A deacon is a stone in the shoe of the church. A deacon must be present prophetically to call the church to attend to the needs of the world. Each deacon must discern his/her own place in this prophetic mission by participating in the ministry to which he/she is called. The aspirant will show that he/she is discovering that passion for helping the poor, the sick, and the needy.

The aspirant will survey his/her own community and develop a list of social service agencies with address and phone numbers and be able to articulate access to the system.

In the church, a deacon can be responsible for the training of lectors and Eucharistic ministers and visitors. The aspirant will develop a training syllabus and present this to the examining chaplain.

### **Reading List:**

Collins, John N. *Deacons and the Church: Making Connections Between Old and New*. Herefordshire: Gracewing and Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 2002.

Countryman, L. Wm. *Living on the Border of the Holy*.

Dozier, Verna. *Authority of the Laity*.

Hall, Christine., ed. *The Deacons's Ministry*. Hereefordshire: Gracewing, 1991.

Hartley, Ben L. and Paul E. Van Buren. *The Deacon: Ministry Through Words of Faith and Acts of Love*. Nashville: The United Methodist Church, 1999.

Plater, Ormonde. *Many Servants: An Introduction to Deacons*. Cambridge, Mass.: Cowley Publications, 2004.

Pritchard, Robert. *A History of the Episcopal Church*. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 1991.

Walker, Williston and Richard A. Norris, David W. Lotz, Robert T. Handy. *A History of the Christian Church*. 4<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Mc Millan, 1985.

## **HUMAN AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING**

The Reverend Jeffrey Ross, examining Chaplain

In order to give of the self in ministry, one must not only understand individual identity but also be able to build successful relationships with appropriate boundaries. Our work together will provide an opportunity to develop skills and deepen understanding of individual identity and human interpersonal relationships.

### **GOALS**

1. To comprehend the experience of system dynamics within the family of origin and continue to integrate these experiences into individual identity.
2. To continue to develop and synthesize the pastoral identity as a deacon and religious leader.
3. To appreciate power dynamics and system theory within congregations.
4. To be able to articulate an individual approach to leadership.
5. To learn to present and participate in group case studies as a means to gain insight into pastoral interactions and to build peer support and relationships.

### **TEXTS**

*Genograms in Family Assessment* by Monica McGoldrick and Randy Gerson.

*The Wounded Healer* by Henri Nouwen

*How Your Church Family Works* by Peter L. Steinke

*Leadership in Congregations* edited by Richard Bass

*Shared Wisdom: a guide to case study reflection in ministry* by Jeffrey H. Mahan et al.

### **EVALUATION**

1. Completion and presentation of personal family genogram.
2. Written reflection on *The Wounded Healer*
3. Analysis of system dynamics within current congregation.
4. Written description of candidate's style of leadership.
5. Presentation of a pastoral case study.

The Reverend Jeffrey Ross is currently the Rector of Saint Peter's Church in Lewes Delaware. He holds a Master of Science in Pastoral Counseling and Spiritual Direction from Neumann College in Aston, Pennsylvania and a Master of Divinity from the General Theological Seminary in New York City. In addition to being a Rector, his pastoral experience includes serving as a Counselor, Diocesan Youth Minister, and College Chaplain. He also served as a reader for the GOE for several years. He is married and the father of two children.

## **SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT AND DISCIPLINE**

The Rev. Celeste Cox, Examining Chaplain

St. Paul says, *Present your bodies* (your somas, i.e., all that you are) *as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship* (Rom. 12:1). As a disciple of Jesus in formation for the ordained diaconate, you are called to consider what a living sacrifice might be, in terms of your life and servant ministry. How will you be a living sacrifice and sign of *diakonia* for the world, especially the poor and needy? How will you be a living sign of *diakonia* for the People of God, the Church, who need instruction on how to be servants in the Way of Jesus? This Way is the way of self-denial, self-emptying, reaching out to the lost and the lepers of today's world. This way is the flow of mercy and justice pouring out – *flowing* from the heart and words and deeds of a servant formed in Christ Jesus.

A deacon is to model her life upon Holy Scripture. He is to make Christ and his redemptive love known... She is to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world... At all times, his life and teaching are to show Christ's people that in serving the helpless they are serving Christ himself. Who could do such things?! No one – unless he, she, is truly centered in Christ, formed by the holy Word, and formed by the disciplined practice of prayer. Such a servant must also be self-aware and possess the sort of self-understanding that leads to humility and wisdom. Every day such a servant prays with body, mind and spirit, the desire expressed in the *Anima Christi* of St. Ignatius: *Jesus, may all that is you flow into me...* in the hope that she, he, may say with St. Paul, *It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me* (Gal. 2:20).

Realizing that, as Edward Hays has written, Jesus is the Lord and Holy Pattern for our lives, men and women who aspire to be deacons are called to ongoing spiritual growth and development. To learn to be a deacon, i.e., to be formed by grace for this purpose, is to learn Christ or, in St. Paul's words, *to put on the Lord Jesus Christ* (Romans 13:14). There is no particular book to read, or course to take, that contains "everything you need to know to be a spiritually mature deacon." There is only the yoke of servant to put on – through the faithful daily consumption of the Word, the faithful daily practice of prayer, *lectio*, reflection, all of which inform and empower one's active diaconal ministry. Then, after the active ministry has taken place, the deacon returns to the well, the source, to be restored, healed, guided before "going out" again with others to heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, and bring good news to the poor.

Deacons in preparation are accountable for –

- + ***developing a mature spiritual life***, which includes the faithful practice of prayer beyond corporate worship. They should have a Rule of Life and a spiritual director. **To be included** in the Rule and in discussions with the spiritual director are **such issues as stewardship of the body and regular Sabbath time**.
- + ***seeking greater self-awareness***. As challenging personal issues arise in prayer, in discussions with a spiritual director, diaconal projects, clinical pastoral education, or in family relationships, the servant minister is to **seriously consider personal therapy** in the assurance that, as Jesus said, the truth does set us free.
- + ***trying something new in their spiritual practices***, since *newness of life* is a hallmark of risen life in Christ.

Soul friends in print (*Read the first 3 books on the list and then 3 others from this list, your own, or recommendations of your spiritual director*)

*Wisdom Distilled from the Daily: Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today* by Joan Chittister (HarperCollins, 1990).

*The Naked Now: Learning to See as the Mystics See* by Richard Rohr (Crossroad, 2009)

*Giving to God: The Bible's Good News about Living a Generous Life* by Mark Allan Powell (Eerdmans, 2006).

*In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* by Henri J.M. Nouwen (Crossroad, 1991).

*Reclaiming the Body in Christian Spirituality* (edited by Thomas Ryan) (Paulist Press, 2004).

*The Kingdom of God Is Like...* by Thomas Keating (Crossroad, 1993).

*The Discernment of Spirits: An Ignatian Guide for Everyday Living* by Timothy M. Gallagher, OMV (Crossroad, 2005).

*The Practice of Prayer* (The New Church's Teaching Series) by Margaret Guenther (Cowley Publications, 1998).

*Lord, Teach Us: The Lord's Prayer and the Christian Life* by William H. Willimon & Stanley Hauerwas (Abingdon, 1996).

Consider for daily reflection/daily life retreat.

*SacredSpace: The Prayer Book 2010* “a prayer guide inspired by the ...interactive website [www.sacredspace.ie](http://www.sacredspace.ie)” -- from the Jesuit Communication Centre, Ireland (published by Ave Maria Press).

*Open the Door: A Journey to the True Self* by Joyce Rupp (Sorbin Books, 2008), designed as a six-week process with a reflection for each day of the week.

## **PRACTICAL TRAINING AND EXPERIENCE**

The Rev. Earl Beshears, Examining Chaplain

Each postulant for the diaconate is expected by the Canons of the Episcopal Church and by the Diocese of Delaware to demonstrate competency in the area of practical training and experience. Following is a summary of the ministries appointed to the Diaconate by our Church.

### Ministries of the Diaconate

1. As a deacon in the Church, you are to study the Holy Scriptures, to seek nourishment from them, and to model your life upon them.
2. You are to make Christ and his redemptive love known, by your word and example, to those among whom you live, and work, and worship.
3. You are to interpret to the Church the needs, concerns, and hopes of the world.
4. You are to assist the bishop and priests in public worship and in the ministration of God's Word and Sacraments, and you are to carry out other duties assigned to you from time to time.
5. At all times, your life and teaching are to show Christ's people that in serving the helpless they are serving Christ himself.

### Expectations for Competency in Practical Training and Experience

1. For each of the five Diaconate ministries identified above, develop a written program of practical training and experience and submit it to the examining chaplain. Your program must be signed by you with the signature and approval of your supervising priest.
2. Make an appointment with and meet with the examining chaplain to review, discuss and consider approval of your plan of practical training and experience. This meeting may result in changes to your practical training and experience program.
3. At least every three months, provide the examining chaplain a written report of your progress in each of the five Diaconate ministries. These reflections should include a description of your activities and an assessment of your progress, strengths and places to grow.
4. Discuss your quarterly progress with the examining chaplain. The chaplain will contact you for a face-to-face meeting or a telephone conversation to discuss your progress and what other steps might take to nurture and expand your gifts for the Diaconate ministry.
5. This process will continue throughout your preparation for the Diaconate. Determination of competency by the examining chaplain will not be made until all other areas of competency are completed and approved.

The ministry of a Deacon is a wonderful gift to the Church and to the people of our communities. I am grateful that you are called, willing and able to undertake this important ministry. I look forward to working with you to help you prepare for the Deaconate ministry.