

THE *Belleville Deacon*

OFFICE OF VOCATIONS | DIACONATE FORMATION | DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE



Bishop, Diocese of Belleville
The Most Reverend
Michael G. McGovern

618-277-8181
bmogovern@diobelle.org

Vicar General, Diocese of Belleville

Very Reverend Steven L. Beatty, V.G.
618-277-8181, Ext. 1061
sbeatty@diobelle.org

Director of Permanent Deacon
Formation

Reverend Steven Pautler
Parish phone: 618-532-6291, Ext. 307
spautler@diobelle.org

Assistant Director of Permanent
Deacon Formation

Reverend Michaelsami Arockiam
618-233-2391
misar5613@gmail.com

Coordinator of Deacons

Deacon Thomas J. Helfrich
618-722-5042
thelfrich@diobelle.org

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The Class of 2023 has concluded Deacon Formation, and is now prepared for their ordination.
(Pictured not in order) Mr. Jay Fowler - St. Anthony, Beckemeyer; Mr. Brad Haar - St. George, New Baden; Mr. James Keepes - St. Mary, Mt. Carmel; Mr. Anthony Kellerman - Sacred Heart, DuQuoin; Mr. Daniel Kimutis - St. Clare, O'Fallon; Mr. Daniel Laquet - St. Mary, Centralia; Mr. Douglas Lugge - Cathedral of St. Peter; Mr. David Mills - St. Edward, Fairfield; Mr. David Miskell - SS Peter and Paul, Waterloo; Mr. William Mueller - St. James, Millstadt; Mr. Leonard Ratajczyk - St. Clare, O'Fallon; Mr. Thomas Ritzheimer - St. Mary, Trenton; Mr. Fred Sterns - St. Ann, Nashville; Mr. Justin Wolfslau - St. George, New Baden.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Reverend Steven M. Pautler



On this momentous occasion of the ordination of fourteen Permanent Deacons, I want to extend my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to each one of them. Their journey to the diaconate is a testament to their unwavering commitment, deep faith, and devotion to serving God and His people.

As deacons, they have been called to a unique and vital role within the Catholic Church. Their ministry is one of service, compassion, and humility, mirroring the example set by Jesus Himself.

As we prepare for ordination let us seek inspiration from the words of Pope Francis, who reminds us that "the one who serves is the greatest among us." Deacons are called to be men of prayer and spiritual depth. Allow your spiritual growth to shine through your ministry, as you bring the message of God's love and mercy to all you encounter.

Finally, remember that you are not alone on this journey. Lean on your fellow deacons, priests, and the faith community for support, guidance, and fellowship. Collaborate with them to build a Church that is welcoming, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of the world. We pray for these men soon to be ordained, and ask the Holy Spirit to guide their ministry and service. Please continue your prayers for the increase of those called to be priests, deacons and to the religious life.

Ordination of Deacons Cathedral of St. Peter - Belleville

Friday, June 2, 2023

Holy Hour for Vocations/with Vespers - 5:00 p.m.
(Sacrament of Reconciliation will be available)
Blessed Sacrament Chapel

Saturday, June 3, 2023

Morning Prayer - 9:00 a.m.
(Blessed Sacrament Chapel)

Alb & Cincture vesting for Candidates - 9:20 a.m.
(Cathedral Cry Room)

Priests and Deacons Vesting - 9:20 a.m.
Diocesan Vestment
(Cathedral Undercroft)

Priests and Deacons directly participating - 9:20 a.m.
(Cathedral Sacristy)

4th Degree Knights of Columbus - 9:15 a.m.
(McCormick Center)

Proceed to the front of the Cathedral and be lined up no later than 9:50 a.m.

Ordination of Deacons - 10:00 a.m.

Immediately following the Recessional Procession the Presbyterate and Permanent Deacons will gather on the front steps of the Cathedral to welcome our brothers with applause.

Reception following Ordination - McCormick Center
(Near the Cathedral)

Important Reminder!

The Belleville Deacon won't be released in the months of July and August. We'll resume our publication in September.



Dear Patti,

I am writing this letter with mixed emotions – the joy for your upcoming explorations in retirement and the sadness of saying goodbye to someone who has been an integral part of the vocation team. As you prepare to close this chapter of your life, I want to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude for the remarkable contributions you have made during your time with us.

Throughout your tenure, wearing many hats, you have served as the backbone preparing deacons to serve the diocese. Your exceptional organizational skills, coupled with your unwavering dedication and commitment, have been crucial to our collective success. I have always admired your ability to handle even the most demanding situations with grace and proficiency. Your endless patience, your faith in God, and the ability to foresee our needs before we even recognized them ourselves have been nothing short of astounding. Patti, you have set the bar high for those who will follow in your footsteps, not just in terms of your dedication to the diaconate, but also through your kindness, your warm heart, and the respect you have shown to everyone. You have been more than an administrator to us; you have been a friend, a confidant, and an invaluable part of our lives.

As you embark on this new journey called retirement, I hope it brings you the joy, tranquility, and satisfaction you truly deserve. This is the time for you to relish life's simple pleasures, rediscover old hobbies, embark on new adventures, and spend quality time with loved ones.

Please remember that you will always be a part of the vocation team, and our doors will remain forever open to you. As you step into this new chapter of your life, feel free to call upon us should you need anything. We are here for you, just as you have been there for us over the years. Thank you, Patti, for the countless contributions you have made, and for being an inspiration to us all. You will be greatly missed, but we are excited for the next stage of your journey and we know that even greater things lie ahead for you. God's blessings for a fulfilling, happy, and healthy retirement! *With deepest gratitude, Reverend Steven Pautler, on behalf of the Deacon Community.*



Patti, enjoying a Christmas gathering with the wives of the 2023 Belleville Formation Class

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Deacon Formation 2023:

The Ubi Caritas Class

By Deacon Candidate David M. Mills

Deacon Formation 2023 is composed of 16 men from a partnership between the Diocese of Belleville and the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau. The 14 from Belleville will be ordained as permanent deacons on June 3 and the two from Springfield-Cape Girardeau will be ordained on June 10. We all finish five years of graduate theology courses at Saint Meinrad School of Theology the weekend of May 12-14.

A lot about the world situation has changed since we applied for the diaconate in 2018. As the "COVID-19 Class" we basically faced a reprise of "rogues' gallery of the 20th Century" in five years of formation. All things considered, the members of the class changed more from individual discernment and group dynamics rather than enduring the rapid pace of changes in the last half decade.

A class lapel pin for Deacon Formation 2023 was created to capture the essence of our "servant leadership" journey to becoming a Deacon. Our class motto is "Ubi Caritas" which is an homage to the refrain of the popular Catholic hymn of the same title: "Where charity and love are, God is there."

The color gray signifies the traditional clerical color of a Permanent Deacon and the two gray arches are reminiscent of the river and arch that separate the two dioceses.

Red and black have several interpretations: one, they are the school colors of Saint Meinrad; two, when following rubrics for Mass we were instructed to "do the red, say the black"; three, the two principal guide rails for professing our faith are Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture; four, the dual refrain of our class cheer: "God is good, all the time. All the time, God is good"

The inverted triangle made of three gold stars has two references: one, the Most Holy Trinity; two, the three creeds of the Diaconate "word, liturgy, charity."

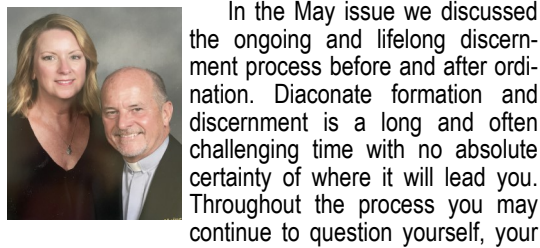
Finally, the center seal on a field of white contains all the hallmarks of the Diaconate: Holy Spirit (fire),

Book of Gospels (open book), cross with red stole (vestment), chalice (minister at altar), and bowl, water pitcher, and towel (service).

We entered Deacon Formation 2023 to learn and now we go forth to serve. The future looks bright for both dioceses as these humble men to be ordained are true servant leaders filled with brilliance, charity, and discipline.

MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR OF DEACONS

Deacon Thomas and Dawn Helfrich



In the May issue we discussed the ongoing and lifelong discernment process before and after ordination. Diaconate formation and discernment is a long and often challenging time with no absolute certainty of where it will lead you. Throughout the process you may continue to question yourself, your abilities, your formators/instructors, and God's plan for you. We found that the other men and women in our formation class played an integral role in helping to support and shape us in those five years of formation. One thing that stands out in both of our memories, is our first gathering as a group. We were the only couple from our parish and county, and we did not know any of the other men and women. We were not sure what to expect. We soon found out that the group members came from different backgrounds and experiences. Some were cradle Catholics, some were converts. Some worked as skilled craftsmen and some worked in corporate or technical careers. Some had grown children, some had children still at home. Looking back, now fifteen years after that first class, and ten years after Ordination, these are the things we would have told ourselves:

1. Embrace our differences as that is what will give us perspective and help us grow in our faith and as people. Each person, including the spouses, brings unique talents to the table.
2. Listen! Listen! Listen!

3. Make a point of sitting with different people at meal times or during class.

4. Trade phone numbers and addresses right away.

5. And remember, these strangers will become some of our closest friends.

6. Enjoy the weekends together. They truly are a gift.

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Reverend Michaelsami Arockiam



The Cathedral of St. Peter will soon witness the descent of the Holy Spirit as Bishop Michael McGovern ordains fourteen men of our Diocese as permanent Deacons on June 3, 2023, the feast of Charles Lwanga and his companions, totally 22 martyrs, who were burnt alive in Uganda in the 19th century for their faith. Pope Paul VI raised them to sainthood in 1964. This feast is a gentle reminder that the Deacons are called to serve, i.e., to spend themselves in the service of the Word and of His Church: they are ordained to spend themselves in "a bloodless and silent martyrdom;" they will sacrifice a little bit of what they are in order to gain all that Christ offers for themselves and for those whom they love and serve. The Holy Spirit who gave these Ugandan martyrs the courage, will arm our deacons with determination, sound faith, wisdom and courage to spend the rest of their lives ministering the Church.

I join Father Pautler, the formation team and the Clergy to congratulate our newly ordained Deacons and also the two candidates, Tony Peters and Kevin Henderson of the Diocese of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, who will be ordained on June 10 by Bishop Edward Rice. I congratulate their wives and families for their role in bringing these men to the altar to answer the Father's Call; I want them to be sure of the Father's love for them as He has chosen one of their own to share and serve the Priesthood of His Son, Christ Jesus. Relying on the mercies of the Father, let us all serve and minister. God bless.

