

THE *Belleville Deacon*

OFFICE OF VOCATIONS | DIACONATE FORMATION | DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE



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*CALLING MEN FOR
THE PERMANENT DEACON
CLASS OF 2030 TO BEGIN
IN FEBRUARY 2024.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
TO FOLLOW.*

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Advent Prepare the Way!

Deacons are actively involved in various aspects of church life and the Advent season. They participate in liturgical services, assisting in the celebration of the Eucharist and often proclaiming the Gospel and preaching homilies that reflect the themes of hope, peace, joy, and love, central to Advent.

Their sermons often focus on spiritual readiness and the significance of Christ's coming. In addition to their liturgical duties, deacons engage in acts of service and charity,

embodying the spirit of Advent through community outreach, helping the needy, and visiting the sick. They provide pastoral care, offering guidance and support to parishioners, aiding them in their spiritual preparation for Christmas. Deacons also play a vital role in promoting participation in Advent traditions, such as the lighting of the Advent wreath and engaging with Advent calendars, fostering a sense of community and shared anticipation. Moreover, they contribute to organizing and preparing liturgical services specific to the season, ensuring that the services reflect the solemnity and joy of Advent. Overall, the Catholic Deacon during Advent serves as a crucial link between the liturgical, catechetical, and charitable dimensions of the Church, helping the faithful to prepare their hearts and minds for the celebration of Christ's birth. Thank you to our dedicated deacons who help to make our faith journey, especially during this time of preparation, so special.



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Reverend Steven M. Pautler

As the Director of Deacon Formation, the season of Advent presents a unique and profound opportunity for both reflection and action. Advent, a time of preparation and anticipation for the birth of Christ, invites us all, especially our aspirants and all deacons, to step back from the usual pace of life and enter into a period of thoughtful readiness. This season is not just about the external preparations for Christmas, but more importantly, about the internal journey we undertake.

The themes of Advent—hope, peace, and love—are not merely abstract concepts but are meant to be lived and experienced in our daily interactions. As future deacons, aspirants are called to be bearers of these virtues. In seeking hope, we are reminded to remain optimistic and confident in the promise of God's love, even in times of uncertainty or challenge. Embracing peace requires us to be instruments of reconciliation and harmony, both within our communities and within ourselves. And in pursuing love, we are called to reflect the unconditional love of Christ in every encounter, showing compassion and kindness to all.

During this Advent season, I encourage aspirants, those considering the diaconate, and indeed all members of our faith community, to embrace these values fully. Let us use this time to deepen our faith, to reach out to those in need, and to prepare our hearts for the coming of Jesus. In doing so, we not only honor the true spirit of Advent but also grow in our own spiritual journey and in our service to others.

INFORMATIONAL MEETING FOR MEN INTERESTED IN BECOMING DEACONS FOR THE CLASS OF 2030

The initial meeting for men interested in joining the Deacon Ordination Class of 2030 is scheduled for Saturday, February 3, 2024. This meeting will start at 10:00 a.m. and will be held in the Cathedral Undercroft. Eligibility to apply is extended to men who will be at least thirty-three years old but not older than fifty-six by September 2025.

It should be noted that men who are older than fifty-six in September 2025 may still be considered for the program, but they will need to obtain special approval from both the Deacon Formation Office and our Bishop before they can move forward with the application process.



The Office of Permanent Deacon Formation is seeking priests who are willing to serve as mentors/spiritual moderators for Aspirants and Deacons. Those interested are asked to email Reverend Steven Pautler spautler@diobelle.org. Thank you for your interest.

We are seeking a part-time (24 hours per week) Administrative Assistant for the Office of Vocations and Deacon Formation. TO APPLY: Send resum , cover letter, and references to Human Resources, Diocese of Belleville, 222 South Third Street, Belleville, IL 62220 or email: humanresources@diobelle.org.

Important Dates

Deacon Formation for the Class of 2028

Aspirancy Session

Pastoral Identity Skills, Boundaries

Ms. Suzanne Yakimchick

Saturday, December 9, 2023

Cathedral of St. Peter (Undercroft)

Time 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Aspirancy Session

Prayer & Sacramental Participation

Deacon Ron Pirau

Saturday, January 13, 2024

Cathedral of St. Peter (Undercroft)

Time 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Aspirancy Session

Evangelization & Ecumenism

Mr. Robert Rivers

Saturday, February 10, 2024

Cathedral of St. Peter (Undercroft)

Time 8:30 - ?

Aspirancy Session

Research & Writing in Formation

Mr. Robert Rivers

Saturday, March 9, 2024

Cathedral of St. Peter (Undercroft)

Time 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Aspirancy Formation Weekend

Philosophy I

Deacon Dan Lowery

Friday April 12th - Sunday April 14

Cathedral of St. Peter (Undercroft)

Friday 6:30 p.m. - Sunday 12:00 p.m.

Aspirancy Formation Weekend

Philosophy II

Deacon Dan Lowery

Friday May 10th - Sunday May 12th

Cathedral of St. Peter (Undercroft)

Friday 6:30 p.m. - Sunday 12:00 p.m.

MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR OF DEACONS

Deacon Thomas and Dawn Helfrich



Last month I mentioned that I would provide more on who and what of the Diaconal Community of the Diocese of Belleville, hereafter referred to as the Diaconal Community. The Diaconal Community has its own Constitution and all permanent deacons in the diocese of Belleville are members. It joins together in order to nurture the spiritual, fraternal, and familial bonds of our members, to foster union with our Bishop, and to advance the servant leadership ministry of Jesus through Word, Sacrament, and Charity. The primary purposes of the Diaconal Community are:

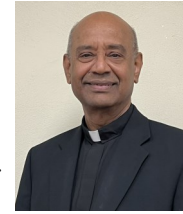
- To advise the Bishop on matters of concern for the Diaconal Community
- To communicate with Diocesan, Regional and National organizations on matters affecting diaconal ministry
- To promote the personal and spiritual growth of the members of the Diaconal Community and to support and encourage one another in our shared ministries
- To support the Office of the Permanent Diaconate
- To seek out and promote continuing education opportunities among our members

We try to do a service project every year somewhere in the diocese around the Feast of St. Lawrence. A business meeting of the Diaconal Community is held in conjunction with the meetings with the Bishop that are held 2 to 3 times a year. The current Officers of the Diaconal Community are President Kevin Templin, Vice President Dan Cozzi, Secretary Jim Law, and Treasurer John Hemen. The Diaconal Community offers its membership the opportunity to make a voluntary annual donation of \$40.00, or the amount of their choice, for the purpose of providing financial assistance to the Permanent Diaconate Formation class. The Diaconal Community will make one annual donation to the Permanent Diaconate Formation class in the name(s) of a deceased Deacon, Deacon spouse, Deacon widow, or the children of a living or deceased Deacon. The amount of the donation to the Permanent Diaconate Formation

class shall be based on the number of deceased members in a given year from above. A simple card of condolence from the Diaconal Community shall be mailed to surviving family members at the time of death with a note informing the family that a donation will be made to Permanent Diaconate Formation class.

MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Reverend Michaelsami Arockiam



I hope that you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving and started the day with the Eucharist. This day gives us an opportunity to thank God our Father and also to examine whether we have cultivated "a grateful heart" in our Christian living. We, who stand at the table of

the Lord's own Thanksgiving (Eucharisto, in Greek) almost all our lives, cannot but have our hearts grateful as that of Jesus' who thanked His Father for his death on Good Friday. Thus, Thanksgiving like other Christian feasts, is very close to our hearts!

Now we have entered into the Advent season and we look forward to the celebration of Christmas. Adam's fall has brought Sin and Death into the entire creation. Humankind began to live in slavery, sickness, darkness and in utter ignorance in such a way that it cannot recognize its need for God properly and the finality of that need. It is to fulfill its need that humanity was searching within the created order (Wis. Chs. 13-15; Rom.1:18-32). In brief, it did not even recognize its need for the Son of Man! Such was its ignorance! Humanity did not know what exactly it needed, i.e., the Son of Man! God the Father in His merciful love sent His Son in the flesh (in the human nature) to make humanity recognize its need properly and fulfilled its need. Christmas is, then, God fulfilling our need for the Son of Man: the Father fulfilled, not so much our human desire, but our very need for the Son of Man to gain that life which He wanted humanity (the entire creation) to live in the first place. Now being part of the glorified body of Christ, the Son of Man (the Church) we recognize correctly and gratefully respond to His fulfillment of our need. May this Christmas and the joyful season that follows bring us closer to the Son of Man! A Happy Christmas!

Aspirants please remember you can find course syllabus, agenda, required books, and other information at St. Meinrad's Student Portal... BLACKBAUD

Advent Lunch With the Class of 2028 Deacon Aspirants



We warmly invite the Belleville Deacon Community to join the Class of 2028 Deacon Aspirants for a special Advent Luncheon on Saturday, December 9, 2023. The event begins with the Angelus Prayer at 11:55 a.m., followed by a luncheon catered by Betty Ann's of Mascoutah at 12:00 p.m. We anticipate finishing up by 1:30 p.m. Located in the Undercroft of the Cathedral.

This event, held during the aspirants' monthly meeting, offers a chance for fellowship and celebration in the spirit of Advent. Please RSVP to Deacon Tom Helfrich at THelfrich@diobelle.org by December 5, 2023. A freewill offering is welcome to support future gatherings and deacon formation. We eagerly await your presence as we embrace this season of hope and anticipation.



Ideas to Engage the Assembly: Integrating Illustrations, Images, and Icons

- \$125.00 includes all presentations and meals. Lodging is additional
- Learn more and register at: shsst.edu/PreachingConf
- Questions? Contact Deacon Steve Kramer, D. Min., Director of Homiletics: skramer@shsst.edu, 414-858-4767



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