

# THE *Belleville Deacon*

OFFICE OF VOCATIONS | DIACONATE FORMATION | DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

(The Messenger March 14, 2024)

*“One of the hallmarks of the Church is our outreach to the poor and neglected in our society. Deacons have a significant role in providing both material and spiritual help for the poor in the name of the Church.*

*No matter what other services a deacon provides (in liturgy, education, parish life), it is important that each deacon has a ministry that brings him into direct, face-to-face contact with the poor.” — Bishop Michael McGovern, on the role of Deacons.*

## ¡Felices Pascuas!

©LPi



Deacons (from left) Justin Wolfslau, Brad Haar and Tom Ritzheimer are completing their first year of service since being ordained June 3 at Cathedral of St. Peter in Belleville. All three minister at St. George in New Baden and St. Mary in Trenton (Submitted photo)."



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### CELEBRATING OUR DEACONS

The role of deacons holds profound significance in the life of the Church, serving as a beacon of Christ's servant-leadership. Through their dedication, they minister to the marginalized, exemplify charity, and bring the Gospel to life through their actions.

Deacons are entrusted with the sacred tasks of proclaiming the Word, assisting at the altar, and distributing the Eucharist. But perhaps their most crucial role is to mirror Christ the Servant, reminding all believers that to serve one another is to serve Christ Himself.

### WELCOME MARTINA SKORCH TO THE VOCATION AND DEACON FORMATION TEAM

We are thrilled to share some wonderful news with you all. We have recently welcomed Martina Skorch to our team as the new Administrative Assistant for Vocation and Deacon Formation! Martina is currently serving as the high school youth minister for Perry County, a role in which she has demonstrated exceptional dedication and leadership. Her skills and passion have come highly recommended, making her an outstanding addition to our team.

In addition to her responsibilities with us, Martina will also contribute her talents to the Department of Life, Marriage, and Family for 12 hours each week. The remainder of her time will be dedicated to supporting our missions in Vocations and Deacons, ensuring that we have the full benefit of her expertise and enthusiasm. Martina's office will be located on the second floor of the Chancery.

 Are you being called to be a Permanent Deacon?

The Office of Permanent Deacon is considering starting a new class of aspirants in fall 2025. Eligibility is extended to men aged thirty-three to fifty-six by September 2025. Men older than fifty-six may still apply but require special approval from the Deacon Formation Office and the Bishop.

The formation process is a five-year commitment, including academic studies conducted by St. Meinrad School of Theology, spiritual direction, and learning about the deacon's role. Participants are required to attend a three-day meeting once per month over the course of the five year program. Interested individuals should first discuss their interest with their pastor. For those unable to attend the initial meeting, another session will be scheduled later. This meeting is an opportunity to learn about the process and requirements for becoming a Permanent Deacon in the Diocese.

For additional information contact:  
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## Important Dates

### Deacon Formation for the Class of 2028

#### 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.

**End of term vote and evaluations**  
and recommendation for advancement  
scheduling begins in April 2024.

#### Deacon Formation Class of 2028

Canonical Retreat - King's House at the Shrine  
Presenter: Rev. Michaelsami Arockiam  
Saturday, August 10, 2024

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

**BLACKBAUD**

## Important Dates

#### Belleville Deacon Community Annual Deacon Retreat

September 6 - 8, 2024  
Kings House at the Shrine

#### Meeting with Bishop McGovern (Deacons only)

*Attire is deacon clerics (grey shirt, vest, rabat, etc.  
with white tab and dark slacks).*

October 27, 2024 - 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.  
Cathedral of St. Peter, Undercroft

#### National Diaconate Institute for Continuing Education (NDICE) Annual Conference

July 22nd - July 25, 2024  
Holy Trinity Parish, Fairview Heights, IL  
*Being the Eucharist for All*  
<https://ndice.net/>

Deacon Steve Kramer, Director of Homiletics, Associate Professor, Pastoral Studies, Sacred Heart Seminary and School of Theology, Hales Corners, WI, explores the Third Sunday of Lent with a focus on the First Scrutiny Rite for RCIA, shared through a detailed 2000-word homily.

Plus, don't miss a compelling conversation with Fr. Ricardo Da Silva, SJ, on preaching strategies and methods. A must-hear for anyone interested in deepening their Lenten experience.

<https://www.americamagazine.org/preach-podcast-catholic-homilies>



## MESSAGE FROM THE COORDINATOR OF DEACONS

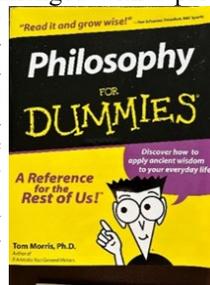
Deacon Thomas and Dawn Helfrich



By the time you read this, you should be well into preparations for the academic phase of formation beginning with an easy topic - philosophy. Ha! Let me tell you a personal secret not so secret - for me, philosophy was like trying to put a square peg in a round hole. As a proud pocket-protector wearing civil engineer with a technical way of looking at things, perfectly honed throughout college and graduate school with little room for philosophic thought, philosophy was a challenge to say the least. I am not afraid to admit that it was very difficult for me to grasp and to understand many of the concepts.

That said, with blood, sweat, and maybe a few tears, I did pass (barely). I can now look back and realize I definitely learned some new things about myself, my learning style, and ultimately gained an appreciation of philosophic reflection, especially as it pertains to our faith. While Socrates and Plato have nothing to fear, I got through and moved onto other academic classes much more interesting to me personally.

Throughout your academic coursework, you too will likely find classes that motivate and energize you, and those that don't. My advice for any of you who feel challenged with a particular subject is to make the best of it, be open-minded, work hard, and don't get frustrated or give up. This too will pass and you will be better because of it. And, if anyone is interested, you are welcome to borrow my philosophy for dummies book. It may be a little dusty.



## MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Reverend Michaelsami Arockiam



I wish each one of you a Happy Easter! Our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead. His resurrection proves that the Father accepted the way he lived the life proper to the human nature, his passion and his sacrifice on the cross for all of us who believe him as the Eternal Son on the basis of his historical resurrection. Humanity never understood the depth of the Father's eternal love which He has for us in His divine nature until the Son in his human nature came to reveal the Father's eternal love; God the Son took the human nature and loved

us all in the same way God the Father loves us in His divine nature. This the Son did, so that finally now the humanity perceives the Father's eternal love. What God has in His divine nature, the Son reveals in his human nature (by whatever it takes!). Is it possible? Can the human nature reveal what is within the Divine Nature? Just imagine how difficult it would be! Imagine what it would entail if the Son has to do the revealing successfully and fruitfully?

Again, imagine what it took for the Son to reveal the richness of the eternal love the Father has for us in His divine nature! How relinquishing and surrendering he was in every moment of his life! Finally, it took the death on the cross to reveal the eternal love of the Father's love and His mercy for us in fullness! Through the historical resurrection of the Son in his human nature, we come to know that the Son in his human nature, has revealed successfully and fruitfully how loving the Father is eternally.

May this Easter season help us to grasp what the Son has done in order that we know, perceive and possess the Father's love. Again, I wish each one of you a Happy Easter! **Father Michael**

## A THANK YOU MESSAGE FROM

Reverend Steven M. Pautler



As my family and I navigated the difficult journey of bidding farewell to our beloved mother, Margaret, I've been profoundly touched by the overwhelming wave of support from my brother Priests, Deacons, Aspirants, the Diocesan/Parish Staff and many friends.

Your prayers, heartfelt messages, phone calls, generous gifts, and comforting visits have been a beacon of light during these trying times. It's in moments like these that the true essence of our community shines brightest, and I am deeply humbled and grateful for the incredible circle of support surrounding us.

Margaret, my mother, held her faith with the United Church of Christ close to her heart throughout her life, yet she was intertwined with the Catholic faith in a way I fondly describe as being 'Catholic by osmosis.' Her unwavering presence at Mass where my brother and I served as lectors, every school play, and all the facets of our Catholic upbringing, was a testament to her dedication. This same unwavering support and love were bestowed upon her grandchildren, Heather and Travis, who she cherished deeply.

From the bottom of our hearts, my family and I want to express our sincerest gratitude. Your outpouring of love and kindness during this period of mourning has left an indelible mark on us, and it is something we will hold dear forever. Thank you for being our source of strength and for showing us the profound impact of compassion and community. — Fr. Steve

### PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR PERMANENT DEACON ASPIRANTS

Tom Braun & Betsy Amoroso	Immaculate Conception Parish, Columbia
James & Chelsea Burris	St. Mary Parish, Centralia
Jeffrey & Jennifer Craig	St. Andrew Parish, Murphysboro
Nathan & Carrie Higginson	SS. Peter & Paul Parish, Waterloo
Douglas & Cynthia Kuhl	St. Dominic Parish, Breese
Matthew & Angela Lees	St. Joseph Parish, Marion
Andy & Cheryl Orlet	Holy Childhood, Parish, Mascoutah
William & Judith Rebholz	SS. Peter & Paul Parish, Waterloo
Timothy & Joan Taylor	SIU-C Newman Center, Carbondale
Gary & Dorothy Zwilling	St. Joseph Parish, Stringtown
Brian & Barbara Bauknecht	Immaculate Conception Parish, Jackson, MO
Bob & Lori Janota	St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Cape Girardeau, MO
Jim & Holly McCleary	Sacred Heart Parish, Mountain Grove, MO
Brad & Emily Stroder	St. William Parish, Buffalo, MO
Ron & Linda Yates	St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Springfield, MO