



DIOCESE OF FALL RIVER
OFFICE OF THE
**PERMANENT
DIACONATE**



Bishop Edgar
da Cunha

DEACON UPDATE

Heroes We Remember -- Heroes We Are Called to Be



As a kid growing up we may have had someone that we looked up to, a hero, who inspired us to act with extraordinary courage, to help us confront the challenges of the day. In olden days he may have worn a cowboy hat or was draped in a protective cape. Our hero may have been a remarkable wonder woman or the great protector of Gotham city. Whether our great champion fought the crimes of the day or hit a grand slam, they were individuals we looked up to and longed to follow. Our own day and age stands in need of such advocates of the good and just. The month of November might be called “hero month” as we acknowledge the great saints and souls of those personal defenders, who with courage witnessed their faith in the face of so many challenges. We remember the extraordinary, the martyrs, and so often the very simple ways, St. Therese the “Little Flower”, lives that made a significant contribution in the providence of God’s plan.

But we more than remember the stories of the past. The remarkable witness of so many invite us to continue to retell, and more importantly, they invite us to continue to write God’s love story by the unfolding of the narrative of our vocation to become saints. The story of the communion of saints is told every day in the lives and hearts of each one of us. In truth, it is a love story so powerful that it is a “forever story” of souls that are never forgotten. It’s the story of everyday heroes of parents, teachers, first responders, health care workers and even baggers in the local grocery store. It’s the story of heroes in the names written on the stone monuments of those who served a nation and in the flat stones in silent fields that mark the resting places of our personal heroes who loved so greatly.

I celebrated mass on All Saints Day for our grammar school children. I asked them who are you heroes? The students were somewhat primed by one of our teachers who raised his hand and said “my wife”! Student after student when asked the same question didn’t response by identifying some marvel character but to a person said: “my mom, my dad, my grandmother, my grandfather, my brother, sister, even my teacher!” Each student listed a living and breathing saint that they knew.

Yes the month of November is “hero month”. We remember by more than recall we re-live and are the living memories of those we honor and we honor them well by living the remarkable love story of Jesus in our lives. A group of children gathered in church for mass was asked: “What is a Saint?” One child responded, “A saint is someone who let’s the light shine thru them” then he pointed to the light shining thru the colorful stained glass window. The saints break thru the darkness and shine boldly when the light of Christ shines thru them.

We remember our heroes and recall the hero we are invited to be!

In Christ’s love
Fr. Bob Oliveira

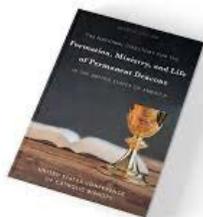
HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



The 2nd Diaconate Class

November 6, 1982

USCCB Releases Updated Edition of National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States



The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has released the second edition of the National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States. First promulgated in November 2004, the directory outlines the guidelines and directives to be used by dioceses in preparing or updating a diaconate program and formulating policies for the ministry and life of deacons.

According to the most recent available data from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University, there are 18,075 permanent deacons in the United States; it is also reported that 97 percent of the world's permanent deacons live in the Americas and Europe. The updated directory reflects on the wisdom gleaned

from a broad spectrum of deacons and their formators. With a focus on the identity of the deacon as a “living icon of Christ the Servant within the Church,” and a minister of Word, Liturgy, and Charity in the community, the new edition reflects poignantly on fifty years since the establishment of the permanent diaconate in the United States. Developed by the USCCB's Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations (CCLV), the second edition includes norms that will take effect on June 9, 2022.

In a recent meeting with permanent deacons and their families in Rome, Pope Francis described the spirituality of deacons as “availability inside and openness outside...available inside, from the heart, ready to say ‘yes,’ docile, without making one's life revolve around one's own agenda; and open outside, looking at everyone, especially those who are left out, those who feel excluded.” The Holy Father reminded those present that the Church should have “a heart that burns with love and serves with humility and joy.”

Bishop James F. Checchio of Metuchen, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations expressed gratitude for the update of the document. “I am grateful for the good work of the CCLV committee that has led to the publication of the updated National Directory. This document will serve as an instrumental resource for dioceses as they work to strengthen their permanent diaconate programs. It is my hope that permanent deacons and those who accompany them will be encouraged by the new edition of the Directory and be inspired to continue in their faithful service to the Church in imitation of Christ the Servant.”

We are currently reviewing this second edition and how it applies to us. There are some changes in the formation program as well as some ongoing formation requirements. Once we complete a review of this new document we will release the Diocese of Fall River Deacon Manual, which will be updated to reflect these changes.

THE WIVES' CORNER

This month's contributor is by Barbara-Anne Foley



Thanksgiving Day. Growing up in a strong Catholic home, in the month of November, we were always challenged by my dad to learn about at least 1 new Saint and by Thanksgiving Day be able to share at the table about your Saint. I have tried to carry on that tradition and this year learned about a new to me Saint Benedict Joseph Labre. He was a French Mendicant, (one who relies exclusively on alms giving to survive!), third order Franciscan, Catholic Saint. He only lived to approx. age 35 but lived and helped more people in those short years than many do in their much longer lifetime! He chose the life of a pilgrim visiting most of the shrines in Europe and survived by begging for his food and sustenance and traveling solely on foot. He is the patron Saint of the homeless which is what struck a chord with me as we are teaching our Religious Education students the “living

lessons” of “Love Thy Neighbor as Thyself”. We had our 1st ever “Halloween Treats for our Friends on the Streets” event at Holy Trinity Church in the parking lot on Halloween day. Students visited car trunks of parishioners and families lined up in rows who had donated necessity items to fill up more than 50 bags that we will be bringing to Champ House, St. Clare’s Sober House, and to the homeless through the “Street Reach” Program all in Hyannis. I think Saint Benedict Joseph Labre would have been proud!

Saint Benedict Joseph Labre was the oldest of 15 children and went to live with his uncle who was a Priest and helped with his early education for the priesthood. When Benedict was 18 an epidemic hit their city and he and his uncle took care of and ministered to the service of the sick. Sadly, his uncle was among the last victims of the epidemic. Saint Benedict Joseph Labre wanted to be like his uncle and tried many orders to become a priest but was rejected repeatedly as too delicate, unsuitable too young, or unsuitable for communal life.

According to Catholic tradition, it is said Saint Labre “experienced a desire, which he considered was given to him by God and inspired by the example of Alexius of Rome and that of the Franciscan tertiary pilgrim, Saint Roch, to abandon his country, his parents, and whatever is flattering in the world-to lead a new sort of life, a life most painful, most penitential, not in a wilderness nor in a cloister, but in the midst of the world devoutly visiting as a pilgrim the famous places of Christian devotion.”

He joined the third order of Franciscans and settled on a life of poverty and pilgrimage. He traveled to Rome on foot living solely on what he could get by begging. He then traveled to most of the major shrines of Europe, visiting some several times. He slept out in the open or in a corner of a room often seen muddy with ragged clothes, praying. He spent many hours in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. In fact, they called him the “Beggar of Perpetual Adoration”.

He has 136 separate cures attributed to his intercession just 3 months before he died! Just amazing! And those miracles led to the conversion of an American Protestant Reverend-John Thayer to convert to become a Catholic. John Thayer was a resident in Rome when Benedict died. Saint Benedict Joseph Labre was declared Blessed by Blessed Pius IX in 1860 and later canonized by Pope Leo XIII in 1881. His feast day is observed on April 16th.

It is said he cured some of the other homeless he met and to have multiplied bread for them. In his last year

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of his life, he lived for a time in Rome in the Colosseum and would only leave to make his yearly pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Loreto. The day before he died, he collapsed on the church steps of Santa Maria ai Monti, just blocks from the Colosseum. Strangers took him into a house behind the church where he sadly later died of malnutrition and exhaustion on April 16, 1783. He was buried from that very church.

Today, at John Carroll University his legacy lives on! They have the "Labre Project" whose mission it is from Saint Labre to not only feed the homeless but to offer them friendship. These friendships they believe are mutually beneficial and an opportunity to see the face of God in people of all kinds. His legacy lives on and it should live on in all of us if we each do our small part to help the homeless. At this University they read the "Labre Prayer" every day to him that I just love: "St. Benedict Joseph Labre, you gave up honor, money, and home for love of Jesus. Help us to set our hearts on Jesus and not on the things of this world. You lived in obscurity among the poor in the streets. Enable us to see Jesus in our streets in our poor brothers and sisters and not judge appearances. Make us realize that in helping them we are helping Jesus. Show us how to befriend them and not pass them by. St. Benedict Joseph Labre, you had a great love for prayer. Obtain for us the grace of persevering prayer, especially adoration of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament. St. Benedict Joseph Labre, poor in the eyes of men but rich in the eyes of God, pray for us. Amen

NEW FEATURE

Meet Our Deacon Candidates

This month we welcome James Adams, St Joseph Catholic Collaborative, Falmouth, MA



My name is Gus Adams. I am a member of the St. Joseph Catholic Collaborative in Falmouth. My wife Lisa and I have three grown children, ranging in age from 26 to 30, and have been married for thirty two years. We have owned and operated Falmouth Physical Therapy for the past 30 years, where Lisa practices as a physical therapist and I have worked as business manager and personal trainer.

Five years ago, Msgr. Steve Avila approached me after a weekday Mass and asked if I had ever considered the diaconate. I had been attending daily Mass for a few years at that point, as my wife and I experienced a deeper conversion to the faith following some struggles that we experienced with our teenage children. I told him that I had considered looking into it, so he suggested I take a course or two at St. John's Seminary in the Masters of Ministry (MAM). In 2017 I enrolled at St. John's and completed all 14 classes and fieldwork, which resulted in my receiving my Masters in Ministry in 2020.

In the Fall of 2020, I decided to step away from our business and teach theology at St. John Paul II High School in Hyannis. Having coached and trained athletes for over twenty years, I felt called by God to share my faith with these young people. It has truly been a blessing. I couldn't have done this without the love and support of my wife, Lisa. Every day at school the students want to know what my wife packed me for lunch. They comment on my wife's outfit selection for the day as well.

Mgsr. Avila has been extremely supportive. He has put my wife and I to work helping teach Confirmation, RCIA, as well allowing me to lector at Mass and be a Eucharistic minister. I have also helped lead That Man is You, our men's group, for the past two and one half years.

Going virtual last year was a challenge in formation, and I feel that the guys are all thankful to be together in person this year. We learn so much from one another. I couldn't ask for a better group of men to share with. I am truly blessed, and look forward to what God has in store for all of us in the future.

NADD1 NOVEMBER WEBINAR

**RECORDING NOW
AVAILABLE ON OUR
WEBSITE**



Deacon Tim O'Donnell -
Author of **The Deacon - Icon of Christ the
servant and Minister of the Threshold**

DEANERY REBOOT

As we begin a return to more normal times, we are hopeful that our deaneries will begin to meet again on a regular basis.

We are hoping that some of our deacons will step up to help organize and plan for their deanery sessions. We will assist with content.

If you are interested in helping to revitalize the deanery system, please contact Deacon Frank Lucca at
deaconfranklucca@frpermanentdiaconate.com .

Attleboro/Taunton Deanery

Cape Cod Deanery

Fall River/New Bedford Deanery (all set)

DEACON ADVOCATE

Deacon Joe McGinley is the Deacon Advocate for our Office of the Permanent Diaconate.

His role is to advocate for deacons in need of assistance, to communicate on a regular basis with our deacons individually and with their wives and widows.

You can reach Deacon Joe at
deaconjosephmginley@frpermanentdiaconate.com

FORMATION CLASSES UNDERWAY

Classes for our candidates began in September. As you know, all classes are recorded and made available to our deacons and spouses on the website.

This semester, we are offering two classes - Synoptic Gospels with Fr Fred Bebiczuk and Church History with Fr David Pignato. The previous class sessions are also available on the website.

Viewing these classes may be used for CEU credit.

OFFICE CONTACT

As a reminder, the diaconate office email address is office@frpermanentdiaconate.com. This address is currently available for your use. The verizon email address will no longer work. Please make the change in your address book.

The address remains, Office of the Permanent Diaconate, 121 Mt Pleasant St., New Bedford, Ma 02740 Thank you!

LETTERS OF SUITABILITY FOR TEMPORARY MINISTRY

To request letters of suitability to exercise your ministry outside our home diocese for a temporary stay, visit the Deacon Portal and select the "Letter of Suitability Request" link. If you are planning to move on a permanent basis please contact the office for the letter of suitability.

DEACON MANUAL

The Deacon Manual, developed in conjunction with the Deacon Council has been approved by the Bishop. There are several changes that were made by the USCCB this summer, so once we review those changes, the manual will be printed and distributed to all deacons.

We expect the manual to be released to you this fall as the National Directory was just published.

SAVE THE DATES!

We will continue to publish dates as soon as they are available as requested by the Wive's Council. At their suggestion, please cut this out and place on your refrigerator so you won't miss these important events!

Advent Day of Reflection November 13, 2021

Holy Trinity Parish
Fall River, Ma

Advent Day of Reflection

November 19, 2022
Holy Trinity Parish
Fall River, MA

CEU Reports Due

January 31, 2022

Convocation

March 19, 2022
Location TBA

Installation to Order of Acolyte

June 21, 2022
Holy Trinity Parish
Fall River, MA

Deacon Retreat

September 30-Oct 2, 2022
LaSalette Retreat Center
Attleboro, MA

***All in person dates are tentative and depend on the Covid-19 situation at the time.*

Birthdays

November

Thomas Bailey 19
Donald Battiston 26
Karl Buder 4
Robert Craig 5
Paul Fournier 9
William Gallerizzo 11
Robert Hill 6
Joseph Regali 17

Prayer Requests

- Marie Guy - wife of Deacon Mike Guy
- Deacon Dan Donovan
- Carolyn, daughter of Deacon Dominic Messina
- Janice Fitzpatrick wife of Deacon John Fitzpatrick
- Patry Lukac, wife of Deacon Ted Lukac
- Deacon Steve Minninger
- Marissa, daughter of Deacon David Boucher
- Michael Wojcik

...and for all those that we do not know of that are in need of prayers and support

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