



“My service to the Diaconate has been one of the great joys of my life. I experience the richness of my community by serving the local parish. At the same time, I feel close to the homeless in our city as I walk the streets of Toronto each week, listening to their struggles and praying with the vulnerable and marginalized.”

- Deacon Robert Kinghorn

### Deacons: Their Wives and Families

While some deacons are single, the vast majority are married and share their dedication to ministry with their wives. Although deacons serve the diocese in diverse ways, their service originates in the home through spousal and parental relationships. A deacon is a servant all the time and his family comes first. In the culture in which we live, diaconal families are enriched and challenged by ministry.

Wives are strongly encouraged to participate in all aspects of the formation program. Indeed, the wife's approval is required before the applicant comes into the program. The wife's written consent is a prerequisite for ordination.

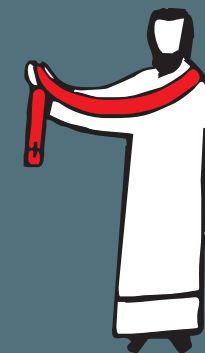
“Experiencing the formation journey with my husband brought me closer to my faith and has strengthened our family bond. The vocation of the Diaconate is one that involves the commitment and support of our entire family. It continues to be a tremendous blessing in our lives.”

- Curtis Munroe, wife of Deacon Everis Munroe



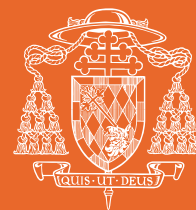
“In this way, you (deacons) give witness in the world of today, as well as in the working world, of the presence of faith, of the sacramental ministry and the diaconal dimension of the sacrament of Orders. This seems very important to me: the visibility of the diaconal dimension.”

- Pope Benedict XVI Addressing Deacons in Rome, February 2008



## Is God Calling You to Serve the Church as a Deacon?

For more information about the Permanent Diaconate, please contact:



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“Each one of us must discern how God is calling us to serve the Church. Deacons play a vital role in evangelizing both to the gathered and the scattered in our community. Their ministry is of great importance to our Archdiocese, answering the call of Jesus to love and serve.”

- Most Reverend,  
Thomas Collins,  
Archbishop of Toronto

## How do Deacons serve the church?

A deacon is ordained to serve the people of God, assist the Bishop and work with his Priests – there are three dimensions to their service: Ministry of Charity, Ministry of the Word, and the Ministry of the Altar.

In the Archdiocese of Toronto, you will find deacons serving the community in diverse ways: visiting the imprisoned, comforting the dying, caring for the disadvantaged and reaching out to those pushed to the fringes of society by sickness, poverty, crime or age. At your local parish, you may find deacons preparing the faithful to receive the sacraments and to carry out their vocation as baptized Christians. They preach, teach, counsel and give spiritual guidance. They assist bishops and priests in liturgical celebrations. They baptize, witness marriages and preside at funerals. Whatever they do, deacons are acting on behalf of the servant Christ.



## Who can be a Deacon? What is the formation process?

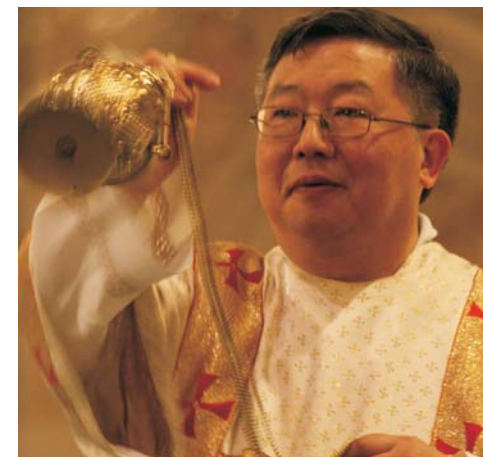
The Diaconate Formation Program is open to men both married and single between the ages of 35-59 who meet the basic requirements. The applicant should have the full consent of his wife if he is married and the full support of his pastor.

Candidates accepted into the program are required to undergo formation for a period of four years that involves studies at St. Augustine's Seminary, meetings in the homes of other candidates as well as service in areas of social concern.

The Diaconate Formation Program for the Archdiocese of Toronto seeks to provide a total environment in which a candidate can grow into that unique character intended for him by God. The program integrates the human, spiritual, academic, and pastoral dimensions into a preparation that is vital for a person seeking a life of commitment to Church service. Such preparation and integration fosters a spirit of community among the candidates and their families.

To learn more about the application process, call the Director of Deacons at the Catholic Pastoral Centre (416) 934-3400 Ext. 304. We encourage you to peruse additional resources on the Diaconate program online at: [www.vocationstoronto.ca/diaconate](http://www.vocationstoronto.ca/diaconate).

“Dedicated to the works of charity and functions of administration, deacons recall the admonition of St. Polycarp: “Let them be merciful and zealous, and let them walk according to the truth of the Lord who became servant of all.”



## What is a Deacon?

The term “Deacon” means servant. The ministry of a Permanent Deacon takes the form of assisting the Bishop and Priest, but is also directed to the deacon's own brothers and sisters in the whole Church. Permanent Deacons are not studying to become Priests – once ordained, they remain deacons for the rest of their lives. Most deacons are married and have full time jobs in addition to their dedicated ministry to the Church.

## History of the Diaconate

The Permanent Diaconate is documented from apostolic times and flourished up to the 5<sup>th</sup> century when it experienced a gradual decline in the Western Church, surviving only as an intermediate stage for candidates preparing for priesthood. We read in Acts that the apostles chose deacons to help them respond to the pressing needs of the infant Church in Jerusalem and maintain fidelity to its mission of service. Deacons are called to embody the ideal of every follower of Christ, to be “one who serves.” (Luke 22:27)

The Diaconate was restored as a permanent order by the Second Vatican Council and continues to provide a vital ministry for today's Church. Currently, more than 110 deacons serve the Archdiocese of Toronto – from Toronto, north to Midland, east to Oshawa, and west to Mississauga.

“Sing a new song unto the Lord! Let your song be sung from mountains high!” *Sing to him as servants, but also sing as friends of Christ, who has made known to you all that he has heard from the Father. It was not you who chose him, but he who chose you, to go forth and bear fruit - fruit that will last. This you do by loving one another (Cfr. Jo. 15, 15ss). By the standards of this world, servanthood is despised, but in the wisdom and providence of God it is the mystery through which Christ redeems the world. And you are ministers of that mystery, heralds of that Gospel.*

- Pope John Paul II