

Archdiocese of Atlanta
Permanent Diaconate

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Summer2019



My Dear Brothers,

“Summertime and the living is easy.” That line from the musical Porgy and Bess could not be more wrong when describing life in the Chancery as we approach the first day of Summer.

Over the past month I have had the fun task of moving Archbishop Gregory to DC and then attending his Installation. As I write this I am attending a conference for deacon directors in Columbus Ohio. In just days we will celebrate together at the Eucharistic Congress.

This is a very interesting time for the Church here in North Georgia since Archbishop Gregory has moved on to his new assignment in Washington. I have had some time to reflect on what his departure from Atlanta will mean for each of us and for the Diaconate throughout the Archdiocese. We have been blessed with Archbishops who have been so supportive of our ministry of the diaconate. I have had the pleasure of working with and getting to know Archbishop Gregory as a bishop, a boss, and a friend.

We have been told that it may be a year before the Vatican announces a new Archbishop. In the interim, Bishop Joel Konzen will be leading the Archdiocese as the Administrator elected by the College of Consultors. Canonically there will be no significant changes during this time while the Archbishop's seat is vacant. I trust that you all are joining me in prayer for the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit to infuse the decision making process for our new Ordinary.

I hope to see many of you at the Congress, it is always a great joy to see our deacons represented in large numbers. I also hope that you all do get to take some time for rest and regrouping this summer.

Know that I am here to serve you and that you are in my prayers. Please keep our entire community in prayer!

Sincerely in Christ,

Deacon Dennis



**Co-Director of
Diaconate For-
mation**

**Office of the
Permanent Di-
aconate**

**Archdiocese of
Atlanta**

Formation Forum

‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’ Matthew 25:40

The ministry of the Deacon is Word, Liturgy and Charity. While Jesus in Saint Matthew’s Gospel in Chapter 25, Verse 40 is telling everyone that it is our privilege and duty to care for our brothers and sisters, deacons take on that privilege as a requirement of their Diaconate Ministry.

It has been a particular honor to watch how the men and their wives, the instructors, and all involved in Diaconate Formation take the words of Jesus to heart.

Candidates in Diaconate Formation claim a social justice ministry that they will be involved in during formation. (On occasion that ministry changes so that they have the experience of a different ministry). After ordination, they are given a dual assignment of a parish and a social justice ministry.

It is good to share some of these acts of charity so that others will be inspired to also take the words of Jesus to heart.

Working with the Mustard Seed Ministries puts one in touch with many, many of the needs of others. Something as simple as a new t-shirt can brighten the day of a resident in a facility that cares for those young adults and adults with challenges. Last year the candidates, aspirants, and faculty in diaconate formation collected 200 shirts to take to the mission. They are hoping to collect 250 this year.

Many deacons work with the Ignatian Spirituality Project (ISP) and facilitate retreats at Ignatius House for the homeless. They have been gracious to extend a welcome to the men in Diaconate Formation to join them. And some in formation have done just that, giving of their time even though they have family, a job, and formation homework, to be an active part of this ministry to our brothers and sisters.



Diaconate Candidate helped Retreatant walk to each Station and to “feel the Stations” due to his blindness.

The Faculty and Diaconate Formation Advisory Board also take seriously the call of Jesus to minister to our sisters and brothers. Bill Allen, Phyllis Wigton, Deacon Gayle Peters, Dr. Ron Chandonia, and Sr. Margaret McAnoy are in the tenth year of teaching in Diaconate Formation.

Sr. Margaret has retired and will move to her Mother House in Monroe, Michigan in July. For ten years she has been the head of the Aspirancy Team and a member of Diaconate Formation Advisory Board. Over 100 Aspirants have come through Diaconate Formation under her guidance in their Aspirancy Year.



Formation Forum

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It’s important to help those in need, the hungry need food, the homeless need shelter, the naked need clothing, the thirsty need drink, and the challenged need compassion. In filling those needs, though, we become more like Christ who healed the sick, touched the leper, listened to the woman at the well, wept at the loss of Lazarus with his sisters.

We cannot ignore that in prayer we encounter our God, who leads us to more deeply and fully serve the needs of others. It is not work, it is the love of God that propels us to charity to become like Christ.

We are on our Summer Break in Diaconate Formation. Which means that there are no Saturday Classes until August. We never take a ‘break’ though from charity and service to the least of the people of God.

If you are involved in a ministry that you truly benefit from, that leads you closer to God, and helps you become more like Christ, please tell us, so that we can pass the information on to those in Diaconate Formation.

We also seek your prayers for the men and wives, the faculty, spiritual directors, deacon mentors, Diaconate Formation Advisory Board members, and pastors involved in formation.

Peace,

Penny Simmons

Co-Director of Diaconate Formation

PLEASE PRAY FOR US

FOR THOSE THAT HAVE DIED

Michael R. Kelly, brother-in-law of Deacon Joe Eustace 6-14-19

Rey Martínez, cousin of Deacon Joe Pupo 6-1-19

Deacon Jim Weiss, 5-11 –19

Deacon Robert Smith 5-6-19

Ruth Jones, wife of Deacon Mike Jones 4-13-19

FOR THE SICK AND SUFFERING

Deacon Al McHugh

Deacon Jim Stone

Lynn Ory, wife of Deacon Randy Ory

Deacon Scott Sparks

Mike Doyle, nephew of Deacon Bob Hauert

BAPTISMAL FONT, THE REST OF THE STORY

For centuries it has been a tradition for baptismal fonts to have eight sides. The first seven sides were meant to represent the seven days of creation and the eighth side, however, represented God's ongoing, unending work of creation, both in the world and in each of His people. When a child is baptized, he or she is baptized into that eighth day-another new creation ready to inherit the kingdom of God.

Isn't that wonderful? God is never finished creating! He is still making new things every day. He is at work every day making everything that already exists "new" (Rev. 21:5)

Every day we see God creating in the world around us. Plants are pollinated and multiply; seeds mature into berries; volcanic lava creates new land formations. Every day the world shifts and changes a bit as God continues his active, creative work around us.

Now, just as God is still creating in the natural world, he is also still creating in the spiritual world. Every day He creates new openings for you to receive His love and to experience healing and grace in your relationships. Every day He opens new doors for you to share in your faith. Although not as dramatic as volcanic lava, these too are manifestations of the "new creation" that God is forming in and around us.

We are about half way through Lent. Now is a good time to look back for signs of His creative work. Where do you see new seeds about to blossom forth? Especially when it comes to matters of the heart, God is infinitely creative. He knows where you need renewal-in your prayer life and in your habits-and how to bring about change.

You may see yourself as a work in progress, but God see you, as well as everything he creates, and calls it "good" (Gen 1:31).

As Isaiah promised, God has a wonderful future in store for you, one that will bring you joy and amazement (65:18). So, welcome the ways that God is making you new right now, and have faith that he is not finished yet!

From the Magnificat Lent 2019

Justice and Peace Ministries

Justice and Peace Ministries exists to support parishes and schools in their work on social issues. One of our resources is *JustPeace*, a twice monthly e-newsletter featuring news, programs, and events on issues of both domestic and global concern. [Click here to see our latest issue, published on May 24.](#)

We would like to invite all clergy to subscribe to *JustPeace* as a means to stay up to date with the work Justice and Peace Ministries is doing. The newsletter goes out every other Friday. Periodically, and only when circumstances warrant it, we also send out advocacy or emergency relief action alerts. As we know that our priests and deacons receive so many emails already, we want to assure you that our subscription list is not used for any other emails and we do not share the list.

[Please click here to subscribe.](#) (The subscription form is at the bottom of the page.) We also encourage you to share this subscription link with your staff or anyone in your community who would be interested in receiving this information.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Program Coordinator Jayna Hoffacker at jhoffacker@archatl.com or 404-920-7898.

Fr. Joseph Mendes

I am writing to you on behalf of a dear friend of ours, Fr. Joseph Mendes. He will be retiring this month and will soon take up residence at St. Patrick's Catholic Church, in Norcross Georgia. It is very fitting that Fr. Joe's journey of service returns him to his first parish, once again. St. Patrick's has renovated a beautiful space for Fr. Joe to enjoy his retirement but still be an important part of the community.

Father Joe often speaks about the Deacon Formation Classes he taught, and the many men who were his students. He fondly remembers the dear friend and parishioner, Kevin Doyle, who drove him to each and every class, over those ten years. Sadly, Mr. Doyle passed away from cancer a few weeks ago.

I know Fr. Joe's heart is heavy leaving St. Marguerite d' Youville parish, but he looks forward to his new residence at St. Patrick's Catholic Church.

My request is that over this summer, the many deacons who attended Fr. Joe's classes would drop him a line of fellowship and hope. He is very much "old school" in that he has emails printed out for him, but he truly enjoys writing letters and receiving them. With that said, "Operation Mendes" begins.

You will be able to reach Fr. Joseph Mendes at the following address:

Fr. Joseph Mendes, MSFS
St. Patrick's Catholic Church
2140 Beaver Ruin Rd.
Norcross, GA. 30071