



# DEACON TALK

Council of Deacons Newsletter • Archdiocese of Milwaukee

February 2017

## **Director's Report:**

There is a definite touch of Spring in the air as I write this article on Valentine's Day. Although the sentiments of the day have been overwhelmed by the card, candy, and flower people; it is always important to tell those special people in our life that they are loved. As deacons we are invited to broaden that message to the many we touch that rarely hear "I love you!"

As Spring approaches, the deacon world is ramping up with activities. Deacon Day is fast approaching, set for Saturday, March 11 at St. Paul's in Racine. The "Southern" territories have planned a wonderful day but let's make it a great day with a large turnout!

Our local Church has been blessed with the appointment of two new Auxiliary Bishops, Fr. Jeff Haines and Fr. Jim Schuerman. Both are very caring and pastoral priests who will be a wonderful

blessing for our Archdiocese. They are also both very supportive of the Diaconate and they will be most encouraging of our ministry. The Ordination for Fr. Jeff and Fr. Jim will take place on Friday March 17 at 2 PM at the Cathedral. You have all been invited to pray together at the Liturgy. The Deacons are invited to vest and sit together in the sanctuary (RSVP to Chancery), and the wives need to secure a ticket for the event through the Chancery. As a Diaconate family we offer our full support and daily prayer for Bishops Elect Haines and Schuerman.

There are many things going on, so please pay close attention to this newsletter. I also want to invite you again to share with our family any special events or ministry experiences. I will continue to make specific requests for things I know about, but do not hesitate to initiate the process.

On Valentine's Day we tell our special "sweethearts" how much we love them. But I invite you to take a moment to tell those we minister to that they are loved by us and our God...even if it is not February 14.

Blessings to you all! I hope to see many of you at Deacon Day on March 11.

Peace,  
Mike

## **President's Report:**

Greetings Brother Deacons and Wives,

Since I am writing you specifically on Valentine's Day, the topic of my article should not be a great surprise. Here are some intriguing facts about history's most romantic holiday.

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**1. The St. Valentine who inspired the holiday may have been two different men.**

Officially recognized by the Roman Catholic Church, St. Valentine is known to be a real person who died around A.D. 270. However, his true identity was questioned as early as A.D. 496 by Pope Gelasius I, who referred to the martyr and his acts as “being known only to God.” One account describes Valentine as a temple priest who was beheaded near Rome by the emperor Claudius II for helping Christian couples wed. A different account claims Valentine was the Bishop of Terni, also martyred by Claudius II on the outskirts of Rome. Because of the similarities, it’s thought they may refer to the same person. But enough confusion surrounded the true identity of St. Valentine that the Church discontinued liturgical veneration of him in 1969, though his name remains on its list of officially recognized saints.

**2. In all, there are about a dozen St. Valentines.**

The saint we celebrate on Valentine’s Day is known officially as St. Valentine of Rome in order to differentiate him from the dozen or so other Valentines on the list. “Valentinus”—the Latin word for worthy, strong or powerful—was a popular name for centuries. The official Roman Catholic roster of saints shows about a dozen who were named Valentine or some variation of it. Because of this abundance you can choose to celebrate multiple times each year.

**3. Valentine is the patron saint of beekeepers and epilepsy, among many other things.**

St. Valentine has wide-ranging spiritual responsibilities. People call on him to watch over the lives of lovers, but also for interventions regarding beekeeping and epilepsy, as well as the plague, fainting and traveling. As you would expect, he’s also the patron saint of engaged couples and happy marriages.

**4. You can find Valentine’s skull in Rome.**

The flower-adorned skull of St. Valentine is on display in the Basilica of Santa Maria in Cosmedin, Rome. In the early 1800s, the excavation of a catacomb near Rome yielded skeletal remains and other relics now associated with St. Valentine. And as is custom, bits and pieces of the late saint’s body have been distributed to reliquaries around the world including the Czech Republic, Ireland, Scotland, England and France.

**5. Chaucer may have invented Valentine’s Day.**

The medieval English poet Geoffrey Chaucer often took liberties with history, placing his poetic characters into fictitious historical contexts that he represented as real. No record exists of romantic celebrations on Valentine’s Day prior to a poem Chaucer wrote around 1375. In his work

“Parliament of Fowles,” he links a tradition of courtly love with the celebration of St. Valentine’s feast day.



Despite my trivial pursuit of St. Valentine’s Day, it really should be for all of us an opportunity to revisit St. Thomas Aquinas’ definition of real love. He said: “Love is willing the good of another.” In other words, choosing what’s best for someone else instead of one’s self. It’s not a feeling or emotion primarily. It requires giving ourselves away for another’s good. May we experience an ecstatic Lent as we contemplate the ultimate love of God as expressed the kenosis of the Cross.

I hope that I will see you all very soon at Deacon Day! As always with Fraternal Charity,

Deacon Dale Nees

***Deacon Senate:***

The Deacon Senate met on Wednesday, November 16 at the Cousins Center. Deacons in attendance: Kempka, Bowen, Fogarty, Wiese, Maack, Nees, Campbell, Chmielewski. Excused: Jansen, Ebel, Kilkenny, Paczykowski.

After the opening prayer, our guest for the evening, Judith Longdin of the Office of Ecumenism and Interfaith, spent an hour with us talking about the work of her office. Much of what her office does is build relationships, enter into dialogue, and promote understanding between our Catholic faith community and other faith traditions (both Christian [Ecumenism] and non-Christian [Interfaith]).

Deacons are often at the front line in this effort, at times unknowingly, as we prepare people for sacraments as well as entering into the various ministries in the community. Judith is looking for deacons willing and interested in possibly formalizing this process within the Archdiocese. She informed us of multiple events scheduled over the next 4-6 months in the Archdiocese that involve ecumenical and/or interfaith dialogue. Your district rep will have this calendar of events and, if interested in further ministry in this area-building relationships and promoting understanding with those of other faith traditions, please contact Judith at the Archdiocese or Dcn. Mike Chmielewski.

Other meeting topics:

Treasurers Report: Balance of @\$9,000.00 with pending deposit of dues for covenanted deacons from Arch. Verified that the account has 2 additional signers to Dcn. Kempka, Dcns. Kornburger and Sites.

Formation: Inquiry sessions to begin in January 2017 for the class of 2022 (starts Fall 2018). Please encourage men to attend.

Deacon Day 2017: Set for 3/11/17 at St. Paul the Apostle, Racine. Archbishop ListECKI will lead prayer. Vice Rector of Mundelein Seminary, Chicago, Very Rev. Thomas A. Baima will be our featured speaker.

Memorial Mass/Retreat: Both events were held with many positive comments.

Post Ordination Formation: Plans for a required 3-year post ordination formation program were approved by the Archbishop. The effort will start

with the 2016 ordination class with the first session on the calendar for 5/20/17.

The meeting ended with a presentation by Dcn. Wiese about the deacon trip to the Dominican Republic this past September. Scott laid out some important questions for the deacon community as a result of this immersion experience. How can we continue to keep this opportunity a part of deacon formation both for candidates and/or post ordination? How can we support the ministry at La Sagrada Familia? How can we support the formation of permanent deacons from La Sagrada?

Our meeting closed with prayer. Next meeting set for 1/18/17.

The 1/18/17 meeting was cancelled and the Senate will next meet 3/15/17.

Mike Chmielewski

### ***Special Welcome:***

We have two deacons currently serving in the Milwaukee Archdiocese who have recently been incardinated into the Archdiocese. Deacon Charles (Chuck) Hankins was ordained in 2002 in Little Rock, AK. Chuck and his wife Julie moved to Waukesha in 2013 and he began covenanted ministry at St. William/St. John Neumann parishes in early 2014. In July 2015, Chuck and his family moved to Tulsa, OK where he continued to serve as deacon. Chuck and Julie returned to the Waukesha area in May of 2016. He is again covenanted at St. William/St. John Neumann and has made a commitment to remain in the area. He requested excardination from Little Rock in conjunction with a request to incardinate into Milwaukee in August 2016. Dcn. Chuck was officially incardinated into Milwaukee as of 11/28/16.

Deacon Steve Hayes was ordained in Madison in 2004. Steve and his wife, Karen, moved into the



Milwaukee Archdiocese in 2012. In May of 2012 he was covenanted with Annunciation, Fox Lake/St. Joseph, Waupun parishes where he continues to serve. Steve made the formal request to excardinate from Madison in conjunction with a request to incardinate into Milwaukee in late July 2016. Dcn. Steve was officially incardinated into Milwaukee on 12/26/16 (feast of St. Stephen).

Congratulations and a special welcome to Dcn. Chuck and wife, Julie, as well as Dcn. Steve and wife, Karen.

Dcn. John Muller and wife, Mary Ann, have also moved into the Milwaukee Archdiocese. John was ordained a Permanent Deacon in 2008 in the Diocese of Crookston, MN. He is a retired teacher and coach and also retired from covenanted diaconal ministry. He moved here to be closer to family. John and his wife joined St. Anthony parish in Menomonee Falls and has asked and received all the permissions necessary to serve at the parish. He will not enter into a formal covenant but will serve the parish and the pastor where needed and able as a retired deacon. Welcome Dcn. John and Mary Ann.

Mike

### ***Being Present in the Moment:***

Many times during formation, Deacon John Ebel and Susan McNeil emphasized to our class that we should always strive "to be present in the moment." They said that we would never know when the Holy Spirit would be at work around us, so we should always be looking for those moments. Then when they came, we wouldn't miss them and could respond, thus allowing God to work through us.

Just how wise this advice was, became evident during the recent convention of The Catholic Medical Association in Washington DC. My wife Cindy is president of The Milwaukee Guild. By virtue of being the First Gentleman, (is that the proper title for a male First Lady?), I get invited to attend the meetings. By virtue of being a deacon, I am invited to be present at the altar during daily

Mass. I usually stay in my clerical shirt throughout the day as the Medical Association likes its Catholic identity to be visible as much as possible. As the day goes on, I usually forget that I'm wearing a collar. That forgetfulness is what led to my "present in the moment" encounter.

After a long day of talks and seminars, the Wisconsin members decided to have a private get-to-know-each other party at a tiny restaurant across the street from the hotel and convention center. It was rush hour in D.C. and the traffic cops were quite harried trying to keep cars and pedestrians from bumping into each other. As I was walking across the street, I casually remarked to one of the officers, "This is crazy today, isn't it?"

"Stand on the corner and wait for me," she answered. Thoughts raced through my mind. What did I do? I was just trying to be friendly. I was even more concerned when she waved at her partner, who was across the street, and told him to come over. Cindy glanced at me with that "Now what did you do?" look that I get, and deserve, quite often! As the officers approached me, they both reached under their vests and pulled out neck chains that had crosses attached.

"Yeah it IS crazy today," she said in response to my comment. "We sure could use a prayer and blessing."

I was a little confused at first, but then realized that I was still in my clerics. The officers noticed that and, out of their need at the moment, they had appointed me their sidewalk chaplain! Knowing that the lights were going to change any minute, I came up with a quick prayer asking for protection and gave them a fast blessing.

"Thanks Rev," one of them called out as they scurried back to their posts. Cindy and I turned and continued our journey to the restaurant. It all happened in only a few minutes. If I had not been inspired to make a casual comment to the officer, if I had become defensive and heatedly demanded to know why I was being told to stop, the beautiful moment of sidewalk ministry would have been lost.

Deacon John and Susan knew what they were talking about back in those good ole days of formation. Being present in the moment truly does allow God to work through us. We just have to be ready to answer when the call comes!

Gary Nosacek

### ***The Mercy Choir, The Blonde and a Deacon in Rome...***

Deacon Ted Faust was ordained this past September. His wife, Linda ('The Blonde') has been singing and praying sacred music with choirs for 55 years. They were blessed with the opportunity to join the Milwaukee Mercy Choir directed by Maria Notch and Aaron Matthews to sing in Rome and Assisi.

**The Blonde reflects:** The first day, we attended the papal audience at St. Peter's Square. A crowd of 50,000 people were gathered to catch a glimpse of Papa Francisco. A white bird (looking a lot like an image of the Holy Spirit) was circling in the sky over the Pope, Bishops, and Cardinals as they led us in prayer. I wondered what graces the Holy Spirit would pour down on us during the coming week?

The first time we went inside St. Peter's Basilica was overwhelming: The Pieta, the Holy Doors, the tomb of St. John Paul II (where we prayed and I quietly and personally sang *Serdeczna Matko* to him). I could feel the grace of the Holy Spirit as we walked around the magnificent Basilica. During the second visit to St. Peter's, I could feel the grace of the Holy Spirit again as we sang with the Sistine Chapel Choir for the Consistory of 17 new Cardinals. I sing chant and Latin weekly with the St. Josaphat's Basilica Choir directed by Mr. Chris Berry while Ted is on altar. I felt comfortable as we sang the same style of sacred music in St. Peter's

Basilica. The third visit to St. Peter's was most comfortable yet...like going to "my church." We sang to the side of the altar, right next to St. Peter's tomb, with 300 voices from across the USA and the Sistine Chapel Choir in the otherwise empty Basilica. The choirs, brass and organ music were broadcast out to St. Peter's square where Pope Francis presided at the Mass for the Close of the Doors of Mercy.

Following the Mass, I slowly walked toward the door to exit. It was too crowded. Then I noticed what seemed like hundreds of Bishops and Cardinals from all over the world prayerfully entering the Basilica from the outside altar. I asked

that door guard if I could watch them process in. These clergy are successors of the Apostles who God trusts to lead our Church. Again, I could feel the grace of the Holy Spirit as they slowly entered the Basilica. I couldn't exit through that door either so I went back toward the main altar of St. Peter. The bishops were gathered far behind the altar. A couple of people were stacking chairs and

gathering linens in the almost empty cavernous Basilica. I walked up to the foot of St. Peter's tomb and felt so close to St. Peter. I prayed for my friends and family. I again felt the grace of the Holy Spirit.

We are professed members of the St. Josaphat Secular Franciscans Fraternity. We sang and prayed Mass at the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi while Ted was on altar. We prayed at the tombs of St. Francis and his brothers. We prayed at the Portiuncula, the little Chapel where he died. We sang Schubert's Mass in G during a Latin High Mass at Chiesa Nuova next to a chapel with St. Philip Neri's tomb. As I prayed, I felt like I knew St. Philip Neri because I have been singing a Mass dedicated to him for the past 5 years at St. Josaphat's. We sincerely could feel the Holy Spirit's presence and grace as we were guided



throughout the week. We are very grateful for this amazing opportunity to praise God with song and prayer after all these years.

**Deacon Ted's recollection:** This was our first visit to Rome or Assisi. I was the only deacon on the trip and was assisting Fr. Ken Omernick, Fr. Carlos Zapata and Fr Cyril Guise, O.C.D. The history and grandeur of Rome is breathtaking. I was 'on altar' in the Milanese Church of Ambrose and Charles Borromeo and in a side chapel in the Basilica of St. Francis in Assisi. Thanks to the gracious Fr Carlos, I preached there, too. For a Secular Franciscan Deacon, that was a mountaintop kind of experience.

But the most spiritually moving place for me was in the Basilica of St. Clare. When one enters the Basilica, the large side chapel on the right contains the San Damiano cross that spoke to St. Francis (*Francis, rebuild my Church...*). That cross is a byzantine-style crucifix but is held in a large

Western-style cloister chapel. There is a smaller side altar to the left of the main entrance, as well. It was poorly lit, the altar was simple granite and of Western-style, and the decorative inscriptions on the walls were in Greek, rather than the customary medieval Latin. The chapel had a distinctly Byzantine feel to it. There is a profound sense of unity between the East and the West in this Basilica – as if the Church was 'breathing with both of her lungs' (*Ut Unum Sint*, 54). It was while praying with Linda within this small, silent, dark chapel that I could feel the movement of the Spirit within my heart. I'm always a bit surprised when this sort of thing happens. It is the time that we least expect – the place we wouldn't have predicted or in the humble quiet of an empty side chapel that He sometimes chooses to move us. It is in these unexpected circumstances that He quiets us, soothes us, heals us and then charges us to move forward toward the poor, the marginalized, and the forgotten.

**If you get to Rome**, by all means, please enjoy the espresso, pasta, wine and gelato. By all means, take

in the eye-popping scale and grandeur of the Major Basilicas. But most of all, find some quiet time to drink in deeply of the Spirit, Who alone can renew the soul. It seems that it is in meeting God in these unplanned moments or these 'least of all' places, that we transform a trip into a journey and He transforms a journey into a pilgrimage.

Pax et Bonum

Deacon Ted and Linda Faust

### ***Rest in Peace:***

Deacon Paul S. Monzel died on November 18, 2016. Paul was born 1/11/35 in Webster, South Dakota. He moved to Watertown, WI in 1943 with his family and graduated from Watertown High in 1953. He spent some time in the seminary and eventually earned a Master's Degree in Counseling from UW-Madison. He spent more than 30 years employed by the Dept. of Vocational Rehabilitation in Fond du Lac as a counselor and supervisor.



He married his beloved Andrea on 10/23/63 at Sacred Heart Church in Fond du Lac. Together they had two children: Michael (Jenny), and Jennifer (Christopher) Jeske. They also have three grandchildren: Claire, Brennan, and Derek.

Paul began his diaconate formation in 1984 at St. Francis Seminary. He was ordained on 4/23/88 at Mater Christi Chapel by Archbishop Weakland. He was assigned to serve at Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish in North Fond du Lac. His ministry included teaching religious education, marriage and baptism preparation, preaching, witnessing marriages, and visiting the sick. He also worked as a chaplain for St. Agnes Hospital for 15 years. He retired from covenanted ministry in 2007, but remained very connected at Presentation Parish as well as the entire Fond du Lac community.

Visitation and the Mass of Christian Burial for Deacon Paul took place at Sacred Heart Parish in Fond du Lac on Wednesday 11/23/16. Fr. Pat Heppe was the main presider with multiple other priests concelebrating. Dcn. Dave Zimprich (Word) and Dcn. Dale Paczykowski (Altar) assisted at the altar. There were 20 deacons, wives, and widows that joined in the prayer and escorted Paul's casket both in and out of the prayer space.

Fr. Heppe reflected on the Matthew 25 Gospel reading and also on the presence of light. He invited us to accept Paul's challenge to live in the light and to be light as Deacon Paul was in his ministries. Archbishop ListECKI offered the final commendation as he expressed his appreciation to Andrea and the family for sharing Deacon Paul with the faithful in Fond du Lac. Our prayer for Deacon Paul and his family continue. May he rest in Peace.

### ***Rest in Peace:***

Deacon Michael E. Cesarec died on January 17, 2017. Mike was born on 9/16/23 in Milwaukee, graduated from Custer High in 1941, and then entered the US Army in 1942. He served his country through all of World War II, being honorably discharged in 1946 as a Tech Sgt. He worked for Evinrude Motors 1947-1977 as a transportation specialist. He then worked for a local trucking firm and then, eventually JC Penney for 13 years before retiring from the secular work force in 2000.



Mike married his beloved Loyola (Lee) on 11/16/48 at St. Isidore Parish, Osman, WI. They had four children: Patricia (Gerald) Taylor, Michael (Leanne), Dr. Robert (Barbara), and Kathleen (Theodore) Jach. They also have 10 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren.

Mike began his diaconate formation in 1981 at St. Francis Seminary. He was ordained a Permanent Deacon on June 9, 1984 by Archbishop Weakland. He was assigned to Our Lady of Good Hope Parish where he served 1984-1992 and again 1996-2000.

He served at St. Mary Czestochowa 1992-1996. Mike's ministry included serving at the altar as well as baptisms, weddings, funerals, and other parish teaching programs. Mike's passion was care for the sick, homebound, and grieving. He retired from covenanted ministry in 2000 but remained active in ministry at OLGH as long as his health allowed.

Deacon Mike's visitation and Mass of Christian Burial took place on Saturday 1/21/17 at Our Lady of Good Hope in Milwaukee. Current Pastor Fr. Michael Barrett was the presider and was assisted at the altar by classmate Dcn. Dean Collins. More than 35 deacons, wives, and widows attended the prayer celebrating the life of Deacon Mike. Fr. Mike offered up the image of "mansions" (in place of the term "dwelling places") as places that God calls us to both experience and share His presence. In Dcn. Mike's case, the "mansions" in his life included his military service, his 70+ years of marriage and dedication to family, his secular work ethic, and of course his 32 years of service to God's Church as deacon. Bishop Sklba offered the final commendation just prior to the deacon community leading Mike's casket from the church.

Mike was entombed in the family crypt at Resurrection Cemetery on Monday 1/23/17 with full military honors. We continue to lift Deacon Mike and his family in prayer. May he rest in Peace.

### ***Know Your Deacons:***

St. Vincent of Saragossa, Deacon and first Martyr of Spain, was born in Huesca, Spain in the latter part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century. He was ordained a Permanent Deacon by Bishop St. Valerius and commissioned to preach. Vincent was also the spokesperson for the Bishop as Valerius had a speech impediment.

The Roman governor arrested and imprisoned both Valerius and Vincent during the persecution of Diocletian. Vincent gave a most wonderful proclamation of their faith at which Valerius was exiled and Vincent was detained and subject to horrible torture. He survived the torture proclaiming and singing the praises of God. His strength and

faith even led to the conversion of his jailers. He eventually died of his injuries in 304.

Vincent is the patron saint of roofers, vinedressers, tile makers, and sailors among others. His feast day is January 22 and is widely celebrated in Spain and other Western European countries.

***Prayer Requests:***

Deacon Tony Martino`84  
Deacon Francisco Blas`02 and wife Florencia  
Deacon Chuck Kustner`75 and wife Martha  
Andrea Monzel wife of Dcn. Paul  
Deacon John D`Alessio`98 and wife Antoinette  
Betty Rooney wife of Dcn. Mike`88  
Deacon Roberto Fuentes`02 and wife Lorenz  
Deacon Jay Wittak`05  
Deacon Dick Govek`92 and wife Dorothy  
Rocki Lazaga wife of Dcn. Al`92  
Deacon Ed Weber`81 and wife Sue  
Deacon Mike Burch`94  
Deacon Baleriano Gonzalez`84  
Lee Cesarec wife of Dcn. Mike  
Theresa Mensah, wife of the late Dcn. Tony`83  
Jack Matz, father of Sue Smallhoover (Dcn. Jim)

**ALSO THE RECENTLY DECEASED AND THEIR FAMILIES:**

Deacon Paul Monzel`88, 11/18/16  
Deacon Mike Cesarec`84, 1/17/17  
Bernice Brah, mother of Dc. Gene`94, 12/11/16  
Joan Banach, sister of Dcn. Bill`83, 12/9/16  
Jack Finley, father of Dcn. Mike`00, 12/31/16  
Arlene Singer, sister of Dcn. Leon Zalewski`83, 12/27/16  
Paul Plum, Brother in law of Dcn. Paczkowski, 1/1/17  
Lucille Pettey, wife of Dcn. Larry`75, 1/6/17

***Dates to Remember:***

Deacon Day 2017  
3/11/17, St. Paul the Apostle, Racine

Dcn. Wives Retreat  
3/31-4/2/17, Redemptorist

Post Ordination Formation  
5/20/17, Cousins Center 8 AM – 3 PM

Roman/Episcopal Gathering  
6/3/17, St. Mary Visitation, Elm Grove: Morning

Memorial Mass 2017  
Date TBD, planning by District 7/8/9

Dcn. Retreat 2017  
11/2-11/5/2017 Director Fr. Jerry Herda, Vicar for Clergy



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of MILWAUKEE**

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