

THE *Deacon Servant*

OFFICES OF DEACON SERVICES | DIACONATE FORMATION | ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE



IN THIS ISSUE:

- Director's Report 1
- Diaconate Formation..... 2
- Pastoral Formation..... 2
- Know Our Deacon 4
- Memorial Mass 4
- Deacon Senate 5
- Invalid Baptisms..... 6
- Prayer Requests 8
- Dates to Remember 8

DIRECTOR'S REPORT



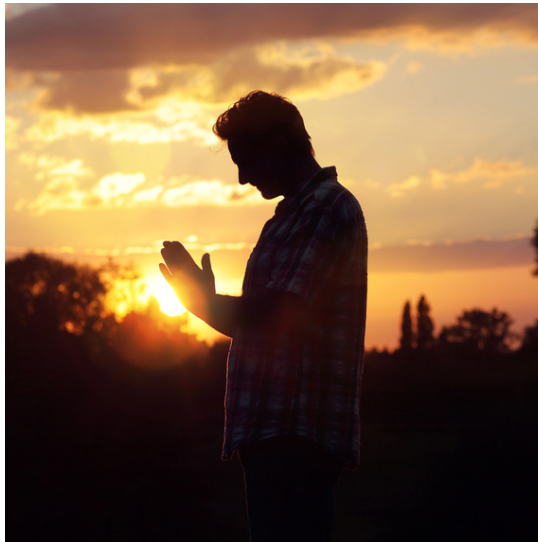
Deacon Mike Chmielewski

This will be the third issue of the Deacon Servant Newsletter published since the coronavirus pandemic began in March. Instead of feeling like we are slowly moving out of the crisis, we seem to be sinking even deeper.

Cases are rising dramatically, deaths rising also, and the cold weather and seasonal flu will likely fuel more cases. New and greater challenges seem to be on the horizon locally, nationally, and internationally. When we add the increasing volatility of racial justice issues and violent actions and a very contentious presidential election, it is no wonder that people are tired, overwhelmed, and depressed.

One of the unique calls of the diaconate is to interpret the times that we live in and to make connections in our prayer, service, and homilies. We come from, and live, in the secular world and have a perspective of the spiritual that our priests do not have. The occurrences of 2020 have given us much to ponder, to pray about, and to invite our communities to reflect upon. At times, it seems like repeated heavy topics that can be difficult to preach about and even more difficult to listen to.

As I prepare a homily for the Twenty-Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, I cannot take my heart off the weekend's Second Reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians (Phil 4; 6-9). It is a reading of gratitude, hope, comfort, and joy. It calls us to emotions that are difficult to raise up in these difficult times. If you move up a couple of verses to begin at verse 4, Paul says, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I shall say it again, Rejoice! ...The Lord is near." (Phil 4:4-5)



As deacons, we are husbands, fathers and grandfathers, and we live a family-centered life. We live in neighborhoods, work in the marketplace, and serve those in need in various environments. We are truly called to be heralds of hope and joy, even in the most difficult of times.

Our preaching responsibilities call us to challenge people's thinking, encourage their reflections, and foster transformation. However, we should not be focused on singular issues and we are not the only vehicle for transformation.

There are times we need to call people into thanksgiving, the very definition of Eucharist. There are times we need to lift people up and have them experience joy. God has never abandoned us...and he never will. "Rejoice...the Lord is near!"

Deacon Mike Chmielewski

DIACONATE FORMATION: ALWAYS A NEW BEGINNING



*Deacon Dale
Nees*

September and October are special months for Diaconate Formation, particularly during this phase of our two-year cycle. Inside of two months, we have the privilege of witnessing three distinct beginnings. The most obvious was that the staff of the Office of Diaconate Formation, Manuel, Charmaine, and myself, along with our fall faculty, welcomed eighteen new men (and the seventeen wives of those married)

as the aspirant class of 2020. Their admission and selection marked their transition from that of an inquirer to an aspirant. This year-long period is to primarily “discern the capability and readiness of an aspirant to be nominated to the bishop for acceptance as a candidate for diaconal ordination.” “It must provide an appropriate initiation into diaconal spirituality; supervised pastoral experiences, especially among the poor and marginalized; and an adequate assessment of the aspirant’s potential to be promoted to candidate formation.” We are excited to welcome them all.

We will also witness seventeen second-year candidates, nominated by the Committee on Admission and Scrutinies and selected by Archbishop ListECKI, admitted as Acolytes. The Rite of Installation to the Ministry of Acolyte will take place on Saturday, October 17, with Bishop Haines presiding. Due to COVID restrictions, it will not be open to the public. Those to be instituted are Thomas J. Binder, Arnold M. Bryson II, Jerome T. Campbell II, James G. Casserly, Michael P. Dunn, Brent A. Enwright, Jon S. Gabik, Jeffrey A. Kucharski, Manuel Maldonado-Villalobos, Jason L. Myres, Michael A. Reesman,

Raul V. Rueda Pelayo, Michael Skupien, Edward Sosa, Lance C. Tappa, John G. Van Zeeland, and Brian J. Witteman. For these men, it is their second Rite of Installation, as they have already been instituted as Lectors.

Finally, we also saw our four new deacons, Rob Mitchell, Kurt Peot, Peter Rebholz, and John Shaughnessy commence with their post-ordination formation. Following an incredibly beautiful and moving liturgy which affirmed their faithfulness to initial formation and without pausing a moment, they entered into post-ordination formation. The National Directory states that the goal for “the post-ordination path in diaconal formation ‘is first and foremost a process of continual conversion.’” The primary source of this phase of formation is the ministry itself. “The deacon matures...by focusing his own call to holiness on the fulfillment of his social and ecclesial duties, in particular, of his ministerial functions and responsibilities. The formation of deacons should, therefore, concentrate in a special way on awareness of their ministerial character.” “It is motivated by the dynamism as the holy order received: Do not neglect the gift you have, which was conferred on you through the prophetic word with the imposition of hands...Be diligent in these matters, be absorbed in them...for by doing so you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.” That is some serious formation!

We thank everyone for their continued prayers for the aspirants, candidates, and new deacons as they began their new phases of formation and ministries. Diaconate Formation greatly appreciates the tremendous ongoing support from so many, which made all these new beginnings possible.

Deacon Dale T. Nees

PASTORAL FORMATION: SENT ON MISSION



*Manuel
Maldonado-
Villalobos*

One of the areas of comprehensive preparation in our Diaconate Formation Program is the Pastoral Dimension. This preparation is not merely theoretical, full of speeches and lectures. It is an active face-to-face preparation. It is of the dimensions that send aspirants and candidates on mission. In this way, they can live the call to be servants, from the experience itself, among those in need.

In the National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of the Permanent Deacons in the United State (NDFMLPD) we can read the following:

“126. An integral formation must relate the human, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions to pastoral practice. “The whole formation imparted to [the

participants] . . . aims at preparing them to enter into communion with the charity of Christ. . . .

Hence their formation in its different aspects must have a fundamentally pastoral character.”⁴⁰ Within that context, the pastoral dimension in formation is not merely an apprenticeship to familiarize the participant in diaconal formation with some pastoral techniques. Its aim, however, is to initiate the aspirant and candidate into the sensitivity of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus, who came to serve and not be served...”

According to the directory, pastoral formation helps aspirants and candidates to live the experience of the Gospel within

► See **PASTORAL FORMATION** (continued on page 3)

► **PASTORAL FORMATION** *(continued from page 2)*

society, among the needy and rejected. It is an opportunity of carrying and living the charity of Christ among our most vulnerable and neglected brothers and sisters. Therefore, this area of formation is not only theories and presentations of “how to do it”, but rather living it. It is not looking at the needs of our brothers and sisters from afar and just telling them “God bless you” or “I am going to pray for you.” It is walking in their shoes; it is feeling their struggles, sufferings and frustrations. It is to be a servant of Christ in their midst.

For this reason, throughout our formation, the students are involved in five pastoral experiences. Three mini-placements, as we informally call them, during the Aspirancy year that cover the areas of Catechesis, Liturgy and Parish Outreach. Two pastoral immersions during the Candidacy path, Societal and Parish immersions. This Fall 2020 trimester, due to Covid-19, we are having both groups experiencing their respective assignments at the same time. Aspirants in Catechetical ministry and Candidates, Parish Immersion.

What is all of this about? What is the meaning or purpose of sending them on mission? What are the outcomes or the reasons for doing this?

To understand the rationale, I think it is important to remember, for example, the passage from the Gospel of Luke 10:1-4; the sending of “The 72”:

“After this, the Lord appointed seventy-two others whom He sent ahead of him in pairs to every town and place he intended to visit. He said to them, “The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest. Go on your way; behold, I am sending you like lambs among wolves. Carry no money bag, no sack, no sandals...”

Our goal with these assignments is for the students to follow the mission of Jesus who sends the disciples to places where He must go, where He wants to be. The student becomes a herald for the Gospel. He is not the owner of the Good News, rather a servant in action. As we say in formation, it is to go where others do not go, where you do not feel comfortable, it is to make your hands sweat and get dirty with the hard work of service. It is a mission with a purpose.

When we combine what the directory presents, with this passage of the Gospel, we will find the purpose of these pastoral experiences and we will be able to better understand why they are necessary. First, we want the students to understand that ordained ministry is one of service. As deacons, we are called to be the image of Christ the Servant, who came to serve and not to be served. Second, we want

to create a sense of stewardship. The harvest is great and the workers few. We must feel responsible for the mission and pray to the Father for the continuance of it. The participants are sent to their parishes to learn more about parish life and its work for the Gospel. They are also sent outside the parish, to the communities, to society. Just as Jesus sends his disciples ahead of him, (sometimes like lambs amid wolves), so we send the students beyond their parishes. The mission is difficult and sometimes can look like a dangerous task, much more in these times where society might not want to recognize God.

Third, we want to “create” an idea of hospitality. The disciples of Jesus cannot carry anything, no bag, no sandals. They should only carry their service. This means that they must trust in the hospitality of the person they meet. Thus, the student who goes with nothing shows that he has confidence in people. He must think that he will be welcomed, and at the same time, show an attitude of welcoming and hospitality to those he serves. Through these pastoral experiences, the Aspirants and Candidates are called to self-giving and communion. The student coexists steadily, participates in the life, difficulties and services of people and institutions, having a clearer understanding of the call to service, community values and fraternal coexistence. It is finding Christ in the other, not wanting to bring his own “Christ” to them. His Christ will be discovered through his works of service.

Fourth, it is to understand that the vocation and ministry of a deacon is simply the welcoming of the excluded and vulnerable. The disciples must take care of the sick, prisoners, orphans, widows, etc. This means that they must welcome all those in the community who are marginalized. The practice of solidarity, the option for the poor and defending human dignity are important aspects of all these pastoral experiences. Thus, we make the Kingdom of God present on Earth.

The integral preparation of the pastoral dimension is not merely activities to fulfill some requirement or to keep our aspirants and candidates busy. Practical pastoral preparation is essential for our students to discover the importance of hospitality, self-giving, communion, and welcoming the excluded, thus being able to be the image of Christ the Servant amid our society and our Church. A Christ who came to serve, not to be served, and to lay down his life for his sheep. A Christ that sends us on mission.

Manuel Maldonado-Villalobos

NATIONAL DIRECTORY FOR THE FORMATION, MINISTRY, AND LIFE OF PERMANENT DEACONS IN THE UNITED STATES, Committee on the Diaconate of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), 2005

USCCB, <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/luke/0>

KNOW OUR DEACON

In my nearly five years as the Director of Deacon Services, one of the awesome benefits has been developing relationships with my brother deacons and their spouses. It has been a tremendous honor to hear their stories, share their ministries, and pray with and for them.

One of the deacons that I have developed a special bond with is Deacon Bill Banach.

Whether he is checking on me or I am checking on him, we share a weekly phone call. If for some reason I miss the call, I hear about it next week.

Bill was ordained on January 22, 1983, and was assigned to serve at Holy Spirit Parish, a block from his home. Holy Spirit eventually merged with St. Barbara Parish and is now known as St. Rafael Parish. He served there for 24 years and in 2007 he was assigned to the Basilica of St. Josaphat. He moved at the invitation of the Basilica pastor who encouraged Bill to “come home.” Bill grew up in the shadow of the Basilica and still had many connections there. Bill was covenanted with the Basilica until his retirement in 2016. He continues to serve when and how he is able. He continues to participate in the parish SVDP conference and he has a list of homebound and nursing home residents that he brings Communion.

Other facts of note about Dcn. Bill:

- Married the love of his life, Janet, in 1951. Janet died in 2002.
- Got married while on leave from the Army and spent time in Korea during the war earning a Bronze Star.
- Has a degree from Marquette in Civil Engineering and worked as an engineer for the City of Milwaukee for over 30 years.
- Was the spiritual advisor for the Milwaukee Council of SVDP 1999-2011.
- Was awarded the “Veteran Scouter” award in 2006 by the Boy Scouts of America for 65 years of service.
- Was a member of the Deacon Personnel Board 2001-2016 and is an original member of the Deacon Ministers of Care team on which he still serves.
- Has been a member of the Polish Fest Liturgical Committee from its inception.

Thank you, Deacon Bill, for your service and all you do and have done for God’s people.



Deacon Bill Banach

Greetings to the diaconal community,

The annual Memorial Mass celebrates and remembers the lives of our deceased deacons and wives who have served so faithfully and now enjoy their reward in the Kingdom of God. In this time of the pandemic, it has become necessary to cancel this liturgy and the time gathered to support one another as we continue the ministry of service to God’s people.

During these fall months, please remember in your prayers the following deceased members of the diaconal family:

Jo Ann Buyck October 31, 2019
Barbara Iwan January 31, 2020
Catherine LaPointe March 29, 2020
Suzanne Weber April 3, 2020
Dennis Ference May 1, 2020
Barbara Aschenbrener August 28, 2020
Renee Wendt September 27, 2020

Remembering You

In the rising of the sun and in its going down, we will remember you.

Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

When we notice things you liked, we will remember you.

Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

When we see in others glimpses of your ways, we will remember you.

Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

When we see in ourselves things that you would value, we will remember you.

Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

So long as we live, you will live in us, as we remember you.

Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

In the midst of our grief, we seek the comfort of one another’s love.

Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

May we find comfort and richness in our memories of you.

Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

Thank you for the good times.

Thank you for your love and your laughter.

Most of all, thank you for being you.

You leave this world a better place than you found it.

Spirit of Love, hear our prayer.

Deacon Mike Chmielewski

Rev. Dr. Mark Stoner

DEACON SENATE

The Deacon Senate met on July 15, 2020, via Zoom. In attendance: Dcns. Wiese, Bowen, Copson, Starke, Petro, Paczkowski, Schneider, Jansen, Chmielewski. Excused: Nees, Campbell. The meeting opened with prayer and then the May minutes were amended (Dcn. Gundlach as the new District rep for 1,2,3 in January 2021) and approved.

Scott Campbell (excused for parish Confirmation) provided a written financial report which included a reported balance of \$4986 and a note that expenses exceeded revenues in this last fiscal year by about \$1200. Scott will put together a budget plan for 20-21 for the September meeting. The budget plan could impact a possible adjustment of the \$50 deacon dues for this year.

Dale Nees (excused for a family vacation) provided a written Formation Report which noted: 18 new aspirants for September (class of 2024) with more age, culture (1 Black, 1 Vietnamese, and 3 Latinos), and regional (1 each from Fond du Lac and Sheboygan) diversity. The ODF Office hopes to add a new full-time staff position to help with the larger classes. He also reported that the September 12, 2020 Ordination will have limited attendance and thus the entire Deacon community will not be able to attend.

District reports were few as many did not meet. Starke reported the 6,10,13 were moving ahead with plans for Deacon Day 2021 now scheduled for May 1, 2021, at St. Monica, WFB, and with Tom Thibodeau as the presenter. Copson reported that 4,5,12 are still planning Memorial Mass for October 18, 2020, at 2 p.m. at St. James, MF, with Bishop Schuerman presiding. The gathering may not include dinner. Wiese reported that there will be no trips to the Dominican Republic for 2020 and asked that this item be removed as a standing agenda issue until future needs.

Our primary discussion of the meeting focused on the annual parish contribution to the deacon continuing education fund. Because of the financial impact on parish funds and fewer formation opportunities, it was proposed that the Senate lower the required parish contribution from \$1000 per deacon with suggested amounts ranging from \$0 to \$700 (for the current fiscal year ONLY!) The Senate unanimously passed the following motion: "Subject to the approval of the Archbishop, proposing a reduction of the annual parish contribution to a deacons' continuing education fund from \$1000 to \$500 for the current fiscal year ending June 30, 2021. Individual deacons would have the discretion of waiving all or some of the \$500 contribution. Any hardships would be addressed on an individual basis."

Additional items discussed included a need for a Retreat Director for the 2021 Deacon Retreat. Suggestions can be sent to the Deacon Services Office, the Retreat Committee, (Dcns. Petrie or Klingsiesen), or your District Rep. There was also a proposal for the Deacon Council to make a \$500 donation to the Redemptorist Retreat Center to help offset the cancellation of the 2020 Retreat. This proposal was tabled until reviewing a budget plan for 20-21

at the September meeting.

The meeting ended with the formal President transition. Dcn. Bowen begins a two-year term as President, Dcn. Wiese moves to Past President and Dcn. Starke moves in as President-Elect for two years. Dcn. Nees completes his six-year term in President mode and Dcn. Jansen becomes the new District Rep for 6/10/13 replacing Starke. The meeting ended with a prayer and blessing from outgoing President Wiese. The next meeting is set for September 16, 2020, via Zoom.

The Deacon Senate met again, via Zoom, on September 16, 2020. Deacons present included: Nees, Bowen, Wiese, Campbell, Copson, Schneider, Petro, Paczkowski, and Chmielewski. Excused were: Jansen and Starke. Dcn. Bowen opened the meeting with prayer. Dcn. Nees began the meeting highlighting and answering questions about his written Formation Report. There are now 35 men in formation, 1 third-year candidate, 16 second-year candidates, and 18 aspirants. Tuesday classes continue to be virtual but Saturday classes will be in person, with an abbreviated schedule, at MMCPCC beginning September 19. Dale also reported that the Ordination on September 12 went very well.

Dcn. Campbell then presented the financial report including a projected budget plan. Our current balance is \$4,597.49. Scott offered two budget scenarios, one with \$50 deacon dues and the other with \$30 deacon dues. The Senate agreed upon a budget with \$40 deacon dues that would allow for a slight surplus. The lowered dues, for this year only, are a consistent reflection of the financial stress of the pandemic. (Note: In July the Senate approved lowering the parish contribution to a deacon's continuing education fund to \$500.00 for the 20-21 fiscal year.)

There were no District reports as only District 1/2/3 met via zoom with minimal attendance. Other items addressed included:

- The annual Memorial Mass has been canceled for 2020. Originally scheduled for October 18 at Good Shepherd in Menomonee Falls. District 4/5/12 will again host the event in 2021.
- The Senate agreed to make a \$500 donation to the Redemptorist Retreat Center as a sign of support for their ministry. The 2020 Deacon Retreat scheduled for November 5-8 has been canceled.
- The Senate also agreed to make a \$75 donation to the Sisters of the Divine Savior in honor of Sr. Margaret Bosch on her celebration of 75 years in consecrated life. Sr. Margaret was a member of the Deacon Formation staff for many years early in the program.
- Discussion was held about searching for a Retreat Director for the 2021 Deacon Retreat (11/4-7/ 2021).

The meeting closed with prayer. The next Senate meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2020, via Zoom.

ARE YOU CELEBRATING INVALID BAPTISMS?

Have you ever done something you knew you shouldn't do that had long-lasting and disastrous consequences for a lot of people more than 20 years later? Deacon Philip Webb in Carrollton, Texas (Fort Worth diocese) and Deacon Mark Springer then in Troy, Michigan (Detroit archdiocese) are now internationally known in the Vatican and throughout the world for regularly altering the prescribed wording of the baptism rite for children by saying "We baptize you" instead of "I baptize you". No big deal? Guess again. All the baptisms they 'celebrated' throughout the years using their own formula were invalid according to a Doctrinal Note from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith approved by Pope Francis on June 8, 2020.

Among the invalid baptisms performed by Deacon Philip Webb in 1992 in the Diocese of Fort Worth was Zachary Boazman who thought that he was validly ordained a priest in 2019. After the Vatican Doctrinal Note was published, on June 24, 2020, presumed Fr. Boazman reviewed a videotape of his own baptism and discovered that Deacon Webb used the invalid "We baptize" form and hence his (Boazman's) baptism was invalid. Zachary Boazman went through most of his life presuming that he was validly baptized and hence eligible to receive all the other sacraments. He was stunned to learn that he had received all those sacraments invalidly since he was not a baptized Catholic, nor even a Christian.

Hence, Zachary Boazman's later presumed priestly ordination in 2019 was equally invalid. While this was bad enough, presumed Fr. Boazman unknowingly began his priestly ministry among his parishioners by invalidly celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, witnessing marriages, and performing the Anointing of the Sick. Needless to say, this caused a great deal of consternation among the faithful once it was learned that a permanent deacon's change in the baptismal rite for Boazman resulted in no valid baptism for Boazman and thus invalid sacraments for them performed by Boazman. Zachary Boazman immediately informed his ordinary, Oklahoma City Archbishop Paul Coakley, of his discovery and sought the Archbishop's guidance.

Archbishop Coakley issued a news release urging his clerics to contact diocesan offices if they had ever deviated from the approved baptismal formula and apologized to all Catholics affected by the invalid celebration of sacraments. Thereupon, Zachary Boazman was soon validly baptized, made his true First Communion, was confirmed, and then ordained a deacon and finally, a real priest. Archbishop Coakley's news release stated, "Because Father Boazman's own baptism was invalid, the Masses he celebrated, the confessions he heard and the weddings he witnessed prior to being baptized and 're-ordained' also were invalid." (The baptisms performed by Zachary Boazman prior to his true ordination as a deacon were still valid because even the laity can baptize with the requisite intention but only using the approved Trinitarian formula.) Archbishop Coakley later

sanated (validated) the marriages celebrated by Father Boazman in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City.

The bishop of Fort Worth, Most Rev. Michael Olson, published an open letter dated September 18, 2020, in which he provided further insights into Deacon Webb's liturgical praxis:

"There is positive and probable doubt that Deacon Webb validly baptized infants because it was his regular practice to use a substituted and invalid formula in the hundreds of baptisms he is believed to have administered while assigned to Saint Catherine of Siena Catholic Church. I am making his name public to alert anyone who is recorded as having been baptized by Deacon Webb. Notations had been made to the sacramental records at Saint Catherine of Siena Catholic Church which state that anyone baptized by Deacon Webb should be conditionally baptized and confirmed unless there is evidence that he validly baptized on a specific occasion. Where it is applicable, issues regarding the validity of marriages should be addressed with the Assistance of the (Fort Worth) Tribunal."

Bishop Olson's letter further stated in reference to the approved liturgical formula, "These are the exact words (I baptize) to be spoken by the minister of the sacrament while the same minister (and no one else) also pours the water over the head of the person to be baptized. No other words can be used and no other words can be added. As the Second Vatican Council taught in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, #23, 'Therefore no other person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority.' Such changes would include 'WE baptize you ...' or 'I baptize you in the name of the Creator, of the Redeemer, and of the Sanctifier.'" Lastly, he apologized "to all those whose lives have been adversely affected by the discovery that the sacraments they thought that they had received they, in fact, did not receive."

On August 22, 2020, the Archdiocese of Detroit send out a news release, which included portions of a "Letter to the Faithful" from Archbishop Allen Vigneron regarding invalid baptisms using the "We baptize" formula by Deacon Mark Springer while assigned to St. Anastasia Parish in Troy, Michigan from 1986 to 1999. The facts are similar to those regarding Deacon Webb's use of an invalid baptismal formula. Fr. Matthew Hood, a graduate of Sacred Heart Major Seminary who sought ordination to the priesthood in June of 2017, also recently viewed a family video of his baptism as an infant and realized that Deacon Mark Springer decided to change the proper formula for baptism, using "We baptize" instead of the authorized "I baptize." Mr. Matthew Hood immediately contacted the Diocese of Detroit and was eventually validly baptized, confirmed, ordained a deacon, and finally and truly ordained a priest on August 17, 2020. Nonetheless, for the past three years now Fr. Hood unwittingly and invalidly

► **INVALID BAPTISMS** (*continued from page 6*)

celebrated Mass, granted sacramental absolution, witnessed marriages, and celebrated the Sacrament of the Sick, all as a non-baptized and non-ordained person.

Archbishop Vigneron's letter further said, "The parish and Archdiocese of Detroit will make efforts to contact those whom the deacon (Springer) attempted to baptize, so that they may receive valid sacraments. The Archdiocese has made the deacon's identity known in an attempt to alert people whom we may not have a way to contact." The letter states that there is a specific location on the Archdiocese of Detroit website for concerned faithful to use in determining how to rectify their sacramental and ecclesial status should they have received sacraments from Fr. Hood or Deacon Springer. (According to news sources, Deacon Springer is now retired and no longer in active ministry.)

The "Doctrinal Note on the modification of the sacramental formula of Baptism" from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith approved by Pope Francis and issued on June 24, 2020, provides clarity in examining the nexus between theology and liturgical praxis. Words do matter. Ecclesial authority in regulating the liturgy matters. In addition to the "We baptize" formula, the document also condemned similar invalid formulae including "In the name of the father and of the mother, of the godfather and of the godmother, of the grandparents, of the family members, of the friends, in the name of the community we baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." The formula using 'in the name of the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Sanctifier' had earlier been condemned as invalid by church authorities.

So, what's the big deal about 'We baptize' instead of 'I baptize'? The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith addressed the apparent concern about making a mountain out of a mole hill. This has to do with the theology and meaning behind the prayers and sacramental formulae which goes beyond the lack of authority to make changes in the liturgy as condemned by Vatican Council II in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. The deacon or priest who baptizes does so not as an agent or representative of the faith community but by virtue of sacred ordination which makes the cleric an alter Christus. The Doctrinal Note says, "The Second Vatican Council states that: 'when a man baptizes it is really Christ Himself who baptizes.' The affirmation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, inspired by a text of Saint Augustine, wants to return the sacramental celebration to the presence of Christ, not only in the sense that he infused his virtue to give it efficacy, but above all to indicate that the Lord has the principal role in the event being celebrated."

"The minister is therefore the sign-presence of Him who gathers, and is at the same time the locus of the communion of every liturgical assembly with the whole Church. In other words (sic)

the minister is the visible sign that the Sacrament is not subject to an arbitrary action of individuals or of the community, and that it pertains to the Universal Church."

"Therefore, in the specific case of the Sacrament of Baptism, not only does the minister not have the authority to modify the sacramental formula to his own liking, for the reasons of a Christological and ecclesiological nature already articulated, but neither can he even declare that he is acting on behalf of the parents, godparents, relatives or friends, nor in the name of the assembly gathered for the celebration, because he acts insofar as he is the sign-presence of the same Christ that is enacted in the ritual gesture of the Church. When the minister says 'I baptize you' he does not speak as a functionary who carries out a role entrusted to him, but he enacts *ministerially* the sign-presence of Christ, who acts in his Body to give his grace and to make the concrete liturgical assembly a manifestation of 'the real nature of the true Church' insofar as 'liturgical services are not private functions, but are celebrations of the Church, which is the "sacrament of unity," namely the holy people united and ordered under their bishops."

In addition to the theological explication above (as approved by Pope Francis), the Second Vatican Council in its Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, stated in no. 22.1: "Regulation of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church, that is, on the Apostolic See, and, as laws may determine, on the bishop." and 22.3: "Therefore no other person, not even a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority." These statements were later incorporated into the 1983 revision of the Code of Canon Law in canons 838.1 and 846.1 and further referenced in numerous liturgical documents including *de Ecclesiae Mysteriorum* (St. John Paul II; August 13, 1997) and *Redemptionis Sacramentum* (St. John Paul II; March 19, 2004) among others. Deacons should also be mindful of No. 35 in *Redemptionis Sacramentum*: "Let all deacons, then do their part so that the Sacred Liturgy will be celebrated according to the norms of the duly approved liturgical books."

In conclusion, this article has explored only two known individuals who have altered the approved baptismal formula. It can be assumed that perhaps the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith heard of other clerics doing the same thing in other parts of the world. With the proliferation of video cameras and cellphones, we may later learn that clerics permitted a wedding couple to create their own wedding vows rather than using the church's approved vows. At least two canonists have told me that such videos may provide grounds for invalidity of such marriages. My advice after 36 years of ordained ministry is to refuse these requests as being banned by *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and Canons 838 and 846. Why roll the dice on invalidity for any sacrament?

Prayer Requests

Deacon Leon Zalewski `83
and wife Joan

Deacon Richard Hiller `75

Jeri Petro, wife of Dcn. Greg `12

Deacon Dave Pollak `96

Deacon Dan Zozakiewicz `94

Deacon Dick Govek `92
and wife Dorothy

Deacon Don Lydolph `81
and wife Jane

Deacon Sy Regan `75

Deacon Steve Hayes `04
and wife Karen

Deacon Troy Major `02

Deacon Tom Hanley `77

Deacon Jim Starke `16

RECENTLY DECEASED AND THEIR FAMILIES

Elise Weber, mother of Gloria Hansen (Dcn. Keith `09), July 24, 2020

Barbara Aschenbrener, widow of Dcn. James `81, August 29, 2020

Renee Wendt, widow of Dcn. Bernie `94, September 27, 2020

Olivia, niece of Dcn. Peter (Julie) Rebholz `20, October 3, 2020

DIGNITY BURIALS

Terry Scott, July 16, 2020



DATES TO REMEMBER

October 18, 2020 - CANCELED

Memorial Mass

November 6 - 8, 2020 - CANCELLED

Deacon Retreat

May 1, 2021

Deacon Day

St. Monica, Whitefish Bay

Dr. Tom Thibodeau, "Servant Leadership"

September 11, 2021

Ordination

Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist at 10 a.m.



**ARCHDIOCESE
of MILWAUKEE**

Published by Deacon Services and Diaconate Formation

P.O. Box 070912 | 3501 South Lake Drive Milwaukee, WI 53207-0912

Deacon Michael J. Chmielewski, Director Deacon Services, (414) 769-3409

Deacon Dale Nees, Director Diaconate Formation, (414) 758-2212

Manuel Maldonado-Villalobos, Associate Director, (414) 758-2207

Many Hands. One Vision.



Catholic Stewardship Appeal

Archdiocese of Milwaukee

*This ministry is funded by the
Catholic Stewardship Appeal.*