

# THE *Deacon Servant*

OFFICES OF DEACON SERVICES | DIACONATE FORMATION | ARCHDIOCESE of MILWAUKEE



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## DIRECTOR'S REPORT



*Deacon Mike Chmielewski*

Do you know what a “nonagenarian” is? It is someone in their 90s. Now the big question, “How many nonagenarian deacons do we have in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee? After a not too exhaustive search,

I count five current nonagenarians, with three more to become so by the end of 2021. No slight to the wives intended, but I am not revealing any of their ages. I was told long ago that doing so was not a wise idea.

So what is the point? The point is first and most importantly, “Thank You!” Thank you for your many years of diaconal service. Thank you for your example of “Christ Servant.” Thank you for your commitment to God’s Church and His people.

It is regularly emphasized in diaconate formation that a deacon is not “what you do” but “who you are.” These eight men are very clearly deacons and wonderful reflections of “Christ Servant” to the world. They are deacons who continue to live out diaconal responsibilities as best as their body allows.

One of the eight is still covenanted to his parish (with plans to retire in June), although most of his ministry takes place outside the parish, including weekly visits

to the neighborhood hospice. One just cannot bring himself to write that official retirement letter but he remains a constant presence in his parish. Another is at the altar and leading prayer on occasion and never misses a deacon funeral. Another continues to visit the homebound and helps prepare meals for SVDP. One serves as an acolyte at his senior living center services. Another is a regular (pre-COVID) chaplain assistant at the VA.

Often, serving at the altar becomes the first ministry a deacon needs to surrender. The physical challenges of processions, maneuvering steps, carrying books and other items, and just keeping in step with the presider is a great challenge for the body. Ministry that can be done in individual time and space is more easily accomplished.

One ministry that is rarely impeded by age is the deacon’s call to prayer. Praying for our Church, our world, and all those in need is often a ministry that ends only with the final journey home.

For all our nonagenarians, thank you! Thank you for all you have done and continue to do for God’s people.

Dcns. Bill Banach `83, Edward Blaze `75, Don Borkowski `81, Gregorio Lebron `90, Chester Moczydlowski `78, Sy Regan `75, Eugene Schopper `83, and Ray Waitrovich `98.

*Deacon Michael Chmielewski `09*



## PROMOTING VOCATIONS TO THE DIACONATE



*Deacon Dale Nees*

You see a man participating in faith formation events in your parish. In conversation, he expresses a love for the Church and a desire to serve. It dawns on you that he might have a diaconal vocation...what do you do?

Personal invitation proves to carry considerable weight in a man's discernment toward a vocation as a deacon.

### TOP THINGS TO PROMOTE DEACON VOCATIONS *(Adapted from the steps to promote vocations from the USCCB)*

1. **Pray** for an increase in deacon vocations. Jesus says in Matthew "to beg the master of the harvest to send laborers into the vineyard." If we want more deacons, we all need to ask.

2. **Invite** men between 31 and 56 years to consider a vocation to the diaconate. A simple, sincere comment should not be underestimated. I ran across an easy technique you can remember as a non-intrusive approach to encourage openness to a vocation using four letters: ICNU. "(Name), I see in you (ICNU) some qualities that may make a good deacon, and I want to encourage you to pray about it."

3. **Make it attractive.** Show the diaconate for what it truly is – a call to be a joyful servant to the whole family of faith and the world through the ministries of Word, Sacrament, and Charity. Deacons need to give witness to the joy of their vocations.

4. **Preach it, brother!** We must talk about deacon vocations regularly if a "vocation culture" is to take root in parishes and homes. This means that people need to hear about deacon vocations through homilies, prayers of the faithful, and discussions in the classrooms. "Vocations kept out of sight are out of mind."

### FOUR STEPS PARISHES CAN TAKE TO INVITE DEACON VOCATIONS

*Whom would you invite?* Here are four easy steps on

how to surface names for a personal invitation.

#### 1. Consult

Meet with the pastor, parish staff, and the coordinators of ministries in the parish and ask them for names of people they believe would make good deacons.

#### 2. Meet

Meet as (or create) a vocations committee/group to help promote vocations and add more names to the list or refine the list you have compiled. It would be ideal to have the pastor attend this meeting too since he probably knows the men and their families better than most.

#### 1. Pray about it

Prayer must always be our primary tool in vocation work. Before finalizing the names of who you plan to invite, spend an hour in prayer as a group, perhaps before the Blessed Sacrament, and ask the Lord's help and guidance in this important work you are about to undertake.

#### 4. Personally Invite

Have a member of your committee/group speak personally to and invite the person saying something like: "I am contacting you on behalf of our committee. We feel you may make a good deacon." You may also want to ask the pastor to do the inviting on the parish's behalf. An invitation from the pastor can be very effective.

Pope Francis says, "Vocations are born in prayer and from prayer, and only through prayer can they persevere and bear fruit." Therefore, we ask you to pray daily for an increase in vocations to the diaconate.

Please do not hesitate to call the Office of Diaconate Formation at (414) 758-2202 or e-mail us at [diaconateformation@archmil.org](mailto:diaconateformation@archmil.org) if you need any assistance in promoting diaconal vocations. The time between now and Thanksgiving is a very important window for men to discern whether to apply for admission into the Aspirant Class of 2022. The application starts in January 2022.

*Deacon Dale Nees '09*

## VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT AND THE PERMANENT DIACONATE



*Manuel  
Maldonado-  
Villalobos*

In the January 2021 Deacon Servant, I spoke about a common phrase that talks about our faith and trust in God within the formation process. “Trust the process” has been a “motto” for many, for others it has been challenging, but in a good way. This trust helps the process of reflecting and analyzing what comes next. This process is called “discernment”.

Discerning can be interpreted in different ways and used in every moment of our life. It is evaluating life situations. Knowing how to distinguish morally what is correct from what is incorrect. It is to analyze my talents and abilities in a job search. And so we could go on mentioning the goals of discernment in human life. When we speak of discernment on the Christian plane, the word takes on a much greater meaning and purpose.

As St. Paul mentioned in the First letter to the Corinthians in 12:4-7 “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”

Discernment is seeking God’s will in our lives. It is seeking a practical path of human freedom, within the history of salvation and our place in this plan. It is discovering that our decisions and calling go according to God’s plan and human history. Seeking the will of God in the Christian life, in our life, is the end point of discernment. This discernment is a gift, and it is a grace that must always be asked for. It is a constant process of searching and listening. It is knowing how to distinguish what comes from God from what is merely personal.

In discerning, we have to discover what it is that God desires over what we want. In this way we are discovering the path that God is tracing and in this way we are learning to free ourselves from all that can be personal desires in order to discover our true calling; our vocation. It is the call to choose freely in our history. “The history . . . of every Christian vocation, is the history of an inexpressible dialogue between God and human beings, between the love of God who calls and the freedom of individuals who respond lovingly to him.” (NDFLMPD #165)

Hence, the objective of discernment in Diaconate

Formation is to help men who feel a call or a desire to serve the Church as a permanent deacon. We must always discern, because every situation is an opportunity to discover God’s will and where He calls us to serve.

It is important to reflect according to the wisdom of God, which is born from intimate contact with his Word, and not from the options of men. We must be ready for a complete renewal of our persons, by the action of the Holy Spirit who moves hearts to the knowledge of the truth. And the ultimate goal is to live the fundamental principle of brotherly love: “Love one another as I have loved you” (Jn. 13, 34)

To help discover God’s will in the lives of these men, we must understand that God uses various means for authentic discernment. In discovering the vocation to the permanent diaconate, the National Directory tells us that this discernment is not only personal. This discernment is also by the family and community. Although the directory exposes these three sources of discernment in chapter four, they are applicable throughout the process and life of these men.

Personal: “The first stirrings of a vocation to the diaconate are often explored at a personal level ... Here, an individual initially reflects upon the nature of his perceived call.” (NDFLMPD #169) The man reflects at a personal level if his feelings and desires are in line with the will of God, which is calling him to be of service to others. The individual looks at his life, skills, strengths and weaknesses to discover what God wants from him.

Family: “As the majority of those who inquire about the diaconate are married, they should be directed to pay particular attention to discussing their possible vocation with their wives and families... For a married man, the support and consent of his wife is required ... Many regions and cultures also place emphasis on the participation of the extended family. This, too, is an important resource for discernment.” (NDFLMPD #170) In addition to the personal discernment, it is important for the man to listen to his wife (if married) and the entire family. It is important to discover if this call is just personal or if it is a call understood by the family. The family is the first call and the first ministry of the man seeking the diaconate. If this ministry is abandoned or neglected, the vocation is self-centered and it is not God’s will.

► See **VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT** (continued on page 4)

## THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY IN DEACON FORMATION CELEBRATING THE YEAR OF ST. JOSEPH



*Maritza Espino*

We are delighted to announce that now in our Formation Program, immediate family members of our Aspirants and Candidates are welcome to join us on Saturdays at 10:30 a.m. Liturgy when they have all-day formation. Mom and their kids, teenagers, young adults, and adults can join their father for Mass. This is a great opportunity for the Aspirants and

Candidates to come together as a family, and at the same time support their father in his ongoing discernment to become a Deacon. *The National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (n.135) strongly encourage that “A family life perspective is rooted in the challenge of Pope John Paul II as stated in *Familiaris Consortio*: “No plan for organized pastoral work at any level must ever fail to take into consideration the pastoral area of the family.” Refocusing one’s thinking from an individual-centered approach now represents an important component in organizing diaconal formation, ministry, and life.”

In light of Pope Francis proclaiming this year as the Year of St. Joseph, I would like to take the opportunity to echo the importance of the role of the father figure in the family. Often, we focus more on the mother’s role, love, and care

for the family. Now, I would like us to focus on the role of the father. Pope Francis invite us in his Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde* to reflect upon St. Joseph as the father. A father that is described as; a beloved father, a tender and loving father, an obedient father, an accepting father, a creatively courageous father, a working father, and last but not least a father in the shadows. St. Joseph had been proclaimed as the Patron of the Universal Church, he is our role model. As a Deacon, Candidate, or Aspirant allow yourself to ponder about St. Joseph’s fatherhood—do you identify with any of the descriptions mentioned above? The answer will be different for each one of you depending on where you are in your parenting journey (i.e. father of infant children, teenagers, young adults, or empty nesters, etc.). I invite you to read and reflect on Pope Francis Apostolic Letter *Patris Corde*. He offers a beautiful reflection on St. Joseph and his vocation, role as a father, and head of a household. His name and presence often go unnoticed, however, his presence and accompaniment to Mary and Jesus were essential. Let us not forget to be physically and spiritually present to our families even amid our busy work schedules, external noises, social media distractions, and also, liturgical responsibilities.

*Maritza Espino*

### ► VOCATIONAL DISCERNMENT (continued from page 3)

Communal: “An inquiry and eventual application for entrance into diaconal formation is not just a personal and family journey. The Church must accompany it. The parish is the primary experience of Church for most inquirers. It is the responsibility of this community and, in particular, its pastor...” (NDFLMPD #171) The community and the Church play an important part in the process of discovering God’s call to service for each man seeking the diaconate. The service, involvement and faithfulness from the man to the Church community is take into consideration in the formation process. Also his docility and fidelity to Church doctrine and teachings.

True discernment to discover and carry out God’s will in our lives requires openness and some practical behaviors. It is important to have a desire for change where you must express the will to grow and open yourself to the perspectives that the training process presents. He who has

nothing to change cannot live a specific vocation.

Commitment to concrete actions is important for discernment. It is necessary that those who discern a vocation acquire very specific and practical commitments in the service of the family and the community. If discernment does not lead us to respond to the call to be the image of Christ the Servant, then the call may simply be personal and not truly divine. We must constantly ask God to help us discover our true calling and our calling to serve.

*Manuel Maldonado-Villalobos*

NATIONAL DIRECTORY FOR THE FORMATION, MINISTRY, AND LIFE OF PERMANENT DEACONS IN THE UNITED STATES, <https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/vocations/diaconate/upload/DeaconDirectory.pdf>

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## NEW DEACON COUPLES

**Deacon Todd Benzschawel and his wife, Carla**, moved into the Archdiocese of Milwaukee in July 2020, to be closer to his mother who lives in Pleasant Prairie (Kenosha Co.). It is a “homecoming” of sorts for Dcn. Todd. He was born in Milwaukee, graduated from Manitowoc Roncalli High in 1983, earned his B.A. in Business from UW Oshkosh in 1987, and his Master’s in Business from UW Whitewater in 2003.

Todd and Carla have been married for 33 years and have two adult children, Eric and Andrea. Todd’s work history has been centered in finance work for multiple large organizations, most located in the Chicago area. He has worked for Abbott Labs, Abbvie Inc., Cardinal Health, and currently, Imagine Chicago. Todd was ordained



a Deacon for the Archdiocese of Chicago on May 19, 2003, and served at St. Peter Parish, Wadsworth, IL.

As Todd and Carla discerned a move closer to his mother, they made a connection with St. Anne Parish in Pleasant Prairie. Todd and Carla were warmly welcomed by Fr. Bob Weighner, the Pastor, and Dcn. Rich Stanula`14. Deacon Todd and Carla were officially welcomed into the Archdiocese of Milwaukee by Archbishop ListECKI on August 31, 2020, and assigned to St. Anne Parish. In addition to service at the altar, Todd and Carla have been teaching religious education classes at St. Anne’s.

Although Todd and Carla still reside in Illinois, they have plans to relocate their residence into the Kenosha area. Welcome, Dcn. Todd and Carla!

**Deacon William Kintis and his wife, Sue Ann**, moved from New Jersey to Kenosha to be closer to his mother who lives in Kenosha. Dcn. Bill is also coming “home.” He was born in Milwaukee, grew up in Kenosha, graduating from Bradford High in 1976. He left Wisconsin to attend college in Arizona, earning his BS from Arizona State in 1982.

Bill and Sue Ann were married in 1986 in Arizona and have one adult daughter. Professionally, Bill spent 20 years employed by Wyndom Hotels as a Senior Report Developer in New Jersey. He currently is employed at Walmart in Kenosha. Dcn. Bill was ordained a Deacon on June 9, 2007, for the Diocese of Metuchin, New Jersey. He served at St. Patrick Parish in Belvedere, NJ. In addition to liturgical service, Dcn. Bill was involved in preparing youth for Reconciliation



and First Communion, active in ecumenical activities, and helped prepare and serve meals to the needy.

When Dcn. Bill would come to Kenosha to visit his mother, he would pray with her at her parish, Our Lady of Mount Carmel. He entered into a friendship with the Pastor there and eventually was invited to assist at the altar when in Kenosha on visits. When he and Sue Ann decided on a

permanent move to Kenosha, it was a natural fit for them to connect with Fr. Dwight Campbell, Pastor at OLMC.

Dcn. Bill and Sue Ann were officially welcomed into the Archdiocese of Milwaukee by Archbishop ListECKI on February 8, 2021, with an assignment to Our Lady of Mount Carmel. Welcome, Dcn. Bill and Sue Ann!

*Deacon Mike Chmielewski*

## REST IN PEACE

**Deacon Michael A. Bowen** died on January 19, 2021. Deacon Mike was born in Fort Monroe, Virginia on July 16, 1951. His military family eventually moved to Kansas City, Missouri where he spent most of his youth. He was Jesuit educated graduating from Rockhurst High in 1969 and Rockhurst College in 1973. He then entered Law School at Harvard University earning his degree in 1976. He began his law career in 1976 at Foley & Lardner in Milwaukee where he practiced his profession until he retired from the partnership in 2015.

Mike married the love of his life, Sara Armbruster, on August 30, 1975, at St. Augustine Parish in Newburg, WI. Mike and Sara have five children: Rebecca (Eric) Sigmon, Christopher (Amanda Morris), John, Marguerite (Bruno) Morlan, and James. He also leaves behind five grandchildren: Jade, Hailey, Anna, Laura, and Stephen.

Mike began his diaconate formation in 2008 at the St. Joseph Center. He was ordained a Permanent Deacon on September 8, 2012, at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist by Archbishop Jerome E. Listecky. Mike was assigned to his home parish, St. Monica, Whitefish Bay, where he served until his death. Mike was very involved in all the usual Liturgical services and made an extra effort to minister to and care for the sick, homebound, and hospitalized of the parish. Mike had a tremendous gift of being a very passionate preacher. Mike also had a deep commitment to serving the diaconate community. He was a District representation, a formator in

the Formation program, and was currently serving as the Deacon Senate President.

The story of Mike's life has much more than can be said here. He was a devoted family man, an ardent lawyer, an accomplished author, a dedicated "Christ Servant" exemplified by his commitment to being disciple and Deacon of Jesus Christ, and a passionate preacher who challenged the listener.

Mass of Christian Burial was held on Monday, January 25, 2021, at 11 a.m. at St. Monica Parish in Whitefish Bay. Fr. Paul Hartman, pastor at St. Monica, was the presider, Fr. Jordan Berghouse, Associate Pastor, was the homilist. Fr. Jerry Herda, Vicar of Clergy and former St. Monica Pastor, concelebrated. They were assisted at the altar Dcns. Scott Wiese and Dale Paczkowski, both classmates of Mike. Archbishop Listecky offered the Final Commendation.

Per Dcn. Mike's final written request, the funeral prayer was to be private, by invitation only. Dcn. Mike did not want a gathering for him to be a coronavirus spreader event. Dcn. Mike's nine classmates and most spouses were in attendance as well as the Deacon Senate of which he was the current President. The family has requested any memorial donations in Dcn. Mike's name be sent to St. Monica Parish, Women's Care Center, or Franciscan Peacemakers.

May our brother Rest in Peace!

## DEACON PERSONNEL BOARD

The Deacon Personnel Board met via Zoom on February 1, 2021. In attendance: Dcns. Gulig (Chair), Campbell, Schneider, Chmielewski, and Fr. Herda. Excused from the meeting were Dcns. Nosacek and Stanula.

The meeting began with prayer and a review/approval of the minutes from the March 2020 meeting. The discussion then followed on deacon specific issues including:

- Multiple expired covenants, many due to the challenge of covid restrictions.
- Some deacons opting for verbal covenant extensions during covid
- Introduction of two new deacons who have moved into the Kenosha area: Dcn. Todd Benzschawel, ordained in Chicago and now assigned to St. Anne, Pleasant Prairie, and Dcn. William Kintis, ordained in Metuchen, NJ, is now assigned to Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Kenosha.

- Review of the transfer process of Dcn. Matthias from St. Dominic to St. Sebastian.

The Personnel Board will continue to be proactive in diaconal assignments when a parish has multiple deacons and other parishes have none. To that end, Fr. Herda has asked the Director to get the parish membership of the 34 men currently in formation. This information will help the Board vision future assignments. Note that newly ordained deacons will continue to be assigned to their "home" parish for their first assignment.

The Board then reviewed upcoming events, Deacon Day, Memorial Mass, Post Ordination sessions, and our Ordination for the Class of 2021 (Manuel Maldonado). Board Chair Dcn. Gulig encouraged members to be aware of any of our brothers who may be stressed by covid isolation. He closed the meeting with prayer and plans to tentatively meet again in June.

*Deacon Mike Chmielewski*

## DEACON SENATE

The Deacon Senate met on January 20, 2021, via zoom. Deacons present: Starke, Wiese, Jansen, Nees, Schneider, Gundlach, Paczkowski, Matthias, and Chmielewski. Excused: Campbell.

Dcn. Nees opened the meeting with prayer. The prayer and the entire meeting were held in the shadow and sadness of the death of Senate President Dcn. Mike Bowen the previous day. Minutes from the November meeting were approved. Dcn. Campbell, excused to address a family matter, had earlier offered a written financial report. In the report, he indicated a recent deposit of \$3960 which reflected the annual Deacon dues payment (this year at \$40 per fully covenanted Deacon). The account balance is over \$6000.

Dcn. Nees provided a written report on Formation but took some time to highlight a few issues for the Senate. First, there is a new formation team member. Maritza Espino began her role as Associate Director of Pastoral Formation in January and is a very welcome member of the team. Second, the National Directory is making some recommendations to improve formation including lengthening Aspirancy. The team is awaiting final publication to review their options. Lastly, the team is planning to put out a new formation poster in September when the year 1 Candidates begin.

District reports indicated that all the districts but one met via zoom in December (the exception 14/15/16). Participation in the meetings has been positive and most seem to appreciate the opportunity to connect with their brothers.

The group then entered into an extended discussion about Deacon Day 2021 now tentatively scheduled for May 1, 2021. The consensus is that the gathering should be workable if only for the presentation by Dr. Thibodeau and Mass. There will be need to discuss the possibilities of safely gathering for lunch. Another issue may be the planned venue of St. Monica Parish as Dcn. Bowen was our liaison with the parish. The District will enter into a more detailed discussion in their February meeting and then report back to the Senate at our March meeting.

Other discussion included:

Approving a \$150 memorial donation to the Franciscan community in the name of Fr. Steve Malkiewicz who was a long-time faculty member in Formation and who died in early January.

District 4/5/12 confirmed the plan for Memorial Mass 2021, now scheduled for October 24, 2021, to be held at either Good Shepherd or St. James Parish, both in Menomonee Falls.

On the agenda for March will be a discussion about replacing Dcn. Bowen in the Senate President rotation.

The meeting closed with prayer including a special remembrance of Michael Bowen. The next Senate meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2021, via zoom.

The Deacon Senate met on March 17, 2021 via Zoom. Dcns. present: Wiese, Starke, Campbell, Petrie, Paczkowski, Gundlach, Matthias, Schneider, Jansen, Nees, Chmielewski.

Dcn. Wiese opened the meeting with the Prayer of St. Patrick. Minutes from the January meeting were approved. Dcn. Campbell offered a financial report which indicated our account balance of \$6790.54 and a general indication that we are in good financial shape.

Dcn. Nees offered some additional information to his previously submitted Formation Report. 34 men are currently in formation with 17 Aspirants and 17 Candidates (one for ordination in September 2021). Classes continue to meet online on Tuesdays and in-person on Saturdays. The team is hoping to resume in-person classes on Tuesdays in the next trimester (May). The team is also preparing for the new Aspirant class that will start in September of 2022. Nees is encouraging all deacons to personally invite men to discern the call. Inquiry sessions are set to begin any time a group can be gathered. Formal applications will begin in January of 2022.

Districts have been meeting via zoom. District 6/10/13 began their report about Deacon Day 2021. The gathering had been tentatively scheduled for May 1, 2021. The district held a lengthy discussion and is recommending postponing Deacon Day until the Fall because of continuing pandemic issues. The district offered some suggested dates and even proposed combining Deacon Day with Memorial Mass. After reviewing various calendars, and with the gift of instant messaging, the Senate settled on a new date for Deacon Day 2021...September 25th. The presenter, Dr. Tom Thibodeau, is available and now committed to September 25th. The location of the gathering will be determined by the District, which has multiple options.

We then moved into a discussion about replacing Dcn. Mike Bowen in the President rotation. Dcn. Dennis Petrie` 12 presented himself as a willing candidate to fill the empty position. After a brief discussion, the Senate officially welcomed Dennis into the President rotation. Dcn. Scott Wiese will resume the role of President until June 30, 2021. Dcn. Jim Starke will move from Elect to President on July 1, 2021, with Dcn. Dennis Petrie taking over as President-Elect (and recording secretary). The President terms will end June 30, 2023, for Scott, 2025 for Jim, and 2027 for Dennis.

We then entered into some general discussions about various topics including:

Deacon Retreat scheduled for November 4-7 with Dcn. Steve Kramer directing. Dcn. Petrie is asking for

## KNOW OUR DEACON



*Deacon Gerry Ponec*

**Deacon Gerry Ponec** is a lifelong resident of Cudahy and has been a devoted minister to the Catholic faithful there for more than 40 years. Ordained in 1981 and assigned to Holy Family Parish in Cudahy, Dcn. Gerry has served the Cudahy Catholics through the merger of 3 parishes (St. Joseph, Holy Family, St. Frederick) into what is now Nativity of the Lord Parish.

His ministry passion has been caring for and serving the homebound, hospitalized, and many of the local nursing homes. He is also active in St. Vincent De Paul ministry. Dcn. Gerry tells stories, with great respect, of the honor he had to be a “driver” for Archbishop Weakland. Dcn. Gerry is also a very active member of the Cudahy civic community with a lengthy list of significant relationships in the community.

Dcn. Gerry and his wife Lynn have been married for over 47 years and together they continue to serve their parish, the deacon community, and the larger community. Dcn. Gerry was employed by the Louis Allis Corp. as an accountant and in other capacities from 1958 until his retirement in 1994.

Dcn. Gerry’s days of active ministry are slowing down especially after a fall and broken hip that occurred in 2016. He gets around these days with a walker and his “driver” Lynn. Dcn. Gerry continues to reflect the spirit of diaconal service in any way he is able. He regularly sends cards and notes to his brother deacons and always keeps them in his daily prayer.

Thank you, Deacon Gerry (and Lynn) for all you have done, and still do, for God’s people.

*Deacon Mike Chmielewski*

### ► DEACON SENATE (continued from page 7)

suggestions on topics that Dcn. Kramer may address at the retreat.

The Women’s programs for 2021 have been canceled due to the pandemic. Also Jane Kornburger, wife of Dcn. Ralph ‘79 announced her retirement from planning the women’s events. Jane has been the driving force for these events for a very long time and we are most appreciative of her service. This will remain an agenda item for the Senate.

The new Coordinator of the Clergy Formation Office at the Archdiocese is Dcn. Kurt Peot ‘20. Kurt replaces Dcn. Al Lazaga ‘92 who retired in June of 2020.

Dcn. Wiese closed the meeting with the Blessing of St. Patrick. The next Senate meeting is scheduled for May 19, 2021, via Zoom.

*Dcn. Mike Chmielewski*

## WOMEN OF THE DIACONATE

In 1979, my husband, Ralph, was ordained a Deacon. That was a long time ago. At that time, many wives did not attend classes with their husbands as we had small children at home. The women of the Diaconate were blessed with three successive women who worked in the Diaconate Formation office and planned retreats and mornings of reflection for the wives. I was grateful for these experiences that aided my spiritual growth. It enabled the wives to get together and share their unique situations and bond. As time went on, other women stepped up to assist in planning events. I enjoyed doing this, meeting the wives and all the wonderful directors we had over the years. Times and circumstances have changed and I will get out of the “driver’s seat” and let the future unfold in God’s hands. I look forward to seeing all of you at deacon events when it is safe to do so.

PEACE and BLESSINGS,  
*Jane Kornburger*

Director’s Note:

First, I want to thank Jane and all those who assisted her over the years in planning and implementing the programs for the women, especially the annual Days of Reflection and the Women’s Retreat.

Next, we need to move forward and plan for how we can keep programming for the Women of the Diaconate alive. This issue will be part of a discussion I will have with Diaconate Formation and the Deacon Senate. Jane mentioned in her note that the women were blessed by the guidance and encouragement of the Formation Office as well as the volunteer efforts of many wives. With Jane no longer in the “driver’s seat” there is a need to have some of our women step up to the “driver’s seat.” I would specifically encourage the women of ordinations post-2007 to discern and ponder leadership but also ask the question, “How can meet the needs of the women of the Diaconate?”

The issue is on the table! Your input and suggestions are most welcome!

*Dcn. Mike Chmielewski*



## Prayer Requests

Deacon Richard Hiller `75  
Jeri Petro, wife of Dcn. Greg `12

Deacon Dick Govek `92

Deacon Sy Regan `75

Deacon Steve Hayes `04  
and wife Karen

Deacon Ron Lesjak `79

Sue Kaczmarek, widow  
of Dcn. Ray `90

Joan Zalewski, widow of  
Dcn. Leon `83

Deacon Terry Maack `88

Kathy Marx, wife of Dcn. Keith `07

Sara Bowen, widow of Dcn.  
Mike `12

Deacon Dave Pollak `96

Ruth Ference, widow of Dcn.  
Dennis `90

Deacon Dave Zimprich `84 and wife  
Dody

Deacon Don Lydolph `81 and wife  
Jane

### RECENTLY DECEASED AND THEIR FAMILIES

Dcn. Michael A. Bowen `12,  
January 19, 2021



## DATES TO REMEMBER

### May 22, 2021

Post-Ordination Formation Session 3 for  
Class of 2018  
MMCP C

### June 12, 2021

Post-Ordination Formation Session 1 for  
Class of 2020  
MMCP C

### September 11, 2021

Ordination for Class of 2021  
10 a.m. at the Cathedral

### September 25, 2021

Deacon Day with Dr. Tom Thibodeau on  
Servant Leadership  
St. Joseph Parish, Grafton

### October 24, 2021

Memorial Mass with Fr. Jerry Herda  
Good Shepherd or St. James, Menomonee  
Falls

### November 4-7, 2021

Deacon Retreat with Dcn. Steve Kramer  
Redemptorist Retreat Center



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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

Maritza Espino, Associate Director of Pastoral Formation, (414) 758-2205

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