

## **DEACONS IN TRANSITION PROGRAM**

(April, 2004; rev. May, 2005; rev. May, 2006)

The “Deacon in Transition” program is an integrative program sponsored by Kenrick School of Theology in cooperation with the deacon’s sponsoring diocese. Participation in the program is required of all transitional deacons enrolled in the Ordination Program at Kenrick School of Theology/Kenrick-Glennon Seminary. The deacon serves, either in his home diocese or in the St. Louis area, under a pastor designated by the ordinary. The deacon also participates in the formation programs of the seminary and carries a course load commensurate with his academic and ministerial responsibilities.

Expectations of the program are set forth below. Modifications to the program for individual deacons should not be made without the approval of the Dean of Students who consults with the Director of Pastoral Formation, Formation Advisor for the Deacon class, and when necessary, the Academic Dean and the Rector .

### 1. Residency:

- During the summer the deacon lives in the parish full time, from June 1 (or date of assignment) to mid-August (vacation time is to be coordinated with the pastor).
- During the academic year the deacon lives at the seminary except for weekends at the assigned parish (weekends include all day Saturday and Sunday). Deacons may leave the seminary on Fridays after class or other required activities and should return on Sunday evening. Deacons must contact the Formation Advisor, the Dean of Students, or the Associate Dean of Students if, on occasion, additional time away from the seminary is required. Deacons are not excused from Monday morning prayer or Mass.

### 2. Academic:

Each deacon is responsible for:

- successful completion of all M. Div/MA requirements as determined by Academic Dean (must maintain full time status); and
- completion of sacramental preparation for Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick (Practicum).

### 3. Formational:

- During the summer, the deacon is expected to fulfill the requirements of the formation program including daily Mass, daily Liturgy of the Hours, frequent confession, meeting with approved spiritual director at least monthly, on-going growth in priestly virtues, participating in the communal life of the parish as a man of communion and maintaining a presence in the rectory with availability for service as determined by the pastor.
- During the academic year the deacon is to participate fully in the regular seminary program including daily Mass, daily communal morning and evening prayer, spiritual direction at least monthly, attendance at formation conferences and days of recollection, participation in deacon formation sessions, and presence to communal life at the seminary including meals.
- The deacon is required to participate in the seminary retreat in early January (canonical retreat for Priesthood).
- Each deacon will be evaluated early in the second semester of his deacon year in order that the seminary's recommendation regarding ordination to the priesthood can be completed. The Pastor's written evaluation and recommendations are important elements of this process.

### 4. Liturgical:

- During the summer the deacon participates at daily Mass and participates in the parish's devotional life, with frequent opportunities for preaching as coordinated with the pastor. He should be available, as well, for the exercise of liturgical leadership appropriate to the deacon such as baptisms, assisting at funerals and marriages.
- At the seminary during the academic year the deacon exercises leadership roles as assigned at the Liturgy of the Hours and at Mass. He is assigned to preach for the seminary community, for both the theologate and the college.
- At the parish during the academic year the deacon is to be present at weekend celebrations of the Eucharist with regular opportunities to preach, and help with other sacraments, all determined in cooperation with pastor. The ordinary expectation is that the deacon would have the opportunity to preach at least once a week if at all possible. Normally, the deacon is expected to be in the parish on the weekend and should not be excused from his weekend assignment.-

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- It is understood that there will be a few weekends during the year in which the deacon

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will not be at the parish due to vacations and required events in his (arch)diocese. Other absences for personal reasons are determined by mutual agreement of the pastor and deacon.

5. Institutional Assessment Responsibilities of the Deacon:

- A video tape of one homily before an actual parish congregation submitted by March 1<sup>st</sup> to the Director of Assessment to assist in the ongoing assessment of the seminary, or other assessment activity a determined by the Director of Assessment;
- Participation in the exit interview near the conclusion of the academic year illustrating two theses - that the Kenrick program has fostered growth in self-understanding and that the Kenrick program has fostered the deacon's attempt to achieve personal consistency

6. Personal Responsibilities of the Deacon coordinated with the Pastor:

- Balance between the demands of parish and seminary, with appropriate times rendered for spiritual, personal, and intellectual development;
- During the summer – appropriate time-off determined in discussion with the pastor
- During the academic year – breaks as planned by mutual agreement between the deacon and pastor giving special consideration to the scheduled academic breaks and the needs of transitional deacons from other dioceses serving in the Archdiocese of St. Louis;
- Development and commitment to Formation Contract (see Student Handbook)

7. Pastor's Role in Supervision:

- Affirmation of deacon's strengths
- Periodic candid discussions of the deacon's need for growth and improvement in given areas, initiated by the pastor and scheduled by mutual agreement in at least September, November, January, and March
- Meeting with deacon prior to arrival in parish to determine a working agreement
- Participation in a meeting at the seminary with the deacon's professors
- Assessment of the deacons efforts at the conclusion of the summer (see Appendix)
- Assessment of the deacon's efforts early in the second semester (see Appendix)
- Financial – to be determined by established diocesan guidelines (For transitional deacons from other dioceses working in parishes of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, this is \$500.00 a month from September to April.)-

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- The monthly salary/stipend shall be paid each month independent of the number of

8. Seminary's Role:

- Provide resources for pastors;
- Periodic conferences with the pastor to discuss the deacon's progress;
- Provide resources to allow deacons to fulfill expected academic and formational demands
- Recommendation of deacon for priesthood depending upon the result of the evaluation in the second semester

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weekends the deacon is in the parish that month. (Any payments for additional duties at times outside September-April are at the discretion of the pastor.)

Deacons in Transition Program

Appendix

Residency:

It is the desire of the seminary administration that the transitional deacons participate as much as possible in the life of the parish during the academic year while maintaining a full and active presence at the seminary during the academic week. Deacons are expected to reside at the seminary from Monday morning prayer until the completion of their classes on Friday. While they may be able to attend parish events during the week, the first priority is the seminary. By “weekend” the seminary’s understanding is all-day Saturday and Sunday, for each weekend that the seminary is in session. While some deacons are assigned to the parish for the entire deacon year (St. Louis, Jefferson City, Belleville, etc.), other transitional deacons are assigned to local parishes on weekends for the academic year. It is the understanding of the seminary that breaks and vacations will be discussed between the pastor and deacon early in the academic year. A schedule will be drawn up not only for the weekends the deacon will be present, but also if and/or when he will be present for more solemn feasts in the liturgical year. A calendar of the seminary’s academic year will be forwarded in August to each pastor to assist in planning. Please keep in mind that some dioceses place certain expectations upon the deacon to be present in the diocese for specific events.

Pastor’s Recommendation:

Twice during the transitional deacon’s year of service the seminary requests a letter from the pastor (from the “summer pastor” on September 1 and the “academic year” pastor on January 31) assessing the deacon’s efforts. An outline for this letter may be found in canon 1029 from the Code of Canon Law. It states,

“After all circumstances have been taken into account in the prudent judgment of the proper bishop or the competent major superior, only those should be promoted to orders who have an integral faith, are motivated by a right intention, possess the required knowledge, and enjoy a good reputation, good morals, and proven virtues, and other physical and psychological qualities which are appropriate to the order to be received.”

The letter written to the seminary should contain some remarks directed to the faith of the deacon especially as it is manifest in his homilies. Some indication should be given that his motivations are well grounded in a desire to participate in Jesus Christ’s own pastoral charity. The letter should contain a general reflection on the deacon’s ability to share faithfully the teachings of the Church and live a life

that clearly manifests his desire to be a man of communion both in the parish community and within the rectory. The letter should contain any areas of concern or recommended areas of growth for the deacon, particularly as he prepares for ordination to the priesthood and future ministry. Finally, the letter should conclude with a recommendation from the pastor concerning the deacon's advancement to priesthood.

April 2004

