

**POLICY HANDBOOK
FOR PERMANENT DEACONS
Diocese of Scranton**



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PREFACE

This *Policy Handbook for Permanent Deacons* is promulgated for the Diocese of Scranton with the intent to set forth for all permanent deacons resident within the diocese policies and procedures governing post-ordination diaconal ministry and life. This *Policy Handbook* reflects universal principles and norms applied to local circumstances and needs.

Based upon the *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* (1998) by the Congregation for the Clergy and the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (2005) of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the provisions of this *Policy Handbook* intend to foster order without establishing undue structure, and to promote clarity and an equitable application of norms for the permanent deacons living and/or ministering in this Diocese.

The policies and procedures in this handbook pertain specifically to the life and ministry of the permanent deacon. They do not intend to hinder, nor should they be interpreted to impede, the Diocesan Ordinary in the exercise of his canonical and pastoral responsibilities.

This *Policy Handbook for Permanent Deacons* is not intended to be, nor does it constitute, a contract of employment or a promise or guarantee of the benefits or policies stated therein. The Diocesan Ordinary remains the final authority as to the proper interpretation and applications of the provisions of this *Policy Handbook*. The Diocesan Ordinary has the right to make appropriate changes to this *Policy Handbook* at any time without prior notice.

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The Life and Ministry of the Permanent Deacon

OUTLINE OF THE PERMANENT DEACON'S CONTINUING OBLIGATIONS

A Permanent Deacon in the Diocese of Scranton is required to:

- provide 12 hours per week of ministry in a parish or diocesan institution without compensation (an average of 50 hours per month, since some weeks may require more time than others);
 - pray daily Morning and Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours;
 - attend daily Mass (except when employment, family obligations, or distance make it a burden);
 - meet monthly with a Spiritual Director;
 - attend an annual weekend retreat;
- and
- attend at least twenty hours of continuing formation experiences each year (not including the annual retreat).

FACULTIES GRANTED TO PERMANENT DEACONS BY THE BISHOP OF SCRANTON

1. **BAPTISM**
 - a. Administer Baptism and preside at the Rite of Bringing a Baptized Child to the Church ("supplying ceremonies").
 - b. Preside or assist with the rites contained in the R.C.I.A.
 - c. Preach according to the norms of the Rite of Baptism.
2. **EUCCHARIST**
 - a. Function as permanent deacon at Mass in accordance with the Roman Missal.
 - b. Distribute Holy Communion at Mass as an ordinary minister.
 - c. Preside at the Rite of Distributing Holy Communion outside Mass.
 - d. Minister Holy Communion and Viaticum to the sick. (Care must be taken that the sick are given every opportunity to see a priest to receive the Sacrament of Penance and the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick if they so desire. In the case of Viaticum, the Pastor, Chaplain or Superior must be notified when this sacrament has been administered. The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick is not the function of a permanent /deacon.)
 - e. Preside at the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, giving the Eucharistic blessing to the faithful.
3. **MINISTRY OF THE WORD**
 - a. Proclaim the Gospel at Mass.
 - b. Preside at the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Hours on appropriate occasions.
 - c. When specifically granted the faculty by the Bishop, preach the homily at Mass with permission of the local Pastor.
4. **CHRISTIAN FUNERALS**
 - a. Preside at vigils (wake services), funeral liturgies and rites of committal (burials) according to the currently approved rituals.
 - b. The Bishop of Scranton (cf. Can. 1183.2), grants permission for a permanent deacon, with at least the presumed consent of the pastor, to provide ecclesiastical funeral rites to un-baptized children if their parents intended to baptize them, but they died before their baptism.
 - c. The permanent deacon must provide the required information for notation in the appropriate death register.
5. **MARRIAGE**
 - a. Administer the oath and complete the pre-marital investigation.
 - b. Initiate the process for the convalidation of marriage, for declarations of nullity and/or dissolution of the bond.
 - c. Only when given clear and explicit delegation on each occasion by the pastor of the parish in which the marriage is to take place, celebrate the rite of the Sacrament of Matrimony, either during or outside of Mass. (In such an instance, the permanent deacon may administer the Nuptial blessing outside the Mass; however, the Nuptial Blessing is always given by the celebrant of the Mass, even if the permanent deacon witnesses the exchange of vows.)
6. **SACRAMENTALS**

Give those blessings designated for permanent deacons in the Book of Blessings, e.g., blessings of the sick, throats, religious articles, homes, holy water, etc.

ASSIGNMENTS AND ANNUAL REVIEW

POLICY

A permanent deacon in the Diocese of Scranton will normally be assigned to diaconal ministry connected with a parish. The permanent deacon will be expected to provide an average of 12 hours per week without financial remuneration in his assignment (or a monthly average of 50 hours).

The assignment could be to his home parish or other convenient parish (within a 10 to 15 mile radius of his home parish) with the possibility of a secondary assignment of service to a local institution. Primary supervision will be provided by the pastor.

Diaconal service is to be divided among the three principal areas of ministry: **Charity, Word and Liturgy**. The ministry of charity should predominate since that remains the distinctive feature of the permanent deacon's identity. Therefore, at least five to seven hours per week should be given to the ministry of charity. The Permanent deacon's specific responsibilities under each area of ministry should be clearly stated upon assignment in his "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities".

Ministry of Charity includes: hospital, nursing home, hospice, street ministry, homeless, elderly, persons with disabilities, youth, widowed/separated/divorced, soup kitchen, prison, advocacy, justice, migrants, development and coordination of lay apostolates of charity, administration, etc.

Ministry of the Word includes: adult education, catechetical instruction, sacramental preparation, outreach to alienated Catholics and the unchurched, parish renewal programs, proclaiming the Gospel, preaching (when granted the proper faculties and with the permission of the pastor), ecumenism, counseling, giving retreats, etc.

Ministry of the Liturgy includes: baptism, assisting at the Eucharist, wake/burial services, Liturgy of the Hours, exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, paraliturgical services, blessing homes, training lectors and acolytes, etc.

If a permanent deacon is expected to do more than twelve hours per week of diaconal ministry on a regular basis in his assignment, he is entitled to financial remuneration. The details of such compensation are to be documented in the "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities" and approved by the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy.

PROCEDURE

Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities. Before a permanent deacon is assigned and granted faculties to function in a given parish or institution, a "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities" (page 7), must be completed by his pastor/supervisor and sent to the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy. The Diocesan Ordinary, if he has not already done so, sends the permanent deacon a letter of appointment along with a copy of the "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities". A copy of this correspondence is also sent to his pastor/supervisor.

Permanent Deacon's Year-End Report. Every January the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will send a single page "Permanent Deacon's Year-End Report" form to each permanent deacon on assignment within the Diocese, inquiring about his annual retreat and fulfillment of continuing formation requirements for the year. The form will also ask about his readiness to remain in his assignment and about whether or not a meeting with his pastor/supervisor is needed. He is to return this completed form to the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy by January 31.

DELINEATION OF DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. *The Permanent Deacon's Responsibility to the Parish:*

(please note: the ministry of charity should predominate, with a minimum of 5 to 7 hours in a 12-hour week).

- a. **Ministry of Charity** (hospital, nursing home, hospice, street ministry, elderly, persons with disabilities, youth, widowed/ separated/divorced, prison, advocacy, justice, migrants, development and coordination of lay apostles, administration, etc.):

Ministry

*Approximate Hours/
Week or Month*

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

- b. **Ministry of the Word** (proclaiming the Gospel, preaching [when granted the proper faculties and with the permission of the pastor], adult education, catechetical instruction, catechumens, sacramental preparation, outreach to alienated Catholics and the unchurched, parish renewal programs, ecumenism, counseling, giving retreats, etc.):

Ministry

*Approximate Hours/
Week or Month*

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)

- c. **Ministry of Liturgy** (baptism, assisting at the Eucharist, wake/burial services, Liturgy of the Hours, exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, conduct prayer services for the sick and dying, train lectors and acolytes, etc.):

<i>Ministry</i>	<i>Approximate Hours/ Week or Month</i>
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- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)
- 5)

It is understood that the permanent deacon's ministry responsibilities are not to interfere with his obligations to his spouse (where applicable), family and occupation.

The permanent deacon agrees to take part in continuing education courses, workshops, seminars and conferences as designated by the Diocesan Secretary for Clergy Formation.

The permanent deacon will meet with his spiritual director on a regular basis and is expected to be faithful to his personal prayer life and spiritual reading (*minimum requirement for permanent deacons in the United States is to pray Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours*). He will make at least a three-day (or weekend) retreat each year.

2. ***The Parish/Institution and Its Responsibility to the Permanent Deacon:***

Recognizing that the permanent deacon's service is of a part-time nature with no compensation expected, the following, however, should be provided by the parish/institution for his ministry:

- a. Reimbursement of as much as \$450.00 per year for permanent deacon's continuing education experiences will be provided by the parish.
- b. Reimbursement of \$500.00 per year for the mandated annual retreat for the permanent deacon and his wife (\$300.00 per year, if he is single, widowed, or if his wife does not attend).
- c. The parish shall also provide compensation for the use of the permanent deacon's car when used for *specific* pastoral work relating to the parish. The norm is to be the current IRS rate (*57.5¢ per mile in 2015*). The standard rate for any given year can be found on the IRS website - www.irs.gov.
- d. The parish shall also reimburse the permanent deacon for out-of-pocket expenses directly related to his ministry within the parish.
- e. Space should be provided the permanent deacon for office work. There should also be provided, when necessary, secretarial assistance, office supplies, and postage.
- f. The permanent deacon is to be considered a member of the parish/institutional staff and is to be an ex-officio member of the parish council.

3. ***The Priest and Permanent Deacon:***

A final relationship is necessary in order that the diaconal ministry be fully realized in a parish, that is, the communion of genuine respect and collaboration lived between the priest and permanent deacon.

The *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (2005) maintains:

"Deacons exercise their ministry in communion not only with their bishop but also with the priests who serve the diocesan Church. As collaborators in ministry, priests and deacons are two complementary but subordinate participants in the one apostolic ministry bestowed by Christ upon the apostles and their successors. The diaconate is not an abridged or substitute form of priesthood, but is a full order in its own right (*no. 50*).... Deacons and priests, as ordained ministers, should develop a genuine respect for each other, witnessing to the communion they share with one another and with the diocesan bishop in mutual service to the People of God" (*no. 52*).

4. This "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities" will automatically be subject to review annually, as well as in the event of any change in health, family or employment circumstances that significantly affect the ability of the permanent deacon to perform the ministry described above. It will automatically be reviewed and, if necessary, modified when the permanent deacon's pastor/supervisor is reassigned or transferred.
5. It is understood that the following Addenda form a part of this covenant of service:

ADDENDA

1. By virtue of their ordination, permanent deacons are clerics; however, their ministry as a cleric is normally part-time. The Bishop of Scranton has issued a policy and procedure on title and dress to assure appropriate usage in various circumstances. (*See page 16 of the Handbook for Permanent Deacons for policy.*)
2. The permanent deacon is expected to give an average of 12 hours per week (or 50 hours per month) to his assignment. Unless specified below (*see no. 9 on next page*), the permanent deacon is to serve in his ministry without financial remuneration.
3. The permanent deacon's assignment entitles him to work as a team member with all others charged with the responsibility of serving in the identified ministry.
4. Ordinarily, the permanent deacon is expected to serve regularly at the altar on Sunday. Ministerial assistance at Mass is both for support and for identification. He and the priest are to sense the partnership they share in ministry. The people of the community should learn to identify him as someone committed to the diaconal ministry.
5. As a rule, the permanent deacon's liturgical ministry will be limited to the place(s) of his assignment. It is understood, however, that for good reason, he might be requested to function liturgically at some place outside the place(s) of his assignment. In such instances, out of courtesy he should inform his pastor and the pastor/director at the place where the liturgical function will occur before using any of his assigned faculties in this manner. **NOTE: An assignment to Pontifical Liturgies always takes precedence over parish liturgies and other ministerial responsibilities.**

6. The policy of the Diocese of Scranton is that *stole fees* given a permanent deacon on the occasion of funerals and baptisms belong to the parish where the liturgical event is celebrated. Money given personally and other direct gifts are, of course, the personal property of the one to whom they are given.
7. It is recognized that the permanent deacon is expected to exercise accountability both to those for whom he bears personal responsibility and also to the Church which he is serving as an ordained minister. With regard to his ecclesiastical responsibilities, the permanent deacon is accountable to the Ordinary of the diocese either directly or through the pastor and the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy. At all times, the permanent deacon will conduct himself with good taste and proper conduct so as not to bring disrespect upon the parish community, the permanent diaconate, the Diocese of Scranton and the Universal Church.
8. It is understood that ministry assignments are the responsibility of the Bishop as he perceives the needs of the Church and are, therefore, in consultation with the permanent deacon, subject to change when deemed necessary by the Bishop.
9. If the permanent deacon is hired by a parish/institution to provide additional ministry beyond the regular twelve (12) hours per week, he is entitled to be compensated with salary and benefits commensurate with his professional qualifications, family needs and diocesan policy.

ASSIGNMENT AND INCARDINATION PROCEDURES FOR PERMANENT DEACONS FROM OTHER DIOCESES

ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES

A permanent deacon incardinated in another diocese may apply for assignment and faculties to function in the Diocese of Scranton in the following manner:

- The permanent deacon should request a letter from the Ordinary of his diocese of incardination addressed to the Ordinary of the Diocese of Scranton recommending him as a permanent deacon in good standing, granting him permission to reside in the Diocese of Scranton and to request faculties in this diocese; and
- The permanent deacon should write a letter to the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy indicating the area where he intends to reside and requesting an assignment in the Diocese of Scranton. This letter should be sent as early as possible, preferably before the permanent deacon moves into this diocese.
- Upon receipt of these two letters, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will write to the permanent deacon's diocese of incardination requesting a copy of his file containing all diocesan required clearances, formation and assignment data.

Upon receipt of this information, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will interview the permanent deacon to determine appropriate assignments. Subsequent to this interview, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy, after consultation with the Ordinary, will propose an assignment and facilitate the development of a "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities" between the permanent deacon and a pastor/supervisor.

Once the permanent deacon and the pastor/supervisor sign a proposed "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities," the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will review the form, recommend changes and coordinate approval with the Bishop of Scranton. Approval by the Ordinary results in effecting the assignment and the granting of the faculties described in the "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities".

Note: While permanent deacons from outside the diocese are not provided faculties until the "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities" is approved by the Bishop, interim faculties may be granted by the Bishop when such is deemed appropriate.

INCARDINATION PROCEDURES

After a period of not less than three years of diaconal ministry in the Diocese of Scranton, a permanent deacon incardinated in another diocese may apply for incardination in the Diocese of Scranton.

To accomplish this the permanent deacon must indicate his desire for incardination in the Diocese of Scranton in writing to the Bishop of Scranton and the Ordinary of the diocese of incardination. If both Ordinaries agree, an exchange of letters between them will be made to enact the excardination and incardination of the permanent deacon.

A permanent deacon who has lawfully transferred from his own diocese into the Diocese of Scranton and remains here for five years, automatically becomes incardinated into the Diocese of Scranton, provided he has manifested his desire to do so in writing to both the Bishop of Scranton and the Ordinary of his diocese of incardination and neither of them has within four months signified to him his disapproval. (Motu Proprio "Ecclesia Sanctae," No. 3, Art. 5, August 6, 1966.)

REMUNERATION FOR PERMANENT DEACONS

POLICY

The Diocese of Scranton follows the guidelines for compensating permanent deacons as set forth by The *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (2005):

- (1) Permanent deacons in full-time employment by the diocese, parish, or agency are to receive remuneration commensurate with the salaries and benefits provided to the lay men and women on staff for that particular occupation.
- (2) Permanent deacons in full-time secular employment, as well as those in part-time ministries, are to be reimbursed for legitimate expenses incurred in their ministry (*no. 96*).

PROCEDURES

1. Permanent deacons who are *in full-time ecclesial ministry*:

Permanent deacons employed by a parish or a diocesan office/institution are to be compensated in one of the following ways:

- a. If the permanent deacon works beyond the 12-hours per week without compensation, as required in his "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities," he should receive full compensation for his employment with a parish or a diocesan office/institution in the same manner as lay employees performing like tasks, or
- b. If, on the other hand, a permanent deacon does not work an additional 12 hours without compensation, as required under the "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities," then his remuneration under the lay employee salary structure for his employment with a parish or a diocesan office/institution must be reduced proportionately so as to include this required non-compensated ministry of 12 hours per week.

2. Permanent deacons *in part-time ecclesial ministry*:

Permanent deacons whose regular employment is not with a parish or a diocesan office/institution and who agree to work more than 12-hours per week as required in the "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities" are entitled to the same hourly compensation as lay employees performing like tasks.

3. Questions regarding the remuneration of a permanent deacon are to be presented to the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy upon the implementation of a "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities".

ANNUAL SPIRITUAL RETREAT AND CONTINUING FORMATION

POLICY

To maintain a current competence to perform the professional duties of the Order of Deacon, continuing spiritual, academic and pastoral formation is required. To assure that permanent deacons in the Diocese of Scranton are provided opportunities to continue their formation on an on-going basis, the Diocese has established the following policies and procedures.

Each permanent deacon is to meet regularly with a spiritual director of his choice and attend an annual retreat of not less than a three-day weekend per year. To assist in facilitating the annual retreat, this requirement is to be a part of the "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities", and the parish or institution involved will be required to reimburse the permanent deacon for the cost of an annual retreat up to the amount designated.

Each permanent deacon must complete not less than 20 hours per year of continuing academic, spiritual or pastoral formation, which is in addition to the time allocated for the annual retreat. This requirement may be fulfilled through college courses, professional seminars, lectures, continuing education days, days of spiritual reflection, on-line courses, diocesan conferences and/or parish sponsored conferences, etc. From time to time, the Diocesan Secretary for Clergy Formation may schedule academic and pastoral seminars to aid the permanent deacon in achieving this requirement.

This continuing formation requirement is also to be a part of the annual review of the "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities", and the parish or institution to which the permanent deacon is assigned will be required to reimburse him for the cost incurred up to the amount designated.

PROCEDURES

Permanent deacons themselves are to request funds from their pastor or the director/supervisor of the office/institution to which they are assigned to cover the costs of the annual retreat and the continuing formation programs attended. The maximum amount payable per year is set by the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy.

Under the provisions of the policy and procedures for "Assignments and Annual Review," the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will send each permanent deacon with faculties in the Diocese of Scranton a year-end report form, which will include a question on the permanent deacon's participation in continuing formation programs during the past year.

PERMANENT DEACON TRANSFERS

POLICY

Once a permanent deacon is assigned to a parish or institution in accordance with the policy and procedures for "Assignments and Annual Review" (*see page 6*), such assignment remains in effect until terminated by the Ordinary. A permanent deacon, his supervising pastor, or the supervising director of a diocesan office/institution may request the termination of a current assignment.

PROCEDURES

Before any formal action may be taken concerning the request for the transfer of a permanent deacon it must be discussed between the parties involved, i.e., the permanent deacon and his supervising pastor/director.

Once the parties involved have discussed the issues surrounding the request, the permanent deacon or his supervising pastor/director shall write a letter to the Ordinary requesting termination of the current assignment and reassignment to another parish or institution. This letter is forwarded to the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy.

The Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will discuss the request with the parties involved, research other assignment possibilities and recommend alternatives to the Bishop for consideration.

Once the Bishop has decided to consider the request, the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will discuss alternative assignments with the permanent deacon. Based on these discussions, the Vicar meets with the proposed pastor or director of the diocesan office/institution, develops a new "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities," obtains the agreement of the permanent deacon and the pastor/supervisor involved, and presents this new agreement to the Ordinary. The transfer is at the discretion of the Ordinary and termination of the existing assignment does not take effect until he approves it.

FACULTY FOR PREACHING AT MASS

POLICY

The Ministry of the Word is an integral part of the Order of Deacon, and as such it is practiced by all permanent deacons. They instruct and preach at baptisms outside the Eucharistic Liturgy and at other liturgical and paraliturgical rites. Because of this, all permanent deacons ordained in the Diocese of Scranton spend a year of study devoted to homiletics.

Furthermore, there is an additional responsibility attached to preaching the Word of God at Mass because of the countless number of people who will be affected. In view of this, theological soundness and effective communication are essential. Rather than giving it at ordination, the faculty for preaching at Mass in the Diocese of Scranton will be treated as a separate faculty to be granted by the Ordinary upon the successful completion of the permanent deacon's homiletic studies, normally at the end of the fifth year of formation.

A Homiletics Board, consisting of priests, permanent deacons and lay members appointed by the Bishop, will review the homiletic preparedness and desire of each recently ordained permanent deacon. The Board, through the Diocesan Secretary for Clergy Formation, will make a recommendation to the Bishop regarding the granting of this faculty. The Bishop will notify the permanent deacon in writing of his decision in this matter.

PROCEDURES

Upon the successful completion of his homiletic curriculum of studies, a permanent deacon will appear before at least three members of the Homiletics Board, who have been appointed by the Bishop and assigned by the Secretary for Clergy Formation.

Two weeks before his scheduled appearance before the Homiletics Board, each permanent deacon will receive in writing the lectionary citations for two daily Masses and two Sunday Masses for which he is to prepare homilies. At his appearance before the Board, the permanent deacon will be asked to present one Sunday and one weekday homily. The Board will then discuss the presentations in private and decide on the appropriate recommendation.

The Homiletic Board will recommend in writing to the Bishop (and forward to the Secretary for Clergy Formation) either to grant the faculty "without reservations" or "with reservations" (while stating their reasons for these and suggesting remedial actions). A permanent deacon who is granted the faculty "with reservations" will be asked to appear before the Homiletics Board after a twelve-month period for another demonstration of his homiletic abilities. He will, at the same time, submit three completed homiletic evaluation forms (one from his pastor, two from parishioners). The Board will then submit a written report on the permanent deacon's second appearance before it to the Bishop (through the Secretary for Clergy Formation), who will decide what further, if any, remedial steps should be pursued.

If after having granted the faculty, formal oral or written complaints about the permanent deacon's homilies are received, they will be referred to the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy, who will discuss them with the permanent deacon involved and the Secretary for Clergy Formation. A report will then be given to the Bishop with recommendations for appropriate action.

Permanent deacons with the faculty to preach at Mass should be assigned to preach at no less than two Sunday Masses each month (*may be two Masses on the same Sunday*).

CLERICAL TITLE AND ATTIRE

POLICY

The *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (2005) states: "While various forms of address have emerged with regard to deacons, the Congregation for the Clergy has determined that in all forms of address for permanent deacons, the appropriate title is 'Deacon.'" (no. 88). The formal title of "Reverend Mr." is only to be used by transitional deacons who are preparing for priesthood.

In reference to clerical garb, the *Directory* adds, "The Code of Canon Law does not oblige permanent deacons to wear ecclesiastical garb. Further, because they are prominent and active in secular professions and society, the United States Conference of Bishops specifies that permanent deacons should resemble the lay faithful in dress and matters of lifestyle" (no. 89).

PROCEDURES

Upon ordination a permanent deacon is to be referred to as "Deacon" in all forms of address, whether written or spoken. This title, however, is never to be used when the deacon is functioning in a secular occupation.

In the Diocese of Scranton, when a permanent deacon is involved in the specific activities listed below, he *may choose* to wear a black or grey clerical suit and/or clerical shirt with a small diaconal cross attached to the pocket or lapel:

- when functioning as a chaplain in a hospital/hospice/nursing home, prison, or like institution; and also, when visiting a parishioner in the same;
- when presiding at wake vigils and graveside services;
- when in his prudent judgment such clerical attire is needed to serve better in identifying him as being an ordained member of the Church in a particular pastoral situation (*such instances should be considered more the exception than the rule*).

At all other times when a permanent deacon is functioning in ministry, he should be conservatively dressed in a white shirt with tie and jacket. He should also wear a small diaconal cross on the pocket or lapel for identification.

PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL OFFICE

POLICY

The *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (2005) states: "A permanent deacon may not present his name for election to any public office or in any general election, or accept a nomination or an appointment to public office, without the prior written permission of the diocesan bishop. A permanent deacon may not actively and publicly participate in another's political campaign without the prior written permission of the diocesan bishop" (*no. 91*). This policy reflects the particular law governing deacons in the United States as established by the USCCB.

PROCEDURES

In the Diocese of Scranton, when a permanent deacon wishes to seek permission from the Bishop to present his name for election to any public office or in any other general election, his request should be forwarded through the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy. Such requests should be more the exception than the rule.

To accept a nomination or appointment to public office, board or committee, the permanent deacon is to seek permission first through the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy, who will then forward the request to the Ordinary. Likewise, any questions seeking clarification of this policy are to be addressed to the same Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy.

RETIREMENT AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

POLICY

A permanent deacon must request retirement upon reaching the age of seventy-five (75). Permanent deacons granted faculties by the Bishop of Scranton may request retirement or a leave of absence at any time for reasons of health, family circumstances, change in employment, or other personal reasons.

PROCEDURE

Requests for retirement or leave of absence shall be in writing addressed to the Bishop of Scranton and forwarded to the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy. The Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will discuss the request with the applicant and forward it to the Bishop with an appropriate recommendation. The Ordinary will then either approve or disapprove the request and notify the applicant in writing.

A leave of absence or retirement granted by the Bishop of Scranton results in the cessation of all formal and assigned ministries. The permanent deacon's "Delineation of Duties and Responsibilities" is terminated, and no formal assignment will be made while a permanent deacon maintains this status. Nevertheless, he may volunteer for or be requested to perform limited services which are appropriate to the Order of Deacon on an "ad hoc" basis. When such service is volunteered or requested on an on-going basis, approval in advance by the Office of Clergy Personnel is required.

A retired permanent deacon or one who is on leave of absence may continue to participate in all spiritual, educational and social activities of the diaconal community and will receive all communications sent to active permanent deacons.

A permanent deacon on leave of absence may request return to active ministerial status at any time. A written request should be addressed to the Bishop of Scranton and forwarded to the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy. This request should include specific information regarding the change in the permanent deacon's life situation resulting in his ability to return to active status. The Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will discuss the request with the applicant and forward it to the Bishop with an appropriate recommendation. The Bishop of Scranton will approve or disapprove the request and notify the applicant in writing.

Furthermore, The *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (2005) states: "Permanent deacons may temporarily absent themselves from their place of assignment with the permission of their proper pastor or priest supervisor" (*no. 92*). Such temporary absence for extended travel or vacation may not exceed ninety (90) days without seeking the further permission of the Ordinary through the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy.

MARITAL DIFFICULTIES

POLICY

It is recognized that the demands made on marriages today can sometimes become difficult and overwhelming, in turn causing couples to question their relationship and commitment to each other.

Referral for counseling assistance is available to our permanent deacons, their wives, and families by contacting the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy.

PROCEDURES

There may be occasion when a couple will separate and/or divorce. If this is the case the following procedures should be followed:

1. The permanent deacon's pastor or supervisor must be made aware of contemplated separation or divorce.
2. The pastor and/or permanent deacon will inform the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy of any such action.
3. If counseling has not been sought by the couple, the pastor and/or Vicar will encourage same.
4. Ordinarily, a separation or a divorce will not affect the ministerial status of a permanent deacon. However, if there is to be a change in status, either temporary or permanently, the following procedure should be followed:
 - a. The permanent deacon, his wife (if possible), pastor and the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will meet to discuss any change in status that may be necessary. In no way should a status change, if made, be construed as anything other than the proper and agreed upon response to a possible painful situation for the permanent deacon, his wife and family.
 - b. If a permanent deacon is placed on a temporary leave of absence, administrative leave of absence, or is suspended as a result of his marital difficulties, he may at any time request a meeting with the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy to consider his return to active status.

THE DEATH OF A PERMANENT DEACON

PROCEDURES

1. *Notifications*

The family should notify the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy (570-591-5006) and their pastor as soon as possible upon the death of a permanent deacon.

The Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy notifies the Chancery Office.

The Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy will also notify the diocesan clergy, including the diaconal community, about the funeral arrangements.

2. *Vigil*

The deceased permanent deacon's family will coordinate the vigil service with the permanent deacon's pastor and the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy. The permanent deacon may designate the church of burial on his funeral planning sheet.

In an attempt to make it convenient for the diaconate community to attend the vigil, it is suggested that it be an evening service.

The traditional attire for the deceased permanent deacon will be an alb with stole and dalmatic, if available. However, if the permanent deacon and his family prefer a suit rather than vestments, their wishes should be respected.

3. *Lying in State*

The body may lie in state in church for the viewing, but it may also be held in a funeral home or other appropriate place. It is recommended that the body lie in state at the church early on the day of the funeral before the actual Mass of Christian Burial.

4. *Funeral*

The Bishop will be the normal presider, if possible, with representation from diocesan and deanery clergy, and the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy. The permanent deacon's choices for readers, music, and homilist should be pre-planned. A planning sheet for the funeral is available from the Office of the Episcopal Vicar for Clergy.

5. *Cremation*

While never the preferred option, for a serious reason cremation of the body may take place when in keeping with all the norms of the Church for such an arrangement.