

Education For A Deacon

Ordination usually follows a significant period of discernment, theological education and pastoral formation - typically 3-5 years from inquiry to completion. Each bishop defines the process and is different from diocese to diocese.

In Their Own Words

The best way to understand who a deacon is and what a deacon does is to talk to a deacon.

Ordained deacons assist bishops with their responsibility of spreading the Gospel throughout the world, thus enhancing and strengthening the life of the Church. This service ministry models, with integrity and confidence, what it means to live an authentic Christian life.

In short, deacons are sacramental signs of the Church in the world; they are consecrated and visible witness to the kingdom of God made manifest in Christ the Servant.



What Do Deacons Do?

Deacons proclaim the Gospel, preach homilies, serve at the altar, lead worship and prayer services, administer charity, catechize, and serve the sick, grieving and needy. Deacons also assist priests and bishops with baptisms, funerals, and other sacramental rites.

Although deacons are most visible during their liturgical service, their duties often extend far beyond that - much of which goes unseen.

Are you called?

In a world searching for meaning, justice and authentic witness, the Episcopal Church needs people who are willing to serve with humility, courage and deep faith. The vocation to the vocational diaconate is a sacred call – one that invites people to follow the example of Christ the Servant.

For information please contact:

The Ven. David Bishop, Archdeacon

The Ven. Barb Weza, Archdeacon



DEACONS OF THE DIOCESE OF OLYMPIA



What is the ministry of a deacon?

The ministry of a deacon is to represent Christ and his Church, particularly as a servant of those in need; and to assist bishops and priests in the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments. [from An Outline of the Faith, Book of Common Prayer page 856.]

The ministry of the diakonia (diakonos(Greek), meaning servant) is to represent the church in the world through serving those in need and sharing the Good News of God's saving work in Jesus Christ. It is generally believed that the office of deacon originated in the selection of seven men to assist with the charitable work of the early church as recorded in the Book of Acts.

They are to lead the church in ministry. To be a deacon is to really be the hands and feet of Christ out in the community. Deacons have one foot in the church and the other foot is out of the church and in the community. They get out of their parishes and get out into the communities and bring the concerns of the poor, homeless and needy back to the church.

Deacons also proclaim the Gospel and bring God's love and mercy to all.

REFLECTING GOD'S LOVE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Serve With Humility

Luke 6:35 - "Do good and lend, expecting nothing in return."

The distinct role of the diaconate, is a vocation of service. **Deacons serve the sick, poor, homeless, and those in need. Deacons also advocate for those who are vulnerable.**

Deacons lead as organizers and gatherers of others -- encouraging, supporting, and teaching those who seek to practice their faith more fully.

The most impactful parts of ministry are often the things people don't see: helping a homebound person with repairs, sitting with someone in detox, helping coordinate medical care for a trauma victim, being present with individuals in crisis, and serving in countless other quiet but meaningful ways.

In the Diocese of Olympia, deacons serve in a wide range of ministries: some lead programs that feed those who are hungry; others are involved in hospital/hospice chaplaincy. Many work as advocates for the unhoused, engage in prison and street outreach, and provide harm reduction support.

In the Bible and Church History

Deacons first appear in Chapter 6 of the Acts of the Apostles, where seven men are called to serve at table and 'look after the accounts.' One of them, Stephen, begins his ministry preaching and performing miracles. He is ultimately stoned to death, becoming the Church's first martyr.

Other well-known vocational deacons in history include St. Philip, a powerful example of the deacon as a bridge-builder, best known for baptizing the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8). Another is St. Francis of Assisi, whose radical commitment to poverty, preaching, and service continues to inspire the Church today.

The early Church held deacons in high regard. St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote that everyone should 'revere the deacons as they would Jesus Christ.'



Deacon Ministry