



## JUBILEE OF DEACONS

The Jubilee of Deacons has a theme: 'Deacons: Joyful Witnesses of Hope', reminding us that Deacons help bring the hope and love of Christ to a world which has lost hope.

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### PRAYER

Loving God, St Paul understood his diakonia as the proclamation of the good news of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:12-20). May deacons today help bring awareness of the Good News of Jesus to a world in need of hope. St Paul also wrote that a deacon must have some essential qualities (1 Tim 3:8-13), including that he must be serious, not double-tongued, not a drunkard, not greedy, and must hold the mystery of faith with a clear conscience. His family life should be exemplary. May deacons today be given the grace of God to hold to these ideals. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

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### TEACHING

The origins of the ministry of Deacon can be traced back to the days of the New Testament, and were well-established early in the life of the Church. From the earliest decades, ordination by the laying on of hands was conferred on deacons, presbyters and bishops, these orders being three grades of one sacrament of Holy Orders. Over the years, however, as the priesthood grew in prominence, the diaconate declined.

Eventually, in the Latin Church, the diaconate became a mere formality on the path to priesthood. After Vatican II the diaconate was restored as a permanent order and is open to both married and single men.

Ordained to be Ministers of the Gospel, deacons are called to evangelise, to spread the good news of God's saving love, to introduce the entire world to Christ, the Word of God. Through baptism, all the faithful are called to be evangelists. All are anointed with Christ's Spirit of true servanthood, supremely witnessed by Christ, the original and true deacon. Commissioned by the Father, the Son of God humbled himself, becoming the greatest through the self-emptying gift of himself in service to the people beloved by God. By virtue of their ordination, deacons are



called to give expression to the mystery of Christ's loving gift of himself to the Father for the sake of the world. The Church's deepest nature, reflected in the integrated, threefold exercise of Word, Sacrament, and Charity (LG 29; Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* 25), is 'sacramentalised' by the ministry of the deacon (Pope John Paul II, 'The Heart of the Diaconate: Servants of the Mysteries of Christ and Servants of Your Brothers and Sisters,' 19 September 1987). Cardinal Walter Kasper has pointed out that one challenge for the Church after Vatican II has been to emphasise once again that the deacon is the bishop's right-hand man, with a distinct ministry. Such a ministry is primarily directed toward diocesan-wide ministry and groups or special needs within a deanery or parish. His task is to animate the mission of the diocese in collaboration with the bishop.



*Australian Deacons Cross, created by Aboriginal artist, Vicki Clark.*

## TESTIMONY

“After being raised Catholic and involved in weekly Mass, I got drawn into new age concepts in my 30s and left the Church for a decade. Ten years later, I came to the realisation that I had a good job with good pay, great wife, great kids, nice home in a nice suburb – all the so-called signs of a modern successful life – but I had this tremendous sense of emptiness inside. I eventually discovered it was a spiritual emptiness. I still believed in a higher power – so I sought guidance from this power to fill the spiritual emptiness. The shortened version of a much longer story is that this discernment resulted in me returning to the Catholic Church. Upon returning to the Church, I wanted to relearn about my faith as an adult. I went online for hours each night and found many resources and as I was doing this, I came across the concept of Permanent Deacons. My initial reaction was ‘No, if you are married, you can’t be part of the clergy in the Catholic Church’. But, of course, you can. I started to think about whether this might be something I was called to. Eventually I was accepted into formation and ordained just six years after returning to the Church. On December 5, 2024, I celebrate 15 years as a Deacon. In addition to parish ministries, I have been involved in work/volunteering with the St Vincent de Paul Society, in prison ministry, Catholic Mission, in university pastoral ministry and disaster recovery chaplaincy. I am currently the Vicar for Deacons in my Diocese of Parramatta. My wife, Annette, is very much involved in a variety of ways in supporting me and the community in this role. And our three adult children have been heavily involved with us at St Luke’s – in youth, music and liturgical ministries.”



- Deacon Tony Hoban (From [The Catholic Weekly](#))

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## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

That faithful men may come forward to be formed and ordained as deacons and bring hope to people both inside and outside of the Church.

We pray to the Lord.

That deacons may serve well the ministries of the word, the altar and charity which are inseparably joined together as one in the service of God’s redemptive plan.

We pray to the Lord.

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[National Association of Deacons](#)

[Permanent Diaconate – Archdiocese of Sydney](#)

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