



ON THE CALENDAR

29 Mar 2025, Saturday

Ongoing Formation—Finding the Meaning in Scripture

Church of the Holy Cross, Dover
8 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Lunch will be provided

9 Apr 2025, Wednesday

Deacon Community Board

via Zoom

6:30 to 8 p.m.

20 May 2025, Tuesday

(or thereabouts)

Deacon Forum

Your Deacon Forum Coordinator is to contact you through email with the exact date and time for your group.

9 Jul 2025, Wednesday

Deacon Community Board

via Zoom

6:30 to 8 p.m.

19 Jul 2025, Saturday

Ongoing Formation—TBA

Church of the Holy Cross, Dover
8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



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The Herald

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 1

MARCH 2025

A quarterly publication for the Deacons of the Diocese of Wilmington

THOUGHTS WORTH PONDERING

Have you ever been asked the question if you were a Christian or a Catholic? Odd question if you ask me. Recently, a neighborhood friend was doing a Bible study with a group of Protestants from other denominations and they each have a topic to research. She was assigned to investigate the Catholic Church, or at least interview a Catholic.

The first question was if we are saved, how do we know? I went on to talk about the sacrifice of Jesus on the Cross, that His suffering, death and resurrection was the price paid for our sins and that He freed us from our sins. Amazing how Christians think alike. However, when I began to talk about the sacrament of Reconciliation and the forgiveness of sin, the discussion changed a bit. I explained about the Apostolic Tradition and the authority given by Jesus to forgive sin and the Bible references. Easy stuff, right?

The next question was about Baptism. Do Catholics believe in Baptism and what does it mean? I tried my best in answering this one. Back to Theology 101. Of course, it gets complicated but, we did agree on the saving power of Baptism and the Holy Spirit.

Why talk about the obvious to people who know the answers? As deacons, we should be well versed in answering questions that seem obvious but, how do you defend the Catholic Church? Not an easy thing to do when others seem to think Catholics are not Christians. Getting past the obvious that Catholics are indeed Christians, the next segment is to ask why would you not believe that Catholics are not?

Sometimes the obvious isn't so obvious. Point in fact; as the elections draw near, we are faced with electing someone who is either "for women's reproduction rights," or not. I'm not sure if the current internet dictionaries have changed the definition of reproduction but, in my outdated, paper and hard covered, Webster's Dictionary, it states reproduction means to reproduce the species. It also states that marriage

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Published by the

OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE
Diocese of Wilmington

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If you would like to submit an article for publication consideration, please email the article to deacons@cdow.org by the 28th of any month.

If you have an idea for an article for *The Herald*, please email deacons@cdow.org or call any member of the staff.

(Continued from page 1)

is the joining together of man and woman and through conjugal love children are produced. Are we deacons well versed in the teachings of the Catholic Church to defend the sacredness of marriage and the sacredness of human life? If not, why not?

We have to ask ourselves if our society is any different from the Israelites during the time of the Prophet Isaiah? Have we as Catholics, and yes, Christians, become so enmeshed in the rapid cultural changes of inclusiveness and tolerance that we have forsaken our religious beliefs? What is obvious is that we fail to speak out in fear that the mainstream of society will “crucify” us as bigots and intolerant. As deacons, unlike priests, we live and work among the people of God and, are often the ones who will face the scrutiny of the people because we are the face of the Church.

Doesn't God love everyone? Did He not die on the Cross for the redemption of all? Yes, God loves His creation and His creatures. It's His creatures who reject Him and His teachings. God even loves those who reject Him as is evidenced by Lucifer, the fallen angel who rejected God's love but still exists. Yes, evil exists, and we allow it when we become complacent and complicit.

When the Lord called out, “whom shall I send?” Isaiah said, “Here I Am, send me!” As deacons we are sent into the world not to be complacent or complicit but as “heralds,” of the Gospel. We are sent to spread the “Good News” even if it means ridicule and the loss of family and friends. No, the obvious answer is not to choose the lesser of two evils, but to reject evil and do what is right in the eyes of God. What is obvious is that we take up our Baptismal sharing in being a “Priest, Prophet, and King,” so as to bring our Baptismal garment “unstained” into Heaven.

For those of you who are fans of *The Chosen*, here are some links to interviews with Jonathan Roumie.

Pints with Aquinas

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6U__iojshD8

Lila Rose

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L5Sk8oOvt_k

News Nation

<https://youtu.be/FWXtrgamdRM?si=eBCmtD1REanKcW1V>

EWTN

https://youtu.be/VHDVPcdTr2I?si=KPVI_6ulSjv1qvOI

Deacon Vince Pisano

GIRM GEMS

171. When he is present at the Eucharistic Celebration, a deacon should exercise his ministry, wearing sacred vestments. For the deacon

- a. Assists the priest and remains at his side;
- b. Ministers at the altar, with the chalice as well as the book;
- c. Proclaims the Gospel and, at the direction of the priest celebrant, may preach the homily (cf. no. 66);
- d. Guides the faithful by appropriate introductions and explanations, and announces the intentions of the Prayer of the Faithful;
- e. Assists the priest celebrant in distributing Communion, and purifies and arranges the sacred vessels;
- f. As needed, fulfills the duties of other ministers himself if none of them is present.

BRINGING THE GOSPEL OF SALVATION TO EVERYONE

Who does Jesus come for? In the gospel reading, we have a woman which a Jewish man would not talk if he didn't know her. On top of that she is Samaritan, and there was a great divide between Jewish and Samaritan. As the story progresses, it is revealed that she has been married 5 times and is currently with a man not married. A sinner. But Jesus doesn't conform to social or racial norms. He talks to her, going between asking for physical drink and food and spiritual ones. And the conversation is not just about food, they talk theology. She says where they worship and the Jews worship in Jerusalem and who is right.

This is all amazing, that this conversation would happen. The woman, now enlightened, goes back to the city and convinces them to go to Jesus, and these Samaritans, who disliked Jews, come out and ask Jesus to stay with them. A woman convinced the city to come see Jesus.

So, what did Jesus say? He said, with actions not words, I don't care that you are a woman or different from me. I come to bring you salvation. Because Jesus came for all, he did not conform to racial differences or social customs. When he asked for water, he told the woman that he brings eternal water. He asked for physical need but offered her spiritual salvation. And the question about where to worship, Jesus gives a foretaste of the coming of the Holy Spirit. You will no longer be locked into a place but will worship God everywhere.

And what about her sinful life? Jesus offers forgiveness, he offered her the eternal water knowing that about her. It reminds us of the other gospel quote from Mark 2:17, "I have not come for to call the righteous, but sinners".

As deacons, we can put ourselves in both spots. As a disciple of Jesus, we are to bring the Gospel of salvation to everyone. Regardless of the background or race. We overcome differences with the forgiveness and love that Jesus showed. We encourage Confession so that they may receive eternal living water. And always look for ways to engage people and help them to salvation.

As the woman at the well, aren't we still searching? Aren't we still struggling sinful actions? Are we not looking for the Messiah.

This Lent remind parishioners and yourselves that Jesus is waiting for us, at the well/ altar. Ready to give us the drink of salvation. And afterwards, waiting for us to bring others to the well.

Deacon Walt Ferris

WELCOME OUR NEWEST DEACON!

Deacon Curtis Turner



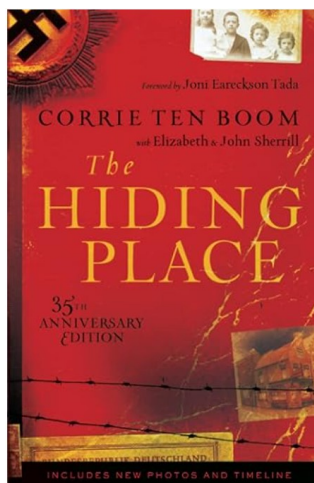
Deacon Curtis Turner was born and raised in the District of Columbia and was ordained for the Archdiocese of Washington in June of 2008. He was most recently assigned to St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church in Hyattsville, Maryland.

Deacon Curtis Turner has been a high school educator most of his adult life teaching math and science and religion. He is currently the Head of School at Saint Frances Academy in Baltimore. Founded in 1828 by Mother Mary Lange, OSP, its original mission was, "To teach children of color to read the Bible." Now, Saint Frances Academy is a small college preparatory high school still owned and operated by the Oblate Sisters of Providence. Deacon Turner is the Academy's 14th Head of School.

His wife, Tara Turner, was raised in Greensboro, North Carolina. She and Deacon Turner married in 1995 and she joyfully converted to the Roman Catholic Church in 2001. They purchased a home in Chester, Maryland in April of 2022. They moved here full-time this past March and now call Kent Island home.

Book Report

The Hiding Place by Corrie Ten Boom



Corrie ten Boom's *The Hiding Place* is an unforgettable memoir of courage, faith, and divine providence amid the horrors of World War II. This powerful book recounts the true story of Corrie, her sister Betsie, and their father, Casper, as they risked their lives to protect Jewish families from the Nazi regime in the Netherlands. More than a gripping tale of survival, *The Hiding Place* is a testimony to the unwavering faith of the Ten Boom family, a faith that withstood even the darkest trials of human suffering.

The Ten Boom family operates a humble watch shop, in their home that doubled as a sanctuary for those fleeing Nazi persecution. Their Christian convictions compel them to act, believing that all people are created in God's image and are therefore worth saving, no matter the cost. This deep faith is evident in their selfless decision to transform their home into a refuge, despite the growing dangers surrounding them. The title, *The Hiding Place*, refers not only to the secret room where Jews were concealed but also to Psalm 119:114: "You are my hiding place and my shield; I hope in Your word." This verse becomes a source of comfort throughout their suffering.

Eventually, the Ten Boom family is betrayed, and Corrie and Betsie are sent to Ravensbrück, a notorious concentration camp. It is here that their faith is tested to its limits.

The Hiding Place is a profound lesson in faith, resilience, and the unshakable love of God. Corrie ten Boom's story reminds readers that even in the face of unimaginable evil, faith in Christ can sustain and transform. The Ten Boom family's unwavering belief in God's sovereignty serves as an inspiration for all who seek to live out their faith with courage and conviction. This book is a must-read for anyone looking for hope amid suffering and a testimony of the triumph of faith over fear.

Deacon Frank Hesson

DEACON RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION TO OCCUR EACH AUGUST

Bishop Koenig agreed to celebrate an annual Mass to honor those deacons having a jubilee anniversary during the current year. Both active and retired deacons with anniversaries of 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, or more years will be recognized. All deacons will be invited to attend and will renew their diaconal promises to the bishop. Afterwards, there will be a festivity for deacons and their families.

This event will occur each year as close to the feast of St. Lawrence as possible, which is August 10. The actual date is dependent upon the bishop's schedule.

Planning for this event is just beginning and more information will be communicated as it solidifies.

CLARIFICATION ON THE USE OF SPIRITUAL DIRECTORS

The *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons* states:

58. Regular spiritual direction is truly of the greatest assistance to deacons. Experience clearly shows how much can be gained in sincere and humble dialogue with a wise spiritual director, not only in the resolution of doubts and problems which inevitably arise throughout life, but also in employing the necessary discernment to arrive at better self-knowledge and to grow in faithful fellowship of Christ.

Therefore, the Bishop recommends all deacons have a spiritual director that they choose themselves. The spiritual director may be a priest, another deacon, a religious, or a layperson. They may be either male or female.

The only diocesan requirements for using spiritual directors is that they must be vetted by the Director of Spiritual Formation for the Permanent Diaconate, which currently is Fr. Joe Piekarski, and each deacon notify the Office of the Permanent Diaconate when they are using a spiritual director and who it is.

BISHOP APPROVES ASSIGNMENT POLICY & CHANGES TO RETIREMENT POLICY

On February 28, 2025, at the Deacons and Wives retreat, it was announced that Bishop Koenig approved:

- a comprehensive assignment policy that includes topics on Assignments, Incardination/Excarnation, Leaves of Absence, and Administrative Leaves of Absence, and
- recommended changes to the Deacon Retirement Policy issued in July 2024, which addresses concerns expressed by deacons.

The complete policies may be found on the CDOW deacon webpage: cdow.org/ministries/permanent-diaconate/deacons/

There are still points some deacons expressed about the July Retirement Policy that must be clarified:

Faculties

When a deacon is ordained, Canon 764 grants deacons the faculty to preach everywhere:

“...presbyters and deacons possess the faculty of preaching everywhere; this faculty is to be exercised with at least the presumed consent of the rector of the church, unless the competent ordinary has restricted or taken away the faculty or particular law requires express permission.”

All other faculties (regarding Baptism, Eucharist, Marriage, Funerals, and Sacramentals) are granted to a deacon by the bishop via a formal faculties document, which usually accompanies the deacon's first letter of assignment.

The bottom line is that a deacon's faculties can be restricted or taken away by the bishop. For example, until 2009, deacons in the Diocese of Wilmington had their preaching faculty restricted immediately upon ordination and were not allowed to preach at Sunday Mass. It was not until the bishop was satisfied of the quality of a deacon's preaching at other liturgies, which often took up to a year after ordination, that he was finally granted full preaching faculties.

Assignments

Assignments to a particular parish, prison ministry, chaplaincies at healthcare facilities, chaplaincies at police or fire departments, etc. can only be made by the bishop, which is done by a formal letter of assignment.

A deacon cannot just switch parishes or end any assignment simply because he no longer wants to continue in that assignment. The bishop must release him from his current assignment by assigning him to a new assignment. All active deacons must have an assignment. There is no such thing as freelancing or itinerant deacons.

When a deacon requests retirement and the bishop agrees, the bishop then formally releases the deacon from diaconal ministry, and all assignments cease. While still ontologically a deacon, a retired deacon is no longer assigned to any parish, which would preclude him from being listed on a website or in a bulletin.

