



Summer 2009

Southwark Diaconal Newsletter

Vol.3 No. 3



Welcome to our latest issue of Diocesan Diaconal News. Please assist in passing on copies to deacons in your area who are without an e-mail facility as well as all others who might be interested in our news. If you have items of news, comment or interest for permanent deacons please send them to me: WJohngreenwood@aol.com

“In the liturgy, God is drawing us into his own very life. The deacon is privileged to serve this divine project, and service is the operative word...The deacon is the *waiter* at God’s Table, *not* the host. He proclaims God’s Word, *not* his own. He is the unobtrusive servant enabling the liturgy to unfold smoothly to achieve God’s purposes. That is what the deacon commits to in his ministry to the altar, and for this reason he should never draw attention to himself but only to the One whom he, and indeed every Christian, serves. But he serves with all the excellence he can command.”

(Owen F CUMMINGS, Deacons and the Church, Paulist Press 2004, Chapter 6.)

On-going Formation (OGF)

Our Diocesan Diaconal Day in Sittingbourne on Saturday 7th March attracted record numbers and was agreed by most to be a success. Father Tom Creagh-Fuller led our morning lecture and discussion on Sacramental Theology. Father Tom is no stranger to the Permanent Diaconate and gave us a far-reaching survey and reflection on the scriptural and theological elements of the Sacraments including Creation, the Flood, Exodus and other themes from the Old Testament, the Christ event, the Church and the Holy Spirit. The Sacraments he argued are shared, enabling and empowering, life giving; they are for life. One deacon described the talk as being “in accessible language but nonetheless weighty, thought-provoking and informative”. Fr Tom assures us he will be happy to be re-invited to a future DDD. In the afternoon Fr Peter Edwards, Director of the Permanent Diaconate in Southwark, gave a presentation on “The Deacon at Mass” which was equally thought-provoking. Be prepared for the new English translation of the Missal expected by the end of 2010 he advised and urged deacons to play their part in preparing the Church for Mass in more dignified and sacral language. The more sacral nature of the text, he hoped, would also encourage a more sacral approach by deacons to the whole of their service in the liturgy. Deacons should be familiar with the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and further recommended reading was “The Spirit of the Liturgy” by then Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger now Pope Benedict XVI.

The OGF programme concluded on Saturday 2nd May 2009 at Saint Joseph’s Church, New Malden led by Bishop Paul Hendricks. Bishop Paul spoke in the morning on “The Paschal Mystery and the Eucharist”. The afternoon Mass included the Renewal of Diaconal Commitment to Diaconal Service and the conferral of ministries on students in formation for the Diaconate.

We're on the web!
www.rcsouthwark.co.uk

Dates for your Diary! Diocesan Diaconal Days

October 2009

Saturday 17th October 2009, 10 am:

Saint Joseph,
Bromley.

February 2010

Saturday 12th February 2010, 10 am:

Saint Simon Stock,
Ashford (South).

February 2010

**Fifth National Diaconate Assembly of
England and Wales**

at Holme Lacy House Hotel,
Hereford from Friday 5th February to
Sunday 7th February 2010.

For further information or to book please
contact:

Deacon Len Mathews,
Diaconate Assembly Booking Office,
82 Mountbatten Road,
KINGS LYNN,
Norfolk.
PE31 6YE

Renewal of Commitment to Diaconal Service and Conferral of Ministries



Deacons Renewing their Commitment during the Mass

At the Mass on 2nd May at Saint Joseph's, New Malden, the assembled deacons renewed their commitment to diaconal service with Bishop Paul Hendricks. Bishop Paul also conferred the ministry of Lector on Mathew Manoharan and Jolyon Vickers now completing their first year of diaconal formation at Wonersh and the ministry of Acolyte on Felim McCarthy and Errol Quagraine completing their second year. Javier Elderfield (third year) was also accepted for Candidacy. This was the first time in Southwark Diocese that these ministries have been conferred away from the Seminary and the practice of combining this with the Renewal of Commitment proved very successful. It is good to gather together the students and aspirants with ordained deacons on these days especially on this particular Day and to welcome people from their families and parishes. Please keep all of them in your prayers.

Deacons' Support Groups

Two new Groups for deacons have now been started:

Gravesend: The regular meetings at Rainham inspired the Gravesend deacons to start their own Group. Their numbers are small but they will be joined by John Tuggey who is to be ordained in July this year. The support for John as he takes up his ministry will be important as well as for those already ordained and, we pray, for other men who will follow John in seeking and entering the ministry of deacon. At the moment the Gravesend Group is only for the deacons but they hope to involve the wives also on occasion later. The next meeting is to be on **Thursday 18th June at 8 pm.** or details please contact Deacon Tom Berrie, janettom@tiscali.co.uk .

Waterloo: Following last year's Aylesford retreat, some of us thought it would be worthwhile attempting to set up a further Group for deacons in the South West Area of the Diocese. Father Jesmond Pawley OFM, Conv is Parish Priest of Saint Patrick's Waterloo and kindly agreed to let us use a room in their Friary for this. Waterloo is convenient for those living or working in central south London and close to Waterloo station which connects with most parts of the South West Area. Like Gravesend the numbers are not large but they will be increased as John-Simon Lawson is ordained this June. We aim to meet on Wednesdays at 6.30 pm perhaps five times a year for Evening Prayer, informal discussion and social time. The next meeting will be on **Tuesday 17th June at 6.30 pm.** All deacons and students very welcome, no invitation required! Contact WJohngreenwood@aol.com

International Diaconate Conference Vienna 2009

186 delegates from 26 countries – a time to share, a time to learn. Four continents were represented, with delegates from North and South America, many African countries, India and most European countries, with a special mention of a group of Lutheran Deaconesses from Finland.

The theme of this year's conference was "Diaconal Spirituality Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow." This theme was worked out in presentations from various speakers and in workshop sessions. The keynote speaker was Cardinal Wilfred Fox Napier OFM, from Durban, South Africa, a truly charismatic man in the spirit of St Francis, whose presentation was entitled "Spirituality as a source of strength as we face global challenges." An Indian priest spoke on "The Church in India and the Permanent Diaconate – a challenge for the Church and for India's inter-religious dialogue." It soon became clear that the Diaconate is in its infancy in India, but the speaker, charged with introducing the Diaconate into Dioceses around Mumbai (Bombay) spoke with enthusiasm of an encouraging start.

Perhaps most information from the point of view of learning about the Diaconate in other countries was gleaned in the workshop sessions. We were asked in advance to choose from a list of workshops we would like to join. Some were put in their chosen group – I was not, but no matter. The first session was simply about sharing diaconal life in our home countries, what we are doing in our dioceses and parishes. With deacons from many European countries as well as South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Basutoland, India and Canada, we all learnt what a contrast there is in the way the Diaconate works and is accepted in different parts of the world!

The Conference closed with High Mass in Vienna Cathedral at which the principal celebrant was the delightful Cardinal Christoph Schönborn who came and spoke personally to each of the deacons waiting in the Sacristy – he particularly asked kindly after the health of Archbishop Kevin. After the official end of the Conference our 'Cultural Tour' took us to the monastery at Steiff (where the CD 'Cantata' was recorded.) The monks had delayed their office of 'None' until our arrival so that we could join them. During the tour that followed the young monk who was our guide stopped at the richly decorated choir stalls and asked us if we knew why they were called 'stalls'. He informed us it came from agriculture – just as cattle in their stalls ruminate on their food, so the monks in the choir stalls ruminate on their food – the word of God. Now there's a thought!

Merville Retreat 2009



Fr Peter Burrows with deacons and their wives at Merville

The Permanent Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Southwark

Director: **Father Peter Edwards** (and Chairman of the Inter-Diocesan Directors' Committee)

St Joseph's Presbytery, 1 Montem Road, New Malden, Surrey KT3 3QW

Phone: 020 8942 2602 Email: frpeter.newmalden@btinternet.com

Assistant Director (South London)

The Rev'd Jeffrey Singleton

Email: jeffrey.singleton@btinternet.com

Phone: 020 8698 5097

Assistant Director (and Inter-Diocesan Bursar)

The Rev'd Roger Evans

Email: evansrf@btinternet.com

Phone: 020 8467 3886

Assistant Director (Kent)

The Rev'd Stephen Newman

Email: stephenpha@blueyonder.co.uk

Phone: 01795 427195

Assistant Director for On-Going Formation: The Rev'd John Greenwood

22 Alberta Street, London SE17 3SD Phone 020 7735 8787 Email: WJohngreenwood@aol.com

Dean of Studies: Father Ashley Beck (also Chairman of the National Assembly of Directors & Assistant Directors)

20 Village Way, Beckenham, Kent BR3 2NP Phone: 020 8650 4117 Email: ashleybeck88@hotmail.com

Archbishop's Delegate for the Pastoral Care of Permanent Deacons: The Rev'd Kevin Dunne

22 Riddlesdale Avenue, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9AB Phone: 01892 6898000 Email: kevinjeandunne@btopenworld.com

Retreats:

September 2009: Friday 11th September to Sunday 13th September 2009:

Diocesan Diaconal Retreat (deacons only) at The Friars, Aylesford.

This will be led by Bishop John Hine. (Now booking)

May 2010: Friday 7th May to Sunday 9th May 2010:

Diocesan Diaconal Retreat (deacons and wives) at Maison d'Accueil, Merville, France.

Please Pray for:

Our students in formation for the Permanent Diaconate:

Mathew Manoharan and Jolyon Vickers (first year),

Felim McCarthy and Errol Quagraine (second year),

Javier Elderfield, John-Simon Lawson, Peter Rennie and John Tuggy (third year)

who are to be ordained soon.

Our aspirants for the Permanent Diaconate:

Jim Coleman, Jim Durkan, Alfred Banya, and Christopher Richardson

who will soon be commencing their formation .

Their wives and families.

Deacon John O'Donovan 1940 - 2009.

An appreciation by Deacon Fred Carter.

It was my privilege to know John O' Donovan for over thirty years. Living in neighbouring parishes we had a number of common interests and common apostolates – the deanery youth Council, the S.V.P. and the Knights of Saint Columba. When I appeared before the deanery clergy for them to assess my suitability for the permanent diaconate, it turned out that Fr Joe Gill had been thinking that John would also make a good deacon. My immediate response was that the choice was obvious. So, in 1988, John and I began to travel together to Womersley for our study days. We both distinctly remembered our first lecture. It was on Jansenism and we wondered what we had let ourselves in for! Our journeys to and from Saint John's seminary were opportunities for us to support each other and John's practice homilies at Streatham Hill, under the guidance of Fr Michael Murphy, were always an inspiration. We were ordained together in Saint George's Cathedral on 27th July 1991.

John threw himself into the pastoral work of his parish of Saint Theresa, Morden, especially catechetical programmes. He was chaplain to the maternity unit at Saint Helier Hospital and frequently visited the wards and was appointed by Archbishop Michael Bowen as the Diocesan Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies (red mission boxes). John was a tireless worker both for his parish and for his family of whom he was so proud. He was taken ill in December 2007 but with the support of his wife Margaret carried on with his diaconal duties. On 14th February this year Almighty God called John to his eternal reward. The esteem in which he was held could be judged by the crowded church at the reception of his body on Ash Wednesday for his requiem Mass on 26th February.

John was a good example to all he met, one always ready to say Yes if asked to do something. The finest tribute we could pay him would be to try to follow his example. Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord.

Fred Carter, May 2009.