



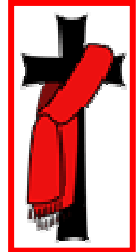
Spring 2008

Southwark Diaconal Newsletter

Vol.2 : No. 2

Welcome to our second issue for 2007-2008. Our OGF programme got off to a good start this year at the Christian Education Centre in Tooting Bec and we give a report from one of the Deacon participants. There is also a report on the Annual National Conference for Directors of the Permanent Diaconate and Deacon Delegates and an appeal from Roger Evans for more Deacons to join the Diocese's annual Pilgrimage to Lourdes.

Suggestions for improvement to and items to be included in our Newsletter are always very welcome. Please send them to me, the editor – WJohnngreenWood@aol.com. Please also let me know if you are not receiving the Newsletter and other items. Sometimes this occurs because of an out-of-date e-mail address which is not notified.



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

Annual renewal of Commitment to Diaconal Service

"Because of the Cathedral's Amigo Hall closure for its long-awaited refurbishment after this Easter, no diocesan events can take place there (or in the neighbouring school hall) during the coming 12 months. The Archbishop has therefore reluctantly agreed that the Mass and Renewal of Commitment to Diaconal Service must consequently be allowed to fall this year, but should resume in 2009 when the date is already agreed for Saturday 2nd May. He will be writing to Parish Priests of all deacons to encourage them to bring parishioners to next year's Mass in the Cathedral on this Saturday nearest to his own Episcopal Ordination."

Fr Peter Edwards.

Dates for your Diary!

March 2008

Saturday 1st March

10 am:

Diocesan Diaconal Day
The Hermitage,
More Park,
West Malling,
Kent.

April 2008

Friday 18th April to
Sunday 20th April

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

**BOOKINGS NOW
CLOSED.**

May 2008

Saturday 3rd May

Diocesan Diaconal Day.
Venue to be announced.

Please note:

**THERE WILL BE NO
RENEWAL OF
COMMITMENT TO
DIACONAL SERVICE
THIS YEAR.**

September 2008

Friday 26th September
to Sunday
28th September:

Diocesan Diaconal Retreat
(Deacons only) at
The Friars,
Aylesford,
Kent

On-going Formation (OGF)

Deacon James Friedenthal kindly sent us this report on our November 2007 Diocesan Diaconal Day:

“We were very fortunate to have as our speaker for this day Fr Michael Winstanley, the Provincial of the Salesian Fathers, a Scripture scholar and formerly lecturer in New Testament at Ushaw seminary.

In the morning he looked with us at how the New Testament had come to be written, the whole process through the centuries from the earthly life of Our Lord to the way the first disciples remembered and eventually recorded his life and sayings, via the various redactions until we come to the texts we have today in our Bibles. We looked at the various approaches to the New Testament, concentrating on the theological, the historical and the literary, and the need to use or at least be aware of all three in our preaching. Fr Michael went on to explore aspects of the theological approach, but most illuminating for us was the way he explained how we need to be conscious of the level of creativity the evangelists allowed themselves as they wrote their recollections coloured by their gradual realization of the implications and impact of the Resurrection. The morning session ended with us examining together how the New Testament stories are imbued with the imagery and resonances of the Old Testament, how the shepherd imagery in Ezekiel, for instance, colours the many references to the Good Shepherd in John, and how the accounts of the feeding of the 5,000 draw on a similar miracle performed by Elisha in 2 Kings.

In the afternoon we looked at the parables, particularly the Prodigal Son and the Good Samaritan. Fr Michael suggested we approach a parable asking ourselves such questions as: Where is the shock element in this? (It may be some big exaggeration of amounts of money, or an unlikely character who turns out to be the good guy); What is the challenge? (do likewise, actually everyone is my neighbour); What is the context in which the parable is being told? (often a response to some criticism levelled at Jesus from the religious leaders of the time). And if we look carefully at the parable, we shall find a key word or phrase that sums it all up – the father is “moved to compassion” – God is like that, we are trying to be like God, so are we like that too?

The whole day was therefore very thought provoking, academic and yet with a pastoral emphasis; many thanks to Fr Michael, and may we hope to have more talks of this calibre in the future!”

Our thanks, too, must go to Fr John O’ Toole and his staff at the Christian Education Centre for making us so welcome.

Our OGF programme continues with the 1st March DDD at The Hermitage, West Malling. Fr Peter Burrows’ theme for the morning session will be “Repentance, Sacrifice and the Mercy of God.” In the afternoon we shall be exploring the role of Deacons in chaplaincy work. Bishop John Hine, who lives at The Hermitage will be the principal celebrant at our Mass and looks forward to seeing us.

Our final Diocesan Diaconal Day will be on 3rd May. Please bear with us as we re-locate this Day and plan it.

Thank You

Wynn Grimmette has requested the following note for the next Newsletter.

I would like to thank all the Deacons who came to Reg’s funeral and all those who sent cards and letters. I found it very supportive for me and my family.

Report on the Annual National Conference of Directors of the Permanent Diaconate and Deacon Delegates, 27th-28th November 2007.

“The Annual National Conference of Directors of the Permanent Diaconate and Deacon delegates took place at Hinsley Hall, Leeds from 27th- 28th November 2007. This conference is part of the Bishops’ Conference Committee for Ministerial Formation, and Directors and Deacons from most of the dioceses were present.

The format of the Conference is an opening address, usually by one of the Bishops of England and Wales, followed by a meeting for Directors and a meeting for Deacon delegates, then time for feedback, together with some presentations from invited speakers. There is also the celebration of the Mass and Morning and Evening Prayer together. And of course, time to socialize and to catch up during meal times.

This year the key-note address was given by Archbishop Peter Smith of Cardiff. The Archbishop spoke of the development of the Diaconate in his own Diocese, how when he arrived there was only one Permanent Deacon (a retired Permanent Deacon from Southwark), and now there are 12 Permanent Deacons, ordained in 2006, and that there are also more men now in formation. The Archbishop spoke about the distinction between the ordained ministry of the Deacon and the ministry

of lay people. He was clear that the Permanent Diaconate is not just about what one does, but is characterized by the relationship within the body of Christ, within the Church. The Deacon, by ordination is set apart, commissioned to carry out a three-fold role in the Church, as a Minister of Word, Sacrament and Charity. in all this he has a special relationship with the Bishop. The Deacon is ordained by the Bishop; there is a special bond between the Deacon and the Bishop, expressed in the formal promise of obedience. This is reflected in the Deacon’s liturgical ministry, as the vested Deacon stands beside the one who is presiding, and if this is the Bishop it is the Deacon who assists him at the Altar. Archbishop Peter shared some reflections on the qualities he looks for in assessing a man’s call to the Diaconate. In addition to his human, moral, spiritual and intellectual capabilities he also looks at his commitment to his family and his commitment to the Church. Is he a team player? Does he get on with other people? Is he a good listener? Is he comfortable with authority and can he exercise authority? Is he good at keeping confidences, can he be a man of discretion? The Archbishop concluded his remarks by stating that above all the Permanent Deacon must be a man of common

sense, who is able to relate well to the people he serves. The Archbishop reiterated that he values the Permanent Diaconate, that he values all that is done by Permanent Deacons up and down the country and that the Church has been enriched since the re-establishment of the Permanent Diaconate.

Among other interesting reports and discussions, Father Paul Embry of the Vocations Office gave a PowerPoint presentation on the work of the Vocations Office. The wife of a Permanent Deacon in the Netherlands presented a paper on the Pastoral Care of Deacons’ Widows. Often when a Deacon dies, his wife can suddenly be very much out of the circle of support and friendship of which she was part. Delegates also raised the question of widower Deacons with families and thus the importance for a whole network of support to be in place. Finally the Wives’ Delegates brought to our attention the need for pastoral care of Deacons’ wives. A number of Dioceses have Support Groups for Deacons’ wives.

This Conference is a wonderful endorsement of the ministry of the Permanent Diaconate in this country.”

Michael Kennedy.

The Permanent Diaconate in the Archdiocese of Southwark

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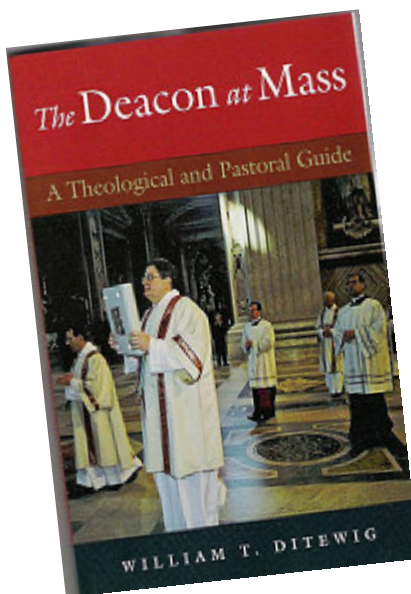
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Book Review



The Deacon at Mass: A Theological and Pastoral Guide

by William T. Ditewig. Paulist Press, 100 pages.

Deacon William Ditewig is a theologian and now professor of theology at St Leo University, Florida. Until recently he was executive director of the Secretariat for the Diaconate of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Already the author of several books on the diaconate, his new book published last year is an invaluable guide to the liturgical role of the deacon at Mass. It is squarely based on the new General Instruction of the Roman Missal and takes the reader conscientiously through the Liturgy from beginning to end in a practical manner. This book is also written in a friendly and easy style. It will be very helpful to each and every deacon not only to know what he is to do but also to understand why he is there and why the Mass is central to his ministry. This is not just a how-to-do guide; it is also a theological study designed to help discern and understand ever more fully the ministry of permanent deacons through their role at Mass. It will no doubt be essential reading for anyone preparing for the diaconate but deserves also to be read by parish priests, M.C's and indeed parishioners to gain a fuller appreciation of the diaconate in the Church.

Annual Diocesan Pilgrimage to Lourdes, 22nd to 29th August 2008

“This year the Pilgrimage will be led by Archbishop Kevin. Lourdes is a thoroughly worthwhile experience, a time of spiritual growth and healing. We also have a good youth team (17 to 24 year-olds) who do sterling work in pushing wheelchairs and helping in the *Accueil*, the hospice where less able pilgrims stay. Prices start at £500 by train and £569 by air, including transfers and full board in Lourdes. Full details can be obtained from the tour operator, Tangney Tours, 01732 886666.

For the past few years five Southwark Deacons have travelled with the Pilgrimage and shared liturgical and pastoral duties between them. It would be great to be joined by a few more, especially this year which is the 150th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady to Saint Bernadette! Do please consider joining us bringing some of your parishioners with you”

Further information can be obtained from the Pilgrimage Director, Fr David Hutton, 020 8462 6745 or Roger Evans 020 8467 3886.