

Catholic Diocese of  
**SAGINAW**

## **History of the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Saginaw**



*The Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve  
and to give his life as a ransom for many. (Mt 20:28)*





Diocese of Saginaw

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# Foreword by Most Reverend Robert D. Gruss Seventh Bishop of Saginaw

The Permanent Diaconate over its history has shown to be a very important and valued ministry in the Church. I believe the re-establishing of the permanent diaconate truly was the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church. It has allowed men, including married men with the great support of their wives, to give themselves tirelessly to the service of the People of God.

Following the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council (cf. *Lumen gentium*, #29), the Holy Father, Pope Paul VI, offered these insights into the vision behind the renewal:

“Beginning already in the early days of the Apostles, the Catholic Church has held in great veneration the sacred order of the diaconate, as the Apostle of the Gentiles himself bears witness. He expressly sends his greeting to the deacons together with the bishops and instructs Timothy which virtues and qualities are to be sought in them in order that they may be regarded as worthy of their ministry.

“Furthermore, the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council, following this very ancient tradition, made honorable mention of the diaconate in the Constitution which begins with the words ‘Lumen Gentium,’ where, after concerning itself with the bishops and the priests, it praised also the third rank of sacred orders, explaining its dignity and enumerating its functions.

“...[The diaconate] is not to be considered as a mere step towards the priesthood, but it is so adorned with its own indelible character and its own special grace so that those who are called to it ‘can permanently serve the mysteries of Christ and the Church.’”

From that moment, the Church has been blessed with the service and sacrifices of deacons (and their wives), having a lasting impact across the world – and in particular here in the Diocese of Saginaw. The Catholic Church has been immeasurably enriched by the many deacons who have given so much to serve the people of God.

I can attest firsthand to what permanent deacons provide to parish life. Throughout my time as a parish priest, there were always one or two deacons assisting in carrying out pastoral ministry in various roles. They bring a unique perspective (especially with many of them being married) as ardent servants of Jesus living their call to discipleship and proclaiming the Gospel through this lens. Over the years, I have personally learned from them as they have supported me in my role as priest.

I am deeply grateful for the deacons who have served with me in my thirty years of ministry, both as a priest and bishop. Along with their spouses and family members who have supported them, they have been true collaborators in the mission of Jesus Christ. So many of them have been shining examples of what it means to be a servant of the mysteries of Christ and, at one and the same time, to be a servant to their brothers and sisters. They have touched countless lives of many people through their ministry across this diocese. We ask the Lord’s blessing upon all of them.

*Heavenly Father, bestow your abundant blessings on all Deacons, their wives, their families, and ministry. Fill them with your grace and power as they minister among your people. By your love and grace, renew your Spirit within Your servants whom you have anointed. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

# Acknowledgements

Since being installed on July 26, 2019 as the seventh bishop of the Diocese of Saginaw, Bishop Robert D. Gruss has mentioned the importance of learning about the history of our diocese. One of Bishop Gruss' staff members, Dr. Dan Osborn of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate, initiated a project to document the history of the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Saginaw.

Dr. Osborn asked permanent deacons and a number of priests to provide their input. He also asked for volunteers to help compile this history. Deacon David Adler, Deacon Rick Warner and Deacon Gary Patelski stepped forward to assist with this undertaking, and the result is this history of the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Saginaw.

The editorial team wishes to thank everyone who contributed their thoughts, memories, and perspectives on the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Saginaw. Hopefully, this history will be updated in the future as God calls more men to answer his call to serve the Church as permanent deacons in our diocese.

This history is dedicated to the bishops, priests, religious, instructors, wives, families, and friends – those still living and those who have gone before us – who have supported our deacons during their formation, their ordination and their years of diaconal ministry.

## Introduction

What does a concentration camp in Nazi Germany have to do with the history of the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Saginaw? We have to go back to the spring of 1938 to appreciate the historical connection. Two months after Germany annexed Austria in the *Anschluss*, an Austrian priest named Father Matthias Spanlang was arrested on May 24 and taken to the Dachau concentration camp along with four other priests. This marked the beginning of the *priesterblock* (priests' barracks) at Dachau. Eventually, over 2000 clergymen filled three blocks at this notorious camp. God, however, is able to bring out something good from even the most horrific tragedies. In this unlikely setting, ongoing conversations began to take place about the idea of restoring the permanent diaconate in the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church. A number of the priests imprisoned at Dachau believed that having ordained Catholic clergy living and working directly among the people would have been helpful in combating the spread of fascism in Europe. These conversations would eventually come to fruition at Vatican II. On September 29, 1964, Catholic bishops attending this ecumenical council voted in favor of restoring the diaconate as a permanent order in the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church – a step that was subsequently approved by Pope St. Paul VI on June 18, 1967.

The spring of 1938 was not only the beginning of the *priesterblock* at Dachau. It was also a momentous time for the city of Saginaw, Michigan and the surrounding region. Just eight days after Father Spanlang's arrest, which led to his confinement in the clergy barracks of Dachau, Most Reverend William F. Murphy was installed on June 1, 1938, as the first Bishop of the newly created Diocese of Saginaw. His next two successors, Bishop Stephen S. Woznicki and Bishop Francis F. Reh, would both take part in the Second Vatican Council, which, as mentioned, endorsed the restoration of the permanent diaconate in the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church. As part of his plan to implement the reforms of Vatican II, Bishop Reh then took the step of establishing the Permanent Deacon Formation Program in the Diocese of Saginaw on September 14, 1972. The dream of a restored permanent diaconate once discussed at Dachau was now a reality in mid-Michigan.



# Historical Timeline

## **C. 33 AD: The emergence of the Order of the Diaconate**

“If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another’s feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do” (Jn 13:14-15). “The Twelve called together the community of the disciples and said, ‘It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table. Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task, whereas we shall devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’ The proposal was acceptable to the whole community, so they chose Stephen, a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit, also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas of Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them” (Acts 6:2-6).

**February 26, 1938: The Diocese of Saginaw is established by Pope Pius XI**

**May 17, 1938: The first Bishop of Saginaw, Most Reverend William F. Murphy, is consecrated a bishop at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Detroit**

**May 24, 1938: The beginning of the *priesterblock* (priests’ barracks) at Dachau**

Father Matthias Spanlang, an Austrian priest, is arrested and taken to the Dachau concentration camp along with four other priests. Eventually, over 2000 clergymen will fill three blocks at Dachau. In this tragic setting, ongoing conversations take place about the idea of restoring the permanent diaconate in the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church.

**June 1, 1938: The first Bishop of Saginaw is installed**

A day after being met by civic leaders at Dixie Highway in Birch Run and then led by police escort to Hoyt Park for a welcoming ceremony, Most Reverend William F. Murphy is installed as the first Bishop of Saginaw at St. Mary’s Cathedral in Saginaw.

**1962-1965: The second and third Bishops of Saginaw attend Vatican II**

The second Bishop of Saginaw, Most Reverend Stephen S. Woznicki, attends the sessions of the Second Vatican Council, as does his successor, Bishop Francis F. Reh.

**September 29, 1964: Bishops at Vatican II vote in favor of restoring the diaconate as a permanent order in the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church.**

**June 18, 1967: Papal approval of the restoration of the permanent diaconate**

Pope St. Paul VI approves the restoration of the permanent diaconate in the Latin Rite.

**August 30, 1968: Permanent diaconate approved in the United States**

On this date, the Apostolic Delegate communicates that Pope St. Paul VI has approved the petition for the establishment of the permanent diaconate in the United States.

**October 15, 1971: Bishop Reh ordains Ray O’Rourke as the first permanent deacon for the Diocese of Saginaw**

**September 14, 1972: Bishop Francis Rey establishes the Permanent Deacon Formation Program in the Diocese of Saginaw**

# Origins and History of the Diaconate

The historical origins of the diaconate go back to the Last Supper, when the Lord Jesus established the sacrament of Holy Orders. Then, not long after Christ's resurrection and ascension into heaven, the Order of the Diaconate emerged in the early Church:

The Twelve called together the community of the disciples and said, 'It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve (*diakonein*) at table. Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task, whereas we shall devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry (*diakonia*) of the word.' The proposal was acceptable to the whole community, so they chose Stephen, a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit, also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas of Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles who prayed and laid hands on them. (Acts 6:2-6)

St. Paul describes the required characteristics of deacons in 1Tim 3:8-10;12-13:

Deacons must be dignified, not deceitful, not addicted to drink, not greedy for sordid gain, holding fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. Moreover, they should be tested first; then, if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. ...Deacons may be married only once and must manage their children and their households well. Thus, those who serve well as deacons gain good standing and much confidence in their faith in Christ Jesus.

Deacons played a prominent role in the early Church as the devoted assistants of bishops and popes. The early Church Fathers wrote on numerous occasions about the important role and function of the deacon. For example, around 110 A.D., St. Ignatius of Antioch wrote in his "Letter to the Smyrnaeans": "See that you all follow the bishop, even as Jesus Christ does the Father, and the priests as you would the apostles; and reverence the deacons, as being the institution of God."

By around the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the roles of the deacon and priest began to change due to the rapid growth of the Church following the legalization of Christianity in the Roman Empire. Priests were given increasing authority over individual faith communities by the bishops, thus creating a greater demand for priests. As a result, deacons became likely candidates for ordination to the priesthood. By the 7<sup>th</sup> century, in the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church, the *permanent* order of deacon had transitioned into a *temporary and transitional* stepping-stone (often for less than one year) on the path to priesthood rather than as the distinct order, which existed in the early Church.

"At the Council of Trent in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, the idea of restoring the diaconate to its more permanent state began to emerge, but ultimately this issue was not addressed given other priorities at that time associated with the Protestant Reformation. Discussions about restoring the permanent diaconate arose again in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, including at the *priesterblock* (priest barracks) of the Nazi concentration camp, Dachau, during World War II. Many there believed that a permanent diaconal presence (i.e., having ordained Catholic clergy living and working directly among the people) would have been helpful in combating the spread of fascism in Europe. Theological discussions continued following the war, especially during the Second Vatican Council (October 11, 1962 to December 8, 1965).

On September 29, 1964, the Bishops at Vatican II voted in favor of restoring the diaconate as a permanent order in the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church. Then, on June 18, 1967, Pope St. Paul VI released an apostolic letter, *Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*, providing the general norms for restoring the permanent diaconate in the Latin Rite. The permanent diaconate has since had a major impact on the Church in dioceses around the world, as the number of deacons has steadily grown.

“One of the great legacies of the Second Vatican Council was its renewal and encouragement of the order of deacons throughout the entire Catholic Church. The Council’s decisions on the diaconate flowed out of the bishops’ discussions on the sacramental nature of the Church.” This nature was to be seen as “missionary” and the sacred right and mandate of the Church. (From the USCCB *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*.)

“Central to the Second Vatican Council’s teaching on the Church is the service or ministry bestowed by Christ upon the apostles and their successors. The office of bishop ‘is a true service, which in sacred literature is significantly called a *diakonia* or ministry.’ The Council Fathers teach that the bishops, with the priests and deacons as helpers, have by divine institution taken the place of the apostles as pastors of the Church. Priests and deacons are seen as complimentary but subordinate participants in the one apostolic ministry bestowed by Christ upon the apostles, with Peter as their head, and continued through their successors, the bishops, in union with the Roman Pontiff” (from the USCCB *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*).

In *Lumen Gentium* (the Vatican II Dogmatic Constitution on the Church), the Council Fathers called for the restoration of the *permanency* of the diaconate. In the spring of 1968, the U.S. Conference of Bishops voted to petition the Holy See to restore the permanent diaconate in the United States and received papal approval on August 30, 1968.

# The Early Years

(1968 – 2004)

## The Bishop Reh Era

On December 11, 1968, Bishop Francis Reh was appointed as the third bishop of the Diocese of Saginaw by Pope St. Paul VI. As mentioned, he had attended the sessions of the Second Vatican Council and desired to carry out the reforms of Vatican II in his new diocese. (He had previously served for six years as the Bishop of Charleston, South Carolina.) One of his priorities was the restoration of the permanent diaconate.

On September 14, 1972, Bishop Reh issued a memo that formally launched the program. The full memo is included in Appendix A, but a few excerpts from that letter are worth highlighting: “As a Bishop I participated in the decision of the Second Vatican Council which allowed the restoration of the permanent diaconate as a proper and permanent rank in the hierarchy of Sacred Orders.” ”A board was established to formulate an actual program which would be suited to the needs of our area.” “Now we are ready to initiate this program in full.”

Interestingly enough, the first permanent deacon was ordained by Bishop Reh prior to the beginning of the official Permanent Deacon Formation Program. The man was Ray O'Rourke, who served as the business manager at Saints Peter and Paul Parish in Saginaw. Father Bill Taylor tutored him privately in Sacred Scripture, as did Father George Serour in moral theology. Mr. O'Rourke was ordained by Bishop Reh at Saints Peter and Paul Parish on October 15, 1971, almost a full year before the bishop's letter establishing the diocesan Permanent Deacon Formation Program. The Saints Peter and Paul Parish sacramental records indicate that he presided at a number of baptisms and helped lead the program for people desiring to become Catholic. Deacon O'Rourke died unexpectedly on October 16, 1974, just three years after his diaconal ordination.

After Bishop Reh established the Permanent Deacon Formation Program in 1972, a board was formed with Father Richard Van Mullekom. One of the members of that board was Father George Serour. His role was to interview aspiring deacon candidates. (He was also instrumental in the diaconal ordination of Art Haley, the second deacon to be ordained in the Diocese of Saginaw.)

Originally, the Permanent Deacon Formation Program involved two years of formation, with Father Richard Van Mullekom as the director. He had previously served as the last rector of the Diocese of Saginaw's Saint Paul Minor Seminary, which closed in 1970. The first deacon formation classes began in the fall of 1973. They were held once per month at various parishes, such as St. Maria Goretti Parish, St. Josaphat Parish, St. Christopher Parish and at an Episcopal church close to the Civic Center. The classes were eventually moved to the Diocesan Center.

Instructors during the early years of the program included: Bishop Reh, Father Bill Taylor, Father Richard Van Mullekom, Father George Serour, Father John Gentner, Father Bert Gohm, Father Bob Byrne, some instructors from St. John Seminary in Plymouth (such as Father John Castelot), (transitional) Deacon Rich Szafranski, Reverend Bill Boli and Reverend Dr. Whitaker from the Episcopal Theology School of Michigan, Sister Roberta Kolasa, Mrs. Evelyn Mudd, and staff from the Ware-Smith Funeral Home.

In addition to Mike Arnold (married to Donna), other deacon candidates included: Paul Carrico (Ancilla), Ed King (Iola), John Cremin (Bea), Lee Stilwell (Judy), George Keller (Catherine), Frank Hudson (Evelyn), Art Haley (Eleanor), Larry Fussman (Kathy), Gerard Deneut (Grace), Dale Emeott (Barbara), Richard Howard (Dorothy Ann), Lambert “Bud” Kuhr (Harriett), John Moeggenberg (Marge), Alvin Provot (Therese), Aaron Prout (Alice), and Frank Winkler (Gerri).

Deacons were ordained in their own parishes at the time, not as “deacon classes” at the Cathedral. Deacon Paul Carrico was appointed by Bishop Reh to serve as the first Director of Permanent Deacons, and was succeeded in this role by Deacon Ed King. Deacon David Adler was then appointed as Vicar for Deacons under Bishop Ken Untener. When Deacon Adler left to serve in the Diocese of Marquette, his duties were then split three ways between Deacon John Cremin (Vicar for Deacons), Deacon Mike Arnold, (Region VI representative) and Deacon Dale Emeott (record-keeping). Deacon John Cremin was later succeeded by Deacon Larry Fussman as Vicar for Deacons.

In the fall of 1977, a diocesan Lay Ecclesial Ministry Formation Program was established, with classes held in the convent at St. Josaphat Parish in Zilwaukee. These classes, which were conducted monthly from Friday evening until Sunday afternoon, were also attended by potential candidates for the permanent diaconate. Then-Father Robert DeLand, the Vocation Director at that time, directed the program together with Sister Regina Doelker.

The following year, these classes moved to the third floor of the current Chancery and Nouvel Catholic Central High School building (formerly Saint Paul Minor Seminary), where meals and overnight accommodations were provided. Sisters Roberta Kolasa and Mary Epple replaced Sr. Regina Doelker – and Father Kevin Kerbawy became the new Director of Vocations. Aspiring deacon candidates at this time included: David Adler (Betty), Floyd Belmer (Viola), Mike Cleveland (Kate), David Kasprzyk (Loretta) and John Sauve. The wives listed after the names of their husbands attended most of the weekend sessions. On completion of the lay ministry program, the deacon candidates were then required to take classes on Homiletics, Canon Law, and presiding at Liturgies, and along the way, they were instituted into the ministries of Lector and Acolyte before being ordained to the permanent diaconate.

On October 19, 1980, the first ordination of a “deacon class” was held at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption in Saginaw. Bishop Francis Reh ordained David Adler, Floyd Belmer and John Sauve to serve as permanent deacons in the Diocese of Saginaw. David Kasprzyk’s ordination was delayed by one year, as he did not meet the minimum age qualification.

### **The Bishop Untener Era**

October 4, 1980, Father Kenneth E. Untener was appointed by Pope St. John Paul II as the fourth Bishop of Saginaw. He was consecrated a bishop and installed on November 24, 1980. Prior to his appointment, while still the rector of St. John Provincial Seminary, Father Untener had been scheduled to be the director of the annual retreat for the Saginaw deacons, candidates and spouses. Following his installation as the Bishop of Saginaw, Bishop Untener kept that commitment, and viewed the retreat as a way to become acquainted with the deacon community in his new diocese. Although he chose not to accept any new permanent deacon candidates during his episcopacy, in 1981 Bishop Untener did ordain four candidates for the permanent diaconate who had completed their formation: John Wilberding (Ella Ann), Mike Jankowiak (Judy), Leonard Martin (Mickey), and David Kasprzyk (Loretta). Two years later, on June 11, 1983, Bishop Untener ordained his last permanent deacon, John Hubarth (Jane). There would be no more ordinations of men to the permanent diaconate for the next twenty-three years.

During these early years, Deacon Lambert “Bud” Kuhr was appointed as the first permanent deacon to serve as a parish administrator in the Diocese of Saginaw. He sold his Saginaw home and, together with his wife, Harriett, moved to the parish rectory in Gagetown. In 1993, Deacon Mike Arnold was asked by Bishop Untener to serve as a pastoral administrator (before there was even a title for this position) at St. Joseph in Alger, where he ministered for about fifteen years.

In addition to preaching and celebrating baptisms outside of Mass, deacons of this era also served in various parish ministries such as leading marriage preparation, visiting the sick, and assisting with funeral ministry.

Although Bishop Untener discontinued the Permanent Deacon Formation Program after his installation as Bishop of Saginaw, he was supportive of those who had answered the call to serve as deacons. As mentioned, he appointed Deacon David Adler as Vicar for Deacons from 1984 to 1993. Deacon David represented the Diocese at Region VI conferences, the National Diaconate Association for Continuing Education, the National Association of Deacon Directors, and at the 1987 papal visit of Pope St. John Paul II, which was held at Ford Auditorium in Detroit with 3000 deacons present.

According to Deacon Adler, Bishop Untener did not feel the Church was in need of “another layer of clerics,” and preferred to “encourage and train the laity.” Father Bill Taylor confirmed this, noting: “It is not that [Bishop Untener] didn't approve of permanent deacons, but he wanted women to have the same chance to be deacons as men since they went through the same Lay Ministry formation. He just did not think that there was a need for that ministry since we [now] celebrate baptisms at Mass.

Father Taylor explained, “At least two or three times at priest gatherings, Bishop [Untener] asked if the presbyterate wanted deacons. He said he would get a program started if there was a clear positive consensus – but there wasn't. The vote was about half and half each time.” Bishop Untener also had observed that there had been some conflicts in a few parishes where the role of the deacon was not understood well.

In summary, Bishop Untener felt that – inasmuch as women were receiving almost the same amount of formation in the diocese's Lay Ecclesial Ministry Program as the male deacon candidates – they should not be prohibited from functioning as deacons. During Bishop Untener's time as bishop, he appointed several women to serve as parish administrators and homilists; he also appointed a religious Sister to serve as the rector of the Cathedral Parish. Bishop Untener died on March 27, 2004.

# Renewal of the Permanent Diaconate

(2005 - 2011)

## The Bishop Carlson Era

Bishop Untener was succeeded by Bishop Robert J. Carlson (who later became an Archbishop when he was appointed to lead the Archdiocese of St. Louis in 2009). Bishop Carlson was installed as the fifth Bishop of Saginaw on February 24, 2005. Soon thereafter, the Permanent Deacon Formation Program was reborn in the Diocese of Saginaw. However, even before the restarting of the formation program, Bishop Carlson chose to ordain two men as permanent deacons. The first was Aloysius Oliver, whom he ordained on August 20, 2006 at St. Brigid Parish. As mentioned, this means that there was a 23-year gap between Bishop Untener's final ordination of a permanent deacon in 1983 and the ordination of Deacon Oliver by Bishop Robert J. Carlson in 2006.

Deacon Oliver states that he remains grateful for the mentorship of Father Jim Bessert before his ordination, and greatly appreciates the Lay Ecclesial Ministry formation he received under the leadership of Sister Roberta Kolasa and Sister Jo Gaugier and all of the instructors of the program. Shortly after his ordination, Deacon Oliver was appointed to serve as pastoral administrator at St. Brigid of Kildare Parish, and later served as pastoral administrator in Alma, as well.

The second man that Bishop Carlson ordained to the permanent diaconate before the Permanent Deacon Formation Program was reestablished was Roger Pasioneck. He was a former teacher with a Master's degree in Theology who had served as a pastoral associate under his mentor, Father Bill Taylor. Deacon Pasioneck was ordained on May 26, 2007, at Holy Family Church. After the retirement of Father Taylor, Deacon Pasioneck was appointed Pastoral Administrator of Holy Family Parish for twelve years. And later, for a period of ten years, Deacon Pasioneck also served generously as a member of the permanent deacon formation team.

Bishop Carlson appointed Dr. Ed Hogan to make the re-establishment of the Permanent Deacon Formation Program in the Diocese of Saginaw a reality. One of the first steps he took was to meet with the Delegate of Deacons at that time, Deacon Mike Arnold. Dr. Hogan found it invaluable to hear the stories and insights of Deacon Arnold, along with those of his wife, Donna. He was also energized by sensing Deacon Arnold's enthusiasm about the renewal of the deacon program after more than two decades of dormancy. To learn about a diaconal formation program that Bishop Carlson recommended, Dr. Hogan traveled to the Diocese of San Diego where he was mentored by the key person who formed deacons for that diocese, Sister Carlotta DiLorenzo, CSJ.

Dr. Hogan also enrolled in the National Association of Deacon Directors "New Directors Institute." This was a yearlong training for new directors from around the country. Experienced Deacon Directors such as Deacon Joe Michalak from the Twin Cities were of immense value in helping Dr. Hogan build a solid Permanent Deacon Formation Program for the Diocese of Saginaw. In terms of accepting new applicants, priority was given to those who had extensive Catholic education from a seminary or who had a Master's degree related to ministry or theology. From those who applied the following were chosen: Jim Damitio (Diane), Stanley Kuczynski (Margaret), Gary Patelski (Arlene) and Mike Smith (Joanne).

In terms of the content of the new formation program, a key question was whether to have the four men complete the entire 4-year formation journey as outlined in the USCCB *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*. This directory called for a four-year program (one year of Aspirancy followed by three years of Candidacy formation). Even though the four applicants had extensive theological education and experience in pastoral ministry, Dr. Hogan discerned (with the support of the bishop) that it was important to follow the program of formation that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops had determined. This would set a valuable precedent for the future of the Permanent Deacon Formation Program in the Diocese of Saginaw. According to Dr. Hogan, “we needed [the four applicants] to set a new foundation for a program that was grounded in obedience [to the Church]...” Under Bishop Carlson, Dr. Hogan served as the instructor for a large number of the classes in the Permanent Deacon Formation Program.

At the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption, on the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, August 15, 2007, these four men officially entered the program as aspirants. They were then received as candidates at the Cathedral a year later on August 15, 2008. A copy of a reflection that Dr. Ed Hogan shared that day is in Appendix V.

The four candidates met once a month on a rotating basis at their individual parishes. For other weeks of the month, on-line platforms were used to hold the classes. Gary Patelski wrote an article that was published in the May/June 2009 issue of *Deacon Digest* on the benefits of using these online tools for diaconal formation.

### **The Bishop Cistone Era**

Pope Benedict XVI appointed Bishop Carlson as the ninth Archbishop of the Archdiocese of St. Louis on April 21, 2009. This meant that the four deacon candidates would need to be ordained by a different bishop than the one who had accepted them as candidates for Holy Orders.

Bishop Joseph R. Cistone was subsequently appointed as the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Saginaw by Pope Benedict XVI on May 20, 2009. He fully supported the continuation of the Permanent Deacon Formation Program. Six months after coming to Saginaw, he instituted the four candidates into the ministry of Lector at St. Stanislaus Kostka church (now Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish) in Bay City on November 22, 2009. Less than a year later, he instituted them into the ministry of Acolyte on October 31, 2010 at Sacred Heart Parish in Mount Pleasant. The next day, Dr. Ed Hogan left the Diocese of Saginaw to take up a new position under Archbishop Carlson in the Archdiocese of St. Louis. He did return, however, on June 5, 2011 – to witness the diaconal ordination of the four candidates at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption by Bishop Cistone.



# Current Status

2011 to the Present

Prior to Dr. Ed Hogan's departure for the Archdiocese of St. Louis, under Bishop Cistone's direction, he took time to familiarize Father T.J. Fleming with the Permanent Deacon Formation Program and help facilitate the transition. Dr. Hogan kindly left the files for the formation program in his office, so that the new leadership could build upon all of the formational pieces that he had put in place. Bishop Cistone appointed Father Fleming to serve as the Director of the Permanent Diaconate.

The Diocese of Saginaw then began a search for a new Director of the Center for Ministry. The new director would also help coordinate and teach in the Permanent Deacon Formation Program. Dr. Dan Osborn was hired by Bishop Cistone and started in his new role on July 1, 2011. Dr. Osborn recalls: "It was a blessing that my wife, LeAnne, and I arrived in the area a few weeks early, so we could attend the Mass at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption when Bishop Cistone ordained James Damitio, Stanley Kuczynski, Gary Patelski, and Michael Smith to serve the diocese as permanent deacons."

Bishop Cistone asked Dr. Osborn to begin collaborating with Father Fleming on the Permanent Deacon Formation Program. The two of them attended the June 2012 "National Directory Institute" in Columbus, Ohio, conducted by the National Association of Diaconate Directors. Here, they received an excellent understanding of the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*. This began the second phase of the re-establishment of the Permanent Deacon Formation Program in the Diocese of Saginaw. This is the program that is in place today, building upon what was established by Dr. Hogan during Bishop Carlson's episcopate.

One fruit of attending the 2012 "National Directory Institute" was the creation of a Diocese of Saginaw booklet called the "Overview of the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program," which drew upon a number of best practices from other dioceses.

Father Fleming thought it was wise to have a permanent deacon as part of the Formation Team and, with Bishop's Cistone's blessing, he invited Deacon Roger Pasioneck to assist with the formation program – a role which Deacon Pasioneck graciously agreed to in 2012. The Diocese accepted new applications for the Permanent Diaconate Formation Program in the fall of 2012.

With these new applications in hand, an Admissions Committee was formed to carry out home visits and interview the applicants. The same Committee also had yearly meetings to monitor the progress of the men as they journeyed through Aspirancy and the three years of Candidacy. This admissions committee consisted of Father T.J. Fleming as the Director of the Permanent Diaconate, Deacon Pasioneck, Dr. Osborn, and a mix of priests, deacons, deacon wives, as well as a religious Sister, Sr. Janet Pewoski.

With Father Fleming, Deacon Pasioneck and Dr. Osborn making up the Formation Team, the new Aspirancy class started in the fall of 2013 with 11 men from across the diocese. This group met in person one Saturday per month from September to June for formation gatherings. Various priests, deacons and lay people helped lead these Saturday seminars, which normally took place at the diocesan Center for Ministry. Wives were invited but not required to attend most of the Saturday gatherings – and many did, which led to a beautiful sense of community among the men and their spouses. The men also had several online evening seminars each month. Instructors such as Father Andy Booms helped with the online seminars, but the bulk of these

virtual classes were dedicated to a study of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* with Dr. Osborn. The aspirants and candidates go through the entire text during their four years of formation.

In 2014, Bishop Cistone appointed Father Thomas McNamara to succeed Father Fleming as the Director of the Permanent Diaconate. The largest ever permanent deacon Candidacy class for the Diocese of Saginaw began in September of 2014, with nine men taking part. Subjects included Sacred Scripture, Pastoral Ministry, Communication and Collaboration, Christology, Homiletics, Catholic Social Justice, Sacraments, RCIA, Jail Ministry, Praying with the Sick and Dying, Funeral Rites and Parish Administration.

The final year of Candidacy formation involved a number of liturgical *practicum* sessions (i.e., hands-on training sessions on how to diaconate at Mass and how to preside at baptisms, funerals and weddings outside of Mass). Deacon Tim Hartwig recalled: “One of my favorite classes had to be the *practicum* sessions with Father Jim Bessert. His love for liturgy and what it represents really struck me.”

If you ask any of the deacons ordained in this class of 2017, one of the things they remember most is “the bond that was created between the classmates as we learned together, supporting one another both personally and in our studies.” They all had a common cause to serve the Lord to the best of their abilities and to meet the challenges that laid ahead of them. These eight candidates appreciated the instruction and support they received from many diocesan priests such as Father Tom McNamara, Father T. J. Fleming, Father Bill Taylor, Father Jim Bessert, Father Jose Cabrera, Father Peter Gaspeny, as well as the support and mentoring from Dr. Dan Osborn.

Though the deacon class of 2017 started with ten applicants, only eight of the men were instituted into the ministry of Lector on October 17, 2015 -- and then instituted as Acolytes on October 22, 2016.

In June of 2017, Father McNamara and Dr. Osborn attended a workshop on the ministry and life of permanent deacons held in Columbus, Ohio by the National Association of Diaconate Directors. They joyfully left the workshop early in order to return for the June 11, 2017 Mass at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption presided by Bishop Cistone, when he ordained the following men to the permanent diaconate:

Daniel Corbat (Pam), St. Brigid of Kildare Parish, Midland  
Lawrence Deford (Connie), Blessed Sacrament Parish, Midland  
Librado (Larry) Gayton (Christina), St. Joseph Parish, Saginaw  
Steven George (Kathy), Holy Spirit Parish, Shields  
Timothy Hartwig (Joan), St. Jude Thaddeus Parish, Essexville  
Kenneth Kochany (Mary), Our Lady of Peace Parish, Bay City  
Todd Lovas (Erin), Nativity of the Lord Parish, Alma  
Richard Warner (Patty), St. John Vianney Parish, Saginaw

[Note: Dr. Jerome Green was ordained a transitional deacon at this same Mass.]

New applications for the Permanent Deacon Formation program had already been received in the fall of 2016. Five men from this group were eventually accepted into Aspirancy and then into the Candidacy path of formation. After the passing of Bishop Joseph R. Cistone on October 16, 2018, it would fall to his successor to eventually call four of these men to Holy Orders.

## **The Bishop Gruss Era**

Bishop Robert D. Gruss was installed as the seventh bishop of Saginaw on July 26, 2019. On Friday, June 11, 2021, the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Bishop Gruss ordained the following four men to the permanent diaconate during Mass at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption:

Dale Sisson (Cindy), Christ the Good Shepherd Parish, Saginaw  
Jacob Huysentruyt (Liz), Holy Family Parish, Sandusky  
Andrew Waligorski (Sarah), Holy Family Parish, Sandusky  
Alan Wright (Beverly), St. Michael Parish, Maple Grove

Bishop Gruss subsequently revised the “Overview of the Permanent Deacon Program” booklet, asking that wives attend the Saturday formation days with their spouses. He had found in his previous diocese that this practice had strengthened the marriages of the married men in formation, and was a blessing for their spouses.

At a September 23, 2020 meeting at the Center for Ministry, Bishop Gruss addressed men interested in the permanent diaconate and initiated the time period for new applications for the Permanent Deacon Formation Program. From the applications submitted, seven men were accepted into Aspirancy. Then, in 2022, they began the Candidacy path of formation.

On September 6, 2023, Bishop Gruss instituted these seven candidates into the ministry of Lector during Mass at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption:

Matt Begres (Vicki), Sacred Heart Parish, Mount Pleasant  
John Copes (Tamera), St. Michael Parish, Maple Grove  
Hugh LeFevre (Doris), St. Dominic Parish, Saginaw  
Jason Rasmussen, Holy Spirit Parish, Shields  
Bob Sasiela (Diane), St. Joseph Parish, Saginaw  
Lenn Stankiewicz (Anne), St. Michael Parish, Maple Grove  
Bob Zondlak (Sandy), Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish, Midland

As one of the candidates pointed out, the fact that there are seven men currently in diaconal formation has biblical significance. The first ordination of deacons in Church history involved seven men chosen and ordained by the apostles to serve the Christian community (see Acts 6:2-6). God willing, the ordination Mass for this deacon class will take place in the spring of 2025.

Moving into the future, the hope is that the Lord will continue to call generous men to serve as permanent deacons in the Diocese of Saginaw. Let us continue to pray fervently for this intention.

## **Importance of the Spouses on the Diaconal Journey**

A significant aspect of the history of the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Saginaw, at least for the married deacons, is the support of all the wives. In fact, without their love and support the ministry of married permanent deacons would be incomplete. These spouses accompanied their husbands when they were discerning the call to the permanent diaconate, and often mentored their husbands – sometimes even gently pushing them to grow spiritually.

Many of the wives accompanied their husbands during the formation process, attending the classes as a couple. They rejoiced for their husbands when they finally reached the day of ordination. Then they supported them in the diaconal ministries to which they were called. Some of the wives have also participated in those ministries with their husbands. Wives have often been the first ones to listen to their husbands' homilies and offer constructive feedback before the congregation hears the deacon preach in church.

In short, the married permanent deacons could not have embraced and lived out their diaconal vocations without the love and support they received from their wives. To recognize them in some small way, when the name of a married deacon or candidate is first mentioned in this history, the spouse's name is also included in parentheses.

With regard to unmarried permanent deacons, they often speak with great appreciation for particular family members, friends, clergy, Religious and lay faithful who have made a deep impact on their diaconal journeys, either by encouraging them or by mentoring them in ministry. These individuals are also to be remembered with gratitude for all of their generous support.

## Deacon Retreats

The first permanent deacon retreat in the Diocese of Saginaw was held at Colombiere Conference and Retreat Center in Clarkston in 1979. Deacon Lee Stillwell was appointed to be in charge of organizing the retreat and generously continued in this capacity until 2017. Deacon Mike Arnold remembers that their rooms were on the first floor and the showers were in the basement. The following year, the retreat was also held at Colombiere.

In 1981, the deacon retreat was moved to Queen of Angels Retreat House on South Washington Avenue in Saginaw for one year. Bishop Ken Untener was the retreat director for that retreat.

The annual retreat for permanent deacons was then moved in 1982 to the Maryville Retreat Center in Holly operated by the Felician Sisters. This retreat center was opened in the fall of 1980. The retreat has been held there ever since. This is a wonderful setting for a retreat with wooded grounds overlooking a lake. It is a very peaceful setting with a cozy, beautiful chapel.

The various retreat directors are listed in Appendix IV. The first retreat director was Sister Janet Brown. Bishop Ken Untener and Bishop Kenneth Povish also led retreats. In 1988, when the retreat director cancelled on short notice, Deacons Frank Hudson, Stanley Bellanger, Dale Emenott, and John Cremin led the sessions.

The early retreats began mid-week and originally lasted until Sunday. In later years, this timeframe was shortened to end by Saturday noon (due to the increasing deacon commitments at parishes). The retreats have always included a number of group sessions along with Masses – and a special time for fellowship on the last evening.

Due to the Covid-19 Coronavirus, the 2020 permanent deacon retreat was not possible. The string of 41 consecutive Diocese of Saginaw permanent deacon retreats came to an abrupt end. Bishop Robert D. Gruss had been scheduled to be the retreat director that year. Thankfully, he was able to lead the first post-pandemic deacon retreat, which took place in Holly from September 24-26, 2021. His theme was “Contemplative Prayer at the Heart of a Servant Leader.”

A full list of the annual permanent deacon retreats may be found in Appendix IV.

## Conclusion

It has been a joy to put together this brief “History of the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Saginaw.” Hopefully, this text offers a glimpse of the legacy of the permanent deacons who have ministered in the Diocese of Saginaw – and a sense of how the Permanent Deacon Formation Program has evolved over the years. In Appendices II and III, there are listings of the permanent deacons who have served in this diocese, arranged both alphabetically and by date of ordination.

Many thanks to those who have contributed to the writing of this history. God willing, future generations of permanent deacons will make this a living document by continuing to capture the history of new classes of permanent deacons as they fill the indispensable role in the Church of being “living icons of Christ the Servant.”

## Appendix I - Bishop Francis Reh's Letter Establishing the Permanent Deacon formation Program

September 14, 1972

My Beloved in Christ,

As a bishop I participated in the decision of the Second Vatican Council which allowed the restoration of the diaconate as a proper and permanent rank in the hierarchy of Sacred Orders. Shortly after I came as your bishop I asked Father Richard VanMullekom, diocesan director for the deacon programs, to initiate the study of a permanent diaconate program for the Diocese of Saginaw. We were careful to proceed slowly in order to have good background against which to begin our own work.


A board was established to formulate an actual program which would be suited to the needs of our area. I am most grateful to Father VanMullekom and the members of this board who have done much painstaking work particularly during the past year. I especially commend them for their constant attention to the theology that a call to this ministry is one of service and that our people would be better served if candidates for the diaconate are served as well as possible in their formation program.

Now we are ready to initiate the program in full. Beside being grateful, I experience a holy joy that our local church will give this Christ-like witness of service. I will be thankful to those who will assist the program in its aspects of educational, spiritual and ministerial formation as well as those who will work with the candidates in determining suitability as deacons of our people.

I rely, of course, on the encouraging support that must come from the candidate's family and from his entire parish community. And I pray that the Spirit of the Lord will be with us all as we initiate and proceed with this program.

With my blessing and prayerful good wishes, I remain

Devotedly yours in Christ,

  
Bishop of Saginaw

## Appendix II- Alphabetical List of Deacons

<u>Last</u>	<u>First</u>	<u>Wife</u>	<u>Year Ordained</u>	<u>Bishop</u>	<u>Where Ordained</u>	<u>Parish First Served</u>
Adler	David	Betty	10-19, 1980	Untener	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Sacred Heart, Birch Run
Arnold	Mike	Donna	3-9, 1975	Reh	St. Valentine, Beaver	St. Valentine, Beaver
Baughman	Jene	Lee	10-1, 2005	Cardinal Maida	Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, Detroit	St. Maurice, Livonia
Belanger	Stanley	Margaret	8-13, 1972		Archdiocese of Detroit	
Belmer	Floyd	Viola	10-19, 1980	Untener	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Holy Family, Saginaw
Brisson	Ralph	Sharmon	6-2, 1984		Diocese of Metuchin, NJ	
Burns	Charles	Lucille	12-11, 1977	Reh	Newark, NJ	O.L. of Perpetual Help, Indio, CA
Carrico	Paul	Ancilla	8-27, 1975	Reh	St. Josaphat, Carrollton	St. Josaphat, Carrollton
Corbat	Dan	Pam	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St Brigid of Kildare, Midland
Cremin	John	Bea	5-29, 1979	Reh	St. Mary, Alma	St. Mary, Alma
Damitio	Jim	Diane	6-5, 2011	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Sacred Heart, Mt. Pleasant
Deford	Larry	Connie	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption
Deneut	Gerard	Grace	6-1, 1979	Reh	St. Matthew, Zilwaukee	St. Matthew, Zilwaukee
Emeott	Dale	Barbara	10-16, 1977	Reh	Blessed Sacrament, Midland	Blessed Sacrament, Midland
Fussman	Larry	Kathy	10-1, 1976	Reh	Sacred Heart, Mt Pleasant	Sacred Heart, Mt Pleasant
Gayton	Librado	Christina	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Joseph, Saginaw
George	Steve	Kathleen	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Holy Spirit, Shields
Haley	Arthur	Eleanor	9-29, 1974	Reh	St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Vassar	St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Vassar
Hartwig	Tim	Joan	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Jude Thaddeus, Essexville
Hubarth	John	Jane	6-11, 1983	Untener	Holy Family, Grand Blanc	Holy Family, Grand Blanc
Hudson	Francis	Evelyn	5-30, 1978	Reh	St. Brigid of Kildare, Midland	St. Brigid of Kildare, Midland
Huysentruyt	Jacob	Liz	6-11, 2021	Gruss	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Holy Family, Sandusky
Jankowiak	Mike	Judy	9-10, 1981	Untener	Blessed Sacrament, Midland	Blessed Sacrament, Midland



Kasprzyk	David	Loretta	7-12, 1981	Untener	St. Mark, Au Gres	St. Mark, Au Gres
Keller	George	Catherine	6-2, 1977	Reh	St. Hedwig, Bay City	St. Hedwig, Bay City
King	Edward	Lola	9-7, 1975	Reh	St. Helen, Saginaw	St. Helen, Saginaw
Kochany	Ken	Mary	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Our Lady of Peace, Bay City
Kuczynski	Stanley	Małgorzata	6-5, 2011	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Stanislaus, Bay City
Kuhr	Lambert	Harriett	1-6, 1976	Reh	St. Andrew, Saginaw	St. Andrew, Saginaw
Lovas	Todd	Erin	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Nativity of the Lord, Alma
Mailey	Harry	Marilyn	2-20, 1972		Archdiocese of Detroit	Archdiocese of Detroit
Martin	Leonard	Mickey	10-25, 1981	Untener	Indian Harbor Beach, Florida	Indian Harbor Beach, Florida
* McNamara	Tom		10-19, 1980	Untener	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Sacred Heart, Birch Run
Moeggenberg	John	Marge	3-12, 1978	Reh	St. Francis, Traverse City	St. Francis, Traverse City
Oliver	Aloysius		8-20, 2006	Carlson	St. Brigid of Kildare, Midland	St. Brigid of Kildare, Midland
O'Rourke	Ray	Dolores	10-15, 1971	Reh	Ss. Peter and Paul, Saginaw	Ss. Peter and Paul, Saginaw
Pasioneck	Roger		5-26, 2007	Carlson	Holy Family, Saginaw	Holy Family, Saginaw
Patelski	Gary	Arlene	6-5, 2011	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Michael, Pinconning
Prout	Aaron	Alice	4-11, 1980	Reh	St Henry, Rosebush	St Henry, Rosebush
Provot	Alvin	Therese	6-8, 1975	Reh	Sacred Heart, Bad Axe	Sacred Heart, Bad Axe
Sauve	John		10-19, 1980	Untener	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Immaculate Conception, St. Charles
Sisson	Dale	Cindy	6-11, 2021	Gruss	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Christ the Good Shepherd, Saginaw
Smith	Mike	Joanne	6-5, 2011	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Joseph the Worker, Beal City
Stillwell	Lee	Judy	10-24, 1975	Reh	St. Anne, Linwood	St. Anne, Linwood
Waligorski	Andrew	Sarah	6-11, 2021	Gruss	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Holy Family, Sandusky
Warner	Rick	Patty	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. John Vianney, Saginaw
Wilberding	John	Ella Ann	11-14, 1981	Untener	St. Vincent de Paul, Shepherd	St. Vincent de Paul, Shepherd
Winkler	Frank	Gerri	1-17, 1975	Reh	St Cyril, Bannister	St Cyril, Bannister
Wright	Alan	Beverly	6-11, 2021	Gruss	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Michael, Maple Grove

\* **Note:** Fr. Tom McNamara's original intention was to serve the Diocese of Saginaw as a permanent deacon, but he was later ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Kenneth Untener on June 4, 1982 at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption in Saginaw.

### Appendix III - List of Deacons by Ordination Date

<u>Last</u>	<u>First</u>	<u>Wife</u>	<u>Year Ordained</u>	<u>Bishop</u>	<u>Where Ordained</u>	<u>Parish First Served</u>
O'Rourke	Ray	Dolores	10-15, 1971	Reh	Ss. Peter and Paul, Saginaw	Ss. Peter and Paul, Saginaw
Mailey	Harry	Marilyn	2-20, 1972		Archdiocese of Detroit	Archdiocese of Detroit
Belanger	Stanley	Margaret	8-13, 1972		Archdiocese of Detroit	Archdiocese of Detroit
Haley	Arthur	Eleanor	9-29, 1974	Reh	St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Vassar	St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Vassar
Winkler	Frank	Gerri	1-17, 1975	Reh	St Cyril, Bannister	St Cyril, Bannister
Arnold	Mike	Donna	3-9, 1975	Reh	St. Valentine, Beaver	St. Valentine, Beaver
Provot	Alvin	Therese	6-8, 1975	Reh	Sacred Heart, Bad Axe	Sacred Heart, Bad Axe
Carrico	Paul	Ancilla	8-27, 1975	Reh	St. Josaphat, Carrollton	St. Josaphat, Carrollton
King	Edward	Lola	9-7, 1975	Reh	St. Helen, Saginaw	St. Helen, Saginaw
Stillwell	Lee	Judy	10-24, 1975	Reh	St. Anne, Linwood	St. Anne, Linwood
Kuhr	Lambert	Harriett	1-6, 1976	Reh	St. Andrew, Saginaw	St. Andrew, Saginaw
Fussman	Larry	Kathy	10-1, 1976	Reh	Sacred Heart, Mt Pleasant	Sacred Heart, Mt Pleasant
Keller	George	Catherine	6-2, 1977	Reh	St. Hedwig, Bay City	St. Hedwig, Bay City
Emeott	Dale	Barbara	10-16, 1977	Reh	Blessed Sacrament, Midland	Blessed Sacrament, Midland
Burns	Charles	Lucille	12-11, 1977	Reh	Newark, New Jersey	O. L. of Perpetual Help, Indio CA
Moeggenberg	John	Marge	3-12, 1978	Reh	St. Francis, Traverse City	St. Francis, Traverse City
Hudson	Francis	Evelyn	5-30, 1978	Reh	St. Brigid of Kildare, Midland	St. Brigid of Kildare, Midland
Cremin	John	Bea	5-29, 1979	Reh	St. Mary, Alma	St. Mary, Alma
Deneut	Gerard	Grace	6-1, 1979	Reh	St. Matthew, Zilwaukee	St. Matthew, Zilwaukee
Prout	Aaron	Alice	4-11, 1980	Reh	St Henry, Rosebush	St Henry, Rosebush
Adler	David	Betty	10-19, 1980	Untener	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Sacred Heart, Birch Run
Belmer	Floyd	Viola	10-19, 1980	Untener	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Holy Family, Saginaw
* McNamara	Tom		10-19, 1980	Untener	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Sacred Heart, Birch Run

Sauve	John		10-19, 1980	Untener	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Immaculate Conception, St. Charles
Kasprzyk	David	Loretta	7-12, 1981	Untener	St. Mark, Au Gres	St. Mark, Au Gres
Jankowiak	Mike	Judy	9-10, 1981	Untener	Blessed Sacrament, Midland	Blessed Sacrament, Midland
Martin	Leonard	Mickey	10-25, 1981	Untener	Indian Harbor Beach, FL	Indian Harbor Beach, FL
Wilberding	John	Ella Ann	11-14, 1981	Untener	St. Vincent de Paul, Shepherd	St. Vincent de Paul, Shepherd
Hubarth	John	Jane	6-11, 1983	Untener	Holy Family, Grand Blanc	Holy Family, Grand Blanc
Brisson	Ralph	Sharmon	6-2, 1984		Diocese of Metuchin	
Baughman	Jene	Lee	10-1, 2005	Cardinal Maida	Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, Detroit	St. Maurice, Livonia
Oliver	Aloysius		8-20, 2006	Carlson	St. Brigid of Kildare, Midland	St. Brigid of Kildare, Midland
Pasionek	Roger		5-26, 2007	Carlson	Holy Family, Saginaw	Holy Family, Saginaw
Damitio	Jim	Diane	6-5, 2011	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Sacred Heart, Mt. Pleasant
Kuczynski	Stanley	Małgorzata	6-5, 2011	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Stanislaus, Bay City
Patelski	Gary	Arlene	6-5, 2011	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Michael, Pinconning
Smith	Mike	Joanne	6-5, 2011	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Joseph the Worker, Beal City
Corbat	Dan	Pam	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St Brigid of Kildare, Midland
Deford	Larry	Connie	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption
Gayton	Librado	Christina	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Joseph, Saginaw
George	Steve	Kathleen	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Holy Spirit, Shields
Hartwig	Tim	Joan	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Jude Thaddeus, Essexville
Kochany	Ken	Mary	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Our Lady of Peace, Bay City
Lovas	Todd	Erin	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Nativity of the Lord, Alma
Warner	Rick	Patty	6-11, 2017	Cistone	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. John Vianney, Saginaw
Huysentruyt	Jacob	Liz	6-11, 2021	Gruss	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Holy Family, Sandusky

Sisson	Dale	Cindy	6-11, 2021	Gruss	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Christ the Good Shepherd, Saginaw
Waligorski	Andrew	Sarah	6-11, 2021	Gruss	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	Holy Family, Sandusky
Wright	Alan	Beverly	6-11, 2021	Gruss	Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption	St. Michael, Maple Grove

**\* Note:** Fr. Tom McNamara's original intention was to serve as a permanent deacon, but he was later ordained to the priesthood by Bishop Kenneth Untener on June 4, 1982 at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption in Saginaw.

<b>Appendix IV: Deacon Retreats</b>			
<u>Year</u>	<u>Presider/Leader</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Notes</u>
1979	Sr. Janet Brown	Colombiere, Clarkston	Dcn Lee Stillwell Coordinator
1980	Fr. Jim Heller	Colombiere, Clarkston	
1981	Bishop Kenneth Untener	Queen of Angels, Saginaw	
1982	Fr. Paul Rouse	Maryville, Holly	
1983	Fr. Charles Irwin	Maryville, Holly	
1984	Fr. Charles O'Neal	Maryville, Holly	
1985	Msgr. Tom Horton	Maryville, Holly	Dcn Dale Emenott Coordinator
1986	Fr. Jim Heller	Maryville, Holly	Sr. Mary Euphrasia new leader of Maryville
1987	Bishop Untener/Sr. Liz Picken	Maryville, Holly	
1988	Belangers, Cremins, Emeotts, and Hudsons give talks	Maryville, Holly	Fr. Coman Majchrzak cancelled. Deacons had Scripture and Communion service
1989	Fr. George Serour	Maryville, Holly	
1990	Fr. Tom Moore	Maryville, Holly	
1991	Fr. Fred Kawa	Maryville, Holly	\$215 gift to Maryville for 10th anniversary
1992	Fr. Tom Moore	Maryville, Holly	
1993	Fr. Jim Heller	Maryville, Holly	
1994	Fr. Tom McNamara	Maryville, Holly	Deacons Emeott & Stilwell co- coordinators
1995	Fr. Fred Kawa	Maryville, Holly	
1996	The Hudsons lead retreat	Maryville, Holly	Fr. Joe Favara is sacramental minister
1997	Bishop Kenneth Povish	Maryville, Holly	
1998	Fr. David Parsch	Maryville, Holly	
1999	Fr. Ken Wilkuski	Maryville, Holly	
2000	Fr. Ronald Wagner	Maryville, Holly	Sr. Mary Angela is new leader of Maryville
2001	Fr. Fred Kawa	Maryville, Holly	
2002	Fr. Dennis Kucharczyk	Maryville, Holly	
2003	Fr. David Parsch	Maryville, Holly	Dcn Dale Emeott retires as coordinator
2004	Fr. George Serour	Maryville, Holly	Dcn Lee Stillwell coordinator
2005	Fr. Robert Byrne	Maryville, Holly	
2006	Bishop Robert Carlson	Maryville, Holly	
2007	Fr. Jim Bessert	Maryville, Holly	

2008	Fr. Pat O'Connor	Maryville, Holly	Sr. Jane Marie becomes leader of Maryville
2009	Fr. Bill Rutkowski	Maryville, Holly	
2010	Fr. Bob DeLand	Maryville, Holly	
2011	Fr. T J Fleming	Maryville, Holly	
2012	Bishop Joseph Cistone	Maryville, Holly	
2013	Fr. Dennis Kucharczyk	Maryville, Holly	
2014	Fr. Andy Booms	Maryville, Holly	
2015	Fr. Tom McNamara	Maryville, Holly	
2016	Fr. Ronald Wagner	Maryville, Holly	Dcn Lee Stillwell retires as coordinator
2017	Fr. Bert Gohm	Maryville, Holly	Dcn Jim Damitio coordinator
2018	Fr. Bert Gohm	Maryville, Holly	Sisters Catherine and Anthony are co-leaders of Maryville
2019	Fr. Robert Byrne	Maryville, Holly	Dcn Jim Damitio retires as coordinator
2020	None		Cancelled due to Covid
2021	Bishop Robert Gruss	Maryville, Holly	Coordinated by Diaconate Office
2022	Fr. Andy LaFramboise	Maryville, Holly	Coordinated by Diaconate Office
2021	Fr. José Cabrera	Maryville, Holly	Coordinated by Diaconate Office

## Appendix V - Dr. Ed Hogan Speech

August 15, 2008

(on the occasion of the end of Aspirancy)

My name is Ed Hogan. It is my honor to serve Bishop as Director of Formation for the Permanent Diaconate. I've been asked to say a word about our Candidates, and their Formation Program. These men—Daryll, Jim, Stanley, Gary, & Mike—have shown themselves to be

-Men of the Gospel

-Men of the Church

-Men of Service

Those are some of the key qualities of the diaconal vocation. The task of our program is to TEST and DEVELOP those qualities in these men. Here we can recall the words of St. Paul's First Letter to Timothy: Deacons must be dignified, not deceitful...holding fast to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. Moreover, they should be tested first; then, if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons (1 Tim 3:8-10). I hasten to add that formation cannot create a diaconal heart – only the Lord can do that. But if the Lord grants it, we can recognize the seeds of a vocation, and cultivate it. That is the scope of our mission.

You may know—if you do not you should—that Bishop Carlson has a keen interest in peace. He is co-founder of a religious order in Columbia called the “Messengers of Peace.” They are dedicated to praying for peace before Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, and letting the peace of Christ flow through them into the world. In light of that, I'd say that the program of formation for the permanent diaconate is dedicated to developing a sort of paradoxical Marine Corps: a “Marine Corps for Peace,” men who are skilled at wielding what Paul VI called the “weapons of peace.” (WDP, 1977) They should be able to encounter any person or situation, and ask two questions: 1) What are the needs here? ...and... 2) How can I serve?

Are there physical needs? I can lend a hand.

Are there emotional needs? I'm all ears.

Are there intellectual needs? Here's an idea.

Are there spiritual needs? Let us pray.

These should be men who can discern the landscape of needs, prioritize them in a sort of “diaconal triage,” and say: “I can help with that.” In fact, I will go so far as to say that the permanent diaconate might adapt and adopt the motto of the United States Air Force: *Aut inveniemus aut faciemus*. We will either find a way, or make a way...to serve those needs.

I once spoke with a nun who had committed her whole life to the cause of peace. She said to me: “You know, a soldier spends a lot of time and energy in training. And he is ready to give his life in the service of his cause. We will not build a culture of peace until we are willing to train just as hard as soldiers, and are willing to sacrifice ourselves just like soldiers, in the service of peace.”

Bishop, ladies and gentlemen, these candidates are such men. They are in “Basic Training” for the diaconate. They have already completed a year of Aspirancy: praying with the Scriptures, reading the Catechism, learning the rules for the Discernment of Spirits. Having been received as Candidates, they will spend the next three years in spiritual formation, intellectual formation, liturgical formation, and formation in works of charity. Following the advice of St. Paul: “They will first be tested and then, if the Lord continues to give them the heart for it, let them serve as deacons!”

Here’s one last thing I want you to know about these men: they have waited a long time to enter this program. These are not men who only recently sensed a call to the diaconate, and entered into a program that was waiting for them. These are men who long sensed a call, and waited for a program to come to them. Bishop, on their behalf, I want to thank you for bringing that program to the Diocese of Saginaw, and calling them forth to serve. They are very encouraged to be on the path at last.

For their parts, I think they could wish that there was a shorter path to ordination than the year behind them, and the three years in front of them. But they have willingly taken up the task that history and circumstance have given them: the task not only of going through formation themselves, but also, as the first men through, of helping to set the program on solid foundations for those who will come after. And there will be more! We will not have a new class of Aspirants this coming year. But we are preparing a class for the following year. And it looks like we will have anywhere from 4-8 men entering that class. You may say: “4-8...that’s not many.” But I say: We are called to be leaven, not flour. Remember that there were only 12 apostles and, by the grace of God, they changed the world. When it comes to yeast, a little bit can go a long way.

Please join me in congratulating these men, and in thanking them for taking up the yoke of Christ “who came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mt. 20:28).



## **Appendix VI – Additional Quotes about the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Saginaw**

1. The late Father Bill Taylor recalled: “In 1969, Bishop Reh became our bishop. He was installed in January. He came from being rector of the North American College in Rome and before that had been bishop of Charleston, South Carolina. He was a native of New York City. He attended every session of the Council and was eager to implement everything he could as soon as possible.”

2. Father William Taylor also remembered that, even before Bishop Reh established the Permanent Deacon Formation Program in 1972, “there was a man named Ray O'Rourke who was business manager at Saints Peter and Paul Parish in Saginaw. Ray wanted to be a permanent deacon in the worst way. So he attended some classes I taught. And I tutored him privately and Father George Serour helped him too. George was teaching adult classes too. Bishop Reh was wanting to ordain a deacon. So, and this is what I think is going to be a BIG surprise to all of you, Ray was ordained by Bishop Reh at SSPP (Saints Peter and Paul) on October 15, 1971, a full year before the letter you have instituting a program. Looking at SSPP sacramental records, I see he did a number of baptisms and apparently ran the convert program for the next 3 years. His ordination was not pleasing to Father Van Mullekom, then director of vocations, but Bishop [Reh] wanted to do it and Ray was so enthusiastic. I am sorry to say that Ray died quite unexpectedly on October 16, 1974, just 3 years after ordination. His wife and young daughters returned to their original home in Detroit and his memory has vanished. But he was the first deacon ordained in the diocese and I don't want him to be forgotten in history. He was my devoted friend. You can find his name in the Ordo on October 16.”

3. Father Bert Gohm states: “I think [the Deacon Formation Program] began...with Father Richard Van Mullekom as director. He was the last rector of our minor seminary which closed in 1970.”

4. Deacon Mike Arnold recalls: “In the fall of 1973, classes were started and held at one month intervals in various parishes...St. Maria Goretti, St. Josaphat, and an Episcopal church by the Civic Center. Then they were moved to the Diocesan Center. I was attending St. Valentine church in Beaver Township, Kawkawlin, MI. The pastor at that time was Father Barney Janowicz. I had asked him what he thought (about the permanent diaconate) and asked him to write a letter of recommendation. Soon after that he was transferred, and replaced by Father Stan Bur. I went to him to ask him if he would write a letter of recommendation which he must have done.”

5. The late Deacon Frank Hudson was struck by “the camaraderie among those studying [for the permanent diaconate] and those who had been ordained.”

6. Deacon Larry Fussman appreciated the “relationships that developed between candidates and instructors. I especially enjoyed the classes on social justice and Christian morality.”

7. Father Tom McNamara, who was in diaconal formation shortly after the deacon formation program was established, relates: “Many of our classes were held during the week as well as on weekends. I remember taking a class from Father Bill Taylor at St. Christopher's Church in Bridgeport on Wednesday evenings. The classes were held from 7 to 10 pm. I always hoped that Father Taylor would let us out a little early so that I could get back to Fenton where I taught the next morning. But, it never happened. Father Taylor

would look at the clock and make sure we stayed there until 10 pm. His classes, of course, were very interesting. Among our teachers in the 1970s were: Father Bert Gohm, Father Bob Byrne, Father Bill Taylor, Bishop Reh, instructors from St. John Seminary in Plymouth (Father Castelot), Mrs. Evelyn Mudd, several Sisters and laymen and women. All were dedicated to the Church and its ministries. I owe my priesthood today to Bishop Reh and the permanent diaconate.

“I was teaching high school and thought that would be my career. Yet, I was interested in this new position called the permanent diaconate. I thought I would teach during the week and serve my parish on weekends. After being interviewed by Sister Alice McDonald, OP, I was accepted into the program. Bishop Reh ordained me [a deacon] shortly before his retirement. As the same time, he nudged me a bit. He encouraged me to consider studying for the priesthood sometime in the future. I enjoyed the diaconate and decided I would give seminary life a try. The school gave me a leave of absence and said that if things did not work out, I could come back there. Thanks to Bishop Reh, I tried it, enjoyed it, and was ordained a priest by Bishop Untener in 1982. If it has not been for Bishop Reh, only God knows where I would be today.”

8. Father Jim Bessert relates: “I do know that Bishop Reh was all aboard with the re-establishment of the permanent diaconate and was a great promoter and supporter (but I was just entering college seminary).”

9. Father Tom McNamara notes that “Bishop Reh...was a great supporter of lay participation in the parishes and the diocese as a whole. As soon as he could, he created the lay ministry program. It still exists today and has educated hundreds of men and women to better serve their home parishes and promote the kingdom of God. Bishop Reh began the permanent diaconate program shortly thereafter and encouraged men to enter it.”

10. The late Deacon David Kasprzyk’s diaconal journey was unique as he related: “I first became interested in the diaconate when the program was instituted in the Diocese of Saginaw by Bishop Reh in the early 1970s, but then I was just a ‘kid’ (not yet near the age of 35). In the summer of 1978, the parish council of then St. Josaphat Church voted to recommend me to the permanent diaconate, and shortly after that vote, Deacon Paul Carrico, also a member of St. Josaphat, called me and asked to come out to the house. He did and at that time informed me of the vote of the parish council and invited me to begin the process for admission to the diaconate program. But I knew that I was yet too young. I would not be 35 until November 1981, but he encouraged me to begin and I did. I proceeded to begin the process that summer and began studies that fall (1978) in the old convent at St. Josephat’s with classmates Dave Adler, Floyd Belmer, Michael Cleveland, John Sauve, and others in the second year who were in the [lay ministry] program. I was at the time of completion only 33 years old. When Bishop Untener was ordained Bishop, I wrote a letter to Bishop Untener requesting ordination to the Permanent Diaconate. I was able to meet with Bishop Untener for lunch to discuss said request. To my relief, he granted my request. We set a date at that time for July 12, 1981 for my ordination at St. Mark’s in Au Gres.”

11. Father Tom McNamara relates: “Deacon David Adler and I had strong support from our pastor, Father Henry Eickholt. The support of the pastor was so important and Father Eickholt was a wonderful man to work with in ministry. As a priest, I was assigned to Sacred Heart Parish in Mt. Pleasant, the permanent deacon was Deacon Larry Fussman. Larry was a tremendous help to me in that very busy parish. In those days, we might have 30 weddings a year, many funerals and many duties concerned with the elementary and high school. Larry was a big help with wake services, with wedding rehearsals, with RCIA, with serving in any way he could. He made life much easier for me and other pastors there. His wife, Kathy, was also a strong supporter of the diaconate and also a servant of parishioners there.”

12. Deacon David Adler recalls that Bishop Ken Untener did not feel the Church was in need of “another layer of clerics,” and preferred to “encourage and train the laity....”

13. According to Father Bill Taylor: “It is not that [Bishop] Ken didn't approve of permanent deacons, but he wanted women to have the same chance to be deacons as men since they went through the same Lay Ministry formation. He just did not think that there was a need for that ministry since we celebrate baptisms at Mass. Bishop Ken also encouraged lay ministers, including women, to give homilies during his tenure. At least two or three times at priest gatherings, Bishop Ken asked if the presbyterate wanted deacons. He said he would get a program started if there was a clear positive consensus – but there wasn't. The vote was about half and half each time.”

14. Father Tom McNamara recalls: “When it was brought up at a meeting one time by someone who wondered why we were not ordaining permanent deacons, Bishop Ken said that his priests were not asking for them. At the time, he did not see the need. ‘If you priests want them, let me know.’”

15. With regard to the renewal of the permanent diaconate under Bishop Untener’s successor, Bishop Robert J. Carlson, Dr. Ed Hogan states: “When Bishop Carlson told me to re-start the Deacon Formation Program, three things needed to happen. One: I needed to get to know the community of active deacons and their wives. There was a strong sense of community there! Two: We needed to get the broader community – priests and lay ministers – on board. Three: I needed to figure out how to build the program! The first point was easy. Deacon Mike Arnold was the head of the diaconate community – the “delegate for deacons.” He and his wife, Donna, had me out to their place for a one-on-one visit. Then they had me out again to meet the whole community. It was crucial just to listen to their stories – well, more accurately, to be present to their pain. They felt like they had been exiled, sidelined – and they were excited that the program was starting again. The second was a little more complicated. It required several related things. The smallest thing was to write a series of articles in the Diocesan newspaper, explaining the nature and purpose of the diaconate. This was simply a matter of theological and catechetical clarity. It wasn’t the most important element, but it was a necessary step. There had to be a clear vision. The larger thing was to win the community over through personal relations. On the one hand, as Director, I had to be a good guy, a good teacher, a good friend to those in the Lay Ministry program. The lay ministers needed to know they were valued and wouldn’t be set aside or minimized by deacons. That last point wasn’t hard, for a variety of reasons. First and foremost, because that community had a great deal to offer – in friendship, in ministerial experience and skill, and in leadership. (I spent many a happy lunch with Sr. Roberta Kolasa, Carole Watters, and Pat Gallery in the Center for Ministry – but I still remember the first one, where they were testing me out!)

“Second, Bishop Carlson’s ecclesiology was firmly rooted in the complementarity of the different vocations. There was no intention, on any level, of setting lay ministries aside. By far the biggest part of winning over the community, though, was the community’s sense of the candidates for the diaconate. People might object to the restoration of the diaconate in theory, but no one objected to the actual Candidacy of Jim Damitio, Stanley Kuczynski, Gary Patelski or Mike Smith. In fact, they were generally known as ‘all-stars’ of the community. In short, the biggest key to getting people on board was the character of these men. There was a sense that: ‘Well, I may not be enthusiastic about the diaconate...but if there’s going to be one, you couldn’t do better than these guys.’ Other things were important, but this was easily the most important human factor. Bishop Carlson took one more structural step to help ensure a positive relation between Lay Ministry and Diaconate. He made it clear: As a general rule, candidates for the diaconate had to complete the Lay Ministry program first. This wasn’t just good politics (though it was also that). The truth is that, structurally, we had a really good Lay Formation program! Candidates for the diaconate would have to prove their mettle – both ministerially and relationally – before going deeper in formation. On to

the third point: how were we going to build the program? Bishop Carlson's advice was simple: 'Call San Diego. They have the best program in the country.' I don't know where he got that information, or from whom, or on what basis the judgment was made. But I knew how to follow an order. I called San Diego!

"When I called, Sr. Carlotta DiLorenzo answered. She was director of the program in the Diocese of San Diego. I got right to the point: 'Sr. Carlotta, could you maybe send me some documents so I can see how you run your program?' Her response was instantaneous: 'Well I could, but it would be totally useless. You need to come and see us. How's this weekend?' I was a bit startled, and hesitated – that was a bit fast! 'OK,' she said, 'next weekend. See you then!' When I landed in San Diego the following weekend, the first thing she said to me was: 'I'm not going to teach you how we run our program. I'm going to teach you to use your own brain – so that when you get back to Saginaw you can build the program in a way that suits your diocese, your resources, and your situation.' She wasn't going to hand me a fish; she was going to teach me how to fish. Over the next four days, she stretched my heart and brain every which way. It was one of the most outstanding lessons in mentoring I've ever received. Quietly, behind the scenes, Sr. Carlotta had a huge impact on our program. Those were the things that happened behind the scenes before the program got started. Let's get to the key things in the unfolding of the program itself. With this completed, the process of selecting candidates needed to begin. Priority was given to those who had extensive Catholic education from a seminary or who had a Master's degree. From those who applied the following were chosen; Jim Damitio, Stanley Kuczynski, Gary Patelski and Mike Smith."

16. Deacon Jim Damitio relates his own journey to the permanent diaconate: "I attended Catholic grade school and was influenced greatly by the Felician nuns and our assistant pastor, Father Charles Zeeb, who was a lifelong friend. Believing that I was called to a vocation, I entered Sacred Heart Seminary in Detroit in 1961 as a high school freshman. During those four years, I received a great education and wonderful formation. Toward the end of high school, I decided that I was not called to the priesthood and left upon graduation. I married and was blessed with three wonderful children. However, the thought of service to the Church remained in the back of my mind.

"On a trip to Detroit one day in the 1980's, I stopped by Sacred Heart Seminary to visit two of my classmates who had been ordained, Father Pat Halfpenny and Father Don Hanchon. A few days after I returned home, I received a note from Father Don Hanchon who was the Director of Vocations for the Archdiocese at that time, asking me if I had considered the permanent diaconate. I believe that note encouraged me and the thought stayed in the back of my mind. For many years, I felt I was called to preach and to baptize, so the diaconate seemed like my path to follow. Of course, the Diocese of Saginaw did not have a Deacon program for many years. I remember one time making an inquiry at the Diocese of Lansing as to whether I could enter their program. I was informed that it didn't work that way; rather one was called from his own diocese and ordained for his diocese. So I accepted the fact that the timing was not right for me at that time. When Bishop Carlson came to our diocese, I immediately inquired of his Vocation Director as to whether the bishop would start a deacon program in our diocese. He felt certain that it would happen. So, once Bishop Carlson was on board here for two weeks, I indicated to him that I felt called to the permanent diaconate and would like to apply for acceptance into the program. I was accepted into the program and ordained on the feast of St. Boniface in 2011. In addition to the influence of the Felician nuns and Father Zeeb mentioned above, I was also greatly influenced and encouraged by another high school classmate of mine, Father Dan Fox, O.F.M, who remains my spiritual advisor. Others who impacted my decision were my pastors, Father Tom McNamara, Father Bob Byrne, and Father Loren Kalinowski. In addition, I was mentored very effectively by a fellow parishioner, Deacon Larry Fussman. I would be remiss if I did not mention my wife Diane without whose prayers, companionship and encouragement, my ordination would not have been possible."

17. Dr. Ed Hogan describes the actual running of the resurrected Permanent Deacon Formation Program: “I enrolled in the National Association of Deacon Directors ‘New Directors Institute.’ This was a yearlong training for new directors from around the country, and it was the first time they were running it! It really helped to form a community. Deacon Joe Michalak of the Twin Cities was my mentor – a brilliant thinker, outstanding formator in his own program, and a great mentor. The ‘New Directors Institute’ guaranteed a lot of sustained, national, institutional support for us. (And, for what it’s worth, our program developed a pretty good reputation. After I came to Saint Louis, I was invited to give a presentation at the National Association of Deacon Directors meeting on how to make *Lectio Divina* a foundational component for a program.) Joe Michalak and the National Directors Institute did a great deal to shape our program, too. Second, the key tension was: were we going to do what the Church asked? The USCCB *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* called for a four-year program: one year of Aspirancy, followed by three years of [Candidacy] formation. On the one hand, Jim, Stanley, Gary, and Mike already had a ton of theological and pastoral experience. Under other circumstances, that might have warranted a modified and shortened program. The Diocese of Saginaw was recovering from what I would call an ecclesiological deficit – a tendency to say: ‘We know what the Church asks. But we know better than the Magisterium. Therefore, we will do our own thing.’ (Note: it was not true of these four men! But it was a general institutional attitude.)

“As a result, we didn’t just need to get these gentlemen through the program. We needed them to set a new foundation for a program that was grounded in obedience – so that people who came after would say: ‘Well, those guys did it. And they’re awesome. So we’d better follow them.’ I knew, all along, that I was going to have to ask for something extra from these four men. Third and last: Jim and Stanley and Gary and Mike had to buy in, and accept that cross on behalf of the whole community. In one way, it wasn’t fair to them – it wasn’t a cross they deserved. (But, then, what cross ever is?) In another way, it was the first and most enduring test of their formation: ‘Will I take up a cross in service to the community, because it’s what the bishop asked me to do?’ This last was, I think, my most stunning and enduring experience of the whole thing: they did it! And they didn’t just do it, they did it wholeheartedly. No, it wasn’t easy. Yes, it was a long haul. Sure, they probably grumbled to themselves from time to time. But by every measure – in time, energy, personal relations, ministerial excellence – they were ‘all in.’ They were diaconal to the core.”

18. Deacon Jim Damitio relates: “Upon ordination by Bishop Cistone, I was assigned to my parish, Sacred Heart, Mt. Pleasant, and ministered there part-time until my retirement from the Central Michigan University in December, 2017. I am pleased to have more time now to serve our parish in any way I am able, including marriage preparation, annulments, scheduling liturgical ministers, and funeral ministry, in addition to other diaconal responsibilities.”

19. Deacon Gary Patelski states: “I was officially appointed Pastoral Administrator of St. Michael Parish in Pinconning on May 8, 2010 and began this assignment on July 1, 2010. In that capacity my wife, Arlene, and I ministered to a parish of over 500 families with a rural Catholic school. We also completed the difficult merger of St. Michael and St. Mary parishes to form Holy Trinity Parish. I served in this capacity until June 30, 2019. ...After Bishop Cistone’s death, I was appointed by the Apostolic Administrator, Bishop Walter Hurley, to serve at the Cathedral of Mary of the Assumption, the parish where I was originally baptized. To date I have been privileged to vest as a deacon in over 50 churches throughout the world – our diocese, the Diocese of Lansing, in Italy, Israel and Scotland.” [Deacon Patelski now serves at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Saginaw.]

20. Deacon Stanley Kuczynski states: “Encouraged by the ordination of Deacon Al Oliver, I approached Bishop Carlson enquiring about the possibility of becoming a permanent deacon myself and thus serving the Polish community in our diocese. While meeting with him, he encouraged me and approximately a year

later, with Father Bill Rutkowski's recommendation, I was accepted into the formation [program]. After ordination, in addition to my ordinary duties [as] minister of music at regular parish liturgies, I began serving at Masses celebrated in the Polish language. Eventually the range of my duties broadened and included visiting the many sick and homebound, funeral ministry, directing the RCIA Program, and occasionally serving at regular parish Masses as well as preaching in two languages. I express gratitude to both Ordinaries, Bishop Carlson and Bishop Cistone, for giving me a chance and calling me to serve the people as a deacon."

21. Father T.J. Fleming remembers how things proceeded after Bishop Cistone asked him to take on the oversight of the Permanent Deacon formation Program after Dr. Ed Hogan followed Archbishop Carlson to the Archdiocese of St. Louis: "One of the first things I had to do was be part of the interview process of hiring someone to be the next Director of the Center for Ministry who would also help teach in the Permanent Deacon Program."

22. Deacon Todd Lovas, a member of the deacon class of 2017, states: "My two most memorable instructors would have to be Father Bill Taylor and Father Jim Bessert. When I began my journey to ordination, I made it clear I had little interest in preaching. Even when we began our work in Homiletics, I was very rigid in what I would do. Father Bill encouraged me to stretch myself outside my comfort zone in a way I couldn't imagine."

23. Deacon Ken Kochany, one of the eight deacons ordained on June 11, 2017, remembers his years of diaconal formation as a special "time together with my brothers in Christ, sitting at the feet of Jesus and listening to his words spoken through Dr. Dan Osborn and the various other disciples of the Lord."





**Catholic Diocese of Saginaw, 5800 Weiss St., Saginaw MI 48603**