

## Archdiocese of Omaha Diaconal Self-Assessment

Name: Deacon \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The following are "IMPLICATIONS FOR MINISTRY" taken from A THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEACON FORMATION AND MINISTRY, which has been approved by the Archbishop for this Archdiocese. Please reflect on your ministry in the light of these statements. If you need additional space for your responses, please use additional paper, remembering to number each response appropriately.

1. Except in special and carefully determined circumstances, the deacon's professional work (employment) should not be equated with ministry. Diaconal ministry is not a job undertaken for livelihood; likewise one's livelihood, although a valid place for diaconal witness and ministry, cannot be the full manifestation of diaconal service in the Church.
  - a. How do you give diaconal witness and service in your place of employment?
  - b. If you are employed by the Church in some capacity, is there a clear distinction between your job and your diaconal ministry? \_\_\_\_\_ Is this stated in a job description and a ministerial agreement?
  - c. Have you considered your employment to be your diaconal ministry? \_\_\_\_ Explain.
  
2. Although the deacon's ministry is that of assistant to the Archbishop and his priests in the furthering of the Kingdom, the ministerial placements of deacons should not be only parochial, especially if that placement is interpreted as being that of a priest substitute; perceptions of the deacon as a mini-priest or professional altar boy must be avoided.
  - a. Describe your current diaconal ministry. Approximately how much time do you devote to it each week?
  - b. Do you feel that you are perceived as a 'mini-priest' or 'professional altar boy' either by the people you serve, by your pastor/supervisor, by the parish staff, by other priests? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what is it that you do that leads to this perception?
  - c. What is it about your current ministry that gives you the most personal satisfaction?

- d. What is it about your current ministry that gives you the least personal satisfaction?
  - e. Do you wish a change in assignment?
3. Although a deacon has legitimate and important liturgical functions, the primary function of the deacon is not his presence at the altar at Mass; to the extent it takes place, such presence needs to be an extension of a ministry of service taking place in the community; participation in liturgical ministry cannot be based solely on the fact of ordination.
- a. How do you evaluate your ministry in the light of this statement? If you were not allowed to function liturgically, what would be left of your ministry?
4. Engagement in the preaching ministry must be understood, portrayed and practiced as rooted in the experience of ordained service, not based solely on the fact of ordination.
- a. Do you preach on a regular basis?\_\_\_\_\_ If so, how frequently? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Do you receive a critique on your preaching from the pastor and/or members of the congregation? \_\_\_\_\_ Have you sought such a critique?\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. How does your ministry of service influence your preaching?
  - d. If you do not preach, is it by your choice?\_\_\_\_\_ Explain.
5. Deacons respond to meet the needs of people they serve.
- a. Has your ministry changed in response to needs identified in the community? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, describe what took place.
  - b. How open are you to responding to needs outside of your local community?

- c. Have you experienced resistance to changes in your ministry in response to identified needs? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, describe.
6. The nature of the Church and the effectiveness of diaconal ministry in the local church make necessary an active and supportive relationship with the Archbishop and presbyterate of the Archdiocese (collaboration). Just as the Archbishop/priest effect the unity of the Christian community, the deacon multiplies its presence of service in the world. The means and the atmosphere must be present which provides opportunities for collaboration to that end.
- a. Would you describe your current ministerial situation as collaborative? \_\_\_\_\_ Describe your relationship with other ministers in the parish, institution or agency.
  - b. Do you prefer to act on your own rather than to collaborate with others?
  - b. Do you ever find yourself at odds with positions taken by the Archbishop? \_\_\_\_\_ What do you do, what have you done in those circumstances? Explain.
7. Care must be taken in the assignment of deacons that their ministry is clearly seen as Servant ministry; the ministry of the deacon should be such that it not only appears to be, but actually is of a type which expresses the servant nature of the Church, evoking a response in others to serve.
- a. Is your current assignment chiefly administrative in nature?
  - c. How effective have you been in involving others in the ministry of service? Give examples.
8. Deacons must have the opportunity to share their ministerial experience with their Archbishop and with one another - thereby preserving a sense of inter-relationship and union with the mission of the Church.
- a. What have been your opportunities to meet with the Archbishop during the past year? \_\_\_\_\_ Have you availed yourself of these opportunities? \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Have you had sufficient opportunities to meet with the diaconal community during the past year? \_\_\_\_\_ Have you availed yourself of these opportunities? \_\_\_\_\_

- c. How have you and your wife participated in a deacon support group? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, how often do you meet? \_\_\_\_\_ Are you interested in knowing more about such groups?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. What are your suggestions on how to improve on the opportunities for sharing ministerial experience which are currently provided?
9. The deacon must be comfortable with his ministerial agreement and have some flexibility in his ministry -particularly in a culture which tends to equate personal value with volume of activity only.
- a. What criteria do you use to judge the 'success' of your ministry?
- b. Do you have any identity problem in your working relationship with your pastor or other priests or the Archdiocese? \_\_\_\_\_ Explain.
10. The deacon should be experienced in and be seen as being involved in service ministries, especially to those most deserving the attention and care of the Church: the poor, the underprivileged and the dispossessed.
- a. Explain how your ministry involves you in service ministries.
- b. In what respect is your ministry 'prophetic' to the community?
- c. How do you become aware of the needs of the poor, the underprivileged and the dispossessed?
- d. Do you make an effort to respond to these needs?
11. Since Christian marriage is sacramental, a vocation of Christian witness in the world, there cannot be a contradiction between that sacramental mode of presence to wife, family and others, and that diaconal presence.

- a. Have you and your wife experienced the influence of diaconal ministry in and on your marriage? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, what have you done about it?
  
- b. How has your diaconal involvement affected you relationship with your children?
  
- c. What steps do you take to resolve the contradictions and strains that do arise or cause difficulties in your marital relationship?

PLEASE RETURN YOUR COMPLETED SELF-ASSESSMENT TO THE DIRECTOR OF DEACONS BY AUGUST 15.

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