



THE ARCHBISHOP OF REGINA

November 14, 2013

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I am writing to you to make you aware of a new program of formation that is being established in the Archdiocese. We are setting in place a formation program for the permanent diaconate. Both Pope Francis and Pope Benedict have emphasized the necessity of continuing the work of the Second Vatican Council. One of the initiatives of Vatican II was the restoration of the permanent diaconate.

Since the early beginnings of the Church, as we see in the writings of the New Testament, ordained ministry in the Church has followed a threefold pattern: bishop, priest and deacon.

Over the centuries, the order of deacon faded in the life of the Church and became a step on the way to the ordained priesthood. This is known as the transitional diaconate. Vatican II restored the permanent diaconate, a form of ordained ministry distinct from priesthood. Just as the diaconate is not a replacement for priestly ministry, neither is it a replacement for lay ministry. Indeed, properly understood, all ministries in the Church have their own purpose and are mutually supportive.

I am happy to announce that, in accord with the wishes of the Second Vatican Council, men with a vocation to this ministry will now be able to pursue this call within our own Archdiocese. A diaconal formation program is being established that will begin in September, 2014. While there have been deacons working in our diocese for many years, their numbers have been few, due mainly to the fact that no local formation program was available. As deacons are usually men with work and family commitments, it is difficult for them to leave home for their formation.

Information about the diaconate in general and our new diaconate program more specifically are available on our Archdiocesan website. There is also a brochure available in your parish church. The brochure contains dates for information sessions to be held around the Archdiocese beginning this week. These dates are also available on the Archdiocesan Web Site. Interested individuals are invited to contact the Archdiocesan director of diaconal formation with any questions.

Any vocation - to marriage, to priesthood or to the diaconate - grows out of the community of faith and is nurtured by the prayer and support of that community. As such, this new initiative of our Archdiocese involves not only those called to the diaconate, but all of us. I ask that you join me in praying for vocations to the diaconate and for those men in our community that are being called to this ministry of service to the people of God.

Finally, if you know of any men in our faith community with a love for Christ and his people, a generous open spirit, and a heart for service, consider asking them, as I am asking you now, "Have you considered a call to serve Christ's Church as a deacon?"

Yours sincerely in Christ,

✠ Daniel J. Bohan
Archbishop of Regina

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