



DIOCESE OF HARRISBURG

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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January 13, 2026

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As the current candidates for the Permanent Diaconate are completing their final year of formation, I am pleased to announce that a new cohort of Candidates for the Permanent Diaconate will begin their formation at the end of August 2026.

I encourage men throughout the Diocese of Harrisburg who have discerned that they may be called to serve the Church as deacons, to make an appointment to meet with their pastor and discuss this possibility. Candidates must be Catholics in good standing who have received all the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion), are committed disciples of Jesus Christ, and who are prayerful and active in the Church. Candidates should be between the ages of 30 and 62, healthy, educated, financially stable, registered in a parish in the Diocese of Harrisburg, and, if married, in a mature, valid, and stable marriage. Single applicants must be ready to contemplate lifelong celibacy, and married applicants must understand that following ordination, if a deacon's wife predeceases him, he will remain celibate.

Applications are available to those who are discerning the Permanent Diaconate only through their pastors. Applications will be available this month and must be submitted no later than March 15, 2026.

Those who are interested in learning more about the Permanent Diaconate or the application and formation process are encouraged to attend one of three information sessions that will be held in the diocese:

- Sunday, January 25, 2025, at 2:00 pm at San Juan Bautista Parish, 425 S. Duke Street, Lancaster
- Tuesday, January 27, 2026, at 6:00 pm at the Diocesan Center, 4800 Union Deposit Road, Harrisburg
- Sunday, February 15, 2026, at 2:00 pm at Saint Pius X Parish, 112 Fairview Drive, Selinsgrove

Additional details are available on the diocesan website under the Permanent Diaconate FAQ, or by contacting the Office for Diaconate Formation at 717-657-4804 x282.

I invite all the faithful of our Diocese to join me in praying for our brothers who may be discerning a call to the Permanent Diaconate and for their families. Pray that God will continue to provide deacons to serve our people who pattern their lives after the heart of Jesus, "who came not to be served, but to serve." (Matthew 20:28)

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Timothy C. Senior
Bishop of Harrisburg