

In its Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, the fathers of Second Vatican Council called for the restoration of the diaconate as a permanent order of ordained ministry in the Catholic Church. A little less than three years later, in 1967, with his *motu proprio Sacrum Diaconatus Ordinem*, Pope Paul VI acted on this by approving the Council's request not only to reinstitute the diaconate as a permanent order of ministry but allowing married men to be ordained deacons. Discussing this proposed reform in September 1964, the *Intermountain Catholic* noted that if approved, this restoration "will enable deacons to baptize, assist at marriages, to distribute Communion." Two years after his promulgation of the *motu proprio* concerning deacons, Pope Paul VI approved the request of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (the forerunner of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) to establish the permanent diaconate in the United States. Slowly, dioceses, across the United States, formed permanent diaconate programs, including the Diocese of Salt Lake City.

In January 1974, the Most Reverend Joseph L. Federal, Sixth Bishop of the Diocese of Salt Lake City, formed a committee to study the possibility of establishing a permanent diaconate program in the Diocese of Salt Lake City. In the middle of the year, the Committee, chaired by Reverend John J. Hedderman, submitted a tentative proposal to Bishop Federal for the implementation of such a program. To discuss the Committee's proposal, Bishop Federal invited Msgr. Ernest J. Fiedler, Executive Director of the U.S. Bishops' Committee on the Permanent Diaconate, to Salt Lake City. On September 28, 1974, Bishop Federal instituted the permanent diaconate in the Diocese of Salt Lake City. In a pastoral letter, announcing the creation of the permanent diaconate, Bishop Federal wrote, "at this time I feel that for the good of souls the order of permanent diaconate should be established in our Diocese of Salt Lake City." He continued on: "for most of you the idea of the permanent diaconate will be something new, but, in fact, it has been with the Church from the beginning. It is my hope that the permanent deacons in the diocese can assist the priests and others in serving you more effectively."

The screening process for the first diaconate class started in September. Beginning in January 1975, the first diaconate group of candidates and their wives started with classes held at the Bishop Glass School and Service Center, Salt Lake City.

On December 26, 1976, the feast of St. Stephen, Deacon and First Christian martyr, Bishop Federal ordained the first deacon class at the

Cathedral of the Madeleine. The first deacons of the Diocese of Salt Lake City were:

- Robert W. Bambrick, St. Henry Parish, Brigham City
- Thomas M. Buller, St. Joseph Parish, Ogden
- John J. Conniff, St. Joseph Parish, Ogden
- Mansueto M. Flaim, St. Marguerite Parish, Tooele
- Leonard J. Henzke, St. Vincent De Paul Parish, Salt Lake City
- Silvio Mayo, St. Patrick Parish, Salt Lake City
- Tranquilino Otero, St. Francis Xavier Parish, Kearns
- Lowell L. Palm, Cathedral of the Madeleine, Salt Lake City
- Charles L. O'Connell, St. Olaf Parish, Bountiful
- Joseph W. Reed, St. Rose of Lima Parish, Layton
- Stanley L. Stott, Blessed Sacrament Parish, Sandy
- Bud J. Wardle, St. James Parish, Ogden
- John C. Weis, St. Rose of Lima Parish, Layton
- Richard E. Werling, St. Henry Parish, Brigham City

From this group of fourteen men, the permanent diaconate program grew. As formation was ending for the first class of deacons, formation for the second class began in January 1976. Bishop Federal ordained the second class of deacons on December 18, 1977 at the Cathedral of the Madeleine. Training for the third class of deacons commenced in September 1978. The Most Reverend William K. Weigand, Seventh Bishop of the Diocese of Salt Lake City, ordained the third class of deacons on June 6, 1981 at the Cathedral of the Madeleine. For several years, the Diocese did not form any new diaconate classes. The next formation class began in 1995. On November 30, 1997, the Diocese of Salt Lake City graduated its fourth class of deacons when the Most Reverend George Niederauer, Eighth Bishop of the Diocese of Salt Lake City, ordained sixteen men to the permanent diaconate.

The Diocese also started a diaconate formation program for Southern Utah in 1996. From this formation program, Bishop Niederauer ordained six men to the permanent diaconate on November 19, 2000 at St. George Parish. Also in 2000, formation of the sixth diaconate class began. This was the first class to be formed according to new universal norms promulgated by the Vatican's Congregation for the Clergy and Congregation for Catholic Education. On January 24, 2004, Bishop Niederauer ordained twenty-four permanent deacons for service in the Diocese. In 2004, based on the Holy See's universal norms, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), after receiving a *recognitio* from the Holy See, published the first edition of the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of*

*Permanent Deacons in the United States.* In 2010, the Most Reverend Bishop John C. Wester, Ninth Bishop of the Diocese of Salt Lake City, ordained the seventh class of permanent deacons, the first class to be formed according to the newly issued *National Directory*.

By the early 2010s, many pastors wanted deacons who spoke Spanish to better serve the needs of the Latino Community. In 2012, the Diocese started a formation program for Spanish-speaking men. On January 27, 2017, Bishop Wester ordained sixteen primarily Spanish-speaking deacons for the Diocese.

Out of these formation classes, many remarkable men have served as deacons. In 1985, Bishop Weigand named Deacon Silvio Mayo, diaconate class of 1976, Chancellor of the Diocese. Deacon Mayo's appointment marked the first time that a permanent deacon was appointed chancellor in the United States. In 2015, Deacon George Reade, diaconate class of 2004, was appointed chancellor of the Diocese, making him the second deacon to serve as Chancellor. On November 30, 1997, Bishop Niederauer ordained the first two Tongan deacons from the Diocese: Deacon Philip Otto Johansson and Deacon Sefo Manu, both of St. Patrick's Parish, Salt Lake City. After ordination, Deacon Johansson hoped to "preach in the Tongan Language for Tongan communities." Deacon Manu goals were to "work with my parish and also to the Tongan community of the parish." Seven years later, on January 24, 2004, Bishop Niederauer ordained William T. Folkes, becoming first African-American deacon in the Diocese of Salt Lake City. Deacon Folkes was born in Jackson, Mississippi, served in the Army, earned a bachelors' degree in social work from the University of Utah and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Phoenix. He worked at the State Training School and served as a deacon at St. Peter Parish, American Fork and later at St. George Parish, St. George. He died January 18, 2017. Deacon Owen Cummings, originally from Scotland, who incardinated into the Diocese of Salt Lake City from the Diocese of Birmingham, England, is a well-known theologian and the author of many books on theology, including on the diaconate. Deacon Cummings earned his doctorate in systematic theology at the University of Dublin. He is currently serving as Regents' Professor of Theology at Mount Angel Seminary, St. Benedict, Oregon. In 2008, Pope Benedict XVI awarded him the honor of *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice*. Tragedy struck the diaconate in 2005, when Deacon Aniceto Armendariz was murdered on September 25, 2005 by three men who mistakenly believed Deacon Armendariz was a police informant.

The formation process for deacons has evolved since the 1970s. For the first formation class, after being screened by a board, the men entered the formation program. This consisted of formal classes in such subjects as the Bible, moral theology, liturgy, preaching and church law, plus special training to fit the particular field each man would enter. The training period for each candidate was two years before ordination. Following ordination, the new deacons undertook an additional year of academic preparation as well as in-service training in two areas of liturgical and pastoral service. Beginning with the promulgation of universal norms by the Holy See's Congregation for Catholic Education in 1998, diaconate formation became more structured and holistic. At this time, the Diocese's formation program became four years. An additional year was added with the publication of the first edition of the USCCB's *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*. With the publication of the second edition of the *National Directory* in 2021, which added a second year of Aspirancy, diaconal formation is now a little short of six years.

The two years of diaconal formation are called Aspirancy. In this stage, the aspirant learns about himself, pastoral ministry in general and diaconal ministry in particular. The focus of this period is discernment on the part of the aspirant and his wife, if he is married, and discernment on the part of the Church to determine whether the aspirant is called to be a deacon. Those who complete Aspirancy become Candidates for ordination. Candidacy is three-and-a-half to four years. Upon successful completion of Candidacy, men are instituted by the bishop into the minor orders of lector and acolyte prior to ordination.

Deacons are not formed alone. Numerous men and women have served in various ways, either as program directors, or on the formation teams, to shape diaconate. The first director of the permanent diaconate program was Monsignor John J. Hedderman, followed by Deacon Douglas Sliger, Deacon Silvo Mayo, Deacon Forrest Gray and Deacon Robert Hardy. Deacon Scott Dodge is the current director. Aiding the director in the formation of deacons was a formation team. The first formation team consisted of Reverend Robert J. Bussen, Reverend J. Terrence Fitzgerald, Reverend Terence M. Moore and Sister Mary Ellen Vaughan, C.S.C. Later members of the formation team included Sister Margo Cain, C.S.C, Deacon Silvo Mayo, Deacon Mansueto Flaim, Mary Flaim, Barbara Glodowski, Sister Ellen Mary Taylor, C.S.C, Sister Maria Molina, S.N.D.de N, Deacon Steven W. Kirts, John Kluthe, M.D., Deacon Russell R. Langer, Deacon Anthony J. Lopez, Sister Marianne Rohrer, S.A., Reverend Clarence J. Sandoval, Chris Segura, Deacon German A. Toro, Patricia Werling, Sister Patricia Riley,

C.S.C, Deacon Owen Cummings, Sister Georgitia Cunningham, R.S.M, Sister Jeremia Januschka, O.S.B, Deacon Dale Dillon, Reverend Eleazar Silva, and Deacon Drew Petersen.

Today, there are eighty-one deacons in the Diocese of Salt Lake City. The Dioese's diaconal community is a wonderfully diverse group, coming from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Forty percent are Latino; fifty-seven percent are White; and three percent are Asian-Pacific. The next formation class begins in January 2022.