



The PeliDeacon

*a newsletter about deacons
in The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana*

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Special Convention Issue



Special Convention Issue

“Day on Deacons” Draws Participants from across Diocese

Over fifty Episcopalians from across the Diocese of Louisiana gathered at Solomon Episcopal Conference Center this fall for a day-long exploration of the Sacred Order of Deacons. Deacons, along with bishops and priests, constitute the three clerical orders in the Episcopal Church.

A day of speakers, presentations and panel discussions surveyed the history and specific ministries of the diaconate within the church and in the world.



Archdeacon deGravelles explains connections between the liturgical role of deacons and their ministries in the world.

Duckworth and Archdeacon Charles deGravelles.

“As I drove home, my heart was filled with gratitude for such a wonderful day, led by an incredible team,” Bishop Duckworth wrote afterwards. “I look forward to many such gatherings in the years to come as well as the continued growth of this important order.”



The Rt. Rev. Shannon Duckworth celebrates the Eucharist with assistance from Deacons Obier, Spencer and Hackett.

The day was also grounded in worship. Morning Prayer was led by Deacon Michael Hackett, and The Holy Eucharist was celebrated by Bishop Shannon Duckworth. In addition, participants enjoyed breakfast, lunch, and time for informal fellowship. Lay participants were able to visit with the Bishop, deacons and priests and to ask questions during plenary and informal settings.

The day concluded with a wrap-up session and question-and-answer period, led by Bishop



Deacon Ben Nobles describes his ministry to the unhoused and destitute of New Orleans.

What Is a Deacon?



Deacon Charles deGravelles ministers at an addiction recovery center in Baton Rouge in 2019.

In the Episcopal Church, deacons are one of three distinct orders of ordained ministry (with bishops and presbyters). Deacons exercise “a special ministry of servanthood” directly under the bishop, serving all people and especially those in need. This definition reflects the practice of the early church, in which deacons were ordained “not to the priesthood but to the servanthood (*diakonia*, “ministry”) of the bishop.” Christian deacons were agents of the bishop, often with oversight of charity. As they proclaim the gospel, lead intercessions, wait at the eucharistic table, and direct the order of the assembly, deacons act as sacred messengers, agents, and attendants. The revival of the order of deacons in the twentieth century has emphasized social care and service. Episcopal canons also

require those called to the priesthood to be ordained as “transitional deacons” as a preliminary step toward ordination as a priest, different than “vocational” or “permanent” deacons.



(Left) Deacon Cindy Obier reads the Gospel at a Eucharist service at St. Paul’s New Orleans. (Right) Deacon Debbie Scalia presents The Louisiana Deacon Award to Deacon Joyce Jackson for Jackson’s many years of ministry at St. Anna’s New Orleans.



Want to Know More about Deacons?

If you would like your congregation or deanery to know more about deacons, what Louisiana deacons are doing, or how to identify possible candidates for the diaconate in your parish, we will be happy to come and make a presentation to fit your needs. Please contact Archdeacon Charles deGravelles at charlesdegravelles@cox.net or via cell phone at 225-223-0607.

Deacons Serve in the Spirit of Jesus Christ



Deacons Model Service

Deacons Inspire Service

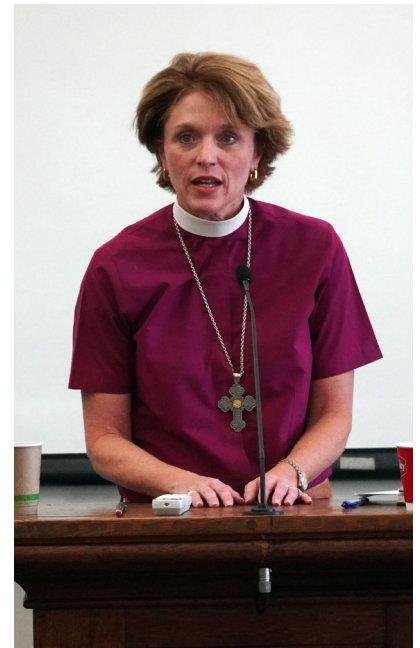
Deacons Facilitate Service



Deacons are a Bridge Between the Church and the World

How Does One Become a Deacon?

“All baptized persons are called to minister in Christ’s name, identifying their gifts and serving Christ’s mission at all times and in all places. Specific roles express our baptismal identity in accordance with God’s calling to each of us to use our unique gifts most fully. In order to assist a person to identify the role into which God may be calling him/her, a formal process of discernment is helpful. The Diocese of Louisiana welcomes inquirers into a period of vocational discernment. The discoveries you make during this time may lead you to pursue service as a member of the laity, a deacon, or a priest. As you enter this process, please know that you are being held in our prayers, that God’s deepest longings for you may be brought to fulfillment.” (From EDOLA website.) For more information, go to <https://www.edola.org/clergy-ordination-process/>



Bishop Shannon Duckworth addresses recent “Day on Deacons” conference.



Deacon Ormonde Plater (1933-2016) reads the Gospel and Deacon Cindy Obier serves as chaplain to Bishop Morris Thompson at Christ Church Cathedral in New Orleans.



Father Jay Angerer, head of the Commission on Ministry, reviews the process from discernment to ordination during the “Day on Deacons” conference..

The Deacons of Louisiana



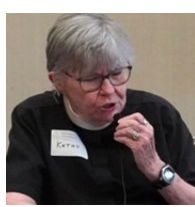
Since 1961, the Diocese of Louisiana has created or welcomed into its fold 43 deacons who have served in a wide range of ministries—to those in prison and those transitioning out of prison, to the unhoused and destitute, those in addictions recovery, the elderly, refugees, immigrants, the LGBTQ community, those with HIV, law-enforcement officers and victims of disasters. Assigned to parishes or as non-parochial clergy, active or retired, Louisiana deacons have been committed to fulfilling their ordination vows to “a special ministry of servanthood directly under [their] bishop.... In the name of Jesus Christ...[serving] all people, particularly the poor, the weak, the sick, and the lonely.”



Dn. Jay Albert
Council on Deacons



Dn. Elaine Clements
Council on Deacons



Dn. Kathleen Comer
Retired



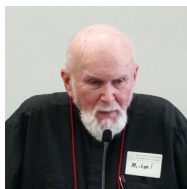
Dn. Maggie Dawson
Retired



Dn. Charles deGravelles
Archdeacon



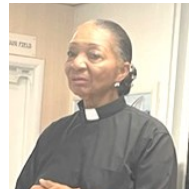
Dn. JoAnn Garma
Council on Deacons



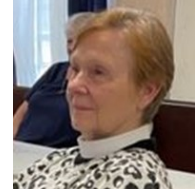
Dn. Michael Hackett
Council on Deacons



Dn. Mark Hudson
Council on Deacons



Dn. Joyce Jackson
Retired



Dn. Alyce Jefferson
Retired



Dn. Charmaine Kathmann
All Saints, River Ridge



Dn. Pat Lyle
Retired



Dn. Luigi Mandile
St. Anna's, N.O.



Dn. Ben Nobles
St. Anna's, N.O.



Dn. Cindy Obier
Chaplain to the Bishop



Dn. Debbie Scalia
Council on Deacons



Deacon Carol Spencer
Trinity, New Orleans



Dn. Reese Wiggins
St. Stephen's, Innis



Dn. Phil Wild
Christ Church, Covington



Dn. John Holbert
Retired

NOT PICTURED: Dn. Louis Ogle, Retired