



## The Most Holy Body & Blood of Christ June 10, 2012 B

### What is a Deacon in the Catholic Church?

Longtime Ascension parishioner Bill Terneus was ordained this weekend to the Order of Deacon by Bishop Noonan.

Acts 6:1-6 gives us the biblical and historical origin of the Diaconate. As the number of disciples grew, friction developed between the Greek and Hebrew followers because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. So the twelve apostles called together the community of disciples and said, "It is not right for us to neglect the word of God to serve at table. Brothers, select from among you seven reputable men, filled with the Spirit and wisdom, whom we shall appoint to this task, whereas we shall devote ourselves to prayer and ministry of the word." The proposal was accepted by the whole community, so they chose Stephen, a man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit, also Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas of Antioch. They presented these men to the Apostles who prayed and laid hands on them. The term used to describe Stephen and the others selected was the Greek word '*diaconal*,' which is translated as servant or minister. This is the root of the word deacon.

Due to a variety of reasons, the need for deacons diminished as time passed with Catholicism becoming the official religion of Rome. Consequently, the Diaconate, as a distinct Sacrament of Orders, essentially became inactive in the Latin Church for some 1,000 years. The Diaconate became more of a transitional step on the way to priesthood. However, the Eastern Church never broke from the tradition of the 'permanent Diaconate.'

On June 18, 1967, the 2nd Vatican Council restored the 'permanent Diaconate' in the Latin Church (Apostolic Letter *Sarum Diaconatus Ordinem*). This was to give depth to the ordained ministry and official Church presence in the business world.

Since that time, the number of ordained permanent deacons has grown to around 36,000 worldwide (17,500 in the United States alone).

### Three ordained orders in the Catholic Church

There are 3 *Ordained* Orders in the Roman Catholic Church: Bishop, Priest and Deacon. All are recognized as clergy.

Today's deacons are called to a threefold ministry:

**Ministry of Charity:** The deacon is ordained to be a witness to the Gospel through a life of service.

**Ministry of the Word:** The deacon proclaims the Gospel at Mass. He is an agent of evangelization by announcing the Good News of Christ. The deacon also preaches at liturgical gatherings, teaches religious education (RCIA), and is involved in sacramental preparation programs, i.e. Baptism and marriage.

**Ministry of Liturgy:** The deacon assists in the Eucharistic celebration, presides at baptisms, can witness marriages, officiates at wakes and funerals, presides at some sacramental and prayer services, i.e. communion services and benediction.

### Deacon Bill Terneus

Deacon Bill was born in Bridgeport, WV, on September 12, 1951. He and his three siblings were raised in a strong Catholic environment. In eighth grade, when Bill thought about becoming a priest, his mother asked him to wait until he graduated from high school before entering the seminary. (His 90-year old mother is here for the ceremonies this weekend.) In high school, Bill met his future wife Christy. They will be celebrating their forty-first wedding anniversary on June 26. They have three children and five grandchildren. Bill and his family have been members of Ascension since 1980.

Deacon Bill is currently employed by General Electric as a draftsman engineer.

Bill has been involved with the RCIA process for ten years. He is a Third Degree Knight in the Knights of Columbus. Deacon Bill's ministries outside the walls of the church include a multi-denominational Bible and prayer group and with others from GE. He is also involved in multiple outreach projects.

Bill was baptized at St. *James* Catholic Church in Clarksburg. He took the name *James* for his confirmation and was ordained a deacon at St. *James* Cathedral in Orlando. Next weekend, our new Deacon will preach at all of the Masses.

## Forty Years of Priesthood

Fr. Dan and I were ordained on June 11, he in 1949 and I in 1972. Each year we celebrated Mass together on the anniversary of our ordination.

I was ordained with eleven other classmates at St. Mary's Cathedral in Kilkenny, ten miles from where I grew up.

Four of the twelve newly ordained priests came to America (three of us to Florida), three went to England, one to Scotland, and four remained in Ireland.

Back in the fifties and sixties, and into the seventies, about three quarters of the number of priests ordained in Ireland each year left the country to serve the Church overseas. In those days, little Ireland ordained about 150 priests each year. This year there are only ten new seminarians for the whole of Ireland. Priests from the Philippines and Africa are now coming to Ireland.

I could have chosen to go to any diocese in the English-speaking world that was in need of priests. I would have liked to tell you that I had a visit from the Holy Spirit telling me to come to Florida, but I didn't. I think pictures of the sunshine may have influenced my decision. Lots of other seminarians had also chosen Florida. Anyway, I have often thanked God that I didn't choose a diocese with cold, snowy winters.

This is my sixth parish to serve in in the diocese. I'm glad to say that I have enjoyed my time in each. I was blessed with good pastors in the first four parishes. I was equally Blessed to serve with great religious sisters in each parish. When people visit from Ireland, they are always so impressed with the involvement of the laity in our parishes here. This is especially true of Ascension where we have hundreds of people involved in many of our different ministries. I feel very blessed and grateful to be pastor of such a great parish. I am thankful to all of you who pray for me and affirm me with your kind words.

Have a blessed week,

*Fr. Dan*



**Giving a  
"Yank"  
milking lesson  
which I started  
doing at 6 or 7  
years of age**



**Ireland  
Hurling  
Champs,  
Senior  
Year  
High  
School,  
1965**



**Early seminary days  
"I think I had been to the pub?"**

**Seminary Days**



**Working in New York With my friend Pat  
During summer when I was a seminarian**





**Ordination Day June 11, 1072**

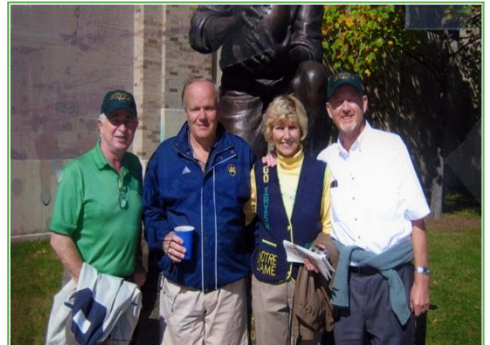


**Washington D.C. 1973  
Summer Conference**

**40 years of  
wonderful  
memories!**



**2 Men and a Baby  
[Fr. Paul Henry & me]**



**Notre Dame Football Game**



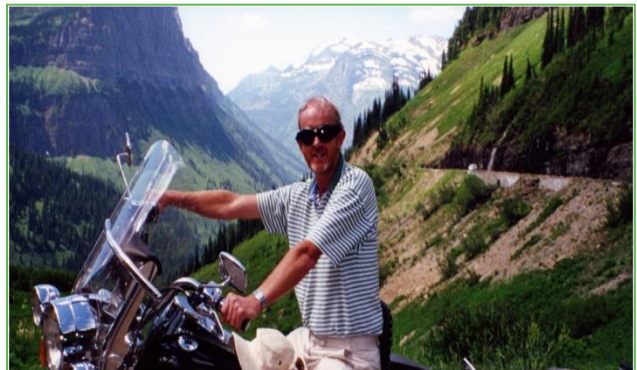
***"Dancing with the Stars"*  
Sr. Mary Walsh -Lima, Peru**



**With Family in Ireland**



**Machu Pichu, Peru**



***"Easy Rider"*  
Glacier National Park, Montana  
{I borrowed the bike for the photo}**