# **Service Agreement**

Name of Deacon \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parish/Location \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Organization (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This agreement covers the years beginning (Month/year) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ through (month /year)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## Purpose of Service Agreement

This agreement serves as a tool that a pastor and a deacon use to arrive at a mutual commitment and understanding of the deacon's ministry while assigned to a specific parish and to document the agreement. It facilitates a dialogue in which pastor and deacon discern how the deacon may exercise his diaconal ministry, which is integrated and moderated by the unique circumstances of his family and professional life, if still employed. It also defines the pastor's commitment to resources and support needed for the deacon needed for the deacon to achieve his goals, and to assist and support the deacon in his continuing formation and spiritual growth.

The agreement seeks also to promote accountability to the Bishop through the diocesan Office of Clergy Formation providing a working basis for ministry reviews of the deacon and his assignment every three years.

Deacons or pastors may request that the agreement be reviewed by the parties when life or parish circumstances curtail the deacon’s ability to fulfill commitments as outlined. Otherwise, the agreement remains in effect for three years or until the installation of a new pastor or parochial administrator at which time a new agreement is arranged.

As reflected in the national directory for deacons there is a threefold call to ministry for all deacons.

* The Church’s Ministry of the Word: The Deacon as Evangelizer and Teacher
* The Church’s Ministry of Liturgy: The Deacon as Sanctifier
* The Church’s Ministry of Charity and Justice: The Deacon as Witness and Guide

By ordination, the deacon, who sacramentalizes the Church’s service, is to exercise the Church’s diakonia. Therefore, “the diaconal ministries, distinguished above, are not to be separated; the deacon is ordained for them all, and no one should be ordained who is not prepared to undertake each in some way.” However, even if this inherent ministerial service is one and the same in every case, nevertheless, the concrete ways of carrying it out are diverse; these must be suggested, in each case, by the different pastoral situations of the single churches.” A deacon may also have greater abilities in one aspect of ministry; and, therefore, his service may be marked by one of them more than by the others. (National Directory, ch 1, par 39)

Following is a list of some of the possible ministries that the deacon may be involved in. This list is not meant to be inclusive or exclusive but simply an indication of the focus of your particular ministry. Please check those ministries that reflect your intention for service in the coming years or an openness to respond to as needed or requested.

A. The Church’s Ministry of Charity and Justice: The Deacon as Witness and Guide:

Outreach to the poor\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Ministry to the sick and dying \_\_\_\_\_

Visiting Homebound or those confined to institutions. (hospital or jail ministries) \_\_\_\_

Social Justice/ Advocacy \_\_\_\_\_\_

Collaboration with institutions like St. Vincent de Paul, Knights of Columbus etc.\_\_\_\_\_\_

Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

B. The Church’s Ministry of the Word: The Deacon as Evangelizer and Teacher:

Adult religious Education/Scripture study \_\_\_\_\_

Baptismal Preparation \_\_\_\_\_

Marriage Preparation \_\_\_\_\_

Annulments \_\_\_\_\_

RCIA \_\_\_\_\_\_

Training of lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Altar Servers \_\_\_\_\_

Cursillos and other non-sacramental activities at which you preside as deacon \_\_\_\_\_

Spiritual direction \_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

C. The Church’s Ministry of Liturgy: The Deacon as Sanctifier

Services at Masses \_\_\_\_

Baptisms at which you function as deacon: \_\_\_\_

Confirmations \_\_\_\_

Weddings \_\_\_\_

Funerals / Vigil Services/ gravesite services \_\_\_\_

Prayer/ reconciliation services \_\_\_\_

Holy Communion taken to homes or institutions at which you function as a deacon \_\_\_\_

Benedictions \_\_\_\_

Stations of the Cross \_\_\_\_

Novenas \_\_\_\_

Retreats/ Days of Recollection \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The normal preaching assignments each month will include: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The deacon is assigned to a particular parish to be a servant to the bishop and the priests of a particular local in their service to the people of God. Deacons have a particular role in bringing together the needs and resources of the people. Communication and collaboration of the deacon with the pastor then is essential to the church's response to the call to serve.

* For this reason, the deacon and the pastor shall meet together privately at minimum once every three months to discuss the needs of the parish and the ministries of the deacon.
* The deacon is encouraged to participate in the planning meetings of the parish.
* To further promote communication and collaboration the deacon is encouraged to participate in the Pastoral Council. As an appointed member of the parish staff the deacon is not there to give advice but to receive and clarify the vision and advice of the laity along with the priests. This participation would enhance the deacon’s ability to support the leadership of the pastor.

As a servant to the Lord and assigned to this parish I commit to dedicate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ hours per month on average to the parish in the threefold ministries of deacon. This will include hours of preparation for preaching and preparation time for other services.

Statement of a personal ministerial goal:

Statement of current or intentioned involvement in ministries that are outside the parish’s understanding of “parish ministries”; i.e. Catholic social services, jail ministry, St. Vincent de Paul, organizations that advocate for or feed the homeless, specific tasks requested by diocesan staff in service to the diocese, etc.

Resources: These are some of the ways I will fulfill my continuing formation:

* Continuing Education Formation days offered by the diocese
* Spiritual Direction
* Annual retreats
* Reading relevant documents from the diocese or the Church at large that reflect on deacons or our ministries
* Other

Deacons do not receive any offering for services rendered in their ministry, according to Diaconate Policy and diocesan statutes. The Parish assumes the cost of the continuing formation of Deacons and wives. These include diocesan Deacon Education days, Diocesan Retreats, pre-approved Conferences, books, mileage, or supplies needed for the ministry.

Asking for God's grace, we the undersigned, join together in service to God's People in accepting this agreement. We pray that the Spirit will guide us in our ministries for the greater honor and glory of God.

Deacon\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Pastor/Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge and support this agreement:

Deacon's Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please forward a copy of the completed and signed Agreement to:

Office of Clergy Formation, 2110 Broadway, Sacramento, CA 95818

## Notes from the National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States, chapter 1

### V. The Church’s Ministry of the Word: The Deacon as Evangelizer and Teacher

He may preach by virtue of ordination and in accord with the requirements of Canon Law. Other forms of the deacon’s participation in the Church’s ministry of the word include catechetical instruction; religious formation of candidates and families preparing for the reception of the sacraments; leadership roles in retreats, evangelization, and renewal programs; outreach to alienated Catholics; and counseling and spiritual direction, to the extent that he is properly trained. The deacon also strives to “transmit the word in [his] professional [life] either explicitly or merely by [his] active presence in places where public opinion is formed and ethical norms are applied.” (31)

Because the deacon sacramentalizes service, he should proclaim the word in such a way that he first witnesses its empowerment in his own life. Then he can effectively challenge others to practice the Church’s ministry of charity and justice in the social environments in which people live their baptismal vocation. By his own faithful practice of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, the deacon “by word and example . . . should work so that all the faithful, in imitation of Christ, may place themselves at the constant service of their brothers and sisters.” (32)

### VI. The Church’s Ministry of Liturgy: The Deacon as Sanctifier

In the context of the Church’s public worship, because of its centrality in the life of the believing community, the ministry of the deacon in the threefold diakonia of the word, of the liturgy, and of charity is uniquely concentrated and integrated. (34)

### VII. The Church’s Ministry of Charity and Justice: The Deacon as Witness and Guide

The deacon’s ministry, as Pope John Paul II has said, “is the Church’s service sacramentalized.” Therefore, the deacon’s service in the Church’s ministry of word and liturgy would be severely deficient if his exemplary witness and assistance in the Church’s ministry of charity and justice did not accompany it. Thus, Pope John Paul II affirms both: “This is at the very heart of the diaconate to which you have been called: to be a servant of the mysteries of Christ and, at one and the same time, to be a servant of your brothers and sisters. That these two dimensions are inseparably joined together in one reality shows the important nature of the ministry which is yours by ordination.” (36)

The deacon’s service in the Church’s ministry of charity and justice is integral to his service in the Church’s ministry of word and liturgy. “The three contexts of the diaconal ministry . . . represent a unity in service at the level of divine Revelation: the ministry of the word leads to ministry at the altar, which in turn prompts the transformation of life by the liturgy, resulting in charity.” (37)

The life of the deacon reflects this threefold calling. Just as the call to charity and justice informs the deacon as evangelizer, the ongoing call to holiness sends him into the world to serve people in need and reflect God's love for all.