Appendix-11

APPENDICES

1. Priestly Life and Ministry Board Documents
2. Faculties
3. Sacramental Assistance Compensation Guidelines
4. Pastor Position Description
5. Associate Pastor Position Description
6. Temporary Administrator Position Description
7. Retired Priest Policy
8. Funeral Arrangements Form
9. Deacon Life and Ministry Board Documents – Constitution and By–Laws
10. Faculties for Deacons
11. Letter of Understanding for Deacons
12. Placement Committee Forms for Deacons
13. Funeral Guidelines and Form for Deacons

APPENDIX 11

THE
LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING
FOR
PERMANENT DEACONS

INTRODUCTION

The Second Vatican Council fittingly shaped the restoration of the order of

the diaconate. “For strengthened by sacramental grace they are dedicated to the People of God, in conjunction with the bishop and his body of priests, in the service of the liturgy, of the gospel, and of works of charity.” *(Lumen Gentium, #29)*

Permanent deacons are assigned by the Archbishop for diaconal ministry in parishes, institutions, apostolates, etc. in the Archdiocese of Baltimore and supported in this work through his vicars and delegates and the Division of Clergy Personnel.

Aware of their common mission, the supervisor and deacon seek, through prayer and discussion, to achieve a common vision by which they will direct their collaborative ministerial efforts in a particular setting. They listen to one another with love and respect as partners in ministry and together discern the voice of the Holy Spirit.

PURPOSE

The Letter of Understanding is intended to clarify the mutual expectations and responsibilities of the deacon’s assignment through dialogue between the deacon and his supervisor. By detailing the deacon’s areas of responsibility, the Letter of Understanding will help the deacon, the supervisor, and other staff members to be conscious of their common mission and promote a positive working relationship. The Letter of Understanding should help to clarify both the supervisor’s expectations of the deacon as well as the deacon’s expectations of the supervisor.

If the deacon is an employee of a particular parish and also has other ministerial responsibilities at that parish, there may be the need for a distinct employment contract which would be cross-referenced in the Letter of Understanding. This Letter of Understanding is intended to address only the deacon’s ministerial responsibilities which are distinct from his employment with that parish.

INSTRUCTIONS

When a deacon prepares to begin an assignment, he meets with his

supervisor to discuss the services the deacon will provide to the ministry site.

The format of the Letter of Understanding reflects the deacon's three-fold ministries of Charity, Word, and Liturgy and invites the deacon and supervisor to identify together specific goals for the deacon's ministry. In some situations, consultation with other staff members during the preparation of the Letter of Understanding may be appropriate.

The following points should be given thoughtful attention as the deacon and supervisor prepare the Letter of Understanding:

Areas of Responsibility

The extent to which a deacon responds to the three areas of service – Charity, Word, and Liturgy – will vary according to his unique personality, gifts, and talents as well as the needs of his particular community. The Letter of Understanding should also indicate those duties which will be conducted wholly, or partly, outside of the ministry site assignment.

Especially with regard to the area of Liturgy, the deacon should assist at Mass, baptize, witness marriages, preside at wake services, benediction, the Liturgy of the Hours, and other appropriate services on a mutually agreeable schedule. A deacon should have the opportunity to preach on a regular basis, subject to the approval of the supervisor and the presider of the liturgy.

As a member of a parish staff, a deacon should be able to participate regularly in meetings of the staff, the pastoral council, and other appropriate collegial bodies. Although work commitments may make it difficult for the deacon to participate in staff meetings, the supervisor should make every effort to communicate with the deacon in order to share information with him and seek his input on matters

and plans pertaining to the parish. The deacon also shares in the responsibility to initiate and maintain ongoing communication with the pastor and other staff members.

Time

In light of the deacon's obligations at work and at home, a total commitment to ministerial responsibilities may average about 10 – 12 hours weekly.

Note should be made of the time needed to prepare homilies as well as time in which the deacon may be involved in extra-parochial or extra-agency service.

Compensation

Deacons who receive remuneration by reason of the secular livelihood they exercise or have exercised are to take care of their own and their family's needs from the income derived from this source and, therefore, they receive no salary.

Deacons should be reimbursed for expenses they incur in the exercise of their ministry. The ministry site is also to provide in the budget the designated amounts for the deacon's retreat and continuing education and formation participation.

For those deacons who are employed by the Church in some capacity, the distinction between the obligations in his employment contract and the Letter of Understanding should be made clear, especially in the area of compensation. There may need to be a distinct employment contract which would be cross-referenced in the *Letter of Understanding*. This *Letter of Understanding* is intended to address only the deacon's ministerial responsibilities which

are distinct from his employment with that parish.

Deacons employed by an Archdiocesan entity receive salary and benefits according to the Lay Employee's scale and plan. These deacons are also entitled to ordinary benefits provided a deacon if they serve in the same place.

Wife and Family

The deacon who is self-supporting through his own secular employment and has family commitments will provide diaconal service and ministry in ways which do not conflict with his primary obligation to his wife and family.

A married deacon should share the Letter of Understanding with his wife so that she may be familiar with and supportive of the ministerial commitments of her husband.

Supervision, Evaluation, Revision, and Renewal

The Letter of Understanding is to be one element of an ongoing process of dialogue between the deacon and his supervisor. The deacon and the supervisor should meet regularly so that the deacon may receive support and timely feedback regarding the effectiveness of his ministry as well as to deepen and unify their relationship for the benefit of each other as well as the ministry site.

The deacon and supervisor are also encouraged to engage in an annual evaluation session, set in a prayerful atmosphere, designed to affirm the deacon's past performance, and identify new goals for continued growth and development of his ministry.

The Letter of Understanding may be revised at any time by mutual consent of the deacon and the supervisor. It is recommended that the *Letter of Understanding* be reviewed

and updated at least **every 3 years**, at the midpoint and the end of the term, or whenever there is a substantial change in ministry. A revised *Letter of Understanding* is to be prepared and submitted to the Office of the Diaconate.

If a disagreement arises between the deacon and the supervisor, especially regarding the deacon's areas of responsibility, the first step should always be prayerful and open dialogue with each other in the effort to arrive at a mutually acceptable resolution. If this is not successful, either the deacon or the supervisor should contact the Office of the Diaconate so that resolution of the disagreements may be facilitated.

PERMANENT DEACON
LETTER OF UNDERSTANDING

DEACON:		
NAME:		
ADDRESS:		
PHONE:	H:	
	W:	
	C:	
FAX:		
E-MAIL:		
ASSIGNMENT:		
NAME:		
ADDRESS:		
PHONE:		
FAX:		

E-MAIL:		
SUPERVISOR:		

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

I MINISTRY OF CHARITY AND SERVICE			
OBJECTIVES	**TIME**	**WORKS WITH**	**COMMENTS**
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

II MINISTRY OF THE WORD			
OBJECTIVES	**TIME**	**WORKS WITH**	**COMMENTS**
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

III MINISTRY OF THE LITURGY			
OBJECTIVES	**TIME**	**WORKS WITH**	**COMMENTS**
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

IV DIACONAL REQUIREMENTS			
ACTIVITY	**Yes / No**	**COMMENTS**	
Yearly retreat			
Spiritual Director			
Ongoing Formation (formal)			
Ongoing Formation (informal)			

V PARTICIPATION IN ARCHDIOCESAN ACTIVITIES			
ACTIVITY	**Participated?**	**COMMENTS**	
Archdiocesan sponsored Retreat (at least once every 3 years)			

Day of Enrichment / Convocation			
Chrism Mass			
Ordinations			
Vicariate Meetings			
Deacon funerals			
Other deacon gatherings			

VI COMMENTS/ADDITIONAL MATTERS

DEACON			**SUPERVISOR**	
EFFECTIVE DATE:				
RENEWAL DATE:				