



Fall 2005

Deacon Ed Porter, Director Emeritus Honored At Cathedral Basilica

Diaconate in Newark Honors Former Director

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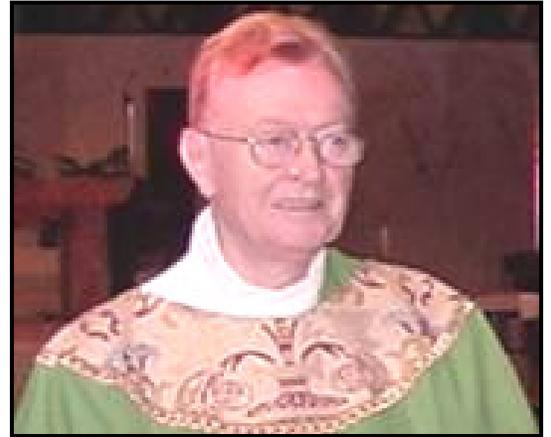
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Bishop Edgar M. da Cunha S.D.V.-D.D. concelebrated Holy Mass for the Annual Gathering of Deacons at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark on October 1, 2005.

This annual Mass, usually held close to the feast day of St. Francis of Assisi, Deacon, gave a special tribute to Deacon Edward M. Porter, Permanent Diaconate, Director Emeritus. Hundreds attended as Deacon Porter was acclaimed for his meritorious contributions to the Diaconate Community of the Archdiocese of Newark. During his tenure, as Director of the Permanent Diaconate, Deacon Ed exhibited compassion, sincerity, expertise, insight, good judgment & leadership. (see more on page 2 col.3)



In Memorial



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|---|---------------------------------|
| Pray for those who have left this Century | |
| Vishno Brennan | Tom Noone |
| Joe Cunningham | James P. McNulty |
| Al Mistretta | Charles Kiley |
| Bill Shelhamer | David Garcia |
| Joe Heinrich | Henry Keturwitis |
| Ed Hildebrandt | John A. Allgair |
| Theodore J. Glogoza | Edwin J. Alsing |
| Rafael Vargas | Vincent M. Messina |
| Osiris Molina | James J. White Jr. |
| Maureen Niland | Geraldine Lynn |
| Angela Petrozelli | James P. McNulty |
| Richard Mohr | Samuel Ventola |
| MaryLou Hogan | Angela Rosa Reyes |
| Tom White | James (Bill) W. Courtney |
| Walter Stanecki | John T. McCarthy |
| Incoronato Vitale | Margaret C. Grieder |
| George A. Ross | Alexander J. Czerepka |
| | Joseph Fiore |

Pray for Our Community

Please remember in your prayers all the ill and convalescing members of our diaconate family. May the Spirit of God, the healer of souls, bring His healing grace and peace upon the ailing, their families, and all who care and minister to them.

Office of the Permanent Diaconate

DeacoNews

Archdiocese of Newark, New Jersey

Director's Column



Deacon John McKenna

Since I was asked to assume the position of Director of Deacon Personnel on July 1, 2005, I have had the privilege and opportunity to speak with many of you concerning the diaconal ministries that you perform. I am amazed at the dedication and generosity of your service to the people of our Archdiocese. I know that this work is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

This past summer, I have been busy soliciting a number of dioceses' requesting information about their diaconal policies and procedures. A few have responded and I am in the process of distilling the information to incorporate into a handbook. Once it has been approved by the Archbishop, my idea is to have our policies and procedures handbook posted on the Archdiocesan Diaconate web site.

The contents of the handbook will include our policies regarding a formal Ministry Agreement, information on Ordination and Assignment, Faculties and procedures for requesting faculties in another diocese, to name a few. I believe that this will be a valuable reference guide for our ministry.

"My Life as a Catholic Deacon"



Deacon Ed Porter has written and published a new book, "My Life as a Catholic Deacon" which takes a deeply personal look at his first 11 years, of his 17 years, as a Catholic deacon. The book was designed to lend first hand experience to men who are in formation or considering the diaconate. Family, friends, and fellow deacons gave Deacon Ed's book rave reviews, a "must read."

"Any man considering or beginning the diaconate process needs to read this book. Deacon Ed Porter has a unique way of showing you the trials and triumphs of becoming a Deacon and he hopes to inspire you to embark upon or continue this wonderfully rewarding journey serving the public, and the Catholic Church". (web site quote)

The book can be ordered from the web site: <http://careersfordeacons.com> or from The Porter Publishing Co., Box 326, 765 Mountain Ave, Springfield, NJ 07081. The cost is \$14.98 and \$13.50 for deacons and men in formation

Important

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We gathered to honor our brother, advisor, confidant and special friend of the diaconate, Deacon Ed Porter Emeritus



Deacon Spotlight



Deacon Thomas DiBenedictis

Deacon Thomas H. DeBenedictis, D.P.M. (Doctor of Podiatric Medicine [Podiatric is the branch of medicine that deals with the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of diseases of the human foot, also called chiropody - from dictionary .com]) was born in 1949 in Christ Hospital, Jersey City, to Anne & Henry DeBenedictis. Tom's Mom was a registered nurse and his Dad was a Hudson County Police Officer. Tom was raised in a loving, supportive Catholic home in Union City and has an older brother Al. His grammar & high school years were spent in Union City.

After graduation from Emerson High School, Tom was accepted as the first male to attend Christ Hospital School of Nursing. After three years of school, Tom graduated and became a registered nurse in 1971. Tom met his wife Linda, who was a student nurse, while he was an orderly at Christ Hospital in 1967. Their relationship grew and they were married in August of 1971 soon after he graduated. During nursing school, Tom was drafted into military service, but because the Army needed Nurses, Tom was permitted to finish nursing school. He was inducted into the Army in 1970 and spent a year as a private first class at Christ Hospital School of Nursing. Upon graduation in June of 1971, Tom was commissioned a second lieutenant. After three

months of basic training in San Antonio, he was assigned as a staff nurse at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington D.C. for a two year tour of duty.

Tom was then accepted into the U.S. Army School of Nurse Anesthesia in October 1972 and was graduated in May of 1974 with a CRNA (Certified Registered Nurse Anesthesia) and re-assigned to Walter Reed where he spent five more years on active duty. While at Walter Reed, Linda & Tom were blessed with their first child Elizabeth, born in 1973 who is now married and living in Bayonne and working as a florist. Then in 1976 Diana was born, also at Walter Reed, who is now a probation and parole officer for the State of Delaware and lives in Wilmington, Delaware. After seven years of active duty Tom joined the U.S. Army Reserve and spent another 21 years in the Reserves retiring in 1998 as a Lieutenant Colonel.

When active duty was completed in 1978, he returned to civilian nursing as a nurse anesthetist. In 1979 Tom and a fellow worker, Jack Testa, applied to the New York College of Podiatric Medicine were accepted and graduated in 1984. Tom & Jack received Doctor Degrees in Podiatric Medicine. Tom then spent two years at West Haven Veterans Medical Center in Connecticut to complete surgical training in podiatric surgery. In 1986 Tom and Jack opened a podiatric practice in Union City and continue to practice there with a new younger associate, Dr. Margaret Portela. During the years of podiatric medical school and residencies, Tom and Jack's families lived in a two family house in Union City and supported each other every step of the way. Tom enjoys marathon running and has completed more than thirty five 26 mile marathons including fourteen New York City Marathons. In 2004, Tom and his daughter Elizabeth took a motorcycle safety course and Tom now enjoys driving his Harley

Davidson to the Cathedral each weekend.

This concludes the secular part of Deacon Tom's story and now on to the spiritual chronology. When Tom came back to Union City in 1980 he was attending St Michael's Parish which was administered by the Passionists. In the early 1980's St. Michael's was closed and merged with St. Joseph's in Union City. Deacon Tom Barrett was his first shining example of a Deacon. As time went by Tom D. felt it was time to get more involved in his parish and he did so in a variety of ministries. He found himself being encouraged more and more by Deacon Tom Barrett and the Passionists to pursue the diaconate. Tom D. readily admits that he initially did not comprehend the totality of the diaconate. He was interviewed by Deacon Michael Matthews and was enrolled in the class of 1995. On the third of June 1995 Tom was ordained a Permanent Deacon by Archbishop Theodore E. McCarrick (now Cardinal and Archbishop of Washington DC).

Deacon Tom D's first assignment was with Tom Deacon Barrett and Deacon Ray Wandel at St. Joseph & St. Michael's. In October of 1996, Deacon Matthews asked Tom if he would assist Deacon Ed Porter with wedding preparations at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark. He was assigned on a part time basis and began working at the Cathedral. Tom will always remember his first visit to the Cathedral and how he was so impressed with the beauty and holiness of the building. He feels to be assigned there has been a gift he will never take for granted. Since his initial participation at the Cathedral, under the legendary care and guidance of Deacon Ed Porter, Deacon Tom's appreciation for this aspect of the diaconate ministry increased many fold. Deacon Tom points out that he believes that he and his newly ordained co-workers in the vineyard, Deacons Guy Mier and Michael Keary, can bring "Marriage

Preparation" beyond just "getting married," but helping couples remain married, by assisting them in finding a deeper understanding of commitment within the Sacrament of Matrimony. Working with some 100+ weddings couples per year, with at least six meetings per couple as well as rehearsals, not to mention the intermittent baptisms they are honored to preside over helps to keep everyone at the Cathedral busy. Tom points out that this ministry has strengthened his own marriage to Linda and he clearly sees how the Holy Spirit is working in his life and the couples he ministers too.

Deacon Tom wanted it clearly stated that: "So many aspects of my ministry and life are the result of the support, encouragement of so many, beginning with his father & mother Henry & Anne, wife Linda, his girls who have been willing to share him with others, close friend Jack Testa, Deacons Tom Barrett, Mike Matthews, Ed Porter and Msgr. Groncki, to name a few, and that the little I feel I do now in the service of Christ in this local church of Newark is my payback - and what a joy it is. The funny thing about working for the Lord is that the more you do the more YOU seem to receive and then the Lord in His own way gets you to want to give even more!" Deacon Tom wants also to encourage everyone to take advantage of the Cathedral Basilica, it's beauty, peace and holiness. He encourages everyone to come and celebrate, because the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart is for all of us!

Wives & Widows

by Florence Paredes

As you know, from previous articles in the DeacoNews, five deacon's wives helped to start "Magnificat" in the Archdiocese of Newark. Magnificat is a ministry of Catholic women and is all over the world. The Newark chapter is called, "Handmaid of the Lord".

A representative from the chapter, Patricia Patterman was the speaker for the St. John the Apostle (Linden/Clark) Rosary Altar Society's Day of Recollection. Patricia gave us the gift of an invitation to study scripture, to pray and deepen our love for God. Her different presentation with scripture and music filled us with a zeal for finding more ways to appreciate scripture, the sacraments, and the catechism of the Catholic Church to journey to our God. She provided us with printed handouts concerning scripture and prayer. Thank you, Patricia, for an inspiring spiritual day.

A little about our speaker – In addition to her involvement in Magnificat, Patricia Patterman teaches adult CCD and is a customer service manager. Patricia has three sons and nine grandchildren. Her husband Karl is the CCD Principal at Sacred Heart Parish in Rochelle Park.



You can call on the Magnificat Team for a presentation in your own parish. Write or call Elizabeth Tobin for information: 160 Jefferson Ave, Emerson, NJ 201-265-2738. Magnificat's next "Handmaid of the Lord" meeting will be a prayer breakfast on October 22nd, 2005, 9:00 am -12:00 pm at the Frick's Old Hook Inn on Old Hook Road, Emerson, NJ 07630. Call 201-265-2738 for cost and reservation details.

Retreat Notes

Deacon Earle S. Connelly Jr. (201) 863-4840
Upcoming Retreats - Deacons: October 21-23, 2005. A Deacon Wives retreat, with its own Retreat Master, will be conducted from November 11-13, 2005 at Maris Stella, Harvey Cedars, Long Beach Island (call Jean Andrews at 973-675-7213 or send an email to nanajean53@hotmail.com).

Deacons and Wives

By Deacon Cesar Sarmiento, '05

We were so fortunate to have attended the Couples Retreat that was held last July 29th to 31st at the Franciscan Spiritual Retreat Center in Ringwood, New Jersey. The retreat director, Fr. John F. Campoli, I.V. Dei, founder of Hisloveministries.com, was terrific.



It was attended by 18 couples ranging from the first Diaconate Class of 1975 to the most recently ordained Class of 2005. To those of us who were recently ordained, it was both very reassuring and gratifying to be welcomed as brother Deacons by our seniors and mentors.

The retreat was like a glass of cold lemonade on a hot summer day – refreshing, invigorating and flavorful. From among Fr. Campoli's many topics, he reminded us to trust and depend on the Lord as Mary did, to be aware of God's presence in our lives and to accept ourselves for what we are. All these helped very much to put our spirituality in perspective and challenged our spiritual outlook in the light of our diaconal ministry.

Other attendees' comments include, "overwhelming experience", "Fr. John – great sense of humor", "Deacons and wives bonded – newly ordained with veterans", "Fr. John is outstanding", "It was truly a grace-filled weekend that enriched all our lives".

All of us are very grateful to Deacon Earle and his wife, Angela, for organizing this retreat and we look forward to the upcoming ones.