



LITURGICAL MINISTRY OF DEACONS

Role and Function It belongs to the Office of a Deacon, to assist the Priest in public worship, especially in the administration of Holy Communion; to lead in public prayer; to read the Gospel, and to instruct both young and old in the Catechism; and at the direction of the Priest, to baptize and to preach. Furthermore, it is the Deacon's Office to work with the laity in searching for the sick, the poor, and the helpless, that they may be relieved. (*From ACNA Ordinal*).

For a liturgical rite, a deacon takes his or her appropriate place along with the Bishop (when present), the priest, layreaders, other liturgical ministers, and the gathered laity. In the absence of a bishop or priest, deacons or layreaders may officiate (and preach) at non-Eucharistic liturgies under the direction of their priest and bishop.

Always seek the direction and follow the guidance of the rector in terms of local custom.

Morning, Noon Day, and Evening Prayer (and other non-eucharistic liturgies). In the absence of or at the direction of the priest, deacons may officiate at the Daily Office, but should seek to train and encourage lay persons to assume their ministry of officiating. When pronouncing the absolution, the deacon should use "us" and "our" instead of "you" and "your."

The Holy Eucharist

- a) Proclaims the Gospel (this includes carrying the Gospel book in procession where this is the custom.)
- b) Leads the Prayers of the People (or oversees this ministry) and may deliver the Invitation to Confession.
- c) Prepares the Table for Holy Communion.
- d) Stands with the celebrant at the Great Thanksgiving, following local custom in terms of actions such as pointing the book for the celebrant.
- e) Administers the Chalice, assisted by additional administrators when necessary.
- f) Clears the Table after Holy Communion.
- g) Performs the Ablutions, assisted by the server or other administrators when necessary, either after Communion or at the end of the service.
- h) Gives the Dismissal to the Church for service in the world.

Holy Baptism

- a) At the discretion of the Officiant, may perform the baptism, especially when there has been specific involvement in the preparation of a candidate. A deacon leads (or oversees) the Prayers for the Candidates (also at confirmation and/or reception when the bishop is present).
- b) In the absence of a bishop or priest, may perform a public baptism with the permission of the Bishop. Baptism in the context of the Sunday Eucharist is the norm, but not required.

Celebration and Blessing of a Marriage

- a) May deliver the Charge (impediment or request for reasons not to marry), ask for the Declaration of Consent, read the Gospel, preach, and perform other diaconal functions at the Eucharist when celebrated in the context of a marriage.
- b) If licensed to do so, may preside at the Sacrament of Marriage with the permission of the Bishop (the ability to approve this is assigned by the bishop to the local Rectors when candidates for marriage are members of that local church) provided appropriate changes are made to the nuptial blessing.

Funerals and committals

- a) May officiate at a funeral (the Burial of the Dead) or Committal when the services of a bishop or priest cannot be obtained. The Blessing of the people is to be omitted. Deacons normally do not consecrate graves.