

**May 2022**

***A Portrait of the  
Permanent Diaconate:  
2021-2022***

Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate  
Georgetown University  
Washington, DC

*A Portrait of the Permanent Diaconate:  
A Study for the  
U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops  
2021-2022*



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**Table of Contents**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Executive Summary .....  | 1  |
| Major Findings .....   | 1  |
| Introduction.....  | 4  |
| Number of Permanent Deacons.....                                     | 5  |
| Interpolation of Missing Data .....                                  | 7  |
| Active Permanent Deacons .....                                       | 7  |
| Total Permanent Deacons.....   | 7  |
| Ministry Status of Deacons .....                                     | 8  |
| Incardination Status of Deacons in Active Ministry.....              | 9  |
| Marital Status of Active Deacons .....                               | 10 |
| Age of Active Deacons .....  | 11 |
| Race and Ethnicity of Active Deacons .....                           | 12 |
| Highest Level of Education of Active Deacons.....                    | 13 |
| Changes in the Diaconate during the 2021 Calendar Year .....         | 14 |
| Ministry and Compensation .....                                      | 15 |
| Post-Ordination Formation.....                                       | 17 |
| Retreats .....   | 18 |
| Directors of the Diaconate.....                                      | 19 |
| Policies of the Offices of the Diaconate.....                        | 20 |
| Appendix: Questionnaire and Response Frequencies for 2021-2022 ..... | 22 |

# ***A Portrait of the Permanent Diaconate: A Study for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops 2021-2022***

## **Executive Summary**

This report presents findings from a national survey of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate in arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies in the United States. The study was commissioned by the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The survey of Offices of the Permanent Diaconate has been conducted by CARA for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops since 2005.<sup>1</sup> The original questionnaire was designed in collaboration with the Executive Director of the USCCB Secretariat for the Diaconate.

CARA conducted the survey between February and April 2022. In addition to regular reminders sent out by CARA, the National Association of Diaconate Directors (NADD) sent out emails encouraging participation in the survey and USCCB conducted phone follow ups. At the completion of data collection, CARA received responses from 141 of the 183 arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies whose bishops and eparches belong to the USCCB and who have an active Office of Deacons, for a 77% overall response rate. The response rate is higher among arch/dioceses (80% or 138 out of 173 possible responses) than among arch/eparchies (30% or three out of ten possible responses).

## **Major Findings**

### *Number of Deacons*

- Responding arch/dioceses with the largest number of permanent deacons include Chicago (804), Los Angeles (498), and Joliet in Illinois (497). Adjusting for Catholic population size, Latin rite dioceses with the lowest ratio of Catholics per permanent deacon include Lexington (477 Catholics for every deacon), Amarillo (547), Rapid City (678), Pueblo (681), and Anchorage (699).
- The 138 Latin Rite arch/dioceses that responded to this question report a total of 16,765 permanent deacons (both active and not active). The three eparchies that responded reported a total of 36 permanent deacons. Extrapolating to include arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies that did not respond to the survey, it can be estimated that there were as many as 20,888 permanent deacons in the United States in 2021-2022.

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<sup>1</sup> The survey was originally commissioned by the USCCB Secretariat for the Diaconate, which became the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. It has been conducted annually since 2005-2006, with the exception of 2010-2011 and 2017-2018.

- Latin Rite arch/dioceses reported having 11,746 permanent deacons active in ministry. The three eparchies reported 31 active permanent deacons. Extrapolating to include arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies that did not respond to the survey, it can be estimated that there are 14,586 deacons active in ministry in the United States in 2021-2022, or about 70% of all permanent deacons.
- During the 2021 calendar year, 458 new permanent deacons were ordained in the responding arch/dioceses. At the same time, 512 deacons retired from active ministry and another 393 deacons died. As is the case with priests in the United States, there are not enough new permanent deacons being ordained to make up for the numbers who are retiring from active ministry and dying each year.

#### *Demographic Characteristics of Active Deacons*

- Nine in ten (93%) active permanent deacons are currently married, 4% are widowers and 2% have never been married.
- Close to all (95%) active permanent deacons are at least 50 years old. About a fifth (20%) are in their 50s, two-fifths (41%) are in their 60s, and two-fifths (36%) are 70 or older.
- Seven in ten of active permanent deacons (72%) are non-Hispanic whites. One in five active permanent deacons (21%) are Hispanic or Latino, 3% are Asian or Pacific Islander, and 2% are African American.
- Seven in ten active permanent deacons (67%) have at least a college degree. One in seven (14%) has a graduate degree in a field related to religion or ministry.

#### *Compensation and Formation*

- Among permanent deacons who are financially compensated for ministry, one in five (19%) is entrusted with the pastoral care of one or more parishes (Canon 517.2). Additionally, one in four (25%) works in other parish ministerial positions (e.g., DRE, Youth Minister) and one in seven (15%) works in parish non-ministerial position (e.g., administration, business, finance).
- Nine in ten responding arch/dioceses (89%) require post-ordination formation of permanent deacons. These arch/dioceses require a median of 20 hours of post-ordination formation annually.
- Virtually all arch/dioceses (98%) require an annual retreat of deacons and 86% provide other annual gatherings for deacons.
- Close to all responding arch/dioceses (95%) have a Director of the Diaconate (or a person with a similar title). In one in three of these arch/dioceses (35%), the position is full-time.

- In terms of formal policies, nine in ten arch/dioceses (86%) have a plan for the placement and ministry of deacons. Nine in ten (93%) have an active ministry formation program for the permanent diaconate. And, among those with no such program in place, three in five (56%) are planning to begin a program in the next two years.
- Nine in ten responding arch/dioceses (94%) have a minimum age of acceptance into permanent diaconate (which, on average, is 33 years old). Three in five (56%) have a mandatory age for permanent deacon's retirement (which, on average, is 75 years old).

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**Introduction**

In spring 2005, the Secretariat for the Diaconate<sup>2</sup> of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) first commissioned the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) at Georgetown University to conduct an annual survey of Offices of the Permanent Diaconate. CARA conducted the survey each year since then, except for 2010-2011 and 2017-2018.

This report presents findings from this latest national survey of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate in arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies in the United States and incorporates trend data from previous years' reports. The original questionnaire was designed in collaboration with the Executive Director of the USCCB Secretariat for the Diaconate and the questionnaires used in subsequent years are nearly identical.<sup>3</sup> The 2021-2022 questionnaire is presented in the Appendix.

CARA conducted the survey between February and April 2022. To improve the response rate, the National Association of Diaconate Directors (NADD) sent out emails encouraging participation in the survey and USCCB conducted phone follow ups. At the completion of data collection, CARA received responses from 141 of the 183 arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies whose bishops and eparchs belong to the USCCB and who have an active Office of Deacons, for a 77% overall response rate.<sup>4</sup> The response rate is higher among arch/dioceses (80% or 138 out of 173 possible responses) than among arch/eparchies (30% or three out of ten possible responses).

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<sup>2</sup> This office is now known as the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

<sup>3</sup> The 2005-2006 survey asked for the number of active deacons with Masters' degrees or doctorates. The surveys in subsequent years asked for the number of active deacons with a "graduate degree in religious studies, theology, Canon Law, etc." and the number with a "graduate degree in a field not related to the Diaconate." There are also some differences in the subsequent surveys in the way in which marital status is asked.

<sup>4</sup> The Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA has no clergy personnel except those on assignment from other dioceses and eparchies, so it is excluded from this report and analysis. Five eparchies, Armenian Catholic Eparchy of Our Lady of Nareg, Our Lady of Deliverance Syriac Catholic Diocese, St. Mary Queen of Peace Syro-Malankara Catholic Eparchy, St. Thomas the Apostle Chaldean Eparchy, and St. Thomas Syro-Malabar Catholic Diocese of Chicago have no permanent deacons in the United States and therefore are excluded from this report and analysis.

## Number of Permanent Deacons

The Archdiocese of Chicago has the largest total number of permanent deacons among responding arch/dioceses, with 804 deacons in all, including active and retired. The table below lists responding arch/dioceses that report at least 250 permanent deacons.<sup>5</sup>

| <b>Responding Arch/dioceses with the Greatest Number of Permanent Deacons</b> |                                |                             |
|---|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Arch/diocese</b>   | <b>Total Number of Deacons</b> | <b>Catholics per Deacon</b> |
|   | <b>#</b>                       | <b>#</b>                    |
| Chicago   | 804                            | 2,690                       |
| Los Angeles   | 498                            | 8,083                       |
| Joliet in Illinois  | 497                            | 1,098                       |
| Galveston-Houston   | 426                            | 3,991                       |
| San Antonio   | 367                            | 2,213                       |
| Rockville Centre  | 330                            | 4,142                       |
| New York  | 322                            | 8,718                       |
| Philadelphia  | 308                            | 4,110                       |
| St. Louis   | 288                            | 1,737                       |
| Detroit   | 285                            | 3,971                       |
| Atlanta   | 278                            | 4,281                       |
| Trenton   | 277                            | 2,646                       |
| Phoenix   | 254                            | 4,377                       |
| Tucson  | 252                            | 1,705                       |

- The 138 Latin rite arch/dioceses that responded to these survey questions reported a total of 16,829 permanent deacons. The three Eastern rite eparchies that responded to the survey reported a total of 36 permanent deacons.<sup>6</sup>
- On average, responding arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies reported 84 deacons in active ministry. Half of responding arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies reported 66 or fewer deacons in active ministry.
- The Diocese of San Jose has over 17,000 Catholics per deacon. Other responding arch/dioceses that also have relatively high numbers of Catholics per deacon include El Paso

<sup>5</sup> The total number of deacons is calculated as the sum of all deacons active in ministry and all deacons no longer active in ministry, except those who have been laicized (question 1 + question 6 + question 7 + question 8 – question 12).

<sup>6</sup> Eparchies are reported separately here because of possible double-counting of Eastern rite deacons listed by Latin rite dioceses as serving within their boundaries.

with more than 15,000, Winona-Rochester with more than 12,000 and San Bernardino with more than 11,000.

**Responding arch/dioceses with the Lowest Ratio  
of Catholics per Permanent Deacon**

| <b>Arch/diocese</b> | <b>Catholics per Deacon<br/>#</b> |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Lexington           | 477                               |
| Amarillo            | 547                               |
| Rapid City          | 678                               |
| Pueblo              | 681                               |
| Anchorage           | 699                               |
| Jefferson City      | 713                               |
| Duluth              | 770                               |
| Ogdensburg          | 804                               |
| Savannah            | 905                               |
| Charleston          | 922                               |
| Santa Fe            | 957                               |

- The Diocese of Lexington has the most favorable ratio of Catholics to deacons among responding arch/dioceses (477 Catholics per deacon). The Diocese of Amarillo is second (547 Catholics per deacon).

## Interpolation of Missing Data

### Active Permanent Deacons

To obtain the most complete figure for the total number of active deacons in the country, it is necessary to create estimates for the 42 arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies that did not respond to the survey. To do this, we draw on data for total deacons reported in *The Official Catholic Directory (OCD) 2021* and then make an estimate of the proportion of those reported deacons who are active in ministry.

The figure used here for the proportion of deacons who are active is calculated from the survey responses. Responding arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies indicate that 70% of their deacons are active in ministry. We also adjust for the fact that the number of deacons listed in the *OCD 2021* is lower than the total number that responding arch/dioceses reported – the total number of permanent deacons reported in the *OCD 2021* constitutes 88% of the number reported in the survey by the same group of arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies. Thus, for the 42 non-responding Latin Rite arch/dioceses and Eastern Catholic arch/eparchies, we estimate the total number of active deacons as:

$$\text{Number of total deacons (as reported in the OCD 2021)} * 0.70 / 0.88$$

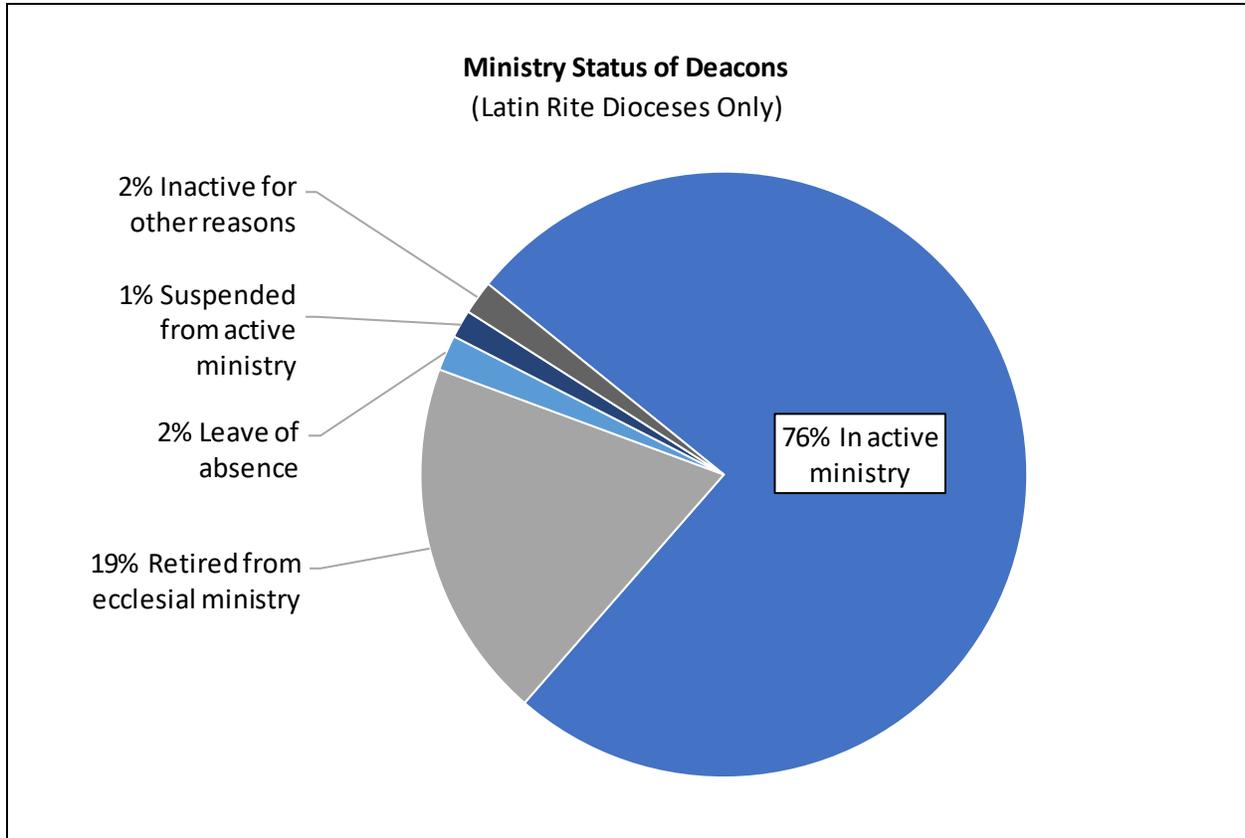
This yields an estimate of 2,809 active permanent deacons in the 42 non-responding arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies. Adding that extrapolation to the 11,777 deacons reported to be active in ministry yields an estimate of **14,586** active permanent deacons nationally.

### Total Permanent Deacons

Using the procedure described above—while excluding the adjustment for active permanent deacons—yields a national estimate of **20,888** total deacons (both active and inactive). This includes 20,673 for Latin Rite dioceses and 215 for Eastern Catholic eparchies.

## Ministry Status of Deacons

*Three in four deacons in responding arch/dioceses (76%) are active in ministry, and the remaining quarter (24%) are inactive for a variety of reasons.*



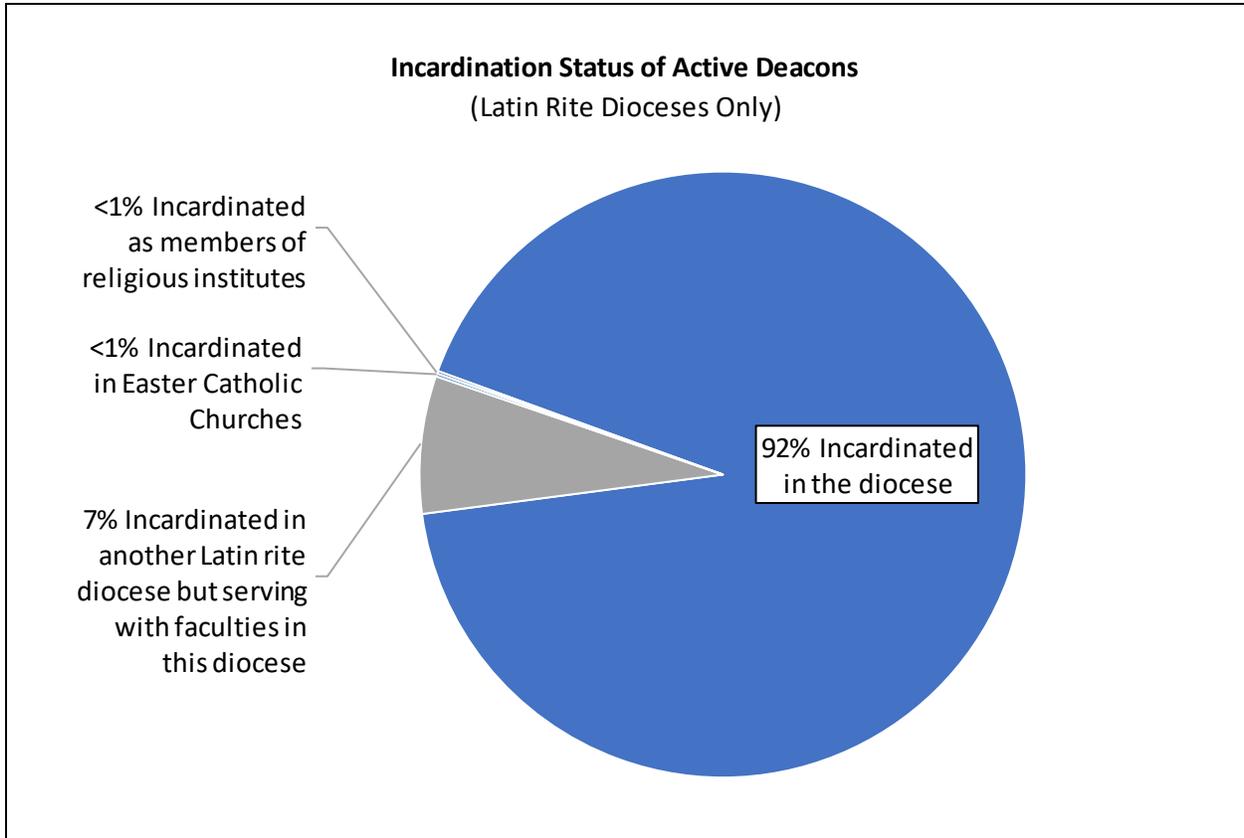
The 24% of deacons not in active ministry include 19% who are retired, 2% on a leave of absence, 1% suspended from active ministry, and 2% inactive for other reasons.<sup>7</sup>

The 141 Latin Rite arch/dioceses that responded to this survey question reported a total of 11,746 active deacons, and the three arch/eparchies reported 31 active deacons.

<sup>7</sup> The calculation of total deacons for this report excludes deacons who have been laicized. The Latin Rite dioceses responding to the survey report a total of 113 laicized deacons. If they to be included in totals, they would represent less than 1% of all permanent deacons.

## Incardination Status of Deacons in Active Ministry

*Excluding responses from eparchies, 92% of deacons in active ministry are incardinated in the diocese that reports them.*

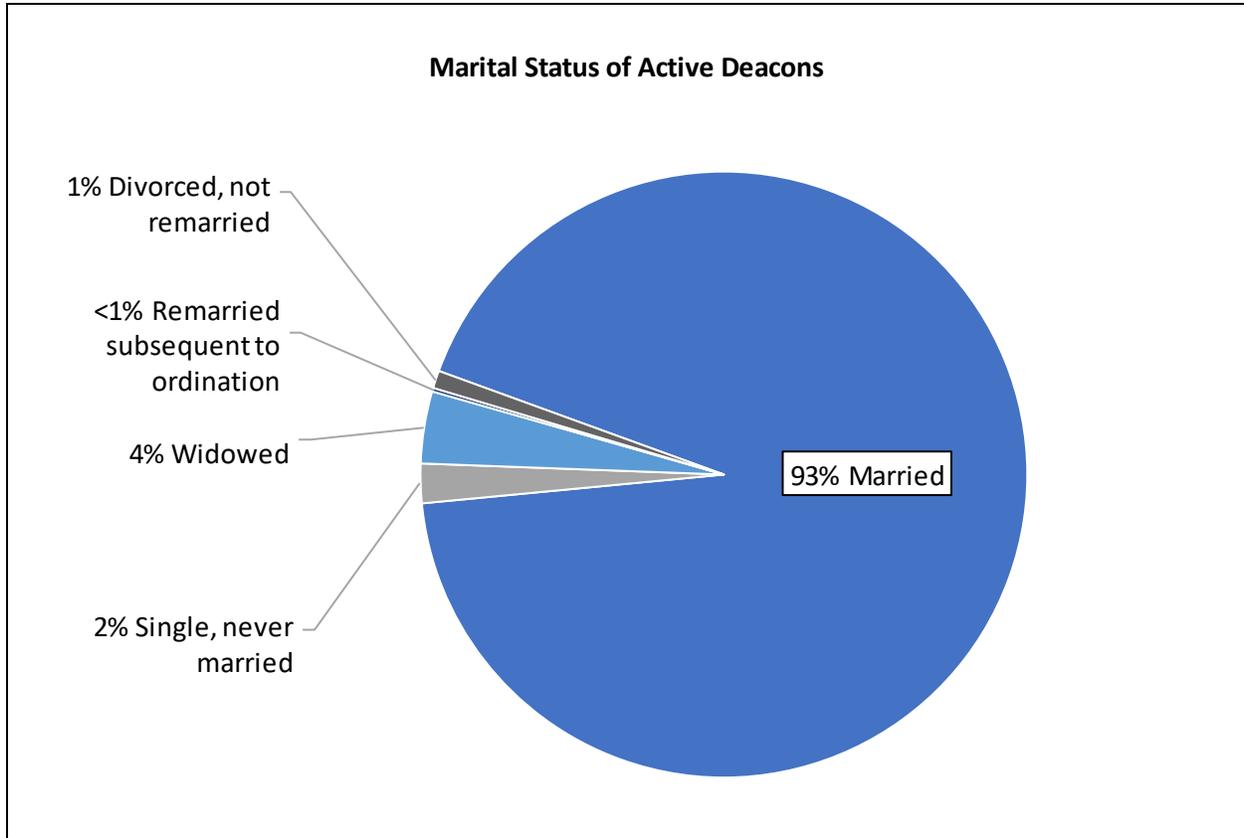


- Among responding Latin rite arch/dioceses, 7% of active deacons are incardinated in another Latin rite diocese but serve in the reporting diocese. Less than 1% of active deacons are incardinated as members of religious institutes or incardinated in Eastern Catholic Churches that are geographically located within the diocese.<sup>8</sup>
- In addition to the above, and not shown in the figure, on average, in each Latin Rite dioceses, there are:
  - 77 deacons incardinated in the reporting diocese.
  - Six deacons incardinated in another diocese but serving in the reporting eparchy/diocese.
  - Less than one deacon incardinated in Eastern Catholic Churches.
  - Less than one deacon incardinated as a member of religious institutes.

<sup>8</sup> As in all cases in this report where subgroups are reported, percentages reflect only deacons for whom information was provided.

## Marital Status of Active Deacons

*Most permanent deacons in active ministry are married. The figure below displays the marital status of active deacons.<sup>9</sup>*



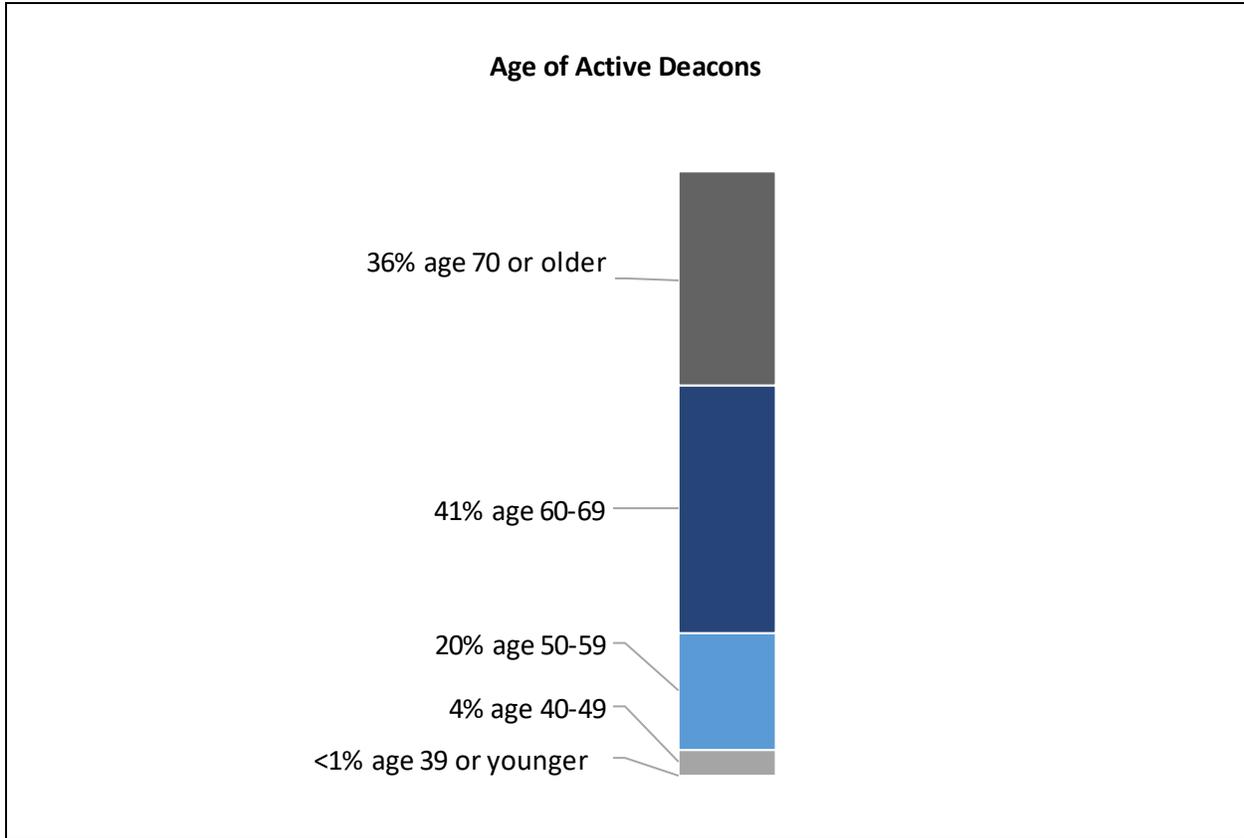
Overall, 93% of active permanent deacons are married, 4% are widowed, 2% have never been married, 1% are divorced, and less than 1% remarried subsequent to ordination.

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<sup>9</sup> Responses of eparchies are included in the figures for marital status and other demographic characteristics.

## Age of Active Deacons

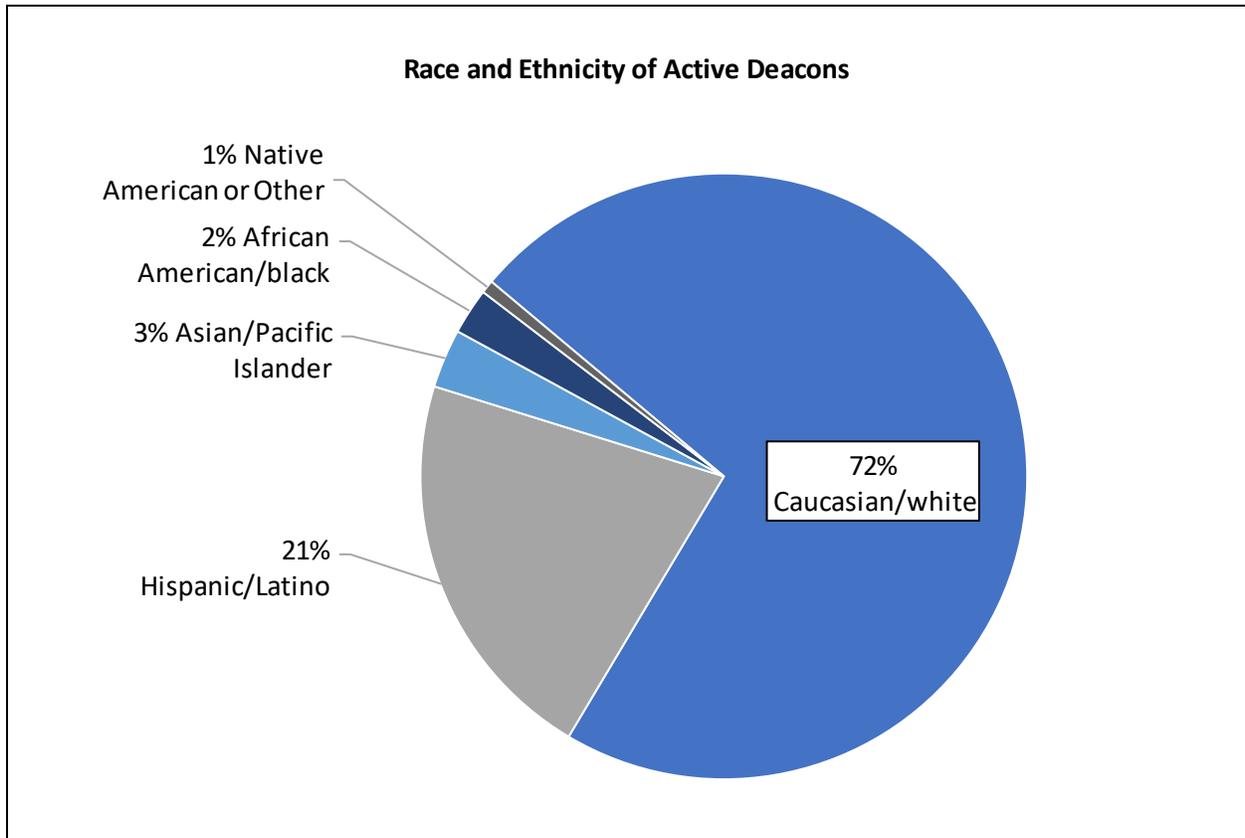
*Three in four active permanent deacons (76%) are 60 years old or older.*



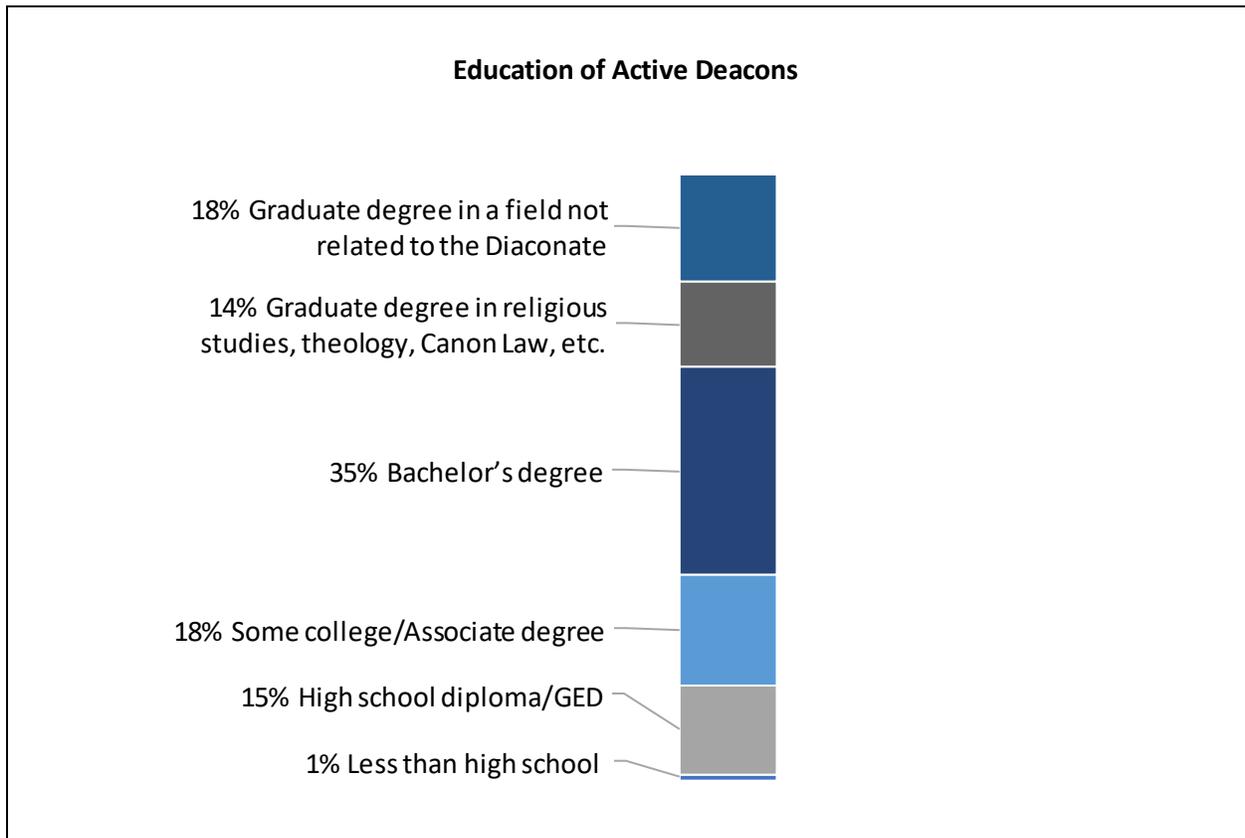
- Two in five active permanent deacons (41%) are 60 to 69 and more than a third (36%) are 70 or older. A fifth of active deacons (20%) are in their fifties.
- One in 25 deacons in active ministry (4%) is in their 40s, and less than 1% are under the age of 40. According to Canon 1031.2 and the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, the minimum age for ordination to the permanent diaconate is 35 for all candidates.

## Race and Ethnicity of Active Deacons

Seven in ten active deacons (72%) are Caucasian or white. One in five (21%) active deacons is Hispanic or Latino. Additionally, 3% are Asian or Pacific Islander, 2% are African American or black, and 1% of active deacons are Native Americans or members of other racial/ethnic groups.



## Highest Level of Education of Active Deacons



In regards to the highest achieved level of education:

- One in a hundred active deacons (1%) has less than high school education.
- One in seven active deacons (15%) has a high school diploma or GED.
- One in six active deacons (18%) has some college education or an associate degree.
- One in three active deacons (35%) has a Bachelor's degree.
- One in seven active deacons (14%) has a graduate degree in religious studies, theology, Canon Law, etc.
- One in six active deacons (18%) has a graduate degree in a field not related to the Diaconate.

## Changes in the Diaconate during the 2021 Calendar Year

*During the 2021 calendar year, responding offices reported that 512 deacons retired from active ministry and 393 died. Another 458 were ordained to the permanent diaconate.*

| <b>Changes in the Diaconate Over Time</b>        |             |             |             |             |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Totals from Responding Dioceses/Eparchies</b> |             |             |             |             |
|  | <b>2021</b> | <b>2020</b> | <b>2019</b> | <b>2018</b> |
|  | <b>#</b>    | <b>#</b>    | <b>#</b>    | <b>#</b>    |
| Ordained for the diocese                         | 458         | 587         | 383         | 494         |
| Retired from active ministry                     | 512         | 410         | 334         | 367         |
| Died   | 393         | 378         | 289         | 290         |
| Requested laicization                            | 14          | 26          | 28          | 27          |
| Granted laicization                              | 14          | 18          | 26          | 23          |
| Divorced/separated after ordination              | 25          | 27          | 23          | 25          |
| Remarried without dispensation                   | 4           | 5           | 5           | 10          |
| Dispensed from the impediment of orders          | 4           | 3           | 7           | 1           |
| Remarried after dispensation                     | 0           | 3           | 6           | 3           |
| Entered the priesthood                           | 4           | 7           | 7           | 11          |

Arch/dioceses were asked to report the number of active permanent deacons that were lost during the 2021 calendar year through retirement, laicization, entering the priesthood, or death, as well as the number of new permanent deacons ordained for the diocese in the year. Additional questions asked about changes in marital status. The first column in the table above presents the total number of deacons in each category among dioceses and eparchies that responded to the 2021-2022 survey. Subsequent columns report the figures for three previous years for comparison. In 2021:

- Four permanent deacons were reported to have left the diaconate to prepare for the priesthood.
- 14 permanent deacons requested laicization.
- 25 permanent deacons divorced or separated after ordination. Additionally, four remarried without dispensation and zero after dispensation.

## Ministry and Compensation

*One in seven (13%) active permanent deacons are financially compensated for ministry in 2021, a continuation of a downward trend from 27% in 2001, 26% in 2017, and 15% in 2019. Of those financially compensated for ministry, deacons who are compensated for parish ministerial position other than Canon 517.2 (in addition to their diaconal responsibilities) make up the largest proportion among those compensated for their ministry.*

| <b>Active Deacons Who Are Financially Compensated for Their Ministry</b> |                                  |                                  |                                  |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Percentage among Active Deacons Who Are Compensated                      |                                  |                                  |                                  |
|  | <b>Compensated<br/>Full-Time</b> | <b>Compensated<br/>Part-Time</b> | <b>Among All<br/>Compensated</b> |
|  | %                                | %                                | %                                |
| Other parish ministerial position  | 23                               | 28                               | 25                               |
| Entrusted with the pastoral care of parish(es)                           | 15                               | 28                               | 19                               |
| Parish non-ministerial position  | 18                               | 8                                | 15                               |
| Diocesan non-ministerial position  | 12                               | 6                                | 10                               |
| Prison ministry  | 7                                | 11                               | 9                                |
| Diocesan ministerial position  | 9                                | 8                                | 8                                |
| Hospital ministry  | 5                                | 7                                | 6                                |
| Parochial education  | 8                                | 2                                | 6                                |
| Ministry in a social services agency                                     | 3                                | 2                                | 2                                |
| <b>Total in compensated ministry</b>                                     | <b>100</b>                       | <b>100</b>                       | <b>100</b>                       |

Respondents were asked about the number of active deacons in each of several categories who are financially compensated for their full-time or part-time ministry (see the table above).

Among deacons who are compensated for ministry:

- One in four (25%) works in other parish ministerial position (e.g., DRE, Youth Minister) with 23% of those compensated full-time and 28% compensated part-time working in those positions.
- One in five (19%) was entrusted with the pastoral care of one or more parishes (Canon 517.2) with 15% of those compensated full-time and 28% compensated part-time working in those positions.
- One in seven (15%) works in parish non-ministerial position (e.g., administration, business, finance) with 18% of those compensated full-time and 8% compensated part-time working in those positions.

- One in ten (10%) works in diocesan non-ministerial position (e.g., administration, business, finance) with 12% of those compensated full-time and 6% compensated part-time working in those positions.
- One in 11 (9%) works in prison ministry with 7% of those compensated full-time and 11% compensated part-time working in those positions.
- One in 13 (8%) works in diocesan ministerial position (e.g., DRE, Diocesan Youth Minister) with 9% of those compensated full-time and 8% compensated part-time working in those positions.
- One in 17 (6%) works in hospital ministry with 5% of those compensated full-time and 7% compensated part-time working in those positions.
- One in 17 (6%) works in parochial education (e.g., school teacher, educational administration) with 8% of those compensated full-time and 2% compensated part-time working in those positions.
- One in 50 (2%) ministers in a social services agency (e.g., Catholic Charities) with 3% of those compensated full-time and 2% compensated part-time working in those positions.

## Post-Ordination Formation

*Nine in ten (89%) of responding arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies require post-ordination formation for deacons. Among those that do require post-ordination formation, the median number of hours required per year is 20.<sup>10</sup>*

| <b>Post-Ordination Formation</b>                                     |            |           |
|--|------------|-----------|
| Dioceses and eparchies responding:                                   |            |           |
|  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|  | %          | %         |
| Post-ordination formation required of deacons                        | 89         | 11        |
| <i>Average number of hours required annually: 25</i>                 |            |           |
| <i>Median number of hours required annually: 20</i>                  |            |           |
| Post-ordination formation provided in language(s) other than English | 19         | 81        |
| <i>Percentage providing formation in Spanish: 17%</i>                |            |           |
| <i>Percentage providing formation in other languages: 2%</i>         |            |           |
| Formation opportunities provided for wives of deacons                | 81         | 19        |

- One in five arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies (19%) provides post-ordination formation in a language other than English, most typically in Spanish. Other languages include Romanian, Creole and Ukrainian.
- Four in five (81%) provide formation opportunities for the wives of deacons.

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<sup>10</sup> The median is the middle value in the distribution when responses are ordered from lowest to highest. By definition, 50% of cases in a distribution fall at or below the median and 50% fall at or above the median.

## Retreats

*Close to all dioceses and eparchies (98%) require an annual retreat of deacons. On average, three in four (75%) deacons participate in the retreat.*

| <b>Retreats<sup>11</sup></b>   |            |           |
|--|------------|-----------|
| Dioceses and eparchies responding:                                     |            |           |
|  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|  | %          | %         |
| An annual retreat is required of deacons                               | 98         | 2         |
| <i>Average percentage of deacons participating in the retreat: 75%</i> |            |           |
| <i>Median percentage of deacons participating in the retreat: 80%</i>  |            |           |
| Diocese provides couples' retreats for deacons and their wives         | 83         | 17        |
| Diocese provides deacon-only retreats                                  | 38         | 62        |
| Diocese provides separate retreats for wives of deacons                | 14         | 86        |
| Diocese provides annual gatherings of deacons<br>(other than retreats) | 86         | 14        |

- Four in five responding arch/dioceses (83%) provide couples retreats for deacons and their wives.
- Two in five arch/dioceses (38%) provides retreats for deacons only. One in seven (14%) provides separate retreats for wives of deacons.
- Nine in ten arch/dioceses (86%) provide annual gatherings of deacons in addition to or apart from a retreat.

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<sup>11</sup> Some respondents noted that the participation in their retreats has been affected by the pandemic and/or the retreats were cancelled.

## Directors of the Diaconate

*Close to all arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies (95%) have a Director of the Diaconate or a person with a similar title.*

| <b>Directors of the Diaconate</b>                                 |            |           |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Dioceses and eparchies responding:                                |            |           |
|   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|   | <b>%</b>   | <b>%</b>  |
| Diocese has a Director of the Office of Deacon (or similar title) | 95         | 5         |
| <i>Full-Time: 35%</i>   |            |           |
| <i>Part-Time: 65%</i>   |            |           |
| <i>Average number of months in this position: 91</i>              |            |           |
| <i>Median number of months in this position: 66</i>               |            |           |

- In 35% of arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies with the Director of the Diaconate position, the position is full-time. The position is part-time for the other 65%.
- Current directors have held their position for an average of seven years and seven months. The median tenure for directors is five years and six months.

## Policies of the Offices of the Diaconate

*Nine in ten responding arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies (86%) have a plan for placement and ministry of deacons.*

| <b>Policies of the Offices of the Diaconate</b>                                    |            |           |
|--|------------|-----------|
| Dioceses and eparchies responding:   |            |           |
|  | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|  | %          | %         |
| Diocese has a plan for placement and ministry of deacons                           | 86         | 14        |
| Diocese has an active formation program for the diaconate                          | 93         | 7         |
| <i>If no, is the diocese planning to establish one within the next two years?</i>  | 56         | 44        |
| Diocese has minimum age for acceptance into a diaconate formation program          | 94         | 6         |
| <i>Average minimum age for acceptance: 33</i>                                      |            |           |
| <i>Median minimum age for acceptance: 33</i>                                       |            |           |
| Diocese has a mandatory age of retirement from active ministry for deacons         | 56         | 44        |
| <i>Percentage requiring retirement at age &lt;70: 0%</i>                           |            |           |
| <i>Percentage requiring retirement at age 70-74: 8%</i>                            |            |           |
| <i>Percentage requiring retirement at age 75-79: 90%</i>                           |            |           |
| <i>Percentage requiring retirement at age 80+: 1%</i>                              |            |           |
| Diocese has a formal policy for deacons who are divorced/separated post-ordination | 48         | 52        |
| Diocese has an active Deacon Council or Deacon Assembly                            | 73         | 27        |

- Virtually all responding arch/dioceses (93%) have an active formation program for the diaconate. Among those that do not, three in five (56%) report that there are plans to establish such a program within the next two years.

- Nine in ten arch/dioceses (94%) have a minimum age requirement for acceptance into the diaconate formation program. In these arch/dioceses, the minimum age ranges from 28 to 60, with a median of 33.
- Over half (56%) have a mandatory age of retirement for deacons. In this group, 8% require retirement between 70 and 74, 90% between 75 and 79, and 1% at the age of 80 or older.
- Half of the arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies (48%) have a formal policy for deacons who are divorced or separated post-ordination.
- Seven in ten of the responding arch/dioceses and arch/eparchies (73%) have an active Deacon Council or Deacon Assembly.

**Appendix:**  
**Questionnaire and Response Frequencies for 2021-2022**



## BISHOPS' COMMITTEE FOR THE DIACONATE POST-ORDINATION SURVEY



Please fill in the total number of deacons in your diocese for each category below

- Mean = 84** 1. Total number of Deacons in **ACTIVE MINISTRY IN THIS DIOCESE**. **NR = 00**
- Of the number reported in item 1:**
- Mean = 77** 2. Active Deacons who are **INCARDINATED** in this diocese. **NR = 02**
- Mean = 6** 3. Active Deacons incardinated in another Latin rite diocese but serving with faculties in this diocese. **NR = 06**
- Mean = <1** 4. Active Deacons incardinated in **EASTERN CATHOLIC CHURCHES** that are geographically located in this diocese (e.g., Byzantine, Maronite, etc.). **NR = 19**
- Mean = <1** 5. Active Deacons incardinated as members of **RELIGIOUS INSTITUTES**. **NR = 18**  
*(items 2 through 5 should total to the number of ACTIVE Deacons reported in item 1)*
- Mean = 07** 6. Deacons incardinated in this diocese but serving another diocese. **NR = 03**
- Mean = <1** 7. Deacons who serve both Eastern and Latin rite Churches (“bi-ritual”). **NR = 08**
- Mean = 30** 8. Deacons **NO LONGER IN ACTIVE MINISTRY** in this diocese. **NR = 01**
- Of the number reported in item 8:**
- Mean = 22** 9. Deacons retired from ecclesial ministry. **NR = 05**
- Mean = 03** 10. Deacons on a leave of absence. **NR = 18**
- Mean = 02** 11. Deacons who are suspended from active ministry. **NR = 18**
- Mean = 01** 12. Deacons who have been released from the clerical state (“laicized”). **NR = 23**
- Mean = 03** 13. Other inactive deacons (not retired, on leave of absence, suspended or laicized). **NR = 29**  
*(items 9 through 13 should total to the same number reported in item 8)*

**Of the number of ACTIVE Deacons reported in item 1:**

| Marital Status |    |     |                                    | Race and Ethnicity |    |     |                          |
|----------------|----|-----|------------------------------------|--------------------|----|-----|--------------------------|
| Mean           | NR |     |                                    | Mean               | NR |     |                          |
| 75             | 05 | 14. | Married                            | 59                 | 09 | 24. | Caucasian/white          |
| 02             | 17 | 15. | Single, never married              | 02                 | 23 | 25. | African American/black   |
| 03             | 13 | 16. | Widowed                            | 19                 | 16 | 26. | Hispanic/Latino          |
| <1             | 29 | 17. | Remarried subsequent to ordination | 03                 | 26 | 27. | Asian/Pacific Islander   |
| 01             | 18 | 18. | Divorced, not remarried            | 01                 | 34 | 28. | Native American or Other |

| Age  |    |     |                   | Highest Level of Education |    |     |   |
|------|----|-----|-------------------|----------------------------|----|-----|---|
| Mean | NR |     |                   | Mean                       | NR |     |   |
| <1   | 23 | 19. | Age 39 or younger | 01                         | 33 | 29. | Less than high school                                   |
| 04   | 15 | 20. | Age 40-49         | 12                         | 28 | 30. | High school diploma/GED                                 |
| 16   | 10 | 21. | Age 50-59         | 15                         | 28 | 31. | Some college/Associate degree                           |
| 33   | 09 | 22. | Age 60-69         | 26                         | 22 | 32. | Bachelor’s degree                                       |
| 30   | 11 | 23. | Age 70 or older   | 11                         | 28 | 33. | Graduate degree in religious studies, theology, etc.    |
|      |    |     |                   | 15                         | 29 | 34. | Graduate degree in a field not related to the Diaconate |

**In the most recent calendar year (January 1 to December 31, 2021) how many deacons have:**

| Mean | NR |     | Mean  | NR |     |
|------|----|-----|---|----|-----|
| <1   | 17 | 35. | Requested laicization (Canon 290)                         | <1 | 16  |
| <1   | 18 | 36. | Granted laicization (Canon 290)                           | <1 | 18  |
| <1   | 18 | 37. | Been dispensed from the impediment of orders (Canon 1087) | 04 | 13  |
| 00   | 18 | 38. | Remarried after dispensation                              | 03 | 11  |
| <1   | 17 | 39. | Remarried without dispensation                            | 04 | 15  |
|      |    |     |   |    | 44. |
|      |    |     |   |    | 40. |
|      |    |     |   |    | 41. |
|      |    |     |   |    | 42. |
|      |    |     |   |    | 43. |
|      |    |     |   |    | 44. |

## Ministry and Compensation

Of the total number of deacons in active ministry in the diocese (as reported in item 1), the number who are financially compensated, either full-time or part-time (excluding stipends and/or reimbursement for expenses, such as mileage) for the following: *(among dioceses and eparchies that reported at least one deacon in one of the categories below)*

| Full-time% | NR |     | Part-time% | NR |  |
|------------|----|-----|------------|----|--|
| 15         | 06 | 45. | 28         | 06 | 46. Entrusted with the pastoral care of one or more parishes (Canon 517.2).      |
| 23         | 06 | 47. | 28         | 06 | 48. Other parish ministerial position (e.g., DRE, Youth Minister).               |
| 18         | 06 | 49. | 08         | 06 | 50. Parish non-ministerial position (e.g., administration, business, finance).   |
| 08         | 06 | 51. | 02         | 06 | 52. Parochial education (e.g., school teacher, educational administration)       |
| 07         | 07 | 53. | 11         | 06 | 54. Prison ministry.   |
| 05         | 06 | 55. | 07         | 06 | 56. Hospital ministry.   |
| 03         | 06 | 57. | 02         | 06 | 58. Ministry in a social services agency (e.g., Catholic Charities).             |
| 09         | 06 | 59. | 08         | 06 | 60. Diocesan ministerial position (e.g., DDRE, Diocesan Youth Minister).         |
| 12         | 06 | 61. | 06         | 06 | 62. Diocesan non-ministerial position (e.g., administration, business, finance). |

## Post-ordination Formation

| Yes%              | No% | NR |  |
|-------------------|-----|----|--|
| 89                | 11  | 06 | 63. Is post-ordination formation required of deacons?  |
| <b>Mean = 25</b>  |     | 25 | 64. <u>If yes</u> , approximate number of <u>hours</u> of post-ordination formation required <u>annually</u> . |
| 19                | 81  | 06 | 65. Is post-ordination formation provided in language(s) other than English?                                   |
|                   |     | 85 | 66. <u>If yes</u> , please indicate the language(s): <b>Modal response:</b> Spanish                            |
| 81                | 19  | 07 | 67. Are formation opportunities provided for wives of deacons?   |
| 98                | 02  | 06 | 68. Is an annual retreat required for deacons?   |
| <b>Mean = 75%</b> |     | 11 | 69. <u>If yes</u> , approximate percentage of deacons who participate in an annual retreat.                    |
| 38                | 62  | 06 | 70. Does the diocese provide deacon only retreats?   |
| 14                | 86  | 06 | 71. Does the diocese provide separate retreats for wives of deacons?   |
| 83                | 17  | 06 | 72. Does the diocese provide couples' retreats for deacons and their wives?                                    |
| 86                | 14  | 06 | 73. Does the diocese provide annual gatherings of deacons (other than retreats)?                               |

## Office of the Diaconate

| Yes%             | No% | NR |  |
|------------------|-----|----|--|
| 95               | 05  | 06 | 74. Does the diocese have a Director of the Office of Deacon (or similar title)?                     |
| <b>Mean = 91</b> |     | 10 | 75. <u>If yes</u> , number of <u>months</u> Director of Deacons has been in this position.           |
|                  |     | 10 | 76. <u>If yes</u> , is this position:      35% Full-time or      65% Part-time                       |
| 86               | 14  | 06 | 77. Does the diocese have a plan for placement and ministry of deacons?                              |
| 56               | 44  | 06 | 78. Does the diocese have a mandatory age of retirement from active ministry for deacons?            |
| <b>Mean = 75</b> |     | 48 | 79. <u>If yes</u> , at what age are deacons required to retire from active ministry?                 |
| 48               | 52  | 06 | 80. Does the diocese have a formal policy for deacons who are divorced or separated post-ordination? |
| 73               | 27  | 06 | 81. Does the diocese have an active Deacon Council or Deacon Assembly?                               |
| 93               | 07  | 06 | 82. Does the diocese have an active formation program for the Diaconate?                             |
| 56               | 44  | 94 | 83. <u>If no</u> , is the diocese planning to establish a formation within the next two years?       |
| 94               | 06  | 06 | 84. Does the diocese have a minimum age for acceptance into a formation program?                     |
| <b>Mean = 33</b> |     | 13 | 85. <u>If yes</u> , what is the minimum age requirement?   |

*In the event we need clarification about the data reported here, please supply the following contact information:*

Survey completed by: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_