

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEACONS AUSTRALIA

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3.30 – 5.00 pm

THEOLOGY OF PERMANENT DIACONATE

In the Norms and Guidelines for the Permanent Diaconate in Australia

1.0 THE CONTEXT OF THE DOCUMENT

1.1 The parish to which I was recently appointed offers Holy Communion to the faithful under the appearance of the consecrated wine only on Holy Thursday. When I enquired why this was so, the reply was that the practice highlights the solemnity of the liturgical commemoration of the Last Supper, and that this solemn character would be diluted by more frequent reception.

I went back to *Sacrosanctum concilium* where I found that communion under both kinds was described, not as the “more solemn”, but as the “more perfect” form of Holy Communion. The instances where the new practice were allowed by SC were

limited, with an emphasis on its being made available to religious and seminarians. However, over the subsequent 42 years, it is clear that the “escape clause” in SC that an ordinary could give permission for wider reception of communion in the ‘more perfect’ form has been generously and benevolently extended to the faithful in parishes in many dioceses.

This anecdote helps me to explain the style, and, to some extent, the content of the Norms and Guidelines.

- 1.2 I wrote the text taking into consideration how it might be best received by the reviewer from the Sacred Congregations for Clergy and Catholic Education in Rome. This was imperative as I was given the impression that a final text had become an urgent matter for ACBC.

As much as possible, the text is facultative, rather than prescriptive; descriptive, rather than definitive; theological rather than legalistic; intended for all of the dioceses of Australia, though expressed as much as possible with local needs in mind.

- 1.3 Theologically, I opted to adopt the fundamental insight of John N Collins (see below 2.0), first published as a doctoral thesis in 1976 and later as *Diakonia. Reinterpreting the Ancient Sources*.¹ He concludes that the *diakon* group of words in both the Christian Scriptures and the literature of the classical Greek civilization is adopted in a religious context to refer, in the overwhelming number of instances, to a commission entrusted to an envoy

¹ Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1990.

under mandate from a transcendent or authoritative religious figure(s). For what it is worth, my reading of the literature persuades me that this starting point is more reliable, and will prove more productive in the future, for a mature theology of the diaconate, than the stream of thought that has rolled various word groups, referring to deacons, slaves, servants, into the one notion of 'servant' and the related nouns and verbal forms, 'service', 'to serve', etc. The present document sows a seed whose fruit will need time to mature. I will come back to the issue of the terminology below.

1.4 The document has been approved for six years, expiring on 15 June 2022. One can reasonably hope that the revision of 2022 will have deacon(s) for its principal author(s). Though the text has undergone several drafts composed by a number of authors, the limitations of the present document are my responsibility.

1.5 I was invited first under the auspices of the Diocese of Broken Bay to give a presentation of the norms and guidelines for the deacons of the Sydney region on October 2016. A second presentation was given in February 2017 to the formators of deacons and to the diocesan directors of clergy life and ministry at a national intensive workshop auspiced by the BCCLM. On the way home from Sydney after the intensive, I realized that I had, methodologically speaking, given a disproportionate emphasis, both in the document and in the presentation, to the culmination of the diakonia of Christ in his self-offering in the Paschal Mystery.

1.6 I had left in the shadows Christ's *diakonia* in its formal aspect of the Son's being sent as the envoy of the Father, charged with bringing to all human beings a saving message. The message, of course, is not merely verbal, but the enfleshed presence of the Reign of God in the teaching, healing, and, finally, cruciform mission of Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Man. The emphasis of the *diakon* word group is succinctly stated by Collins in his latest publication: "The *diakon* words are not focused on the person in need but derive their potency from the person who mandates the activity."²

1.7 I had already explored this territory in a series of short articles for the then fortnightly magazine of the Archdiocese of Melbourne, *KAIROS*.

2.0 RECEPTION OF J N COLLINS RESEARCH IN *DIAKONIA* (1990)

2.1 For many years, with one notable exception, the research was unknown or ignored. The exception is a citation by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in a conference preliminary to the Synod on the Priesthood. He referred to Collins' work because it confirmed his concern that the influential view of priesthood at that time – stemming from a misunderstanding of the preference of the Council Fathers for the term *presbyter* rather than *sacerdos* - was a secularising influence on these sacred offices.

² John N Collins *Gateway to Renewal. Reclaiming ministries for women and men* Melbourne: Morning Star Publishing, 2016, p. 137.

2.2 Despite the century long prevalence in the German and Nordic churches of the Lutheran communion of the view that *diakonia* is lowly service, recent German scholarship has independently arrived at the same conclusions as Collins.³ Collins notes a paper, *The Deacon – Messenger of Jesus Christ?*⁴ by our speaker from the International Diaconal Centre, Dr Stefan Sander, in which Stefan accepted the validity of the results of Collins’ and Hentschel’s labours.⁵

2.3 In our context, the dominant influence is the literature emanating from the United States, all of which, for nearly forty years, has expanded on the notion of lowly service. James Keating, William Ditewig, Owen Cummings and others have promoted a spirituality of service over a long time. The only exception, until very recently, was an article of Richard Gaillardetz, originally published in *Worship* and reprinted in a small collection together with William Ditewig and Owen Cummings, in which the author follows the ‘envoy’ interpretation.⁶

The most recent collection from the United States that I have found, *The Character of the Deacon* (2016), is edited by James Keating. Scott M Carl cites Collins in 27 of 49 footnotes in “*From Being with Jesus to Proclaiming the Word*”. Stephen F Miletic in “*The Mystery of Jesus as Deacon*”, in a nine page section, “We examine the *diakon* word complex”, cites him 3 times (out of a total of 40 footnotes). Shawn McKnight has adopted Collins’

³ Anni Hentschel *Diakonia im neuen Testament* Frankfurt, 2007.

⁴ *Diakonia Christi* Rottenburg: International Diaconate Centre, 2015, pages not stated.

⁵ Collins (2016) 191.

⁶ O Cummings, R Gaillardetz, W Ditewig *Theology of the Diaconate* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2005.

research wholeheartedly, summing up by saying the deacon “is the bishop’s agent in giving *diakonia* to the Church.” (p 69) We may need to correct the second part of that phrase, though the first part expresses the thrust of Collins’ conclusions. In a stirring examination of the spiritual life, James Keating cites Collins 3 times with approbation, though noting the critique – accepted by Collins himself – that the interpretation does not fit every single use of the word *diakonia* in the Synoptic tradition.

3.0 SERVANT ICON OR ENVOY?

3.1 Advantages/limits of each:

icon clear Christological foundation; sacramental tradition of visible sign that makes present a reality of grace; strong and energizing spiritual motivation; close connection to the mission entrusted to the Church to evangelize and serve the poor.

As practised, this approach bears rich fruit, fruit which you can point out yourselves. It is important to keep in mind that the church understands that the service of a deacon is threefold - in worship, proclamation and charity.

There is however a continuing question: how is this service distinguished from the baptismal call to serve? or, indeed, of the bishop’s, or of the priest’s call to serve? I was a guest of Fr Brian Moloney before giving the presentation in Broken Bay diocese. I found a stray ordination card on a sideboard. It read, “Brian

Moloney - 'ordained to serve'". Very good, but it was not the card to commemorate his ordination as a deacon.

envoy John N Collins has revised the understanding of the key text found in the Gospel according to Mark 10:45

"For the Son of Man himself came not to be served but to serve, **and** to give his life as a ransom for many."

Collins was drawn to his interpretation, which I will consider next, by his study of the use of *diakonia* in classical Greek society. He found a context for the service given by an individual that surprised him. The one who performs *diakonia* carries out a commission that has a religious connotation. The quotation above at footnote 2 bears repeating: "The *diakon* words are not focused on the person in need but derive their potency from the person who mandates the activity."

Mk 10:45 is intrinsically linked to the threefold prediction by Jesus of his suffering and death that is found in chapters 8:31, 9:31 and 10:33 of the gospel. The disciples are following him on the road to Jerusalem 'in a daze (and) apprehensive' (v.32). Jesus repeats his prediction for the third time (v.33). They set up a diversion, effectively saying, "Aww, let's talk about power in your kingdom." (v.37)

Our verse is a firm correction of the disciples' continuing blindness to the nature of authority in the community of the Master's disciples. They are fixed on exercising authority, perhaps exercising it as badly as the pagans do (v.42: 'their great men make their

authority felt'); he is teaching them that his, and their, authority is otherwise, it is the authority of one who is sent with the mandate of another.

3.2 Fulfilment of Christ's diaconal mission

Collins' contention is that the reference by Jesus to his death is the Lord's explanation of the outcome of the *diakonia* that the Father gave him. Using technical language, it is an 'epexegetical and' that draws out the significance and the specificity of his *diakonia*.

Thus, the verse means, in accord with the entire good news, that Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of Man, is sent ('he came') by the Father as the Father's messenger, a message that culminates in his self-giving unto death for the reconciliation of all humanity with the divine Father, the religious benefit *par excellence* that he came to bestow on every other member of the human race. He is preeminently an envoy with a religious mission.

3.3 Priority of identity/being over function/doing

I would suggest that it needs only a moment's reflection to agree that this approach does not diminish the deacon's vocation to be a minister who serves in the Church. What the approach achieves, in my opinion, is to give a deeper theological foundation to all the ways that a deacon serves in the Church, based upon and graced by the defining act of the Son of Man's *diakonia*. Prior to describing what a deacon does, the Norms attempt to ground an explanation of who a deacon is.

A consistent sacramental ordering of the Church gives identity to each member. Though an awkward manner of expressing the point, it may be made more clearly by using the personal pronoun “I” rather than the impersonal “one”.

Through baptism, I AM disciple

Through ordination, I AM deacon.

Through ordination, I AM presbyter.

Through ordination, I AM bishop.

If one accepts Collins’ exegesis, one finds a coherent interpretation of the uses of the term *diakonia* and related terms that are found in the New Testament. Modern translations of the same terms, such as ‘service’, ‘help’, ‘care’ diminish the better attested ‘ministry’, ‘administration’. He presents this clearly in *Deacons and the Church. Making connections between old and new* (Gracewing, Leominster 2002) pages 27-46 for Jesus; 47-65 for the Seven and disciples; 66-85 for the Pauline churches. The author provides a very concise summary in *Gateway to Renewal* (2016) at page 136, 2nd para – 138, 2nd para. He presents his conclusions as a table at pages 180-181.

If you have time to read in the Norms document all the references to patristic authors that were collected by Fr Paul Cashen MSC for the 2011 draft of the document, you will be struck by the close bond of the bishop with his deacons, and the sentiment that the deacon is ready to extend the service due by the chief shepherd to the flock. Here we have a confirmation in the life and ministry of

the Church of the rightness of Collins' discovery. Archbishop Porteous shared some humorous instances of this on Thursday night.

Consequently, I adopted the exegesis because I thought that it anchored the ministry of deacon in tradition, while showing the specific character of a deacon's service as a participation in a sacrament, and as a participation in the church's ministry present in the bishop, and as a participation in the jubilee mercy - 'good news for the poor' - inaugurated by Jesus himself. I have already considered the tradition. Shortly, I will consider the sacramental nature of diaconate, the relation to the ministry of the bishop, and finally the jubilee mercy inaugurated by Jesus' obedient fulfilment of his *diakonia*.

As noted, then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger referred to the research because it supported his cautions, often repeated, about the desacralization of the ministry of a priest. Also, it has been alluded to in the Norms of the Bishops of England and Wales.⁷

To not extend this point, I did not see the utility, at present certainly, of several of Collins' conclusions in which he reflects upon

⁷ The National Directory for Formation of Deacons in England and Wales (2010) offers a handy theological summary (page 15):

"As Christ is the sacrament of God, so the Church is the sacrament of Christ. 'God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself' and 'we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us' (2 Cor 5:19-20). So the service that truly defines *diakonia* is akin to the noble service rendered by a faithful ambassador, totally dedicated to his master, his mission, his message; and the message in this case, carried in the name of Christ, is one of reconciliation and peace."

the structures of and election to diaconal ministry in *Gateway* 138-9, from the 3rd paragraph to the end.

3.4 Sacramental grace and character

During the Intensive workshop in Sydney, some more subtle theological issues were raised, particularly regarding the notion of the 'character' of the sacrament conferred in ordination, and about the grace conferred by the sacrament.

3.4.1 Assumptions Regarding Grace

The scholastic vocabulary of grace has enjoyed a revival along with the reform of the reform in liturgical matters. The scholastic vocabulary, replete with distinctions and sub-distinctions, satisfies the intellectual curiosity of the student, though I wonder how the vocabulary leads the student to know grace from the heart. Lest that statement be seen as smug, let's not lose sight of the underlying reality to which the language of grace seeks to point.

The 'trace mineral' in all our discourse about grace is "gift", "gracious gift" is even better, "superabundantly excessive gracious gift" begins to get to the point. I believe that this way of speaking is on the same trajectory as St Paul was when, having described in chapters 2 and 3 of the letter to the church at Rome every manifestation imaginable, at

that time, of human depravity, leading to human beings' spiritual and moral blindness, he finally gets off his chest in chapter 5 the reason for this miserable catalogue. "(Adam) prefigured the One who was to come ... There is no comparison between the free gift and the offence of one man. If death came to many through the offence of one man, how much greater an effect the grace of God has had, coming to so many and so plentifully as a free gift through the one man Jesus Christ." Paul goes on to speak of the single offence and death, its consequence. He is lost for words, he has to repeat himself as he did to portray the gift who is Jesus Christ. "There is no comparison between the gift and the offence ... (that) brought condemnation, but now, after many offences, have come the free gift and so acquittal! Death came to reign over all, but how much greater the reign in life of those who receive the fullness of grace and the gift of saving justice." (5:14-17) Notice, "no comparison", "free gift", "how much greater", "so plentifully", "the reign in life", "the fullness of grace", "the gift of saving justice".

This encapsulates both the dis-grace and the yearning for grace of Israel, the freely chosen, beloved child/spouse/servant of the Lord God. Their fragile love story is the subject of the entire corpus of texts

that refer to the First Covenant. Israel's divided heart is imaged in the divided city, split asunder by injustices towards its own children and separated from its Spouse and his love by its fascination with idolatrous misadventures.

The Second Covenant, the eternal one that is announced in each celebration of the Eucharist, was initiated by the mission of a *diakonos*, a Son of Man, the faithful envoy of the faithful divine Spouse always in search of the return of love from beloved Israel.

At the moment in which the envoy of the divine Spouse completes the mission for which he was sent, 'so plentifully' 'the gift of saving justice' flows in blood and water from his side. Saving justice heals the alienated heart, transforms division into union, infuses the very life and Spirit-breath of the Spouse within receptive hearts.

In the preceding considerations, I propose that every scholastic category can be found: uncreated grace, sanctifying grace, actual grace, prevenient grace, grace of final perseverance.

According to a simple schema proposed by Alphonse Borras,⁸ some sacraments are sacraments *of* grace, visible signs, powerful symbolic, ritual actions, that introduce and immerse the loved creature into this transforming relationship, grounded in saving justice. All is gift. These are the sacraments of initiation into the relationship, and the sacraments that restore the relationship whenever it may be fragile or even broken asunder, and the sacrament of marriage that builds upon the sacraments of Christian initiation.

The final sacrament is a sacrament *for* grace. This is the sacrament that makes saving justice present in *diakonoi*/ministers for the building up of the new Jerusalem, the new city, where all are seated at the supper of the Lamb, one now in adoration and praise, at home, finally, in the bridal chamber of the Spouse. All is gift.

The Second Vatican Council affirmed that this gifted relationship is present in the visible office of the Church (*Lumen gentium* 29). Pope Benedict XVI clarified the different manner in which the gift is present in bishops and presbyters on the one hand,

⁸ Le diaconat permanent: questions et perspectives *NRT* 138 (2016) 568-584, citation at 577.

and in deacons, on the other hand. It is in the first two as *in the person of Christ*, representations of Christ, the life-giving Head of the Body of the Church, in the third as in those who serve the Church through the *diakonia* of liturgy, word and charity.⁹

Benedict XVI ordered the modification of the text of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* n. 1581 and of *The Code of Canon Law* canons 1008 and 1009 to reflect this teaching.

3.4.2 The 'character' of the Order of Deacon.

Please allow me another anecdote to begin to explain the Catechism statement (n. 1570) that there is a 'permanent character imparted to the ordained in ordination'.

My sister and brother-in-law spent a week with me, helping me settle into my new home in my new parish. I described what I knew of the tensions in the community, and enthused about some options that I would consider. I was looking for presbyteral strategies that might gather the community together again at the communion table, prepared by the Lord. Her reaction to one of the more difficult challenges

⁹ Pope Benedict XVI *Omnium in mentem* Apostolic Letter *motu proprio* (26 October 2009).

was, 'why would you bother?' Yet this couple have never stinted or faltered in their vocation as spouses and parents in not a few very difficult moments.

Could I suggest that we best talk about the 'character permanently imprinted on the soul' by a sacrament from within the experience of living that sacrament?

Flemish Jesuit theologian, Piet Fransen, in his popularising, ground-breaking work, *The New Life of Grace* (New York, Desclee; 1969), suggested that the character is not a 'static' mark on the soul. It is, rather, dynamic in the manner of a changing and growing relationship. Taking up this thought, might I suggest that the 'character' is the 'unfolding of a new mould for the soul', conceived by the divine artist whose gift of grace in the sacrament draws the minister one brush stroke at a time to become the work of art conceived by the master painter. Our graced relationship unfailingly remoulds the soul to become a dwelling for the sacrament itself. The 'spiritual mark' assumes its unique 'design' due to the lived ministry and the unique circumstances of each minister who exercises the ordained ministry.

3.5 *Medius ordo*

Shawn McKnight wrote a substantial study¹⁰ of the significance of the term *medius ordo* in Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Constitution *Sacrum diaconatus ordinem* (1972) in which the Pope decreed the restoration of the permanent diaconate. McKnight recently referred back to his earlier work with a helpful distinction. As 'intermediate order', the deacon is directly related 'vertically' by 'order' to bishop and presbyter and 'horizontally' to the faithful for the reason that the deacon does not share in the presidency of the community.¹¹

In the same vein, with an appealing image, David Fagerberg states that the deacon's special arena of ministry is the narthex, the membrane between the Church and the world.¹²

In a conversation with Paul Cashen at the conclusion of the Intensive in Sydney, we came to this expression of the *medius ordo* aspect of the diaconate. The presbyter is given to the Church for the gathering of the faithful in the celebration of Eucharist. The deacon is mandated by the Church, that is, sent as his envoy by the bishop, to be the minister who reaches out to those who cannot find their own way to be gathered for the Eucharist.

3.6 Mandated messenger of divine revelation

¹⁰ Chapter 4 "The Diaconate as *Medius Ordo*" in James Keating ed. *The Deacon Reader* Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2006.

¹¹ S McKnight in James Keating ed. *The Character of the Deacon* (2016) 78.

¹² D Fagerberg in Keating 120.

In approaching a conclusion, it may be helpful to reflect on St Paul's insistence that he is *diakonos*. The words that accompany the handing over of the book of the Gospels to the deacon during the rite of ordination, "Receive the book of the Gospels, whose herald you now are", take on fresh meaning in this context. These are moving words, but they may seem out of place to modern ears accustomed, at least in this country, to associating 'heralds' with sensationalist or left-leaning newspapers.

Let us listen to Paul speaking in 1 Cor 3:5: "For what is Apollos and what is Paul? The *diakonoi* (servants NJB) through whom you came to believe and each has only what the Lord has given him."

The concluding phrase 'the Lord has given' is rendered more literally in RSV, 'as the Lord has assigned.' The divine revealer assigns his envoys to deliver his message.

In 2 Cor 3:5 Paul speaks of his confidence in facing God. "It is not that we are so competent that we can claim any credit for ourselves; all our competence comes from God." To what competence is Paul referring? "Our competence to be ministers of a new covenant", *diakonous hainas diathakas*. Paul is a mouthpiece, sent with a gift, his proclamation of a new covenant, from the Lord.

Then, reminiscent of the language of Romans chapter 5 recalled above, Paul contrasts the administering of opposed realities: the glory of the *diakonia* of death (NJB ‘the administering of death ... in such glory’ contrasts with ‘the *diakonia* of the Spirit in how much more glory.’ (2 Cor 3:7). Paul continues with the comparison in verse 9 with regard to condemnation and saving justice.

We are hearing Paul’s excitement, or, more accurately, his joy in the Spirit, to be a *diakonos* of the new covenant.

His astonishment at ‘the love of Christ (that) overwhelms us’ (5:14) is a paean to reconciliation (5:14-21). It is Paul’s thanks to God that God has given him ‘the ministry (*diakonia*) of reconciliation.’ (5:18) Verse 19 indicates that Paul understood this to be a sacred trust, “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself ... entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.”

In a delightful essay, “Restoring Intimacy to Ministry”¹³, J N Collins reflects on the consciousness of an intimate presence to the Godhead that Paul wishes for his Corinthian correspondents as a result of his *diakonia*, his faithful transmission of the Gospel as its appointed herald.

Having suffered confusion from differing approaches from several teachers, Paul desires that they “reflect upon what they had experienced through reception of the word. If their personal

¹³ *Gateway to Renewal* (2016) 161-173.

experience had been of an opening onto Christ, then his role had been that of a *diakonos* (equally indicated by) a sense of the workings of the Spirit within them” (cf. 1 Cor 14). “He had been an intermediary through whom God’s word had come to them in the Spirit – and within their own experience or consciousness.” (cf. 2 Cor 13:5)¹⁴

3.7 How can this ecclesial reality develop in the Church in Australia?

Preliminary note:

Deacons’ service in parish ministry “might seem an easy way to meet current demands.” However, the ministry of deacon is not only in the parish. “Rather, parochial work should be regarded as extraordinary, it might not be the best use of what should normally be a radical ministry” whenever the bishop sees that kind of ministry is needed. “Like a smartphone, deacons have many apps, doing whatever the one who has oversight requests.” (T Drainey) Blessed John Paul II foresaw “a greater and more direct presence of Church ministers in the various spheres of the family, work, school, etc., in addition to existing pastoral structures.” (Rome, 6 Oct 1993)¹⁵

Some possibilities:

¹⁴ *Gateway* 167-8.

¹⁵ M McEntee *Catechesis on the Permanent Diaconate* KAIROS Melbourne, 2012.

- There is an advertisement in the current employment section of online 'Catholic News' for a Coordinator of Pastoral Activities in a rural diocese. Could the bishop consider, if he has a deacon, sending the deacon to coordinate this ministry of evangelisation?
- For ecumenical prayer gatherings and other ecumenical undertakings in society, there is a fittingness in many, if not most, instances of the participation of an ordained minister. A deacon with pastoral experience or with necessary theological qualifications is most apt for this, while a presbyter – there being no sacrament of Eucharist or reconciliation – is superfluous.
- Where a deacon is available, the superfluous character of a priest's participation is more evident on civic occasions that society expects the participation of an ordained minister, such as Australia Day Citizenship ceremonies, Anzac Day, major environmental observances, Remembrance Day, Christmas Carols, jockey club meetings, blessings of emergency services and their fleets, even ethics committees in business, social welfare, and health care.
- Each of these possibilities represents an occasion when a mandated minister of the Gospel proclaims the Gospel to the world.
- They also represent a process of returning to the diaconate certain diaconal ministries that, in the absence of deacons, needed to be assumed by presbyters.
- Perhaps the increasing visibility of deacons will indicate that there is not, after all, a vocations crisis. Rather, the providential restoration of the 'intermediate order' makes it possible for presbyters to be presbyters rather than exercising a hybrid diaconal- presbyteral ministry that we have come to think of as the ministry of a presbyter.

When presbyters are in a position, finally, to stick to their last, we may see that we have a sufficient supply of them for the gathering of the Church in sacrament and charity.

CONCLUSION

I conclude with another citation from the article by Alphonse Borras:

“The diaconate cannot be reduced to evangelical humility, nor should it be promoted in terms of a spirituality of services to be offered. The diaconate prepares the Church for its mission, following its Christ and Lord in expectation of his second coming. (Rv 21:1)”¹⁶

To balance the constraints of this quotation, I cite from my short essays previously published in KAIROS.

The deacon’s ministry in the Church is truly one of service, “the Church’s service sacramentalized” (Blessed John Paul II). Every deacon has a bond with his bishop. His service, first of all, consists in extending the reach of the bishop’s service of the Gospel. Bishop Terry Drainey (Middlesborough, UK) refers to deacons as “the bishop’s men, working wherever sent in the name of the Church, not just as private individuals”. Perhaps the developed theology that the International Theological Commission believes is in the future will speak of the deacon as a sacramental representation of Christ the obedient messenger (*‘diakonos’*) who, in the power of the Spirit, spoke in the

¹⁶ Art. Cit., 584

Father's name with good news for the poor (cf. Mark 1:2-3,9-11 citing Mal 3:1, Is 40:3).¹⁷

¹⁷ M McEntee loc. cit.