

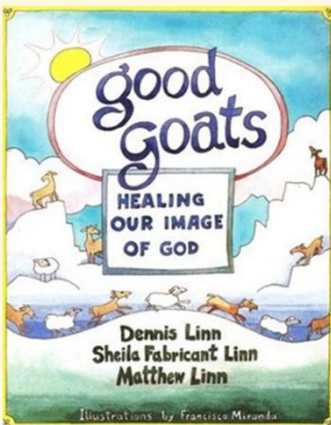
The Herald

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 3

SEPTEMBER 2025

A quarterly publication for the Deacons of the Diocese of Wilmington

GOOD GOATS



“To be or not to be, that is the question” is the famous opening line of a soliloquy spoken by Prince Hamlet in William Shakespeare’s play Hamlet. In the speech, Hamlet contemplates life and death, whether it is nobler to endure the suffering and injustice of life or to die by suicide and face the unknown horrors of the afterlife. Hamlet is in deep despair, overwhelmed by his father’s death and his mother’s hasty marriage to his uncle.

September is National Suicide Prevention Month. It amazes me that we speak so little of a national crisis such as suicide. Did you know that 22 veterans commit suicide each day – YES, 22 a day! That does not account for the other suicides that occur daily. It is that “elephant” in the room we are afraid to talk about. However, as deacons, we may be requested to preside over funeral rites at a funeral home or assist during a funeral Mass, where quiet remarks are occasionally made among those present.

If you have ever had someone die by suicide or experienced the death of a friend or relative by suicide, you know anguish, the shock, and even embarrassment. How can this happen to someone who had so much to live for and so much to give? What do you say? How do you comfort someone or even find comfort? We do not understand the mental health of someone, nor can we search someone’s mental state to find out what hurts. Giving comfort to people who have lost someone due to natural causes is one thing. Providing comfort to loved ones who have lost someone due to suicide is very different.

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FROM THE
DIRECTOR’S DESK



The thinking and understanding of some of our Protestant brothers and sisters is not the thinking of Catholics or at least should not be. On one occasion, a mutual friend of my wife and me died by suicide. Friends of ours who happen to be Baptists were convinced that the friend went straight to hell because their pastor told them that it was a sin against the Fifth

Commandment. We argued that no one has the right to judge, and who knows the mind of God. And what about our friend who died? What was his state of mind? What was his despair that brought him to such a tragic end? It's amazing how quick we are to judge.

There is a book that I read several years ago called "Good Goats: Healing Our Image of God." It was written by Dennis Linn, Sheila Fabricant Linn, and Matthew. In the book, there is a story of a mother who goes to Fr. Linn and talks about her son. He has attempted suicide several times, he deals in drugs and prostitution and wants nothing to do with God. She wants to know what will happen to him if he commits suicide and does not repent. Fr. Linn asks her what she thought would happen. She said he would surely go to hell. Then he says to her, "What if you were the judge and your son came before you, charged with this offense, what would you do?" She began to cry. She said she would get down from the judge's bench and run up and hug her

son and forgive him. Fr. Linn's response was, "What do you think God would do?"

The mental anguish that leads to suicidal ideation is not something that others can see. People mask their pain. People are fearful of getting help for their pain because it may mean they are not good Catholics or they have not "trusted God enough." As deacons, it is our job to remind the person we serve that the power of God is amazing, but He has also put great professionals on this earth. It's okay to rely on them as well. It is best practice for anyone serving the Church to be aware of local agencies that can refer people to services. When in doubt, you can call 911, call the local police and ask for a welfare check, or refer them to the national suicide prevention hotline at 800-273-Talk (8255), or they can text 988. At a minimum, you should always have this information readily available when meeting with people.

It's okay not to be OK. As deacons, we must remember this for ourselves. Are we asking God for Help? Are we seeking out mental health support as needed? Did you know your medical provider can put you in touch with a mental health counselor if needed? Let's take great care of ourselves so we can be great servants. And remember, there are Good Goats.

Deacon Vince Pisano

DID YOU KNOW?

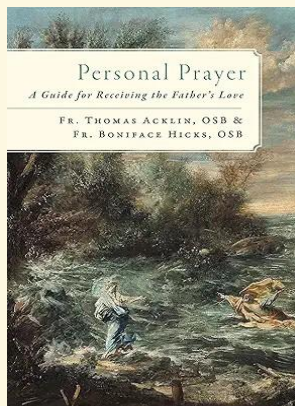
MCDONALD'S INVENTED THE FILET-O-FISH JUST FOR CATHOLICS?

Back in the 1960s, McDonalds realized they had a serious problem - sales were dropping on Fridays because no Catholics were buying cheeseburgers. The solution? A Catholic-friendly burger. While one idea involved a pineapple ring in a bun, the company ultimately went with the classic Filet-O-Fish.

THERE IS A MAGISTERIUM AI APP?

There is actually an app for artificial intelligence that references the Magisterium. You thought ChatGPT was the answer to all your questions. Find out more at www.magisterium.com and download the app.

GOOD READS

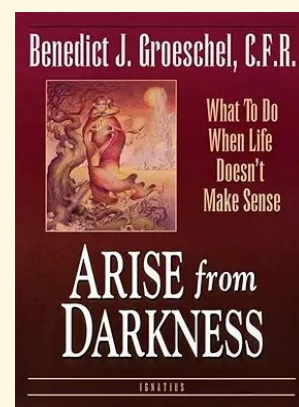


PERSONAL PRAYER: A GUIDE FOR RECEIVING THE FATHER'S LOVE **BY FR. THOMAS ACKLIN, OSB AND FR. BONIFACE HICKS, OSB**

How is your prayer life? If you are trying to grow deeper in your prayer life or trying to better understand the mystery of our relationship with God, Fr. Thomas Acklin, OSB, and Fr. Boniface Hicks, OSB, can help. In their book, *Personal Prayer: A Guide for Receiving the Father's Love*, 2025. Emmaus Road Publishing, Steubenville, Ohio. (www.EmmausRoad.org) It is a great read.

ARISE FROM DARKNESS: WHAT TO DO WHEN LIFE DOESN'T MAKE SENSE **BY FR. BENEDICT J. GROESCHEL, C.F.R.**

If you are struggling with fear, anxiety, grief, loss of loved ones, hurt, angry, or anything that makes life difficult, another must-read is *Arise from Darkness, What to Do When Life Doesn't Make Sense*, 1995. Ignatius Press, San Francisco. This book was written by the late Fr. Benedict J. Groeschel, C.F.R. Fr. Groeschel was a regular on EWTN with the late Mother Angelica. He worked with the homeless in the South Bronx. He was also the director of the Office of Spiritual Development for the New York Archdiocese.



GIRM GEMS

183. When the distribution of Communion is over, the Deacon returns to the altar with the Priest, collects the fragments, should any remain, and then carries the chalice and other sacred vessels to the credence table, where he purifies them and arranges them as usual, while the Priest returns to the chair. Nevertheless, it is also permitted to leave vessels needing to be purified on a corporal, suitably covered, on the credence table, and to purify them immediately after Mass, following the Dismissal of the people.

“249. [...] Moreover, the Deacon consumes at the altar all that remains of the Precious Blood assisted, if the case requires, by some of the concelebrants. He carries the chalice to the credence table and there he or a duly instituted acolyte purifies it, wipes it, and arranges it as usual.

“279. The sacred vessels are purified by the Priest, the Deacon, or an instituted acolyte after Communion or after Mass, in so far as possible at the credence table. The purification of the chalice is done with water alone or with wine and water, which is then consumed by whoever does the purification. The paten is wiped clean as usual with the purificator. Care is to be taken that whatever may remain of the Blood of Christ after the distribution of Communion is consumed immediately and completely at the altar.



ON THE CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 23, 2025, TUESDAY (OR THEREABOUTS)

DEACON FORUM

Your Deacon Forum Coordinator is to email you with the exact date and time for your group.

OCTOBER 1, 2025, WEDNESDAY

DEACON COMMUNITY BOARD – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

VIA ZOOM—7 TO 8 P.M.

OCTOBER 8, 2025, WEDNESDAY

DEACON COMMUNITY BOARD

VIA ZOOM—6:30 TO 8 P.M.

OCTOBER 28-30, 2025, TUESDAY—THURSDAY

HOMILETICS REFRESHER COURSE

DAYLESFORD ABBEY, PAOLI, PA — 5 P.M. TO 2:30 P.M.

NOVEMBER 2-8 & NOVEMBER 23-29, 2025, SUNDAY—SATURDAY

DEACON COMMUNITY BOARD NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

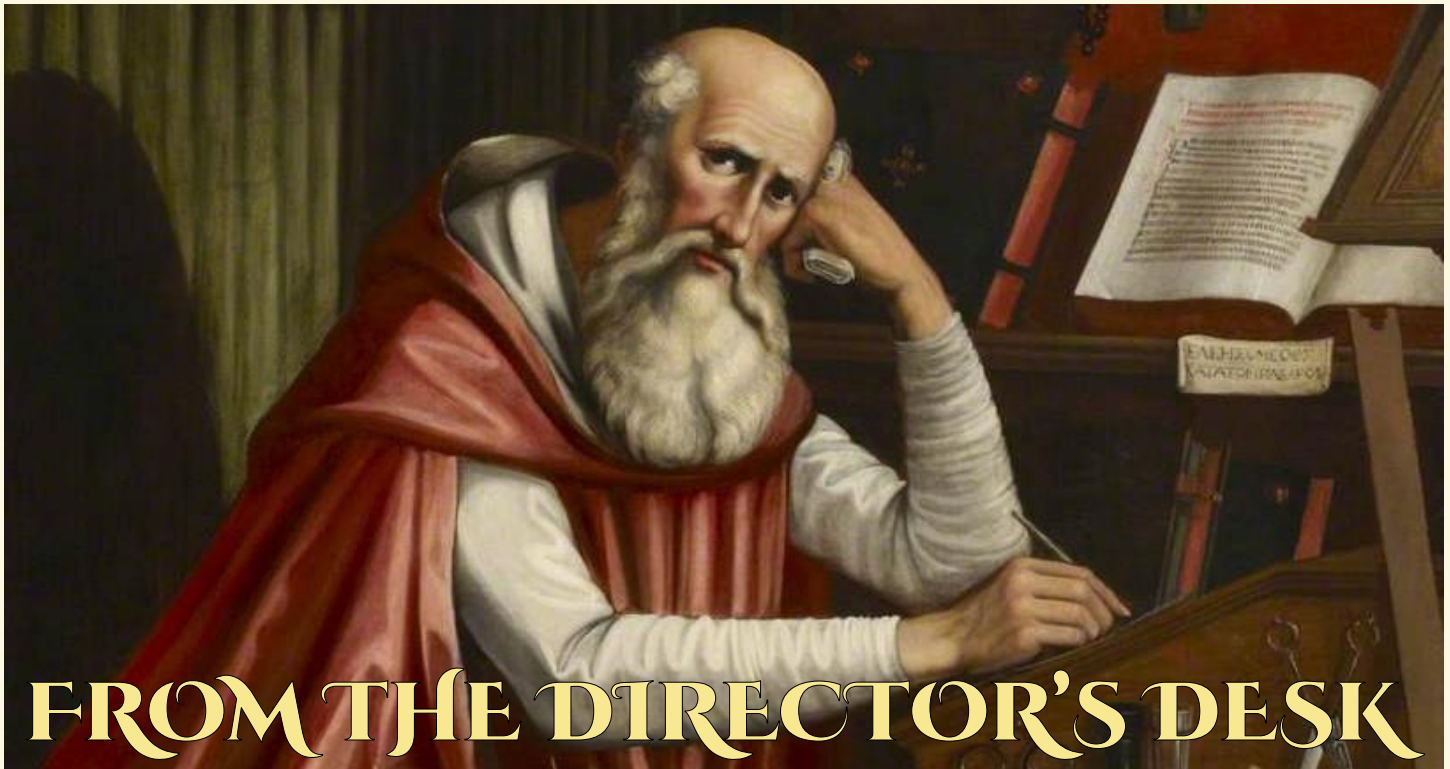
VIA EMAIL

RESERVE THE DATE

FEBRUARY 27 THROUGH MARCH 1, 2026, FRIDAY—SUNDAY

MANDATORY RETREAT FOR DEACONS

HOLY SAVIOR CHURCH, OCEAN CITY, MARYLAND



MOVING INTO THE DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

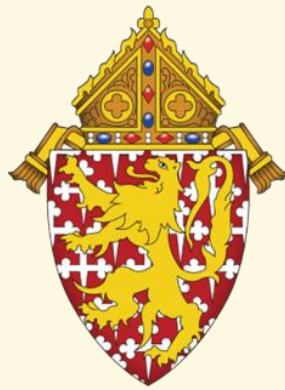
Extern Permanent Deacons, those not incardinated in the Diocese of Wilmington, who plan to move into the Diocese of Wilmington must meet certain criteria before the Bishop will consider a diaconal assignment in a parish or for an institution of the Diocese of Wilmington. While greeting the deacon or having a cup of coffee with the deacons or priests of the parish is a wonderful way to welcome him into our diocese, the pastor is never allowed to offer the deacon an opportunity to serve in his parish. If such a Permanent Deacon approaches you, please refer him to the Director of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate to begin the assignment process.

Once the requirements have been completed, and based on diocesan need, the Bishop may approve a probationary assignment for an initial one-year period along with faculties for ministering in our diocese.

MOVING OUT OF THE DIOCESE OF WILMINGTON

Sometimes life throws you a curve ball, and your boss asks you to take a position in a faraway land, like Virginia, or maybe you have retired from your job, and your dream has always been to live in the Smokey Mountains. In any case, moving out of the Diocese of Wilmington requires coordination between our diocese and the diocese to which you will be moving. As soon as you know the move is eminent, please contact the Director of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate to start the process.

Remember, until you excardinate from the Diocese of Wilmington and incardinate into another diocese, you remain attached to the Diocese of Wilmington.



PUBLISHED BY THE
OFFICE OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE

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