

## Kashmar to focus on communication as chairman

By Deacon Dave Brencic

Improving communication will be a priority, at least in the early going, for Deacon George Kashmar, new chairman of the Diaconate Council.

Kashmar said he would like to see a better flow of information coming from the Diaconate Office.

“The biggest priority is to improve the communication from the Diaconate Office to deacons - get it into their hands quickly, deliver it timely, deliver it in a way that they will read it,” Kashmar said.

He noted that when he served as a DDC he made a point of contacting every deacon in his deanery to see how they wanted to be contacted, whether electronically by email or regular mail.

Kashmar said he also would like to see the process of mutual aid requests streamlined. “Those need to get out to people,” he said.

Kashmar, who had served as council vice chairman the last two years, said he decided to run for chairman after Deacon Bill Stearns chose not to run for re-election.

“Hopefully, we can take it to the next level, take action and not just talk about things,” Kashmar said. “Maybe do things differently, be responsive to the guys and make a meaningful impact.”



George Kashmar, Deacon Council Chairman

As far as identifying other challenges, Kashmar said he plans on talking with Stearns and others who have led the council to get their input.

“I want to see what they see as needs,” Kashmar said.

Kashmar, 56, was ordained in 2006. He works as the business manager at St. Patrick’s Parish in Wadsworth. He and his wife, Mary, have two teenage children.

Ministering at St. Joseph Parish in Libertyville, he has been involved with the social justice ministry, baptismal prep and the worship committee. Outside the parish, Kashmar has volunteered with a soup kitchen in Waukegan and serves on the Admissions and Scrutinies board for the Institute of Diaconal Studies.

The new Diaconate Council consists of Kashmar, Chuck McFarland as vice chairman; Dennis Robak as treasurer; and John Gaughan as secretary.

## Deacons and the Year of Sunday Mass

By Fr. Louis J. Cameli

The Archdiocese of Chicago has embarked on the second year of the Strategic Pastoral Plan Reflect Christ’s Light. The first year launched a special effort to serve teens and young adults. This second year is the Year of Sunday Mass. And it offers us a wonderful opportunity.

Those of us who participate weekly in the Sunday Mass belong to a distinct minority of Catholics. Only 23% of our Catholic people regularly celebrate Sunday Mass. If, as we firmly believe, the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life, then we should be deeply concerned about our absent brothers and sisters. Their irregular, rare, or zero participation in Sunday Mass leaves them without the Word of Life and the Bread of Life. It’s not just a matter of a failure to

*(Continued on page 6)*

In This Issue:	
From the Editor .....	2
Views from the Vicar .....	3
Patristics Conference .....	4
Amate House fundraiser .....	4
Phoebe’s corner .....	5
Pilgrimage opportunity.....	5
Deacon Council notes .....	7
Community news .....	8
Thoughts from the Treasurer .....	9
Obits .....	9
Stritch Retreat House .....	11
Zacchaeus anniversary .....	11
St. Lawrence celebration.....	12

## Getting your hands dirty for God

It was a different kind of trip and project for Hope's on the Way. We weren't traveling hundreds of miles to an area ravaged by hurricanes or some other natural disaster where people had lost their homes and livelihoods.

Instead, it was a relatively short journey to Mundelein with the project being the Cardinal Stritch Retreat House. For many of us, Stritch is a beloved place where we have gone on retreat. It's a place to find quiet, recharge and reconnect with our God.

Deacon Richard Hudzik, director of Stritch, came up with a list of work he wanted done: repainting of the

outside Stations of the Cross, the painting of an apartment, the sanding and painting of some railings, and various other chores in and around the retreat house.

Despite the heat and humidity, I found the project to be joyful work. It was a way of giving back to a place that holds a special place in my heart. I think we were all glad to help improve the surroundings, which in turn will add to the experience of Stritch for all of those who visit.

Making this project extra special was the participation of several men in the formation program. In fact, one guy brought his two sons. It was great working side by side with them, eating meals together and sharing with them our experiences as deacons. I think it was a different kind of learning experience for them

as well.

It was suggested that perhaps Hope's on the Way could make a yearly visit to Stritch to do whatever work was needed. All of us agreed that would be a worthy goal and that other deacons or people in the formation program would probably be interested in participating.

It's not glamorous work - sanding and painting railings, rebuilding benches, tearing up old carpets - but it's necessary work. It's using our God-given skills and talents, however simple those may be, and our willingness to give of our time, to help others. That's what we are called to do as deacons and wives of deacons - to serve any way we can.

Keep the fire burning,  
Deacon Dave Brencic, editor

## The Flame

A newsletter for the Chicago Diaconate community published six times a year: February, April, June, August, October, December  
Publisher: Fr. Michael Ahlstrom  
Editor: Dave Brencic  
Staff: Dennis Colgan, Dan Dietsch, Clare Faherty, Chick O'Leary

Submit Articles and photos to:

**Office of the Diaconate**  
Archdiocese of Chicago  
816 Marengo  
Forest Park, IL 60130  
Ph: (708) 366-8900  
Fax: (708) 366-8968

Email:

[DeaconNews@ArchChicago.org](mailto:DeaconNews@ArchChicago.org)

*The Flame* is also viewable online at:

[www.deacons.archchicago.org](http://www.deacons.archchicago.org)

Printed by the generosity of J. S. Paluch Company, Franklin Park, Illinois. Publisher of bulletins, vocation and stewardship calendars, and of World Library Publications' assortment of music and liturgy resources.

[deacons.archchicago.org](http://deacons.archchicago.org)

## Ensuciándote las manos por Dios

Fue un viaje diferente para "Esperanza en el camino". No estábamos viajando miles de millas a un área arrasada por los huracanes u otro desastre natural donde la gente ha perdido sus hogares y sus pertenencias.

Al contrario, fue un viaje relativamente corto a Mundelein y el proyecto era en la casa de Retiro Cardinal Stritch. Para muchos de nosotros Stritch es un lugar que amamos por ahí hemos ido de retiro. Es un lugar en donde encontramos paz, nuevas energías y nos re conectamos con Dios.

El diacono Richard Hudzik, director de Stritch, nos presento una lista de cosas que se necesitaban hacer:

Resanar y pintar las estaciones del Viacrucis de afuera, pintar uno de los apartamentos, lijar y pintar las barandillas de las escaleras y varias otras cosas que necesitaban atención dentro y alrededor de la casa de Retiro...

A pesar del calor y la humedad. Encontré el proyecto un trabajo con gusto. Fue una forma de devolver a un lugar que ocupa un lugar especial en mi corazón. Creo que todos estuvimos contentos de haber ayudado

a mejorar los alrededores, que agregaran una nueva experiencia del lugar a todos aquellos que lo visiten.

Hacer este proyecto extra especial fue la participación de varios hombres en el programa de formación. Por cierto, uno de los hombres trajo a sus dos hijos. Fue muy bueno trabajar lado a lado de ellos, comer juntos y compartir nuestras experiencias como diáconos. Creo que fue otra clase experiencia para ellos también.

Se sugirió que "Esperanza en el camino" debería visitar anualmente Stritch House para hacer el trabajo que sea necesario. Todos estuvimos de acuerdo de hacerlo como un proyecto que vale la pena y que otros diáconos y hombres del programa de formación estarían interesados en participar.

No es un trabajo glamoroso \_ lijar y pintar pasamanos, reconstruir bancas, sacar alfombras viejas\_ pero es un trabajo necesario de hacer. Es usar las habilidades y talentos que Dios nos ha dado, no importa que tan sencillos sean y nuestro deseo de dar nuestro tiempo para ayudar a otros. Eso es para lo que hemos sido llamados como diáconos y esposas de diáconos \_para servir de cualquier modo que podamos.

Mantengan el fuego encendido

Diacono Dave Brencic, Editor

Views from the Vicar

I am so very pleased that Richard Hudzik has started his new ministry as the co-vicar of Cardinal George for the Diaconate Community. Dick has many talents that I lack and I am confident we will be a good team, along with Dennis Colgan and Enrique Alonso, the associate directors. I am especially pleased that we have a deacon in a top position of leadership for the Diaconate Community and for the archdiocese.

St. Francis Day and the St. Stephen Symposium are two major events for our Diaconate Community. While St. Francis Day is a social event, it is our primary fundraiser for the Diaconate Community. None of the money

goes to our office, but goes to help the Diaconate Council help you help others. In today's Flame is an accounting of our outgoing treasurer, Chuck McFarland. You can be very proud of your generosity. I am looking forward to seeing many of you on Oct. 7 at the Elmcrest as we gather for our dinner.

The St. Stephen Day Symposium on Saturday, Oct. 27, is our No. 1 opportunity to complete the requirements every deacon has for ongoing ministry education. The thrust of our symposium this year is the ministry of the deacon outside the parish. While the parish is the primary focus of most deacons as they do their ministry, part of your formation was to learn about the concerns of our archbishop and our

archdiocese beyond the parish.

In my 43 plus years of ministry I have always done something other than my assigned ministry. It has enriched me and enabled me to bring back far more than the time it took away from my primary focus of serving. I expect to see every one of you at the symposium. It is a time to learn and be challenged.

Political conventions and the upcoming election are very much in the forefront of the news. As clergy, we need to give very clear and strong encouragement to our people to exercise their citizenship in the upcoming election. We also need do this in a responsible way and avoid becoming involved in anything that smacks of partisan

*(Continued on page 10)*

Reflexiones del Vicario



Estoy muy contento por **Richard Rudzik** que ha comenzado su nuevo ministerio como Co Vicario del Cardenal George para la Comunidad

Diaconal. Dick tiene muchos talentos que yo no tengo y estoy confiado en que trabajaremos como un buen equipo junto con Dennis Colgan y Enrique Alonso, los directores asociados. Estoy especialmente contento de que ahora tenemos un diacono en una posición de liderazgo para la Comunidad Diaconal y para la Arquidiócesis.

**St. Francis Day y San Stephen Symposium** son los dos eventos principales de la Comunidad Diaconal. Mientras que St. Francis Day es un evento social, es el evento primario para levantar fondos para la Comunidad Diaconal.

Ninguna parte del dinero va para nuestra oficina sino que va para el Concilio Diaconal para ayudar a otros. En este número de Flame hay un reporte del tesorero , Chuck McFarland. Deben de estar muy orgullosos de la generosidad de todos ustedes. Estoy deseando ver a muchos de ustedes en Octubre 7 en Elmcrest donde nos reuniremos para nuestra comida.

El St. Stephen Symposium el Sábado Octubre 27, es la oportunidad numero uno para completar los requerimientos que cada diacono tiene para completar su Educación Ministerial. El Tema del Symposium de este año es el ministerio del diacono afuera de su parroquia. Mientras que la parroquia es el foco principal de la mayoría de los diáconos cuando hacen su ministerio, parte de la formación fue aprender sobre las preocupaciones del Arzobispo y nuestra Arquidiócesis más allá de la parroquia. En mis 43 y mas años de

ministerio siempre he hecho algo mas de la asignación de mi ministerio. Me ha enriquecido y me ha habilitado para traer más del tiempo que tome fuera del foco principal de servicio. Espero ver a cada uno de ustedes en el Symposium. Es un tiempo de aprendizaje y de reto.

**Political conventions y upcoming elections** están en las paginas de enfrente de las noticias. Como clérigos necesitamos dar una clara y fuerte recomendación a nuestra gente para ejercitar su ciudadanía en las elecciones que se aproximan. Nosotros necesitamos hacer esto de una manera responsable y evitar envolvernos en cualquier forma de partidos políticos. Les recomiendo entrar a [www.faithfulcitizenship.org](http://www.faithfulcitizenship.org) y lean los documentos de los Obispos sobre Formando Conciencia para una Ciudadanía Fiel (Forming Conciences for Faithful Citizenship)

*(Continued on page 10)*

## 3rd annual Patristics Conference slated

St. Lambert Parish will host its 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Patristics Conference Saturday, Oct. 13.

Entitled, "The Fathers, the Family and the Culture of Life," the conference will feature author, television host, lyricist and expert on the writings of the Fathers of the Church, Mike Aquilina and Dr. Jim Papandrea, a teacher, author, speaker and musician who is assistant professor of church history at Garrett Evangelical Seminary.

It is claimed that the expression "May you live in interesting times" is an ancient Chinese curse. Values and institutions such as the sanctity of life and the nature of marriage are being redefined and interpreted to suit the secular culture of the age. Life, which we as Catholics hold to be sacred, seems to be ever more disposable. Marriage, which we have held to be a covenantal, lifelong, faithful, fruitful joining of a man and a woman providing the appropriate context for the family, is being redefined as a barren, contractual bond between any two persons for solely for pleasure of the individuals.

Our times are indeed interesting, yet perhaps not as unique as we might think. Scripture reminds us "there is nothing new under the sun." Aquilina and Papandrea will show that we have been down this path before. They will take us to another time when the concept of marriage was amorphous and unwanted children were treated as trash or commodities to be sold. They will remind us that the Fathers of the Church spoke to the culture of their times on these issues and examine what relevance their teaching has for Catholics in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The annual patristics conference was conceived by Fr. Richard Simon, pastor of St. Lambert parish, and Aquilina and is intended to make



Dr. Jim Papandrea and Mike Aquilina will team up to explore what the Fathers of the Church had to say about marriage, the family and sexuality.

the treasury of wisdom left to us by the early Christians more available to people today.

Aquilina is author or editor of more than 30 books on Catholic history, doctrine and devotion. He is co-host, with Scott Hahn, of eight series that air on EWTN. For many years, he also appeared as a regular panelist on "The Weekly Roman Observer," broadcast by Catholic Familyland Network. He is a frequent guest on Catholic radio.

Aquilina's career in publishing spans almost three decades, and hundreds of his articles have appeared in periodicals and journals in the United States and abroad. He also is a poet and song lyricist. His poems have been translated into Polish and Spanish and have appeared in *First Things*, *Plains Poetry Journal*, *Catholic Digest* and elsewhere. His songs have been recorded by Grammy Award-winner Dion DiMucci.

After graduating from the University of Minnesota with a bachelor's degree in music and theater arts, Papandrea went on to receive his M.Div. degree from Fuller Theological Seminary with a concentration in youth ministry, then spent several years in full-time ministry, focusing on youth and music ministry, and serving as a consultant in youth ministry. He holds a Ph.D. in the history and theology of the early Christian church from Northwestern University with secondary concentrations in New Testament interpretation and the history of the Roman Empire. He also has studied Roman history at the American Academy in Rome, Italy.

A former Protestant minister and convert to Catholicism, he has taught as an adjunct instructor for Barat College, Elmhurst College, Loyola University Chicago's Institute for Pastoral Studies and the lay formation programs of the Archdiocese of Chicago and the Diocese of Joliet. He currently teaches in the Chicago Catholic Scripture School and the Deacon Formation Program of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

The \$25 cost of this daylong conference includes lunch. For more information or to register, go to [www.StLambert.org](http://www.StLambert.org), or contact Deacon Chick O'Leary at 773-775-6659.

## Second City fundraiser to benefit Amate House

Amate House, the Chicago Archdiocese's young adult volunteer program, ended its 28<sup>th</sup> year in June. Our 28 volunteers completed their year of full-time service, and now join the network of more than 600 alumni.

Our new program year began with 34 new volunteers arriving in Chicago from across the country in late July, eager to serve at their worksites, live together in an intentional community and embrace the tenets of Amate House. We are excited to share in the journey of this new group.

Amate House will host an upcoming fundraiser with The Second City on Oct. 13 at Trinity High School in River Forest. A night of "Second City for President" will provide a hilarious look at the upcoming presidential election.

Tickets will go on sale in August, and more information will follow. Check out updates at [www.amatehouse.org](http://www.amatehouse.org). Money raised will help us continue to support and develop women and men rooted in faith, dedicated to service and committed to building a more just and loving society. Please join us.

If you would like to learn more about Amate House, contact Deacon John Lucas at (773) 376-2445.



**Phoebe's  
Corner:**

**Our continuing call**

By Helene Albano

The past few "Phoebe's Corner" columns have highlighted some of the gifts and ministries of our sisters within the Diaconate Community. As we celebrate their gifts and contributions, we can also take the time to reflect on our own call to service and how God continues to work in and through us. Our membership in the Diaconate Community affords us many opportunities to grow in knowledge of the faith/church and to build networks of help, support, care and concern as we minister to those in need.

As we rapidly approach the end of 2012, I would like to extend a personal invitation to all of our Diaconate sisters (and their guests) to share in a day of prayer, ministerial/personal growth, and fellowship, as we gather for the Fall 2012 Diaconate Women's Gathering. The day will also include a light breakfast, lunch and time to fellowship with our sisters in faith.

Our special guest speaker, Teresa Pennix-Gill, will share her call to ministry and the passion and energy that support her journey of faith. Her words convey her enthusiasm as she raises awareness and support for violence prevention. She also will share her current efforts to establish parenting programs in parishes throughout the city. Teresa has recognized that many of the children and their parents in the Chicago area face serious challenges and need help to build and strengthen the parent-child bond.



In addition to her own ministries, Teresa Pennix-Gill has been highly effective in support and collaboration with the efforts of her husband, Deacon Leroy Gill.

She is working to develop parenting programs in parishes to support families and help them cope with today's societal pressures.

In addition to sharing her own journey of ministry, Teresa's words of encouragement and inspiration invite us to reflect on the ways that our own gifts can be used for God's purposes within our homes, parishes and communities. All are warmly welcomed to participate in this opportunity to reflect on our ministry and to strengthen the sense of vision and solidarity within our Diaconate Community. With God's help, we can more clearly discern our call and work to meet the challenges that face our parish communities.



**Save the Date**  
**Diaconate Women's  
Gathering**  
***Building Strong &  
Healthy Families***  
***in our Parish  
Communities***

**Saturday, Nov. 17**

**St. Bernadine's  
Fearon Hall**

**Registration 8:30 a.m. Sessions  
from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.**

**Is there interest  
in a pilgrimage?**

Last year, we offered the pilgrimage "Following in the Footsteps of Paul." Unfortunately, the trip was canceled because of insufficient numbers.

Catholic Tours has asked us to try once again. The pilgrimage would take place in November 2013 with a similar itinerary: Athens, Corinth, Phillip, Thessalonica, Ephesus, Smyrna, several sites from the Apocalypse and Istanbul.

The cost was \$3,100 and we will try to keep it close, though air fares may have risen. If needed, the itinerary may be adjusted. The trip would run between 12 and 14 days depending on the sites. Continuing education funds may be used, if available to you.

If you are at all interested, with no commitment whatsoever, please let me know.

Call (708) 383-5951, or email [fredfish1879@yahoo.com](mailto:fredfish1879@yahoo.com). If there is enough interest, we shall pursue possibilities. If not, nice try.

**Father Ed Salmon**, retired vicar of the Diaconate Community

## Deacons and the Year of Sunday Mass

*(Continued from page 1)*

fulfill an obligation – and, indeed, there is a serious obligation – but it also means that they are denying themselves the critically necessary sustenance for their faith and their life in God.

The Strategic Pastoral Plan addresses these troubling statistics, but perhaps in a way that you wouldn't expect. Rather than targeting the 77% who are not there, we start with those who are present. If we who remain committed to Sunday Mass are better able to understand our experience of the power of the Eucharist in our own lives and if we develop the language to express that experience, then we can give witness to the 77%.

We know from sad experience that numbered in that 77% are family members, friends, co-workers and others who belong to our communities. They are not bad people, but they are very often poorly formed in their faith and even unaware of the riches that God wants to share with them in the Mass. How will they know, unless we tell them? How will we tell them, unless we have a grasp of our own experience of the Mass and have the language to share it?

One particular way to get to our experience is through a process that I call doing a Eucharistic autobiography. It means retrieving the ways in which the Eucharist has been powerfully intertwined with the narrative of our lives. I develop this process and give an example of it from my own life in a small book entitled "Bread of Life: Exploring the Presence of Eucharist in Our Lives" (LTP, 2012), also available in Spanish as "Pan de vida: Explorando la presencia de la Eucaristía en nuestras vidas" (LTP, 2012).

# Year of Sunday Mass

July 2012 - June 2013

A format for doing the same thing in a small group, such as a parish staff, parish council, or a prayer group, is the process called Circle of Witness. This is available at the Archdiocesan website under the "Year of Sunday Mass" and "parish resources."

In this Year of Sunday Mass is there anything that might belong specifically to deacons and diaconal ministry? I think there is. Deacons serve the Sunday Mass in some obvious ways, especially through their ministry of Word and Sacrament, by their proclamation of the Word and their distribution of the Eucharist. There is also another dynamic in play when deacons assist at Mass, something more subtle, but very important for the life of the Church.

Deacons have a directive or guiding function in the liturgy. Historically and even today, they serve by gathering the assembly for the celebration of Mass. Deacons, at different points in the Mass, invite the assembly to prayer and to an expression of their relationship to one another at the sign of peace.

Finally, deacons serve at the dismissal rite which is really a commissioning, a sending, an appeal to take what has been celebrated into the world and daily life. Clearly the directive or guiding function of the deacon in the Mass is very significant and has potential for great impact on those who have come to worship.

If we step back from this directive or guiding function, I think it is possible to summarize it in a few short phrases that we would like to communicate to people: "Pay attention. Know what you are

doing. Carry this celebration into the rest of your lives."

In so many respects, this is exactly the message of the Year of Sunday Mass in the Archdiocese of Chicago. In different places, both in the Mass itself and in the life of the parish more generally, deacons can and should call believers to a deeper claiming of the Eucharist in their lives. If they can nurture and foster some of the resources available through the Archdiocese and their particular parish, this will have significant impact.

Earlier I said that the Year of Sunday Mass offers us a wonderful opportunity. I do believe that. The statistics seem to be negative, even grim. What waits for us, however, is a great possibility – to unfold and present the riches of the Sunday Mass for people who more than ever are in desperate need of the Bread of Life.

(Two links for more information: "Know the Mass, One Word at a Time" by Fr. Cameli at [http://www.archchicago.org/StrategicPastoralPlan/SundayMass/word\\_en.aspx](http://www.archchicago.org/StrategicPastoralPlan/SundayMass/word_en.aspx) and Question of the Week, which are being published in many parish bulletins.)

## Mass Memorial Cards

Mass Memorial Cards are available and help support the works of the Diaconate Community.

To request cards, please email Deacon Dennis Robak at [DRobak@archchicago.org](mailto:DRobak@archchicago.org) or call (708) 366-8900.

## Diaconate Council Notes July 14, 2012

**The following council members were present:** William Stearns, chairman; George Kashmar, vice-chairman; Father Michael Ahlstrom, vicar; and Dennis Colgan, associate director.

**VDCs present were:** Ray Loman, Paul Spalla, Guilio Camerini, Joseph Truesdale and Dan Ragonese

**DDCs present were:** Richard Hudzik, Dennis Robak, Dan Welter, Frank Beil, Adolfo Lopez, Chris Virruso and John Gaughan

**Other members present were:** Peggy Virruso and Margaret Colgan representing the wives of the Diaconate Community

**Absent were:** C. McFarland, J. Vazquez, J. Minor, D. Wagner, S. Stecker, L. Rybicki, W. Warmouth, U. Munoz, E. O'Leary, E. Lopez, W. Pouncy, R. Silva, J. Pineda, J. Schopp, I. Alvarez, R. Tryjefaczka, J. Deiters, T. Bartholomew, G. Bartos, J. Cook and T. Knetl

Roll call indicated that only 16 members out of 40 were in attendance. A quorum was not present. Motions to approve or to not approve agenda items will have to be voted upon at the next meeting.

**Treasurer's report:** Bill Stearns in the absence of Chuck McFarland, treasurer, distributed a printed copy of the report.

Checking account 5/1/2012 thru 6/30/2012: account balance as of 4/30/12 was \$50,543.10; bank account balance as of 6/30/2012 was \$30,734.25

**Educational and financial grants, Vice-Chair, George Kashmar:** No additional mutual aid or financial grants were requested.

The vice-chairman stated that John Gaughan had decided to run for election to the position of council secretary and asked for any other nominations. With none forthcoming, Dan Welter nominated Gaughan, and by voice vote he was elected to serve a two-year term.

Vicar Fr. Mike Ahlstrom asked all of the newly elected officers and new

members of the council to stand while he conducted an installation and blessing ceremony.

The meeting was then turned over to the new chairman, George Kashmar, who stated his intention to bring council members together and to be collaborative in order to move the council forward. He also cited the need to increase attendance and participation at meetings.

Dan Welter offered the council's gratitude and congratulations to Bill Stearns, the outgoing chairman, and cited the rewriting of the policy manual as a major accomplishment.

**Old business: Move Policy age discussion & vote 60 or 65**

Stearns opened the meeting to discuss the remaining issue in the new policy manual -- the transfer of deacons.

Welter proposed that the question be brought to a vote on what age a deacon ought to be expected to discern a call to being transferred to another parish or assignment -- should it remain at 60 years of age or be changed to 65. A vote was taken. There were 13 votes in favor of leaving the age at 60; 7 to make the age 65; and 1 for 75. The issue was resolved that the wording of the policy should remain at 60. It was pointed out that a deacon can always ask for a voluntary move. Stearns thanked all the members for their input on the topic.

**Upcoming events for deacons - dates, times, locations:** The annual St. Francis Day Dinner will be held on Sunday, Oct. 7. Raffle tickets will be mailed to all deacons and their support is crucial. Deacon charities have experienced a 61% decrease in funds.

The St. Lawrence Day Mass and celebration is scheduled for Sunday, Aug. 5, at St. Barbara in Brookfield. This year we will recognize deacons observing their 40<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup> year anniversaries and welcome newly ordained deacons from the two classes of 2012. Dan Ragonese and Vicariate VI are in charge of organizing this year's festivities.

St. Stephen's Day Symposium will take place at Concordia University in River Forest on Saturday, Oct. 27. The 2013 Convocation will also be at Concordia on Saturday, March 9.

On Friday, Oct. 26, at Our Lady of Hope in Rosemont, there will be a TEND meeting, which brings together deacons and deaconesses from Catholic, Episcopal and Lutheran churches. Deacons from the Archdiocese are invited to attend.

**Overnight retreat for council:** The council is planning an overnight retreat at the Stritch Retreat House in Mundelein. No date has yet been determined.

**Vicar's Report, Father Mike Ahlstrom:** Fr. Mike Ahlstrom announced that Deacon Richard Hudzik has been appointed by Francis Cardinal George as the new co-vicar for the Diaconate Community. Hudzik will begin serving a part-time role in September and transition into full time after Jan. 1<sup>st</sup>. Fr. Mike says he intends to remain fully active through the first half of next year and then officially retire, but continue to work part time in his position as vicar.

A folder of materials for the DDCs who will be meeting with new pastors was made available. Many are first-time pastors. The materials contain an agenda of topics to be covered. One item is an increase in the parish's support for the Diaconate Office from \$600 to \$700 annually. Stearns suggested that a file folder might be prepared for each new pastor and have the pastor's name on it. It would then be known with which pastors the DDCs were meeting with.

Fr. Mike asked the VDCs to follow up with their DDCs regarding the meetings. Kashmar recommended that forms such as those for the pastor meetings be made available online or be emailed to each DDC.

The DDCs were asked to take to their deacons the Archdiocesan stoles, which have not yet been picked up. Dan Welter inquired whether newly ordained deacons in the coming years would also receive a

## Diaconate Council Notes

(Continued from page 7)

stole and pointed out that retired deacons, many with long years of service, did not receive one.

Marge Colgan asked whether stoles could be provided for the funerals of retired deacons. Fr. Ahlstrom responded that he is open to providing a stole for any deacon who requests one and will allow the council to vote on the matter at its next meeting.

There are a number of positions to fill on the council and Fr. Mike asked for assistance in recruiting candidates, especially new DDCs.

Fr. Mike said he is affiliated with the Parish Outreach Committee of Catholic Charities. The committee is looking for help finding parishioners who would serve as parish representatives to the Outreach Committee. Deacons are asked to help identify such parishioners. Deacon Don Grossnickle also seeks deacons who would themselves receive training in working with people with disabilities.

**Associate Director's Report Dennis Colgan:** Dennis Colgan referred to the passing of Deacon Bob Sasseti and praised Bob's years of service to the deacon community.

Colgan is seeking help with the St. Stephen Symposium Oct. 27.

### Reports of VDCs and DDCs:

**Vicariate I, Ray Loman:** Ray brought stoles to the Retreat House where deacons could claim theirs. Vicariate I has scheduled a meeting with Bishop Rassas during August. The newly ordained are invited.

**Vicariate II, Paul Spalla:** Paul has 6 stoles he will get to his deacons. Paul thanked Frank Biel for his service as DDC in Deanery IIE. Frank is retiring from the council and his place will be taken by Paul Stanton. Spalla reported that St. Clement Parish finally has a deacon. There was no meeting of the Presbyteral Council to report on.

**Vicariate III, Jose Vazquez:** Adolfo Lopez explained that Jose and most of

the Spanish deacons not present were attending the gathering of the National Hispanic Deacons Association in the Dominican Republic.

**Vicariate IV, Giulio Camerini:** Giulio stated that he has two DDC slots to fill. Javier Pineda of IVC has resigned and John Gaughan of IVD has become secretary to the council.

**Vicariate V, Joseph Truesdale:** Joe is also looking for deacons to serve as DDCs in his Vicariate.

**Vicariate VI, Dan Ragonese:** Dan has two DDC positions to fill in Vicariate VI.

**Black Deacons' Report:** Marge Colgan, in the absence of William Pouncy, said deacons are urged to attend and support the Sunrise Services on Chicago beaches Saturday, Aug. 25. Masses will be conducted at 6:30 a.m. on six lakefront beaches. The services are meant to call attention to the ongoing violence in our city and to promote support for those whose communities are beset by violence. Anyone interested should call either William Pouncy or Leroy Gill.

**Hispanic Deacons:** Pedro Sedano was not in attendance and no report was presented.

**Women of the Diaconate, Marge Colgan:** The women of the Diaconate invite all widows, wives and daughters of deacons to attend their event focusing on violence in the community, the home and schools. The day will be Saturday, Nov. 17 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Bernadine's Fearon Hall. A \$10 donation will be asked. Lunch will be provided. Last year, 75 women attended. Teresa Gill has been conducting programs on parenting.

**Evangelization Committee, William Stearns:** No new developments to report.

**New business, Proposed Constitution Revisions:** Welter referred to the back of the printed Vicar's Report to see suggested changes. One item mentioned was the holding of council meetings in even, rather than odd-numbered months.

Next meeting is scheduled for Sept. 8.

## Community news

Your prayers are asked for those who have recently gone to the Lord: Deacon Robert Sasseti, '85; Deacon Willam Maurer, '96; Deacon Daniel Martinez, '90; Deacon Wilmer Hatch '80; Deacon Stanley Cebrzynski, '74; Deacon Ronald Schultz, '80; John Schliesmann, father of Deacon Barry Schliesman, '09; Essie O. Fair, mother of Deacon Davis Fair, '01, and Jerry Loman, brother of Raymond Loman.

Among the sick, we commend to your prayers: Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I., Jose Vazquez, Marge Colgan, Peggy Virruso, Bruce Peters, Ramon Navarro, Michael O'Malley, Cory Reynolds, son of Kevin and Jen Reynolds, Candace Rottman, Pete Meehan, Bill Reinhart, Steven and Millie Moore, Diane Leo, Florence Szady, Daniel and Maria Patiño, John Wilkenson, Ida Bohannon, Robert DeFiore, Alfia Sasseti, Linda O'Donnell, Susan Winblad, Janet Studer, wife of the late Marvin Studer, '85, Frank DeVita, Gilberto and Maria Cintron, Antonio and Ernestina Ponce, Jorge and Nubia Rozo, Teresa Ochoa, José Uroza, Jose Marrero, Gerry Skaja, brother of Larry Skaja, Dustin Fejdasz, nephew of Michael and Marge Hogan, Laura Deters, daughter of Frank and Carolyn Beil, Cheryl Ann Gaca, daughter of Ron and Linda Morowczynski, Robert Lapin, brother-in-law of Dennis Colgan, Cheryl Becker, Robert Brueggemann and Cindy Grabiec.

To add someone to the sick or deceased list, please call the Diaconate Office at (708) 366-8900.

## Outgoing Diaconate Council Treasurer Thoughts

It has been my privilege to serve as Diaconate Council Treasurer for the last three years.

I wish to share the following observations with my fellow deacons.

The vast majority of council funding comes from our annual St. Francis Day Dinner. This year's event will begin at 4 PM on Sunday, October 07, 2012 at Elmcrest Banquets 7309 West Grand Avenue Elmwood Park, IL. Tickets are \$35 per person.

I encourage you to support your council by attending this event. If you are unable to attend, please consider purchasing raffle tickets or making a donation. When unable to attend, some deacons have made a donation equal to the cost of one or two tickets.

By supporting the event, you help support our entire diaconate community.

As I said, the monies raised help support the work of the Diaconate Council.

Here are the major areas monies were spent in the last three years:

- ... \$39,184 Lenten Appeal (Includes deacon donations & council matching funds.)
- ... \$24,179 Conferences, seminars, symposiums etc. (Lowers cost to attending deacons.)
- ... \$11,877 Education Grants to Deacons
- ... \$ 4,685 Mutual Aid Grants to Deacons in Need

- ... \$ 3,821 Pentegra Machine & Computer for Deacon ID's
- ... \$ 3,586 Retired Deacons and Widows Luncheons
- ... \$ 3,073 Mailings and Postage.
- ... \$90,405 Total of Major Expenses Categories.

Please keep in mind the \$90,000 averages out to over \$2,500 monthly and includes only these major expense items in the last three years

I am disturbed by deacons who receive education grants and yet fail to support their community by participating in the St. Francis Day Dinner.

During my term, I worked to increase the number of Memorial Cards used by our community. Memorial cards have been distributed at recent convocations and when the new Archdiocese stoles were distributed. Cards can also be obtained thru the Diaconate Office. A \$10 donation when using a card is customary. Many deacons choose to contribute more. I have had a few who have contributed less and that is fine if finances are tight. However, I am disturbed when I hear of a deacon who uses the cards without making any donation to our community.

Again, it has been my privilege to serve as Diaconate Council Treasurer over the last three years and I wish every success to our new treasurer, Dennis Roback.

Your brother in Christ,  
Chuck McFarland

***The Flame online at***  
***deacons.archchicago.org***

## In Memoriam

### Deacon Robert Sassetti

Deacon Robert Sassetti, class of 1985, died July 11. He was 87.

Deacon Sassetti ministered at St. Vincent Ferrar in River Forest. During his 27 years as a deacon, he was involved with marriage prep, started the baptismal program, worked with the CCD program, volunteered at Hines Hospital, helped with a social ministry program and assisted Father Ed Salmon, former vicar of the Diaconate with a ministry in the city, according to his wife Alfia. He worked as a CPA and owned his own firm.

"He did a lot of things for a lot of people and for a lot of groups," Alfia said. "He was hardworking and didn't like a lot of attention. He was a wonderful family man, a tremendous father, a tremendous husband and a wonderful son."

He is survived by his wife, 5 children and 14 grandchildren.

### Deacon Wilmer Hatch

Deacon Wilmer Hatch, class of 1980, died Aug. 11. He was 79.

Deacon Hatch ministered at St. Philip Neri Parish in Chicago. He was involved in a variety of ministries in the parish and the community, including parish ministry, teaching Bible classes, visiting the sick in their homes and in nursing homes.

During his working years, he was employed as a salesman and manager.

Evelyn, his wife of 49 years, described him as "very gentle, quiet, strong and the best husband and father that anyone could have."

"He was a kind person. People loved him dearly. You never heard him gossip about people. He was a very good person, a caring person."

Deacon Hatch is survived by his wife, three children and five grandchildren.

## Views from the Vicar

(Continued from page 3)

politics. I urge you to go online to [www.faithfulcitizenship.org](http://www.faithfulcitizenship.org) and read the bishops' document on Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship.

Unfortunately whenever we have an election, I receive a number of complaints that this or that deacon crosses the line and says things that violate our norms for being nonpartisan. We never endorse or condemn any particular candidate or party. Rather we give people guidelines about the Church's social teaching to help them to discern for themselves for whom to cast their vote.

This is never an easy task. I have yet to meet the perfect candidate. One may be against abortion, but

also against health care reform. Another may be in favor of health care, but also for forcing the Church to pay for insurance that will include abortion.

Other issues include assisted suicide, capital punishment, gay marriage, gun reform, nuclear buildup, immigration reform, caring for the poor and mentally disabled. These are only a few of the many complicated issues that need to be investigated. We need to encourage voter registration and nonpartisan voter education.

We need to preach and teach the moral and human dimensions of public issues. We need to share Church teaching on human life, human rights, justice and peace. If you are not sure if you are crossing the line regarding what you are preaching or teaching, consult your

pastor. We can and should be strong to present all the Church's teachings on a wide variety of issues. We also need to be vigilant to avoid telling people who to vote or not vote for in the elections. Above all we need to pray for the electorate to both vote and to choose the best candidates come Election Day.

Let me conclude by thanking Bill Stearns, Sal Lema and Chuck McFarland, who did an outstanding job of serving respectively as chairman, secretary and treasurer of our Diaconate Council. Congratulations to George Kashmar, the new chairman; Chuck McFarland, the new vice chair; Dennis Robak, the new treasurer; and John Gaughan, the new secretary. Pray for all of them to serve you well.

*Father Michael Ahlstrom*

## Reflexiones del Vicario

(Continued from page 3)

Desafortunadamente siempre que tenemos elecciones yo recibo un numero de quejas sobre este o aquel diacono que ha cruzado la línea y ha dicho cosas que violan nuestras normas de endorsar ningún partido político. Nosotros no endorsamos o condenamos un candidato particular o un partido. Más bien nosotros damos guías acerca de la enseñanza social de la Iglesia para ayudarlos a discernir por ellos mismos a quien deben de dar su voto. Esto no es una cosa fácil. Yo todavía no encuentro al candidato ideal. Uno puede estar en contra del aborto pero también en contra de la reforma de cuidado medico. Otro puede estar en favor de la reforma de cuidado de salud pero también estará forzando a la Iglesia para que pague seguro que

incluirá aborto.

Otros asuntos incluyen asistir un suicidio, la pena de muerte, el matrimonio, la reforma de armas, la construcción nuclear, la reforma migratoria, el cuidado de los pobres y los incapacitados mentales. Estos son algunos de muchos temas complicados que necesitan ser investigados. Necesitamos apoyar registro para votar y educación de votantes con sentido no partidista. Necesitamos predicar y enseñar la dimensión humana y moral de estos asuntos públicos.

Necesitamos compartir la enseñanza de la Iglesia en vida humana, derechos humanos, justicia y paz. Si no estas seguro si tu estas cruzando la línea en lo que se refiere a lo que estas predicando o enseñando, consulta con tu pastor. Nosotros podemos y debemos de ser fuertes al presentar la enseñanza de la

Iglesia en una amplia variedad de temas. También necesitamos ser vigilantes y evitar decirle a la gente por quien debe votar o no votar en las elecciones. Pero sobre todo necesitamos orar por el electorado para las dos cosas, para votar y para escoger los mejores candidatos en el día de elecciones.

Déjenme terminar agradeciendo a **Bill Sterns y Sal Lema** quienes han hecho un magnifico trabajo sirviendo respectivamente como director y tesorero de nuestro Concilio de la Comunidad Diaconal. Felicitaciones a **George Kashmar** el nuevo director, a **Chuck McFarland** el nuevo vice director, **Dennis Roback** el nuevo tesorero y **John Gaughan** el nuevo secretario.

Oren por todos ellos para que sirvan bien.

*Padre Michael Ahlstrom*

**Stritch House update**

**By Deacon Richard F. Hudzik**

Another retreat season is upon us, as we enter into a new planning year, a new school year, a new fiscal year – all times to grow closer into God.

Listed below is the calendar for *Stritch-organized* retreats (which is to say, there are other retreats, which deacons attend but which Stritch only hosts and does not organize). In putting these retreats together, know that it is our highest priority to locate retreat leaders who will feed you well spiritually.

Please call, fax, write or email to make your reservations. Rooms are available on each of the retreats listed below. For the Spanish language retreats, remember that you can register for those either through Stritch or through the Diaconate Office.

**2012 and 2013 Dates**

**Sept. 14-16** Deacons and wives: Dr. Kate Wiskus (associate director of formation, Mundelein Seminary), retreat leader.

**Oct. 5-7** Deacons and wives (in Spanish): Rev. Carlos A. Monsalve, retreat leader.

**Nov. 16-18** Deacons and wives (in Spanish): Rev. Luis Vera, retreat leader.

**Nov. 30-Dec. 2** Deacons: Deacon Alfred Coleman (director of Zacchaeus House), retreat leader.

**Jan. 18-20** Deacons and wives: Fr. Kevin Scalf, CPPS (former St. Joseph College campus minister and present associate pastor in Gary Diocese), retreat leader.

**Feb. 1-3** Deacons and wives (in Spanish): Rev. Adan Sandoval Duron, (pastor of Our Lady of the Mount), retreat leader.

**March 15-17** Deacons and wives: Dr. Kate Wiskus, retreat leader.

**April 12-14** Deacon wives and widows: (retreat leader pending)

**May 17-19** Deacons: Rev. Martin Zielinski (Mundelein Seminary church history professor), retreat leader.

**May 24-26** Deacons and wives (in Spanish): Deacon Miguel Valle, retreat leader.

The people whom you love and serve want you to be men and women of prayer. Retreats are ways to open you to God's grace so God can accomplish His work in you.

Finally, on a personal note, as you may know, I am drawing to the close of my term here at Stritch and am very much looking forward to serving you in a new way as co-vicar of the Diaconate Community. Words do not do justice to expressing the joy my wife Becky and I have felt at being able to welcome you all to Stritch over these past seven years. We will miss Stritch; we will miss having you all to "our" house.

Nevertheless, I am confident that Monsignor Dennis Lyle, who is taking over as director on Jan. 1, will do everything in his power to keep prayer and joy alive at Stritch. It is good news that Francis Cardinal George has given the retreat house such a talented leader in Monsignor Lyle.

His experience as seminary rector, as moral theologian, as parish priest, and as one who can preach and teach in Spanish brings many gifts to Stritch. As of Sept. 1, I begin part time as co-vicar and then will work full time on Jan. 1 when Monsignor Lyle returns from sabbatical and takes up residence at Stritch.

May God continue to shed his grace on Stritch and on all who come away to pray. *Venite seorsum.*



Come celebrate with us the 10th Anniversary of  
**Zacchaeus House**  
 2002—2012  
 12:30 p.m.  
 Saturday, November 3, 2012  
 Crystal Light Banquets  
 8400 S. Cicero, Burbank, IL

Master of Ceremonies;  
 Relevant Radio's Father Richard T. Simon  
 Silent Auction    Cash Bar    Prime-rib Luncheon  
 \$50.00 Luncheon

## St. Lawrence celebration

Chicago's Diaconate Community gathered for its annual St. Lawrence Day celebration with a Mass and a picnic on Aug. 5 at St. Barbara Parish in Brookfield. Approximately, 175 people attended the gathering on a beautiful sunny afternoon. "St. Lawrence Day is always a delight. The liturgy is uplifting with so many faith-filled people singing the Lord's praise. The informal barbecue is a great experience of fellowship. Honoring our first 40-year class was also very special. Thanks to all who worked hard to make it a success," said Fr. Michael Ahlstrom, vicar for the Diaconate Community.

Photos by Dan Dietsch



Support the  
charities and people  
of the  
Diaconate Community

St. Francis Day  
Dinner

Sunday  
October 7, 2012

### Numbers to know:

Office of the Diaconate  
816 Marengo Ave.  
Forest Park, Ill. 60130  
Phone (708) 366-8900  
fax (708) 366-8968  
Father Michael Ahlstrom,  
Vicar for the Diaconate Community  
email:  
[mahlstrom@archchicago.org](mailto:mahlstrom@archchicago.org)  
Dcn. Dennis Colgan  
Assoc. Director  
Email: [dcolgan@archchicago.org](mailto:dcolgan@archchicago.org)  
The Chicago Deacons Web site:  
[deacons.archchicago.org](http://deacons.archchicago.org)