

EVENTS FOR YOUR CALENDAR

October 1, 2025: Continuing Formation Report due

December 14, 2025: Rites of Institution to Lector and Acolyte, Sacred Heart Cathedral, 11:15AM Mass

September 11-13, 2026: Annual SSDCA Retreat, Notre Dame Retreat House, Canandaigua

At the 11:15AM Mass on Sunday, December 14 at Sacred Heart Cathedral **Peter Sikora** will be instituted to the **Ministry of Lector** and **Matthew Hall** and **Michael Schoene** will be instituted to the **Ministry of Acolyte**. Kindly keep them and their families in your prayers as they continue along the path of formation.

Attached please find an Apostolic Letter ***In Unitate Fidei***, issued yesterday by the Holy Father, for your use in prayerful reflection and continuing formation.

Deacon Doug Farwell is looking for some **gently used adult server albs** for use in his ministry at **Elmira Correctional Facility**. If you or your parish have any albs in good condition that you'd be willing to donate, reach out to Doug at douglas.farwell@dor.org. Thank you for your consideration.

I enjoyed a visit last week with the folks from Tompkins County and Cayuga County, who meet regularly for mutual support, prayer, and conversation. These **regional groups** are encouraged by the SSDCA to **foster and strengthen a sense of community**, especially in areas of the diocese where diaconal ministry is more scarce. I'm aware of a couple of such groups meeting in the Monroe County area, and I'd be glad to share word of other groups so that folks can connect for prayer and mutual support.

As of this writing there has been no word on the appointment of a new diocesan bishop, but in anticipation of his eventual arrival I've pulled together a snapshot of the diaconate community as it appears today. Please see the attached charts. One reflects the age of deacons with an assignment - **there are 66 active deacons** - and the other reflects our collective age, Active and Senior Status. There are **44 Senior Status deacons** residing in the diocese, a good number of whom continue to minister regularly or occasionally at a parish. Thanks be to God! We are blessed with the diaconal ministry of three (3) **externs**: Rick DeMars (Diocese of Kalamazoo), Gary Terrana (Diocese of Buffalo), and Ken Mamot (Archdiocese of San Antonio). There are **21 deacons** who remain incardinated in the Diocese of Rochester but who **reside outside of the diocese**, some of whom exercise diaconal ministry in the host (arch)diocese.

There are **six (6) men in formation**, three Candidates and three Aspirants. We anticipate two (2) ordinations in 2026 and one (1) in 2027. The next formation cohort is anticipated to commence in Fall 2027, so please continue to keep any eye out at your parish and with your acquaintances for men who may be open to discerning a vocation to the diaconate. The witness and encouragement by our deacons and their wives is a strong influencing factor in vocations to our Order - thank you!

Below is a Thanksgiving Day prayer shared by the Archdiocese of New Orleans. Please know of my deep gratitude for your generous ministry to the People of God, and for the sacrifices that you and your families make in witnessing to the Servant Christ. I wish you and yours a most blessed Thanksgiving Day, with safe travels if you are on the road or in the air to be with family.

Father in Heaven, Creator of all and source of all goodness and love, please look kindly upon us and receive our heartfelt gratitude in this time of giving thanks.

Thank you for all the graces and blessings you have bestowed upon us, spiritual and temporal: our faith and religious heritage, our food and shelter, our health, the love we have for one another, our family and friends.

Dear Father, in Your infinite generosity, please grant us continued graces and blessings throughout the coming year.

This we ask in the Name of Jesus, Your Son and our Brother. Amen.