

Deacons in ACTION

Diocese of ANTIGONISH

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Comfort of Compassion

As we sit on our front porches or back decks, and as we go for a drive with our wives or grandkids, the beautiful array of autumn colours remind us of the loving and merciful God we are blessed to serve each day as deacons. I am also reminded of this love that God has for each of us as deacons and as the wives of deacons when we come together at our ongoing formation gatherings and at diocesan events. The wonder and beauty of the experiences, insights and humble service that your presence gives to those you encounter as "Christ the Servant" are awesome to see and share as a brother deacon. I am so proud of each of you and of your commitment to come together and to be a true community of deacons and wives. God bless.

Deacon Berkley Guthro, Director of Deacons

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Banner Photo:
Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick installed Steve Cover as an acolyte on Sept. 19
Assisting is Deacon David Lewis.

Office of Permanent Diaconate
902-539-6188/1-800-656-5311
deaconberkley@gmail.com
antigonishdiocese/diaconate-program

Deacon and Wives Day

St. Joseph Church, Port Hawkesbury
September 19, 2026



Bishop Wayne Kirkpatrick with Deacons at the annual Deacons and Wives Day

Bishop's Address:

It is truly an honour to be with you. As your bishop, I want to begin by expressing my heartfelt gratitude for the dedicated service of each deacon here, and for the unwavering support of your wives. Your commitment to the diaconate is vital to our Church's life and mission. Deacons, your role is unique and profoundly important. You are ordained not only to serve but to be a living sign of Christ's service to the world. You are entrusted with the ministry of charity, the proclamation of the Word, assisting in the liturgy and celebrating the sacraments. These are not small tasks—they are the very heart of what it means to follow Christ.

To the wives of deacons, your support is indispensable. Your partnership, encouragement, and prayer sustain your husbands in their calling. Together, you form a powerful team that demonstrates the love of Christ within your families, parishes, and communities.

Over the years, your faithful service as deacons has left an indelible mark on the people of our diocese. Many have been touched by your kindness, your willingness to serve in moments of need, and your unwavering commitment to living out the Gospel. Whether it's been through baptisms, marriages, compassionate outreach, or simply being present in times of joy and sorrow, your ministry has been a source of hope and reassurance.

Your presence in the community has often reminded us of Christ's own service—humble, compassionate, and unconditional. When people see you, they see the face of Christ reaching out in love. Your service has helped countless individuals encounter His mercy and His call to discipleship. I want to encourage you all to see your service as a gift to the Church. The diaconate is a journey of ongoing formation, of deepening your relationship with Christ and growing in your understanding of what it means to serve. It's a calling that transforms not only those who serve but also those they serve.



Deacons and Wives with Bishop Kirkpatrick at the installation of candidate Steve Cover as acolyte

Remember, you are not alone in this mission. The Church supports you, prays for you, and is grateful for your witness. Your courage and dedication inspire others and help build up the Body of Christ. As you continue in your diaconal ministry, I encourage you to remain rooted in prayer, faithful to your formation, and open to the Holy Spirit's guidance. Be a visible sign of Christ's love in your daily lives and know that your efforts are making a difference—sometimes in ways unseen but always impactful. Your faithfulness inspires not only your fellow deacons and their wives but the entire diocese. As your bishop, I am deeply grateful for your unwavering dedication to the diaconate and to the Church. I want to leave you with this simple yet profound reminder: your service as deacons and your supportive presence as wives are vital to the life of our Church. Your faithfulness, humility, and love are shining examples of Christ's own ministry.

Remember, you are not walking this path alone—your efforts are supported by the prayers of the Church, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and above all, Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, who journeys with you every step of the way. Continue to serve with joy and confidence, knowing that every act of kindness, every moment of compassion, and every word of Gospel witness is making an eternal difference.

May the Lord bless you abundantly, strengthen you in your calling, and fill your hearts with peace and joy. Keep pressing on, stay united in prayer and purpose, and know that you are deeply appreciated. The Lord has great plans for your service, and He will bless your efforts abundantly. Thank you for your unwavering dedication. God bless you all.



The Glimpses God Gives Us

By Deacon Lorne MacNeil

As a Deacon and Chaplain I am given the privilege of being allowed to enter into people's lives at their most critical times. In times of joy, sadness, fear, death, and critical illness to mention a few. It is in these times that I get a glimpse of the goodness and love God has for us through the eyes of others. Along with the realization of how precious each moment is in our own life. In the last nine months I have personally felt those feelings when I myself was faced with the sudden life threatening Illness of my wife Cheryl. It was through this time of four months of Cheryl' s hospitalization in I.C.U., and another five months of monitoring her, along with many hospital appointments that truly gave much meaning to the word ministry. It also opened up my mind in a much broader way as to how an illness such as this, can be far more reaching than just affecting the immediate family. The worry and anxiety can extend to grandchildren and great grandchildren, relatives, friends even parish communities.

It was only in my own situation with Cheryl, that the true realization and the importance that ministry is having in hospitals from those we least expect is outstanding . I have witnessed the face of God and those glimpses God gives us through the eyes and faces of friends, family, nurses, doctors, and staff, colleagues of mine and Cheryl. I have witnessed the face of God through my daughter and grandsons and how their mother and grandmother's illness changed their lives. I have seen many glimpses of God in friends of ours truly kneeling at her bedside praying and holding her hand. I have seen a glimpse and the face of God in my wife Cheryl when she could not speak, could not see, struggling to breathe, and could not move for four months. It reminded me of the struggle on the cross. She would tell me later that all she could do was pray each day, for those patients on the unit and the nurses of which she was one for 42 years, and thank God for this day, We say now to each other that the many hours her and I spent in silence in the room together, was the most deafening, loudest, most intense noise you could imagine. Were there tears shed inside and out, oh yes there were, were there fears for the future, you bet there were. But we both knew we were never alone, each day God gave us a glimpse, each night I could feel his presence in the room.

As clergy, Priests and Deacons, we do spend many hours bringing the love of God to those in need. In my and Cheryl's experience now came the realization, that God is very much present in the faces and hearts and voices of those who visit the sick in hospitals and nursing homes. It does not take much to make a difference in the healing process of someone who is ill. In Cheryl's case it was just a voice of someone entering the room that made a difference . In my case it was seeing God truly in people such as my sister in law who was and is my lifeline. It was getting a glimpse of God in my grandson's who never left her side even when she was airlifted to Halifax. It was in the prayers and sentiments of those of various parishes and communities, that no doubt got us through an extremely difficult time. Most of all a strong faith in God, that whatever was going to happen, still all would be ok.

So if there is a time in your life when you feel you cannot make a difference in the life of someone just make a visit to someone who is ill and struggling. You just may be the glimpse of God they need at that moment in their lives.

Installation to the Sacred Order of Deacon

Holy Family Church, Sydney Mines, August 6, 2026



We Offer Prayers and Congratulations to Seminarian Joseph MacMaster on his ordination as a transitional deacon. Sacred Order of Deacon is a milestone on the journey of ordination to the priesthood.

Photo Gallery



Deacons with Fr David Rankin at their annual retreat held Oct. 17-18 at Our Lady of Grace Monastery





The annual barbecue was hosted by Deacon Shawn and Barb Bigley. Deacon Shawn and his son handled the barbecue well, despite the rain, and much fun was had by all.





Deacon Tom Sylliboy served a Mass while on a pilgrimage in Medjugorge

Thoughts for the Day

"God saw everything that he had made, and indeed it was good."
Genesis 1:31

"Through ordination we don't construct our identity; we receive it. We're configured to Christ the Servant."
Deacon Dominic Cerrato
The Deacon, Sept. 2026