



NDICE NEWS

NATIONAL DIACONATE INSTITUTE FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

OCTOBER 2023

VOLUME 8 • NO. 1

Promoting the Continuing Education of Deacons

Fall Greetings



Welcome to the October issue of the NDICE Newsletter. Summer is behind us but not forgotten. We had a very well received NDICE Conference in July and we are in the planning phase for the 2024 NDICE Conference. Thanks to all

who attended this year's conference, we are looking forward to seeing you again and many more deacons and wives at the 2024 conference. We are excited to announce that Deacon William (Bill) Ditewig, Ph.D. is the first confirmed speaker at our 2024 conference. To continue with USCCB's Eucharistic Revival theme the NDICE Board has chosen "Being the Eucharist for all" as our 2024 conference theme. Our 2024 conference begins on the heels of the USCCB's Eucharistic Congress, so our discussion revolved around how we as deacons and wives can take this Eucharistic Revival message into the future and decided on this theme. We discussed and made a change to the conference schedule as well. In an effort to make the conference more accessible to all deacons, the conference will begin on Monday July 22 with the opening Mass at 5:00 pm and ending with the closing Mass on Thursday July 25 at Holy Trinity Catholic Church Complex in Fairview Heights IL. This schedule change will allow the deacons who have responsibilities at their parishes to fulfill their obligations on Sunday morning and make their travel time to NDICE less stressful. For those who arrive on Sunday, we are considering a "meet and greet" at a local restaurant on Sunday evening very close to the hotels. We are also considering hosting a side trip on Monday morning for those interested in attending. This would include St. Peter's Cathedral and a tour of The Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows in Belleville. If anyone is interested in doing something like this you can send us a note at NDICE.conference@yahoo.com.

Peace,
Deacon Corby

WE HAD A GREAT CONFERENCE

THEY CAME...THEY LEARNED...THEY LEFT...IN AWE!
Conference Recap by Managing Editor Deacon Gerry Bach

Indeed all those who attended were not left wanting while presenter after presenter delivered mind blowing material that challenged, entertained, and delighted the 136 Deacons and wives who experienced this year's conference.

Before the conference even started, Executive Secretary, Hank Babin, stated "This is the strongest field of Speakers we have ever had." That talented field of speakers didn't disappoint.

The conference started, as usual, with Mass. Belleville Bishop Michael McGovern welcomed all in attendance to his Diocese in grand fashion with his pastoral attitude of love, support, and hospitality.

After Mass now Past President, Max Roadruck, welcomed attendees and officially opened the conference.

Bishop McGovern gave the Keynote address which laid the groundwork for the conference.

One person's comment noted, "I believe all his points were meaningful. His reference to John chapter 6 was particularly good and the questioning about needing a redeemer was highlighted by the example of Adam and Eve grabbing for what they wanted vs. the need to be open handed before Our Lord. Finally his reference about what really goes on in Holy Week highlighted how people can certainly be out of touch if they "fast forward" from Palm Sunday to Easter and do not experience what's in between.

The evening ended with social time where conference goers enjoyed the cash bar as they



Ann Bach stands ready with convention packets which included helpful items for conference goers.

renewed old acquaintances.

Monday morning started with prayer and Mass. Then we all were treated to one of the most popular presenters at the conference, Deacon Greg Kandra. He achieved one of highest speaker rating.



The first of his two presentations "Becoming what we receive and people who pray" brought comments like, "It ties directly to how we serve. It definitely is a matter of presence so we

are not alone. References to seeds of faith
Continued on Page 4 – Conference Recap

Join Us Next Year
JULY 22 – 25
Being the Eucharist for All

The Videos of all the Speakers are available online at www.NDICE.NET/CONFERENCE

Deacons as Guardians and Promoters of the Mystery of Christ

A deacon must carry the Gospel of Blood to the corners of the world

By Deacon James Keating

Within the Rite of Ordination, the deacon is given the Book of the Gospels from the bishop. The reception of the Book of the Gospels symbolizes the deacon's mission. Each Sunday after his ordination, the deacon proclaims this Gospel as its ordinary minister and occasional preacher. Then, upon the conclusion of the Eucharistic liturgy, the deacon is positioned to follow the laity out of the church building and live among them as an envoy of the servant mysteries of Christ.

This life among the laity is signaled in the dismissal rite of the Mass when the deacon urges the laity, and himself, to, "Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord." This diaconal going forth to live holy orders within a lay lifestyle carries a mystery of grace. This grace elicits an evangelical response from the laity. It is the hope of the Church that, by placing clerics among the laity in their daily lives, this grace will support their efforts to appropriate the power of the Eucharist in their mission to transform culture.

Both the grace of holy orders in the deacon and the grace of the Eucharist and baptism in the layperson cooperate to ignite evangelization within the nooks and crannies of secular culture. The deacon embodies a particular calling to "abide" in the secular world. He is a cleric living a lay lifestyle for one reason alone: to animate and support the evangelical and martyrological mission of the laity.

Sacred Blood as Life-giving

While the diaconal mission of proclaiming the Gospel at the liturgy assists the laity to internalize the Good News, the more subtle liturgical duty of the deacon to prepare, guard and distribute the precious blood of Christ serves the laity in their mission to give witness (martyrdom) to Christ in culture. The General Instruction of Roman Missal says, "At Mass the deacon has his own part in proclaiming the Gospel, in preaching God's word from time to time ... in preparing the altar and in serving the celebration of the Sacrifice, in distributing the Eucharist to the faithful, especially under the species of wine" (No. 94).

Blood of Christ

A drawing of the "Blood of Christ Received in Chalice" by Hieronymus Wierix and Piermans circa 1563. Gibon Art / Alamy Stock Photo

It is Christ's own blood that animates the laity — the Church — keeping her vibrant, vigorous and vital within daily life. The liturgical minister who mediates the source of this animation is the deacon.

In Mark's Gospel, the sons of Zebedee are asked, in response to their mother's request that they should sit beside him in his kingdom: "Can you drink the cup that I drink or be baptized with the baptism with which I am baptized?"

The deacon embodies a particular calling to "abide" in the secular world.

They reply that they can and [Christ replies], "The cup that I drink, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am baptized, you will be baptized" (cf. Mk 10:38-9).

It is in receiving the Blood of Christ that believers are given the strength to remain faithful to their call to publicly witness to the Gospel. As Cyprian of Carthage noted, "How can we instill in them the strength to drink the cup of martyrdom if we do not first permit them to drink of the cup of the Lord in the Church?"

At the ancestral source of the diaconate, the Levitical priesthood in the Old Testament, we meet the inchoate origins of a deacon's ministry around the altar. The Prayer of Consecration in the diaconal ordination rite says: "You established a threefold ministry of worship and service for the glory of your name. As ministers of your tabernacle you chose the sons of Levi and gave them your blessing as their everlasting inheritance" (No. 21).

It was the Levites who assisted the priests in preparing the sacrifice of bulls, goats and sheep. In the Old Testament, the sprinkling of blood was a medium for consecration, an act of setting people aside for service to God. The victim was slain in order that its life, in the form of blood, may be released. Furthermore, its flesh was burnt in order that it might be transformed as an offering, a life presented in reverence to God.

Sacredness

For the Hebrews, blood was sacred, as it carried life from God to the living thing; thus blood sustained life. At liturgical rituals in the Old Testament, the priests understood life to be contained in the blood, and so it was not to be ingested. Rather, in reverence to God, life's author, it can only be poured upon the earth, upon the people and upon the altar (cf. Dt 12:23-24; Lv 17:11). To the Hebrews, blood was a sign that life "belongs" to God and must not be profaned, not consumed.

While blood could not be ingested, it remained a powerful symbol in Hebrew life and ritual. Blood "marks" a man as God's own, hence the Passover (cf. Ex 12), where no destruction came to the Hebrews if their dwellings were marked with blood on the doorpost. It was by means of blood that one's life was not only spared but ordered toward a mission. It was through blood, the spiritual or vital principle, that God came into contact with people. The Hebrews understood blood to give life and

Continued on Page 3

NDICE NEWS

October 2023

Volume 8 • No 1

President/Editor Dcn. Corby Valentine
President-Elect Dcn. Stephen Frye
Secretary Dcn. Wayne Weiler
Treasurer Dcn. John Hempen
Executive Sec. Dcn. Hank Babin
Past President Max Roadruck
Wives Rep. Carmen Rendon
Managing Editor Dcn. Gerry Bach
Graphics G Bach Designs

Editorial Advisory Board

Bishop Michael Mc Govern

Fr. Bob Flannery

Deacon Bill Ditewig

NDICE NEWS is published quarterly by the National Diaconate Institute for Continuing Education (NDICE) for the purpose of providing continuing education for those in the permanent diaconate ministry.

even carry the "spirit" or the "breath" of the living thing.

In offering animal sacrifice to God, the priests and Levites of the Old Testament maintained ordered worship for the people. In this worship, people who desired order were willing to sacrifice animals to God in a mode of intercession, gratitude and fear. It was the Levites who prepared the altar during the preparation of the sacrifice. During the preparation of the sacrifice, it was the Levites who prepared the altar. The Levites also assisted with the purification of the temple and cleansed the "utensils" also needed for the sacrifice (cf. 2 Chr 29:15-18).

"Since there were too few priests to skin all the victims for the burnt offerings, their fellow Levites assisted them until the task was completed and the priests had sanctified themselves. The Levites, in fact, were more careful than the priests to sanctify themselves" (2 Chr 29:34).

Blood of Christ

The work of the priests and Levites, as those who offer life to God, came to its ultimate completion in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus Christ. Now, Christ is the one sacrifice that unites God and humanity. His is a perfect offering of love and obedience, reconciling humanity to God the Father in ways bulls and sheep could never attain. Here on the altar of Calvary, the inner life of God, which the Hebrews sought to understand and did so only as in a mirror darkly (cf. 1 Cor 13:12; Heb 1:1-3), is now clearly revealed in its fullness.

The inner life of God is self-donating love, a dynamism of giving and receiving love within God himself, now revealed in Christ's own life poured out upon the altar for the "many" (cf. Mt 20:28). It is this Trinitarian love now revealed in Christ upon Calvary, which reconciles God and humanity. It is the vocation of those who participate in "the death of the Lord until he comes" (1 Cor 11:26), the baptized, to become servants of divine reconciliation by their public witness.

Deacons are sent to the remote corners of society to catch the baptized up into this flowing divine life; a life sourced in Christ's own blood and sacramentally celebrated as divine life itself is shared. "From the pierced heart of

Jesus rivers of graces were to be poured out upon the world to sanctify the Church," writes Blessed Columba Marmion in "Christ in His Mysteries."

It is the deacon who assists in distributing these graces during the Liturgy of the Eucharist in the Communion rite and embedded in the liturgy of charity — that is, his ministry among the laity. The deacon lives among those who participate in the life blood of God's own self-gift, helping to assure that their love does not grow cold and that their devotion to the Eucharistic mystery yields effective public witness.

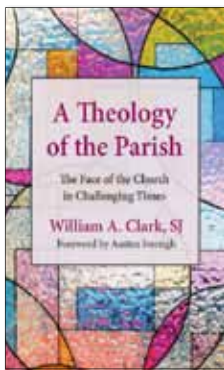
In light of the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, consuming blood during worship, albeit under the form of wine, is no longer a contradiction to the ways of the Hebrew priests and Levites. Consuming "blood" is no longer an affront to God in that he willed that communion with the Divine be effected as such: "Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you" (Jn 6:53).

Sacramental consummation becomes a way to participate, liturgically, in "life and have it more abundantly" (Jn 10:10). Since the sacrifice of Christ is intended to be divine love shared, there is no blasphemy or insult in sharing his blood, as it is the reality, which affects and signifies this communion with God. Hence, consuming God's life as Precious Blood is not a communion trespassed, but one that is fulfilled. The blood of the Eucharistic cup is identical to the charity of God.

Blessed Marmion wrote that it is in drinking from the chalice of his Divine Blood, from which we share in God's joy, that we "excite charity" in our lives. In the liturgy, the deacon is the custodian of the blood and the chalice. It is fitting that he serve the chalice so as to excite charity in the Church's members and reaffirm his own calling to bear the love of Christ to those in need.

The Hebrews believed that it was by way of blood that God comes in direct contact with
Continued on Page 4

FROM PAULIST PRESS



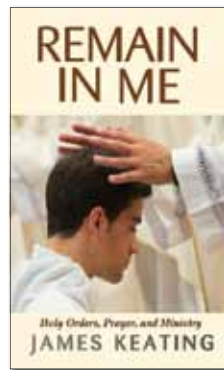
A THEOLOGY OF THE PARISH

The Face of the Church in Challenging Times

William A. Clark, SJ

Answers skepticism about the pastoral role of theology by presenting a case for "Theology of the People" as an important tool for empowering whole communities at the local level of the Church.

5562-0 \$32.95 PB 224 pp.



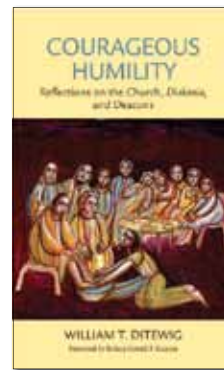
REMAIN IN ME

Holy Orders, Prayer, and Ministry

James Keating

Encourages clergy with the vital challenge of collaboration with deacons through concrete commitments to spiritual direction and a new way of engaging God even while ministering.

5415-9 \$16.95 PB 104 pp.




COURAGEOUS HUMILITY

Reflections on the Church, *Diakonia*, and Deacons

William T. Ditewig

The central theme is that it is only through the courageous humility of the servant that the Church might regain its credibility and be more effective in its mission of evangelization.

5571-2 \$29.95 PB 288 pp.


Available at bookstores or from  Paulist Press
1-800-218-1903 • fax: 1-800-836-3161 • www.paulistpress.com

From page 3 - Guardians

bodies. The deacon, the consecrated one who cares for the Precious Blood, is called to "come in contact" with the Body of Christ, the Church, in its spiritual and human needs. This is known as ministry.

The Body of Christ, the Church, draws life from the "vine" (cf. Jn 15:4), the very mystery of Christ's life, death and resurrection. Such spiritual life is sustained by abiding in faith, hope and love. This faith, hope and love needs to be nourished at the source of holiness, even while one engages in the work, commitments, joys and failures of ordinary life.

If the Church fails to receive such nourishment, then the blood of Christ, the Eucharist, does not flow through the culture. Only when the laity bears witness to the body and blood of Christ that consumes them within Eucharistic participation can we say that the world has hope of being evangelized.

were key following the previous Sunday's gospel about a sower." 

From page 1 - Conference Recap

Rose Fernandez was next. she came to us from the Diocese of Fresno in California. Rose was a delightful addition to the lineup of speakers.

As one observer put it, "She encapsulated the importance about being hospitable and accompanying others. Walking with those who need the living Christ is so key to overall success of being there for others." it was noted



Fun talk to be part of. Good job of challenging our concept of a good welcoming faith community. Excellent

challenge for us to make our community, truly Eucharistic community of hospitality, accompaniment, and action." The rest of the day belonged to Vince Ambrosetti who first had an excellent presentation. People said "His living stories reflected his true discipleship. The value of the

Eucharist definitely shined forth from both his afternoon presentation and his evening music. I am looking forward to more experiences of him in the future."



An added treat was a complimentary BBQ dinner provided by the Holy Name Society from the local St Stephens Parish. The food was delicious and those who served the food were truly accommodating.

Tuesday morning, after morning prayer and Mass brought us presentations by Deacon James Keating. His quiet unassuming style made him a favorite among conference attendees. His mix of humor and common sense approach was refreshing, to say the

Continued on Page 5 – Conference Recap

Come see why so many Catholic Leaders Trust Select for their pilgrimage trips



Dcn. Harold Burke-Sivers



Dcn. Kevin Bagley



Dcn. Greg Kandra



Dcn. Bill Remmert



Dcn. Bill Ditewig



From Page 5 — Recap



least. I'm sure that those who had not heard him before were taken by surprise as he wove his tale of the marriage dance and related it to the subtle nature of God's love and presence in the world.

Some considered Deacon Keating as the highlight of the conference because his down to earth remarks really connected to the deacons and their ministry.

Father Godfrey Mullen, a Benedictine Monk and Rector of the Belleville Diocesan Cathedral, wowed the audience, "Fr. Mullen was very good at getting his key points across. His basic direction for renewing Eucharistic fervor was important. Drawing life from the Eucharist is also key and he gently brought all his points across to me and my brother deacons." "It was really interesting to hear his experience with the topic and how he related it and referenced it to Pope Benedict's document and why it matters in our lives and ministry."



Following a long day of great presentations was a time for relaxing at the formal banquet and, of course, the NDICE follies.

All in all it was the highest rated conference in NDICE history 4.9 out of 5!

Kudos to the local deacons who with their wives pulled off one heck of a conference and played host to 136 deacons and their wives.

They are planning even more great things for next year...Promise! 🙏

BOARD MEETINGS / OFFICER CHANGES

The annual NDICE Board Meetings both on the part of the Deacons and their wives caused a number of changes in the current officer line-up.

Steve Frye the current secretary was elected President-Elect.

Steve you'll remember was just elected to the Secretary position at last year's conference.

Taking Steve's place at the secretary position is **Deacon Wayne Weiler** from the Belleville Diocese.

Carmen Rendon from the Diocese of Louisville is the newly elected wives representative. She replaces Rhonda Heim.



Pres-Elect Steve Frye



Secretary Wayne Weiler



Wives Rep. Carmen Rendon



Sights at NDICE 2023



See You Next Year!
Mon. July 22 - Thurs. July 25

We're Coming Back Next JULY – See You Here!

