

THE BEACON

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE PERMANENT DIACONATE
OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA

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“...Your light must shine before men so that they may see the goodness in your acts...” Matthew 5:16

From the Director



My Dear Brothers,

As the joy of the Easter Season is still upon us let me add my own best wishes to each of you at this special time of year.

As most of you know, we have moved our offices and the last of our chancery departmental moves were completed in the past three weeks. This has been a nineteen month project for me and I could not be happier that it has been successfully accomplished. Sometime in August we will host an open house for all of the clergy of the Archdiocese but know that you are always welcome to our new home in Smyrna. I expect, in fact, to see some of you around here next week when the Archbishop again has his diaconal meetings on Wednesday the 8th from noon until 1:00 PM.

Our 16th annual Eucharistic Congress is coming up in just a couple of weeks. I look forward to seeing many of you there and participating in both the morning and afternoon liturgies.

As we approach the summer I hope that all of you have an opportunity for some down time, family time, and fun time. The work that is done by our 230 plus deacons in this local church is truly amazing. Weekly I am hearing from our community with requests for additional assignments to a variety of ministries in addition to the parish work that we are called to. There is no question that our deacons are living out the words of the bishop at our ordinations, they are truly Believing what they read, Teaching what they Believe, and Practicing what they Teach!

Know that I am here to serve you and that you are in my thoughts and prayers. Please keep our entire community in prayer!

Sincerely in Christ,

Deacon Dennis

ddorner@archatl.com

404-885-7407

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FROM THE ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR'S DESK



Dear Brothers in Christ:

Christ is risen! I pray that each of you is having a peaceful and joyous Easter Season.

Over the past few months we have been working through a large stack of applications to formation for the class of 2017. Coming out of the Information Sessions we received 29 applications along with the associated transcripts, sacramental records, reference letters and so on. The interviews of these applicants are just beginning and we hope to be able to notify those accepted by the Archbishop by late October. It is, to say the least a very thorough process supported by many of the Priests, Deacons, Religious and Laity from throughout the Archdiocese. We owe them a lot of thanks for their dedication and effort.

There have been two significant changes in the qualifications for men that are applying to formation that you should be aware of. First, the maximum age of 60 has been lifted. What we are most interested in is whether there is a founded belief that the applicant will complete five years of formation and have at least 10-15 years in active ministry. For some 60+ year olds, this is not a problem at all. The other change relates to residency requirements. In addition to considering men who are U.S. citizens and permanent residents, we will also accept applications from men who are in the U.S. on valid visas provided they have begun the process to become permanent residents. They must have permanent residency prior to ordination, but a man on an H1B visa (as one example), who has applied for his "green card" is now able to apply. As a result of these changes, you may find that there are additional men in your parish who are called to the vocation of the Permanent Diaconate and now meet the qualifications. If you know of such men, please discuss them with your pastor.

With the new curriculum for formation being put in place, I have had a number of requests from Deacons who would like to attend formation classes with Aspirants/Candidates. Under the Atlanta Directory for Formation, this is not permitted. Currently only the Aspirants/Candidates, their wives and the instructors are to be in the formation classes. The reason for this is to ensure that the classroom remains a free and open environment that promotes inquiry, discussion and debate within the class. The presence of Priests, Deacons or others who are not part of the class; while intended to be a sign of support and assistance (or just a person auditing the class) can end up having the unintended consequence of suppressing discussion and inquiry and doing more harm than good.

To expose the Deacon community to some of the courses now being offered in formation, we will be discussing how we can provide the ordained community access to some of those same courses. This may include online access to the materials, streamed videos or even concurrent but separate classes on Saturday mornings that we Deacons can attend. No matter how we offer the courses, papers and tests would not be required of the Deacons! I hope to have more about this initiative in the early autumn.

As always, thank you for the support and prayers you have provided for the men in formation and all of those involved in forming them.

You remain in my prayers.

In Christ's Service,



Associate Director of Formation SSwope@archatl.com

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World Water Missions Works Water in Haiti ...thanks deacons of the Archdiocese for their help

Many of you are aware of and have supported the work being done in Haiti by World Water Missions. Over the past couple of years, deacons of the archdiocese have contributed more than \$2,000 to help us to bring clean, potable water to the people of that impoverished nation. I have asked Deacon Dennis for the space of a few paragraphs to thank you for your support and prayers and bring you up to speed on what is being done.

World Water Missions is a 501(c)3 company dedicated to help provide clean, potable water for disaster relief and for the people of developing countries such as Haiti. This year, 2011, we have already made two



Discussing water treatment in Robillard, Haiti, with medical team from St. Rose Parish, Murfreesboro, TN. WWM together with St. George, Newnan, built the 3,000 gallon cistern in back-ground and water treatment system (housed in room below cistern).

trips to Haiti and have at least one more planned before the hurricane season gets started in early summer. Currently, we have over 30 projects in various stages of development. Three have already been completed and are delivering clean water daily to over 1,000 people every day. We will install 4 to 5 more when we go down next time. At times, the progress we make seems infinitesimally small compared the need and what could be done if we were working in the States. But, while Haiti is only 2 hours away by commercial aircraft, it is, frustratingly, light years away in terms of having the basic infrastructure to get things done.

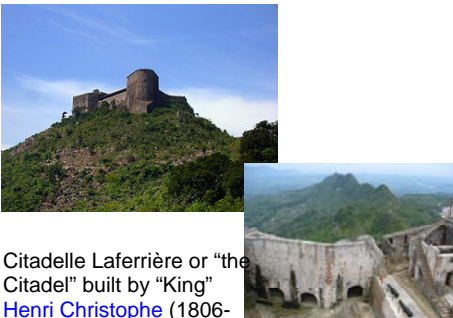
For those of you who have worked in third world countries, you know some of the frustration experienced in just trying to do simple things that we take for granted here. For instance, to travel the 170+ miles

from Port-au-Prince in the south to Cap-Hatien, the major city in the north, takes over 8 hours by 4WD truck (no cars ...they won't take the pounding). Last year, after the earthquake, our local paper ran a series of articles on the work we were doing in Haiti. I brought some pictures we had taken in December 2008 in to show the editor, some of which showed the roadways. He didn't know when the pictures had been taken and commented about how really destructive the earthquake (January 2009) was on the land. "Correction," I said, "these pictures were taken a month BEFORE the earthquake, not after."



Detour on main road between Port-au-Prince and Cap-Hatien. Many roads in Haiti are now being rebuilt, but even where cement exists, numerous giant potholes limit top speeds to 30-40 mph.

The earthquake, as did the 3 major hurricanes of 2008 and Tomas this past year, certainly left more hardship and destruction in their wake than Haiti had previously, but the devastation experienced in Haiti was not nearly the same as say in Katrina here or in the current situation in Japan. That is because even without natural disasters, most Haitian people live in a world of abject poverty. Without help from outside of its borders, there is no hope. There is no possibility of making things better from within because there are not sufficient resources from within to prime the pump of "getting better".



Citadelle Laferrière or "the Citadel" built by "King" [Henri Christophe](#) (1806-1820). Christophe was a (only) king of northern Haiti after independence. Christophe was a tyrant and first (only) king of northern Haiti after independence. Thousands of his subjects died building the Citadel. Christophe committed suicide as his rebelling subjects closed in on him at the Citadel in 1820.

The U.S., Japan, New Zealand, other places which have experienced recent natural disasters may get help from outside their borders for rebuilding, but even without that help, there is an internal capability to resurge and build up again that which has been destroyed. Not so, Haiti, not so. For the last 200 years this tiny nation has suffered at the hands of one despotic regime after another. Haiti got its "independence" from foreign enslavement in 1806 only to be re-enslaved by its own political overlords.

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The land was pillaged and burned, while “kings” and “presidents” departed the country well-healed with whatever wealth they could grab from the mouths and pockets of their people.

The Haitian people I have come in contact with are energetic and willing to work. They want a better life and are willing to work to get it, but more so than any other country I have seen (and I’ve seen a few), the basic blocks needed to construct a better life need to come, at least partially and initially, from outside, because there is nothing left to build with from the inside.

A case in point. On our last trip, one of the many tent camps we visited (about 2,000 people) was just outside of Port-au-Prince. The tents (or more aptly described, plastic sheets of various sizes hung over poles) are setup side by side. They measure, usually, about 6-8 feet on any given side. There is no door no windows no furniture. There may be a single mattress lying on the ground inside, and five or more people will call this “home”. Walkways between the tents have about 24 inches of clearance.



Home “not-so-sweet home” for many Haitians is a 50 ft² piece of dirt covered by plastic sheets thrown over wooden poles. No water, no electricity, no windows, no furniture, no security.



Filling 5 gallon pails with water from a 1,000 gallon plastic bladder.

Water is delivered to the camp by truck and pumped into a bladder (about 1,000 gallons) once a day if they are lucky, but more likely every other day. People, usually the children, maybe the women, but never the men, line up with 5 gallon pails to be filled with water and taken back to their tent for use by the family. There are no wash or shower areas.



WWM has designed and is testing a 3-5 gallon plastic water pouch which is easier to carry than a 5 gallon pail. It is a closable container, keeping water cleaner. Pouches are reusable and can be produced for about \$1.00.

never had to use one. U.S. outhouses are palaces of luxury compared to the rest facilities available Haitian tent cities. “Restrooms” in many of the

The worst though, are the latrine facilities. Most of us are aware of what an outhouse is even if we have

Haiti tent camps are little more than a shallow trench dug in the ground over which several planks with holes cut in them are placed. There are footprints stenciled on the planks on either side of the hole ...no seat upon which to sit, only the footprints to place one in the proper position to get the job done. The shallow depth of the trench below results in a hole that is rapidly filled to the top with human waste and no way to dispose of it or even bury it sufficiently to be able to move on safely to another site. The result is that the excrement is removed with shovels and disposed of...

For washing after toilet use there is usually only a pan, maybe half full of water, on the ground outside the row of latrines ...no soap, no towels, only a half pan of water.



Tent City latrine (in the Middle East, we called them “Beartracks”). The footprints line you up to do what needs to be done.

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World Water Missions was set up, basically, to address water treatment and disinfection problems in third world countries and amidst natural disasters. The reality, as shown in Haiti, is that we have to address the whole scenario of water supply, storage and distribution as well as treatment.

You can't treat something you don't have, and it does no good to treat something the people can't get to. So we continue to form new partnerships with other NGO's doing similar work and supporting the work being done by parishes and faith communities for communities in Haiti. Currently, we have projects active in and around Port-au-Prince, Gonaives and the central mountain area around St. Raphael, and in the north around Cap-Hatien.

As I write this, I am very much heartened by the recent events in the political situation in Haiti. The Haitian people have just successfully elected and installed a president (Michel "Sweet Micky" Martelly). Not only was this transition a change in presidents, but also a change in political parties, something that has not happened in Haiti before without bloodshed and revolution. When I talk to my contacts in Port-au-Prince and elsewhere in Haiti, they, too, are encouraged by the calm that replaced the rioting and political turmoil of just a few months ago as the primary election results were being contested and shrill claims of voter fraud by Rene Preval's ruling party ran rampant. (We actually had one trip cancelled in January 2011 as we went to the airport on our way to Haiti. Rioting was so bad that the airport was shut down, and non-essential Americans were evacuated.) It remains to be seen how effective the entertainer now turned president can be in resurrecting his country from the chaos of the last 2 (or 200) years.

In the end, despite the frustrations and seemingly slow going that we experience when we go there, we keep going, because they have no alternatives. We (U.S., Catholic Church, other church groups and NGO's) are for many Haitians the only life-line they have to an even minimal quality of life.

Concomitantly, they can be our life line to fulfilling Christ's command to live Matthew 25 (*"Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers..."*). We have only to respond positively to His invitation.



Deacon Steve Beers at mass on a recent trip to Haiti.

For more information Deacon Steve Beers can be contacted at: SteveBeers@worldwatermissions.org
Steve will be happy to come and talk to your group about sponsorship and fund raising.

Deacon Richard Tolcher is trying to gather information about local prison ministries-parish level.
Please contact him at rtolcher@archatl.com if your parish has a prison ministry.

Homily Help

<http://homilies.net>
<http://www.deacbench.blogspot.com/>
<http://www.frtommylane.com/homilies.htm>

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THE AQUINAS CENTER *of Theology*

Aquinas Center Website: <http://www.catholicstudies.emory.edu> New URL and almost everything is new. See videos by prominent speakers like Archbishop Wilton Gregory and informational videos and interviews on the Catholic Studies Minor and the Atlanta Catholic Business Conference. There is also a lot of new information about our programs, our Dominican heritage, and a new parish education initiative. See how you can bring Emory scholars to your parish. For the latest programs at Emory click here: [Catholic Studies Program](#)

Parish Education Speakers

Want a world-class speaker for your parish for free? It is easy and we will advertise the program in the **Georgia Bulletin**. Go to: http://aquinas.emory.edu/programs_parish.html

DISTANCE LEARNING

STEP, Satellite Theological Education Program, University of Notre Dame,
Website: <http://step.nd.edu> or Call toll free at **1-866-425-7837** for more information.

University of Dayton <http://www.udayton.edu/>

Felician College <http://www.felician.edu/online/>

Catholic Distance University <http://www.cdu.edu/>

Master of Pastoral Studies-St. Leo Online Programs <http://www.saintleo.edu>

[The Catholic Deacon by Deacon James F. Papillo](#)

This website is intended to provide a useful resource for obtaining information about the Roman Catholic faith, the Roman Catholic Church and the Permanent Diaconate.

The Pontifical College Josephinum

7625 North High Street Columbus, Ohio, 43235 **1-877-9DEACON** (toll free) **1-877-933-2266**
<http://www.pcj.edu/distance/index.html>

For More Details Or To Register, Please Contact Us At:

1-877-9DEACON (1-877-933 2266) E-mail us at: deacons@pcj.edu
or visit us on the web at: www.pcj.edu

All are encouraged to forward this message to those deacons who may not have ready access.

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Continuing Education for Deacons

Deacon Ray Egan will be conducting classes for the Atlanta Archdiocese Diaconate Community. These are the topics that Deacon Ray will be covering:

June 18th

Liturgical responsibilities of a Deacon at Masses and ceremonials.

Aug. 27th

Wake Services
Pastoral support for families at the time of Death
Funerals and Cremation Outside of Mass
Bereavement programs

Oct 15th

Hospice care of a parishioner
Viaticum Prayers of commendation
Prayer in the presence of the body

Nov. 15

Review of the changes to the Sacramentary (Roman Missal) and working with the same.
General discussion

Please mark these dates in your calendars. If you have any questions or would like to attend, please contact Deacon Ray at REgan@archatl.com

The above classes will be held at the St. Stephen Center and will run from 9:00am to 1:00pm. On those dates where this continuing education coincides with [formation dates](#) or click [here](#) for dates, you are welcome to join in for Morning Prayer at 7:40am and attend Mass at 8:00am. Attendance at these sessions will help to fulfill your continuing education requirement in Category 2.

Spiritual Direction Training

Recently Pope Benedict XVI recommended that all should seek spiritual direction. The sparse availability of trained spiritual directors makes that goal, for many, difficult to achieve. Deacons attracted to the ministry of spiritual direction have an opportunity to be certified for spiritual direction through a program offered by Spring Hill College.

Each year Spring Hill College offers the two year program based on the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. The first year combines the spiritual and psychological dynamics of our spiritual journey. The second year progresses to the pastoral applications and an expanded understanding of the Spiritual Exercises. Graduate credits are given to participants. The eighteen credits earned may be applied toward the thirty hours needed for a masters degree if you wish to continue your studies.

Classes meet generally every other Monday night at The Jesuit Retreat Center, Ignatius House, on Riverside Drive in Sandy Springs. For more information contact Mark Dannenfels (404-825-4775 (cell)) or mark@markdannenfels.com. You may also view the program on the Spring Hill College web site, www.shc.edu. Click on the graduate/certificate programs where the spiritual direction program is listed.

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✠ *Please Pray for Us* ✠

James Thacker (D) father of Steve Thacker

Fr. Aubrey McNeil

Fr. Michael McWhorter

Deacon Don Kelsey

Deacon Steve Bek

Mary Korte wife of Deacon Jerry Korte

Michael Welsh son of Deacon Larry Welsh

*Walter Sadowsky (D) father-in-law of Jerry Daly, Candidate for Permanent
Diaconate*

And those whom we promised to pray for ... Lord hear our prayers

Please check in regularly at <http://communique.archatl.com/> for those that might need our prayers.

*If you have some one in need of our prayers please contact Deacon Mark Sholander at:
msholand@bellsouth.net*

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***PRECANA WORKSHOP
INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION***

This workshop is designed for engaged couples preparing to marry in the Catholic Church. It is a one-day workshop beginning at 8:45 A.M. and ending at 4:05 P.M. The fee is \$110 per couple (non-refundable).

The following topics are covered during the workshop: communication, marriage sacrament, married sexuality, reconciliation and forgiveness, and married finances.

Couples should register several months before the desired workshop date. For additional information, please call: 404 920-7645 or visit the Family Life Office web page [here](#)

It is important that couples should speak with a priest or deacon at their parish before registering for this workshop.

To register, please complete the registration form from the web site and attach a check or money order made out to the Family Life Office.

Forms and dates available by clicking this link or at: <http://www.archatl.com/offices>

Dates for the 2011 African American Marriage Preparation Programs

August 6, 2011 November 12, 2011

Registration forms and be found [here](#) should go to **Office of Formation and Discipleship/Pre-Cana** at 2401 Lake Park Drive SE, Smyrna, Georgia, 30080

The fee for the program is \$110.00 per couple. Registration for the program is handled by the Office of Formation and Discipleship. Please contact Lynn Crutchfield at: 404.920.7631

Workshops are held at the Lyke House at the Atlanta University Catholic Center at 809 Beckwith Street, SW.

This program is for engaged couples and couples contemplating marriage.

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Noteworthy Dates

DEACON CONFERENCES WITH ARCHBISHOP GREGORY

Do you have something you would like to discuss with your Archbishop?

These meetings require no appointment. The Archbishop will gladly meet with deacons on a first come, first serve basis on the following dates:

Time: 12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Dates: June 8, 2011

August 24, 2011

November 30, 2011

Contact Mardessa Smith at: MWSmith@archatl.com for more information.

Seminarian Cookout on July 28th!



Come and show your support and have dinner!

Contact Michael Briggs at michaelbriggs@tds.net for reservations and how you can volunteer.

Mass at 5:00 pm followed by dinner at the St. Stephen Center

As in the past a collection will be taken to ensure that the Seminarian looks terrific at school and other functions by outfitting them in Atlanta Archdioceses Shirts.

Donations for "shirts for the seminarians" can be sent to Deacon Dennis Dorner at ddorner@archatl.com

Couples Celebrating 50th & 60th Anniversary in 2011

Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory would like to honor couples married in 1961 and 1951 with an invitation to a Golden/Diamond Wedding Anniversary Mass on **Saturday, October 1, 2011** at noon at Saint Brigid Catholic Church. A catered reception will follow for the honoree couples and their families. Limited tickets are required for this special occasion, so please contact Ana Nagel at (404) 920-7632 or by e-mail at ofd@archatl.com **by August 1 2011** to place your name among the couples to receive an invitation to the Mass and reception. Additional details will be provided after you contact the Office of Formation and Discipleship.

Annual Deacon retreat September 24th and 25th

Father Joseph Fonti from NY will be the retreat master.

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Deacons Wives Database

Over the past few weeks we have worked very hard to update our database with correct contact information for all of the Deacons in the Archdiocese. We believe that we now have correct email addresses for each Deacon and as a result we can keep you up to date regarding information from the Office of the Permanent Diaconate and other offices here in the Chancery.

From time to time it is both necessary and beneficial for us to be able to contact the wives of the Deacons by email. The reasons that we may need to contact them can range from prayer requests to notices about special events directed specifically to women or Deacon's wives. As a result, we would like to update our database to reflect the current email addresses of each wife of a Deacon. **To facilitate this effort if you would please kindly reply with your wife's name and email address and cell phone number to the email below,** we would be most grateful.

Please note that we only use this contact information for messages from the Office of the Permanent Diaconate and the Office of Communications. In keeping with the Archdiocesan policy, this information will not be shared with any other person or organization.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation

Kelly Knight knight@archatl.com

From the USBBC

A document from the USCCB entitled "Questions and Answers Regarding the Canonical Process for the Resolution of Allegations of Sexual Abuse of Minors by Priests and Deacons". The following is a link to the document:

<http://www.usccb.org/comm/archives/2010/10-094.shtml>

Would You Like To Learn Spanish?

St. Michael's in Gainesville, has opened up a learning center using the Rosetta Stone for those wanting to learn English last year. In thanksgiving for this, the Latino community purchased the Rosetta Stone for those who want to learn Spanish. If there are any deacons or deacons in formation that would want to use the St. Michael learning center here in Gainesville, contact me and I will get them their log-ins and passwords to use it. This is just for use in the learning center here at the parish of St. Michael, and doesn't have the on-line option.

Contact Deacon Ken Lampert @ kenlampert@bellsouth.net

Employment Opportunities *Opportunities and Positions Available* *In the Archdiocese of Atlanta*

Please use this web site for the most recent job postings:

<http://www.archatl.com/offices/hr/jobs.htm>

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Polo shirts for your favorite Deacon

These Shirts are now available through the Archdiocese Diaconate Office

They are available in Black, White, and Red.

Please use the order form below and allow three weeks for delivery.



↓ Cut here ↓

Deacon Shirts

Quantity: _____

Size (check box): Small Med Large
 X Large 2XLarge

Color (check boxes) White Red Black

Shipping information:

To: _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zip _____

Enclose: \$30.00 check for each shirt ordered

Mail to:

Archdiocese of Atlanta
2401 Lake Park Drive
Smyrna, GA 30080
Attn: Mardessa Smith

Allow three weeks for shipping and handling

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I Was the Worst Altar Boy Ever by *Matthew Archbold*

I come from a family that went to Mass every Sunday. No questions. And it wasn't like school where you could complain of the stomach flu and maybe get to stay home. To get out of going to Mass, you had to vomit up a spleen at least. We were hardcore Mass goers every Sunday. My Mom even shockingly went on other days (gasp!) when it wasn't even a law that you had to go.

When I did something wrong, my mother dragged me to Confession. I was dragged there a lot- so often that I think some of the priests started scheduling it into their day.

As unlikely as it seems in such a family, I had my very first crisis of faith when I was only eight years old while training to be an altar boy. A little young, you might think, but I was always advanced when it came to tearing things apart. It occurred mainly because I was the dumbest kid to ever become an altar boy.

After Mass one Sunday, my two older brothers and I were deposited into the front pew and my mother sat in the back pew to pray. I had no idea what to expect but I figured it was bad. My Mom dragging me to Church usually meant I'd been caught starting a fire, putting frogs in the milk box, or plucking every apple off the neighbor's apple tree just to throw them at some other neighbor's kids. But that day didn't have a "Matt's in trouble" vibe so I sat there. (I knew that it's always smart to remain silent.) I still don't know if anybody told me why we were there or I just wasn't listening. I just knew my two older brothers, Pat and Kevin, didn't seem surprised to be there so I just went along figuring that we were where we were supposed to be.

Our parish priest came out and started talking to us about the Mass and cassocks and surplices and responsibility. Ah! We were becoming altar boys. At first I was just happy not to be in trouble but as the priest went on and on and on and on I started thinking this sounding suspiciously like school so I raised my hand and asked to go to the bathroom. When I passed my mother she looked at me with her maddest face possible. But I knew she could only get so mad at me IN CHURCH and with the priest only like twenty feet away. So I went to the bathroom and I took my time coming back. I even washed my hands. About ten minutes later I sauntered back into the pew next to my brothers who simply shook their heads at me when the priest wasn't looking.

I still wasn't really paying all that close attention to the priest because I figured my brothers were paying enough attention so that they could just tell me what to do when the time came.

And then it happened. The priest taught us to ring the bells as he raised the Eucharist. Now, this was a catastrophic moment because up until that very moment I'd assumed that God Himself made the bell ringing noise to signify the miracle of transubstantiation. I mean, every miracle deserves a little soundtrack, right? It was a terribly disappointing Wizard-behind-the-curtain moment for me. I was stunned. Heartbroken.

I remember glancing over at my brothers in alarm but they seemed to have no reaction at all. I figured that they hadn't heard that the priest essentially just said, "THERE IS NO GOD. WE RING THE BELLS!!!!!!!!!!!" It's a sham. A con! I silently thanked God that my poor stupid and naive brothers hadn't heard. I could still thank God for that as I was and remain almost uniquely equipped to hold two mutually exclusive ideas in my head at the same time without any issue whatsoever.

This went on for weeks. During Mass, I raced down to the bells to make sure that I was the one ringing them. They probably just thought I was an idiot who liked the sound of bells but in my head I didn't trust them to pull off the con. I figured they'd be seen, noticed by everyone. If there was anything I was good at - even at eight- it was subterfuge.

And I made darn sure nobody in the pews could see the bells when I rang them. I'd hunch over them and ring them with only a slight swing of my hand so that even the people on the side would hardly detect any movement. There I was, trying to protect all the stupid parishioners from the awful truth that it wasn't God at all ringing the bell it was the little fat kid in the cassock. I couldn't let them see. I thought of all those little old ladies who practically spent their lives at Church - EVEN ON WEEKDAYS! I thought of my poor little brother and sister. I thought of my Mom who went to Confession all the time even though she never did anything wrong.

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I don't remember if it was weeks or month later when a priest asked me to ring the bells louder than my subterfuge would allow. He said, "a little oomph" was what was needed. He said offhandedly and jokingly, we have to wake up the people in the back row to tell them that the transubstantiation has occurred and that the Body and Blood of our Lord is truly present on the altar. Something like that is certainly worth a bell ringing isn't it?

Aha! Yes, I told him. I believe it is. And I still do. That's when it hit me. I realized to my surprise and great relief that I wasn't hoodwinking everyone. I wasn't the miracle after all. I was just a witness to the miracle and maybe drawing a little attention to it with the bells. Waking up the people in the back row and all.

So there it was. Problem solved. Now mind you, I've had many, many more crises of faith since. But as I've grown older I've realized a little more with each passing day that I'm not the miracle. I just hope to bring a little attention to the miracle. And maybe that's what I try to do with my writing here. It's my own little way of ringing the bells.

Just loud enough to wake the people in the back row.



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THE BEACON SUMMER 2011

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Prison Ministry Update

Deacon Richard Tolcher

Why do 34 states still support the death penalty, in light of the following?

1. A 2010 poll by Lake Research Partners: A clear majority of voters (61%) would choose a punishment other than the death penalty for murder.
2. A 2009 poll found that only 2% of law enforcement officials found the death penalty as a way to reduce crime.
3. In states such as California, Maryland, Kansas and Florida, the average cost of an execution is \$2.6 million over and above what it costs to house an inmate for life.
4. In Texas, the average cost is \$2.3 million, about 3 times the cost of imprisoning someone in a single cell at the highest level for 40 years.
5. Executions do not bring closure to the families of victims. Their loss is not restored.

There currently are 3,200 inmates on death row in the United States. California alone has 697; Florida and Texas have 735 combined. Georgia has 106 inmates on death row in Jackson State Prison.

Since 1973, one hundred thirty-eight people have been released from death row, with evidence of their innocence. Florida has 25 and Illinois, 20. Illinois recently has abolished the death penalty, after an 11-year moratorium.

The death penalty is so woven into the fabric of our legal system and public consciousness that there is much to be prayed for and about. We can continuously pray for:

1. Victims of violence, including family members.
2. The innocent who are wrongly convicted.
3. Men and women in law enforcement.
4. Elected officials who make our laws.
5. Governors of our states with the death penalty.

If you would like more information, contact Deacon Richard Tolcher at rptolcher@yahoo.com

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THE BEACON SUMMER 2011

Deacons of Archdiocese of Atlanta,

Our committee tries very hard to provide Mass on each Sunday at each of the Boy Scout Summer camps through the Archdiocese.

Much of the time we are successful. Sometimes, due to the remote locations, it is not possible.

I'm asking if we can make the appeal for deacons to provide a communion service where priest availability is not possible.

Our committee has exhausted the local and supply priest lists and still have some holes in the schedule.

The importance here is that many of our campers come from out of state. They may drive all day on Saturday and Sunday from Florida, Texas, Louisiana, etc. and may not otherwise have access to Sunday Eucharist.

So if we have some deacons who'd be willing to fill in a time or more, we'd very much appreciate it.

Thanks be to God we have full coverage at Camp Rainey Mountain. The Woodruff Scout Reservation (Blairsville) is in most need. Phil Krajec is the contact at philk55@charter.net

We also need to fill in Sundays at the Camp Thunder near Molina, GA (south-west area of the archdiocese) Verna Funk is the contact at 404-242-6020 or vfunk07@gmail.com

Thank you very much and God bless,

Deacon Tom Gotschall
Chaplain, Archdiocese of Atlanta Catholic Committee on Scouting
770-490-9436 (direct)
gotschall@mindspring.com
www.standrewcatholic.com

Brothers,

Each year, we are fortunate to host in the Archdiocese of Atlanta the Steubenville/Life teen Conference co-hosted by Life Teen and Franciscan University. Thousands of teens from throughout the Southeast come to share in this upbeat conference. Lives are changed by the power of the Holy Spirit and what a joy it is to watch the hand of God at work. [This year's conference is July 15-17, 2011 at the Gwinnett Civic Center in Duluth, Georgia.](#)

Many of you have assisted throughout the years, either by bringing teens of your own, or by assisting with the various liturgies throughout the weekend. I am offering to you the same opportunity to assist with this year's conference as well. I am fortunate this year to have Deacon Gerry Kazin to assist with the coordination of these various duties throughout the weekend, for which I am very grateful. If you are interested in helping, please feel free to contact me with your available times, and I will be happy to put you to work in service of our Lord. I will be on vacation until June 13th, so feel free to contact me after that date.

Many blessings to you and your families during the lazy, hazy days of summer. May God continue to bless all of you in your ministries of service to Him.

Deacon Mike Byrne
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(C) 404-680-2528, (O) 770-979-4300

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