

Instructor: Deacon Tara Jernigan, D.Min.  
270 Campbell Drive, Sewickley PA 15143  
Phone: (724) 266-1528  
Email: Jernigan.Tara.L@gmail.com  
Skype: tara.jernigan

Dates: 30 May- 25 August 2017

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to explore the ministry of the vocational diaconate and how it has grown and shifted (or failed to shift) to meet the needs of the Church through the ages. The course will examine the biblical perspective on servant-hood; trace the development of the diaconate throughout the history of the Church; explore the writings and lives of a few notable deacons; and examine the emerging role of the diaconate in the contemporary Church. This course will explore the broad range of diaconal ministries and encourage students to think theologically about holy orders and how the threefold orders of the Church relate to one another and reflect the ministry of Christ.

**Course Objectives:**

At the conclusion of this course the student will:

- Have wrestled with and come to a clearer understanding of the nature of the diaconate in the church today.
- Recognize and be able to articulate the nature of the Deacon's orders including the deacon's authority, relationship to the other two orders of ministry and diaconal ontology.
- Be acquainted with the historical role of the deacon in the development of the church and a number of notable deacons who served in each primary period of Church history.
- Interpret the deacon's ministry in light of both Scripture and Christian tradition.

**Required Texts:**

- Collins, John N. *Deacons and the Church: Making Connections Between Old and New*. (Harrisburg, Morehouse Press, 2002) **NB: This text is not required for CDS students.**
- Echin, Edward. *The Deacon in the Church: past and future* (NYC, Alba House, 1971) NB: This book is out of print. A small and hopefully sufficient number are

available from Amazon.com at a reasonable price. Please talk to me before you commit to buy a copy at a ridiculous sum!

- Hall, Christine (Ed.) *The Deacon's Ministry*. (Leominster, Gracewing, 1992)
- Keating, James. *Heart of the Diaconate*. (New York City, Paulist Press, 2015)
- Keating, James. *Deacon Reader*. (New York City, Paulist Press, 2006)
- Sumner, George. *Being Salt*. (Eugene OR, Cascade Books, 2007)
- *Book of Common Prayer*
- *The Bible*

### **Course Requirements:**

#### *All Students:*

- 4 Brief research papers (approximately 4-5 pages each for CDS students, 5-8 pages for Masters and D.Min students) on historical deacons in each major period of Church history (Biblical, Patristic, Medieval, and Reformation). Successful papers will reflect an understanding of the deacon's life and ministry in the context of the needs of the church in that era. (Each paper accounts for 10% of the student's final grade)
- Students will interview a contemporary deacon, ideally in their local ministry setting. This assignment will consist of two parts, the interview itself (proposed questions being due prior to the assignment) and a brief (5-8 pages) paper describing the modern deacon's life and ministry, parish context, and modern challenges and opportunities for diaconal service. (This project accounts for 10% of the student's total grade.)
- Students will research and reflect on the role of the diaconate, both historic and modern, in one of the following areas of ministry: Missionary/Evangelist, Servant, Administrator, Pastoral Caregiver, Catechist, Preacher. The final paper will be approximately 8-10 pages in length and will account for 15% of the student's final grade.
- Students will write a reflection paper on the Deacon's role in liturgy as an expression of the deacon's ordination vows and ministry (4-5 pages for CDS student, 5-8 pages for Masters and D.Min students) (This accounts for 10% of the final grade.)
- Participation in online class discussion will account for the final 20% of the course grade. Students are expected to log in and interact with the course material for every class session. Unless otherwise noted, there will be a question for discussion (some weeks maybe even more than one) posted on the discussion forum. All students are expected to participate. Synchronous discussion will be offered each week. Those who cannot attend will be able to participate via the discussion forum, but all students are strongly encouraged to attend the live session.

*CDS Students only:* will submit a 2-3 page reflection at the end of the course relating the material in the course to their understanding of their own gifts and sense of call to the diaconal ministry. (This will account for 5% of the student's final grade.)

*Masters and D. Min. students only:* will keep an annotated log of reading both assigned and independently chosen (whether for use in writing papers or personal enrichment) related to the topics of the course. An example of a log entry is as follows:

Hennessey, Lawrence R. "Diakonia and Diakonoι in the Pre-Nicene Church" in *Diakonia: Studies in Honor of Robert T. Meyer* (26 pages). This article, while biased toward a Roman Catholic view of the diaconate, offers an extensive study of the New Testament and Early Church (etc. etc.)

Reading log will include author, title, and number of pages, along with a minimum of one paragraph of description. Students are expected to read between 900 and 1100 pages for this course, totaled at the conclusion of the reading log. *Reading log for D.Min. students will be expected to record approximately 1500 pages, including research for final project.* (Reading log accounts for 5% of total grade.)

- *D.Min Students are expected to complete a final project applying course material to the local ministry context. See addendum for full D.Min. requirements.*

Please be aware that acceptable papers will always be the student's own work, cite all sources (and never be limited to only one source, even for reflection papers, unless instruction to the contrary is given) in proper format, properly acknowledge all contributors (including your fellow students, the internet, your instructor, etc.), and present a thorough, thoughtful understanding of the topic at hand. If you are having trouble with proper formatting, you are encouraged to consult your instructor, the seminary's Learning Skills Co-ordinator, and/or *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Turabian, 2007). MLA formatted citations are also acceptable, though not preferable for those planning to continue in advanced academic research. Internet help with citations may also be found at [www.ottobib.com](http://www.ottobib.com). Under no circumstances will plagiarism in any form be tolerated.

The seminary expects that you should plan to spend two hours in preparation for every hour of class instruction. Because of the slightly condensed format of this class, you should expect to spend about eight hours in preparation each week.

- 3-4 hours in assigned reading
- 1-2 hours a week in online discussion (students are encouraged to substitute synchronous online discussion via TurboMeeting or Google Hangouts for some- *but not all-* participation in the discussion forum)
- Approximately two hours in self-directed reading or optional/suggested assigned reading
- 1-2 hours per week preparing written assignments (this will vary week by week)

## Course Schedule

### **30 May, Week One: An Overview of the Study of the Historic Diaconate**

Reading assignment: *Deacon Reader*, pp. 7-26

Lecture: Course Orientation (asynchronous)

Lecture: The Problematic Study of the Diaconate

Live discussion: How does our history color our present ministry?

Post Lecture Reading Assignment: John Collins, Ch 1-2 (Masters/D.Min. Students)

### **5 June, Week Two: The Diakonia of Christ**

Reading assignment: *Heart of the Diaconate*, ch 1

Please read and make notes on John 13

Lecture: Christ the Deacon (asynchronous)

Live discussion: How do you experience the diaconate as a vocation?

*NB: You may also choose to research John 13 in commentaries, but first read and note the Scripture itself.*

*Suggested commentary text is the IVP commentary on John by Rod Whitacre.*

### **12 June, Week Three: The Seven of Acts and Biblical models for the diaconate**

Reading assignment: Acts chapters 5-6, *Heart of the Diaconate*, ch. 2-3

Lecture: The Deacons of Acts (asynchronous)

Live discussion: Forming a diaconal vision

### **19 June, Week Four: The deacon as Evangelist: Stephen and Philip**

Reading assignment: Acts chapters 7-8, make notes regarding the similarities between Acts 8 and Luke 23

Collins, chapters 3-4 (Masters and D.Min students only)

Lecture: Philip and the spread of hope to the hopeless (asynchronous)

Live discussion: Qualifications of Deacons in 1 Timothy 3

**Assignment due June 30: Reflection paper on a deacon of the biblical era**

### **26 June, Week Five: The Patristic Deacon—Self-Sacrificial Ministry, head and heart**

Reading Assignment: Echlin, pp. 1-27

Testament of our Lord (distributed online)

Didache (distributed online)

Ephrem Syrus: "On the Death of a Deacon" (Distributed online)

Lecture: Making Deacon Friends: Ephrem (asynchronous)

Lecture: Making Deacon Friends: Lawrence (asynchronous)

Live discussion: How important is it to connect modern deacons to the deacons of the past?

**Assignment Due July 7: Reflection paper on a deacon of the early church**

### **3 July, Week Six: The Decline (but not disappearance) of the Diaconate**

Reading Assignment: Echlin, pp. 27-94

Lecture: From Constantine and Catechesis (asynchronous)

Lecture: The rise of politics in the diaconate, and Alcuin of York (asynchronous)

Lecture: Finding Francis (asynchronous)

Live discussion: What can the diaconate respond to a rapidly changing world?

**Assignment due July 14: Reflection Paper on the deacon in the Medieval Church**

### **10 July, Week Seven: On Anglican Deacons (and a peek into a few other traditions as well)**

Reading Assignment: Hall pp. 123-158, 175-200

Independent reading: Research the diaconate in as many catechisms as you have access to. Good choices might include: Luther's, Westminster, Heidelberg, Baltimore; as well as the ACNA's *To be a Christian*, and the BCP Catechism

Lecture: How we got here-- Calvin and Luther and the Protestant fracture

Lecture: Some unexpected Anglican deacons-- Nicholas Ferrar and Lewis Carroll

Live discussion: What is the Church currently teaching about the diaconate?

### **17 July, Week Eight: Deacon in the liturgy, then and now**

Reading Assignment: Hall, pp. 67-88

Read through the Eucharistic liturgy (BCP or Texts for Common Prayer) and make note of the role of the deacon? Before class draw some conclusions about what our liturgy says about the order.

Lecture: The Deacon at the Altar

Lecture: Varieties of Service (The Deacon's "Mass" among other things)

Live discussion: How does ministry flow from Sacrament (and vice-versa)?

### **24 July, Week Nine: The Contemporary Deacon (where we went right and where we went wrong)**

Reading Assignment: *Being Salt*

Lecture: Today's Anglican Deacon

Lecture: The current state of affairs "across the pond."

Live discussion: Meeting A Modern Deacon- 1

**Assignment due August 4: Reflection paper on the deacon's role in liturgy.**

### **31 July, Week Ten: Ontology of the Diaconate**

Reading Assignment: Hall pp. 25-44

Lecture: Ontology or Functionality (the moment you've all been waiting for!)

Live discussion: A chance to sound back on the idea of ontology

**Assignment due August 11: Reflection paper on the deacon in the Reformation Church**

**7 August, Week Eleven: The Deacon does not stand alone: On Threefold Ministry**

Reading: Doss (Anglican Theological Review: distributed online)

Lecture: Building on this foundational order

Live discussion: No live discussion this week

**14 August, Week Twelve: Spiritual Formation and the Diaconate**

Reading Assignment: *Deacon Reader* (Keating et.al.) ch. 5-7, 9

Lecture: Discernment in practice

Live discussion: No live discussion this week!

**Assignment due August 18: Interview with contemporary deacon and reflections on modern diaconal ministry**

**21 August, Week Thirteen: Wrapping up loose ends**

Reading Assignment: Hall, pp. 103-122

Lecture: Where do we go from here?

Live discussion: Meeting a Modern Deacon -2

Final lecture: Tying up loose ends

**Assignments Due August 25: Annotated reading log or call paper**

**Topical Research Paper**

## *Addendum for D.Min. Students*

*D. Min. students will complete a final project applying the principles we have studied to their local ministry context. The final project will require additional documented reading (in reading log) beyond the expected norms of the graduate level program. In keeping with the nature of the D.Min. program, this will require significant independent and original research under the guidance of your instructor. The successful paper will include three sections as follows:*

- 1. Presentation of research (summary of the diaconate, addressing a specific concern, etc.) which demonstrates that the student understands the course material and has added his own research to broaden his body of knowledge on the subject. An annotated bibliography will be included. (Do not forget also to add these page values to your reading log!)*
- 2. Presentation of the current state of the diaconate within the student's current ministry context (parish, diocese, denomination, etc.) This section will involve local research, interviewing church leaders, deacons, etc.*
- 3. Presentation of recommendations which apply what has been learned in the course to the improvement of the local ministry context.*

*Successful paper will be approximately 20 pages in length, relevant to the student's ongoing ministry or that of his diocese or governing body, and reflect significant independent research. This project is an ongoing part of your semester and should not be saved as a "final project" for the end of the course. Milestones for this project are as follows:*

***July 1***—Research proposal (one page, with proposed bibliography) due

***August 1***—Research portion of the paper (complete draft, approximately 8-10 pages) due.

***September 2*** – Final paper due

*This project will account for approximately 25% of the student's final grade, other graduate level coursework will account for the remaining 75% with the distribution of master's portion of the grading adjusted accordingly.*