

Synod XIV Assembly
Paragraph 73
Communion, Participation, Mission

“Servants of the mystery of God and the Church (Lumen Gentium 41), Deacons are ordained not for the priesthood but for ministry (Lumen Gentium 29). They exercised this ministry in the service of charity in proclamation and in liturgy in doing so they make real the relation between the gospel and a life lived in love in every social and Church context. They also promote within the whole Church both a consciousness of service and a particular style of service towards all, especially the poorest.

As the Tradition, the prayer of ordination and pastoral practice demonstrate, the functions of Deacons are many. Deacons respond to the specific needs of each local Church, particularly reawakening and sustaining everyone's attention to the poorest in the Church, which is synodal, missionary and merciful.

The ministry of deacons remains unknown to many Christians, in part because, although it was restored by the Vatican II in the Latin Church as a distinct and perfect grade (Lumen Gentium 29), it has not been welcomed in every part of the world.

The teaching of the Council needs to be more deeply explored, particularly in light of the review of the lived experience of the diaconate. This teaching already offers good reasons to local churches not to delay in promoting the permanent diaconate more generously recognizing in this ministry a valuable resource in the growth of a Servant Church, following the example of the Lord Jesus, who made himself servant of all. This deeper understanding could also help to better comprehend the meaning of the diaconal ordination of those who will become Priests.”

Pope Francis and the XIV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.