



DIOCESE OF ARIZONA
Deacon Formation Academy
Service in Action – An Internship



Please note: Due to the result of the pandemic, we recognize that this internship time, may be mostly spent online or as a hybrid. As our congregations continue to evolve and journey during this period, we appreciate that our Deacons in Formation can learn new ways and be more immersed in digital ministry. We appreciate your continued support.

Objective:

The preparation and formation, of the Vocational Deacon, is for the universal Church, not just the church congregation who is supporting them both financially and spiritually. *Service in Action* has three (3) formation objectives. The deacon candidate is:

1. To experience a different worship environment, by being visible and involved.
2. To share their ministry, and “market” it in such a way that it will engage others for interest and possible participation.
3. To learn, and participate in, the ministry(ies) of the host congregation.

The *Service in Action* program is not a process for an evaluated result, such as “pass/fail”, but an exercise for living the experience as Servant-Leader.

This *Service in Action* is in partial fulfillment of the Episcopal Church Constitution & Canons as of 2015 Title III 6.5 (f) (5):

“Before ordination each Candidate shall be prepared in and demonstrate basic competence in five general areas: (1) Academic studies including, The Holy Scriptures, theology, and the tradition of the Church. (2) Diakonia and the diaconate. (3) Human awareness and understanding. (4) Spiritual development and discipline. (5) Practical training and experience.”(pg. 74)

Guidelines - General:

- The deacon candidate is assigned to a host congregation by the Director of the Deacon Formation Academy in consultation with the Archdeacon. If appropriate this congregation could potentially include a congregation outside the Episcopal jurisdiction (i.e. Methodist, Lutheran, etc.). The congregation selection is based upon:
 - The location; such as, if the candidate is from the Tucson area then the assignment will be in Tucson, not Phoenix; and/or
 - Having a Vocational Deacon with the parish; and/or
 - The participation and support of a clergy person [priest or pastor] who understands the role of the Vocational Diaconate.
- The internship for this class will be conducted from **October 2023 through March 2024 for no less than twenty-four (24) “Sunday” weeks**. It is understandable and acceptable that there may be some absences (i.e. vacations, previously arranged commitments, etc.) which are not included within the twenty-four weeks.
- Prior to the start of the internship period, an online training will be conducted to include all parties.



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Responsibilities of the Home Parish:

- Before beginning the internship, if not already done so, the deacon candidate should “relinquish” any major lay leadership role(s) that he/she has in the supporting (Home Parish) congregation. This “housecleaning” offers a teaching-while-leading opportunity, and it allows the beginning of an identity shift toward the ordained role; **upon returning to the home congregation the relinquished role(s) is not to be reclaimed**; but, could possibly be redefined.

Examples: Oversight and training of acolytes – leadership of bible study programs – leadership of outreach projects – leadership of “Lay Eucharist Visitors”, etc.

For any role that is questionable, contact the Director of the Deacon Formation Academy for clarification.

- Recognize and support the deacon candidate in “breaking ties” with the Home Parish during this period. While this is not meant to be in isolation, it is a time of growth and continued discernment for the deacon candidate. Encourage the Home Parish congregants to keep the deacon candidate in prayer. As such, it may be that the deacon candidate’s family continues to worship and support activities at the Home Parish.
- One way to support the Deacon in Formation during this period is to include them in the prayers of the people.
- Upon return to the Home Parish, meet with the Priest-in-charge in order to review and reflect on the learnings of this internship. Where appropriate share portions of the Internship Service In Action Journal. Set in a place a new plan for moving forward with new/different/changed role(s) in order to further ready for ordination.

Responsibilities of the Host (Interning) Parish:

- The Priest-in-Charge of the Host Congregation is the primary “manager” for this period. It is acceptable to designate someone else as the “supervisor”, clergy or lay, within the congregation to provide the immediate oversight and “work” with the deacon candidate as a mentor/coach on a daily/weekly basis providing instruction, answering questions, etc.
- An introduction of the candidate to the congregation is appropriate (i.e. a note in the bulletin, congregation’s newsletter, etc.)
- The Host Parish leadership team and the designated supervisor will create opportunities for the candidate to be active and visible within the congregation; and, allow the candidate to share their ministry.



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- Activities (which will be modified for the current environment) during the internship will include:
 - Serving in liturgies and worship services (Sunday and weekdays), as: Reader, Chalice Bearer, Acolyte, Sub-deacon, etc.
 - Preaching – at least one time at a minimum
 - Working and learning from the Altar Guild/Sacristans
 - Conducting an event (i.e. forum, teaching series, etc.) which allows the candidate to share their ministry and/or general knowledge (i.e. Bible study)
 - If the host congregation has a Vocational Deacon, shadow that deacon in their ministry work; or, shadow the priest/pastor.
 - Hands on involvement in the host congregations' ministries
 - Being very *VISIBLE!*
- The Priest-in-charge should meet with the deacon candidate and the assigned supervisor as appropriate at least 3 times during this period.
- The assigned supervisor will work with the deacon candidate on the “doing”, “being”, and “reflecting” during this period. It will include the following:
 - The initial introductions, if applicable, planning and scheduling of the candidate's activities; and,
 - Detailed debriefing/check-in, every three (3) to four (4) weeks – using the Service In Action Journal as a guide. (*The Journal is provided by the Deacon Formation Academy and the Candidate is asked to share it.*)
 - Meeting 1-on-1 for mentoring and coaching as appropriate.
 - A final review/insight (*see Addendum A: Internship Progress Feedback*) completed by the Host Parish and sent to both the *Director of Deacon Formation* and the *Archdeacon* offering comments of the candidate's participation and progress. The form will be included with the candidates Commission on Ministry File. If the candidate had multiple mentors/guides within the congregation, it is possible for the form to have multiple sets of comments. The form may be digitally signed and emailed to:
deaconsally@yahoo.com and amy@azdiocese.org
- Additionally, to ensure continued improvement of the internship process, an evaluation including logistics, training, communication, etc. will be provided by the Director of the Deacon Formation Academy to the Host Parish to be completed and emailed to the Director at: deaconsally@yahoo.com

Responsibilities of the Deacon Candidate Intern:



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- Make the initial contact to the Supervisor (priest in charge or deacon) of the assigned congregation for planning the schedule.
- **Develop a plan** with the Host Parish Leadership team to maximize the opportunity to be immersed into the life of the congregation, not only on Sundays, but during the week, *if it is possible*. Use resources as needed. Suggestions include but are not limited to:
 - Bishop Smith's *The Diaconate in the Diocese of Arizona for the 21st Century*, Pastoral Letter, June 2014 (online at Diocesan website)
 - The rubrics in the Book of Common Prayer
 - *Deacons in the Liturgy*, 2nd ed. Ormonde Plater, 2009
- Provide the Host Parish with emergency contact information and share any other important personal information as appropriate.
- **Submit to the Director of the Deacon Formation Academy a copy of the "plan."** An email will suffice. It should contain at a high level – an outline of planned key activities. Send to robin.b.hollis@gmail.com (outgoing DFA Director) **and** deaconsally@yahoo.com (incoming DFA Director) **no later than 2 weeks after beginning the internship.**
- Create a personal biography; one "short" paragraph in length; this will be used by the Supervisor for introduction to the assigned congregation.
- Be accountable of activities by completing entries in the "Service in Action Internship Activity" logbook (i.e. journal) following an event/activity to be reviewed with the Supervisor (or designee) every three (3) to four (4) weeks. The signed/initialed booklet(s) will be submitted to the Director of the Deacon Formation Academy at the end of the internship participation.
- Additionally, to ensure continued improvement of the internship process, at conclusion of the internship, an evaluation will be provided for the deacon candidate to complete. It can be emailed directly to the Director of the Deacon Formation Academy or submitted with the Service in Action Journal.

For questions/comments: please contact Director of the Deacon Formation Academy by mobile phone or email at:

The Rev. Dr. Robin Hollis (*outgoing Director*)– robin.b.hollis@gmail.com or
+1.480.242.7178

Or Incoming DFA Director-

The Rev. Sally Niles - deaconsally@yahoo.com or +1.602.770.3739

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ADDENDUM A:



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Internship Progress Feedback Example



Located on the Diocesan Website:

- Clergy Resources [www.azdiocese.org]
 - Deacons and the Diaconate [<http://www.azdiocese.org/deacons.html>]

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Internship Progress Feedback

Deacon Candidate Name:

Internship (Host) Parish:

Dates of Internship:

Priest-in-Charge:

Supervisor / Other Mentors:

Internship Objective:
 The Service in Action program is not a process for an evaluated result, such as "pass/fail", but an exercise for living the experience as Servant-Leader.
 Service in Action has three (3) formation objectives. The deacon candidate is:

1. To experience a different worship environment, by being visible and involved.
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1. Briefly describe the Deacon Candidate's key activities:

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2. Describe the Deacon Candidate's ability to work collaboratively in ministry:

3. Suggestions for continued growth:

4. Overall/ Additional comments:

Submitted by:

Date:

When completed please email to the following within 2 weeks of receipt:
 Director of Deacon Formation – deaconsally@yahoo.com
 Cc: Archdeacon – amy@azdiocese.org