

# Minutes

## Archdiocese of Newark

### Mentoring Workshops for Deacons

May 4/11, 2011

**Mentoring Program for Permanent Deacons- Workshop**  
**May 4, 2011**

**Part I**

**The Adult Mentoring Relationship-Rev. Donald  
Blumenfeld**

**Keys**

1. Each Deacon has own life experience.
2. Need mutual respect.
3. Need to clarify parameters based on trust.-confidentiality
4. This is not Spirituality supervision- a Spiritual Director should handle this area.

You should check on praying/retreats/ use of spiritual  
Director etc

5. Respect should be provided: e.g. punctuality/ Keep appts etc
6. Focus conversation on the Ministry of the Deacon e.g. use checklist to structure direction.
7. Conversation- on truth-“ compliment but don't enable” be non judgmental in comments.

8. You are a mirror to the Deacon- “ we live Holy Orders”

9. Help with self evaluation- get insights.

### **Tools:**

1. Active listening. Don't offer advice but guide the discussion
2. Don't be too quick to help- solve “teach them to fish”
3. Use an approach which is mostly non directive. E.g. “ it appears that you are not seeing a Spiritual Director” ...
4. Be aware of body language, tone of voice etc.
5. Find a good place to meet which will allow for no interruption.
6. Offer objectivity. Don't get personally involved. Keep it Professional. Don't be his friend.
7. The mentor should educate. Provide resources etc.

### **The New Mentor- Rev. Robert Suszko**

1. Develop your own comfort zone.
2. Pick a style of mentoring. Avoid extremes. E.g.” buddy versus watchdog” don't fall into extremes. “ be supportive but Challenging”

3. . Set guidelines of roles. Set Goals and objectives which you will monitor periodically. Base G and O's on the 4 Pillars- Human/Spirituality/Intellectual/Pastoral
4. Ask new Deacon for Autobiography
5. Have Deacon write at least one sentence for each goal which reflects Progress. And collect periodically- this will help both the mentor and new Deacon.
6. List general topics to discuss regularly- maybe keep track in form of a checklist. For example ask about:  
health/family life/prayer/ relationship with staff/priests/ preaching etc
7. Assign a passage from Scripture for both of you to reflect upon- this may open up discussions.
8. Don't write notes when meeting- but do summarize afterwards for yourself.
9. Review your notes before session.
10. Set schedule for 6 months.
11. Remember: mentoring is not Spiritual Direction.
12. Coach.

### **The Dimensions on Continuing Diaconal Formation**

The 4 Pillars or "Dimensions"

Human/Spiritual/Intellectual/Pastoral are almost identical in

both Priesthood and Diaconate Formation.. *The Pillars cannot stand alone- no one is more important than another.*

### **Human Maturity-**

1. we need to be bridges not obstacles in helping people to know Jesus.- what are your human qualities used in bridging- what may be obstacles?
2. Develop a capacity to relate to others- sincere/generous/happy/open/.authentic. N.B. be aware of the new Deacon's human qualities.
3. **Affective maturity**- your capacity to love.
4. **Training in freedom**-“ in obedience there is freedom”
5. Education of a moral conscience takes place.
6. By the frequent use of **reflection and dialogue**- the Pillars of Human/Spirituality/Pastoral/ intellectual can be more fully engaged with each other.

John Mc Keon

## **Draft Minutes**

**May 11,2011**

### **Part II**

#### **Mentoring In Service For Deacons**

Presenters: Deacon Al McLaughlin/Deacon Peter Emr, Rev.  
Donald Blumenfeld/  
Rev. James Manos, Msgr. William Fadrowski

1. Structure your mentoring sessions beforehand; this new class is the best trained/prepared class in the Archdiocesan efforts. We can learn and grow from the mentoring process.
2. Prayer- share a meditation on a Scriptural passage- the exchange invites us to ask questions/ share insights/ helps us to focus- hopefully we veterans are good at this! Ok to ask questions- what do you Mean by this? Your interpretation?

3. Ministry\_ what did you do the past few weeks do you think it went well? What might need changes? Suggest- maybe you/ I might do it differently! Here we might offer some guidance.
4. Say “ how can I help”- need to ask this question. Sometime people are timid- not aware they need help. Asking the questions encourages discussion.
5. Shop talk. Since we will probably know the new deacon from the parish- we can give feedback on what we observe directly- compliment/encourage- don't be afraid to talk about issues you observe. Ask them to self assess. Anticipate what might becoming up in the Parish life and give them a heads up of what they might experience- even the surprises! Talk about the unusual things that occur and that could happen- Be pastoral.
6. Family.- Ask “ How is it going with the family? Do you see a change in the wife/ kids? What questions do the new deacons ask of the family as time goes by regarding time/ communications etc.
7. Think back to our own first year- and since then- how have our families been changed by the Calling? Get a sense of time spent in the Diaconate work vs home/job/ free time.

8. As Deacons, we all carry a lot of baggage. Our efforts are collegial. We are on a common journey and our Spiritual selves are always developing/growing. Egocentric needs of our own selves/ the pastor/priests/ parishioners are always out there. We are not spiritual perfectionists- "the journey makes us one" ...
9. Our own spirituality- prayer life- has to have DEPTH- we are a mirror to all people.
10. Priority- family/job ministry.
11. As Deacons we are "**servants**" in every sense of the word. Question- Can we see the Deacon in the one we mentor and vice versa? What is seen?
12. Question? Can we socialize with the new Deacon and his wife? Yes , but caution – not as a part of mentoring. Realize that your role is to provide a professional resource primarily-
13. People expect the Deacon to act in a certain way!
14. Support the Pastors role ! Be open to the needs of the Pastor.
15. Strong suggestion which was endorsed by many Deacons.- Set up a one formal Calendar with your wife/family so that both the Deacon and family



16. can visualize the time given to Church/ family/ recreation etc.
17. Get to know the new Deacons own history- who he is.. family work history.. spiritual influences/ struggles etc. how he came to the diaconate.
18. Find out expectations of the Pastor
19. Does the Mentor himself have a Spiritual Director?  
How often does he see the person?
20. Engage the new Deacon and yourself to “stretch” and listen to see if God is calling you/ him to something- maybe extra than what is asked of you at this time. To perhaps take careful “risks” with a God given call.
21. Actively talk about Preaching.
22. Help the Deacon to see weaknesses in such areas of Marriage Preparation, Baptism prep. Etc and offer support.
23. Heed the Dominican call to “ Bless, Praise, and Preach the Gospel of Christ” as a Deacon.
24. “Preach well” keep homilies short. Rotate the time of the Mass assigned to the Deacon

John Mc Keon