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To be ‘men of prayer’

Deacons recommit to ministry at annual Mass

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CHARLOTTE — Permanent deacons of the Diocese of Charlotte recently gathered to commit once again to their diaconate service in the church.

Eighty-seven deacons and wives gathered for the deacons’ annual recommitment Mass celebrated by Bishop Peter J. Jugis at St. Patrick Cathedral in Charlotte March 14.

During the ceremony, the deacons’ wives also promised to support their husbands in their vocations to the church.

“It bodes well for the Diocese of Charlotte that so many of you are gathered here today with such enthusiasm in song and prayer,” said Bishop Jugis.

In the Catholic Church, the diaconate is the first of the three ranks in ordained ministry, and a permanent deacon is the only ordained man allowed to be married.

As ordained ministers, permanent deacons may perform baptisms, witness marriages and assist in various liturgies of the church.

In the diocese, all active deacons also are required to participate in continuing education and an annual retreat. Like the priests, who recommit themselves to priestly service at the annual chrism Mass during Holy Week, the permanent deacons gather for a similar recommitment Mass.

It is God’s “grace which empowers you to do your ministry,” Bishop Jugis told the deacons during his homily.

The bishop said that during the deacons’ ordinations, “we prayed to the Holy Spirit to help you faithfully carry out your ministry.”

“You promised to work with humble charity and to be faithful in proclaiming the faith,” said the bishop at the recommitment Mass. “You promised to serve the Lord. Now you must live that moment and put it into practice.”

To be successful in their ministries, the deacons must be “men of prayer,” said Bishop Jugis.

“It was the Lord who imposed these joy-filled obligations as you became his stewards. Therefore, always refer back to the Lord — the one who calls ... always go back to the source, to Jesus,” said the bishop.

“Orient yourself to Jesus ... and renew your commitment to him, and strengthen the bond of friendship with him ... and between one another.”

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