

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA



Memo

Date: September 2, 2025

To: Deacons

From: Penny Simmons, co-director of diaconate formation, Office of the
Permanent Diaconate

Re: Continuing formation opportunity for deacons

You are invited to **Ministry of Presence to the Incarcerated, Immigrant and Refugee**, a to a day of reflection for deacons and wives.

There are many moments in Scripture that explicitly instruct us to care for those who are imprisoned, and for immigrants and refugees (indeed, there are several hundred passages in which care for “foreigners” is enjoined). Our modern society does little to care for these groups and focuses instead on dehumanizing them. The goal of ministry for people who are incarcerated and for immigrants and refugees, therefore, must be twofold: To be present to those whom society has thrown away, and to work for justice that will guarantee respect for their human dignity. This workshop will include a practical guide to engaging in prison and jail ministry, as well as formation in immigration and refugee ministry and restorative justice.

Our presenters are Chaplain Thomas Jahr, Regional Chaplaincy Services coordinator for the Federal Bureau of Prisons, Imelda Richárd, coordinator of prison ministry, and Jayna Hoffacker, director of restorative justice ministry. Bishop Bernard E. Shlesinger III will also join us.

The National Directory for Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons, second edition, provides that **a post-ordination formation program be established for the first five years after ordination**. If you

have been ordained in **2021, 2022, 2023, 2024 or 2025**, you are required to attend the workshop. This workshop, however, is for all who have been ordained and their wives.

Join us on Saturday, October 11, beginning with morning prayer at 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. for this workshop on ministry of presence to the incarcerated, immigrant and refugee.

Time will be allocated for reflections, discussion and to answer questions that arise from the presentations.

The event will take place in Grand Halls B & C at the Chancery, 2401 Lake Park Drive SE, Smyrna, GA 30080. You and your wife are invited to join us for morning prayer at 9 a.m.

You may claim six continuing education hours in your annual report by attending the session. Be sure to note your wife's attendance on the registration form. Lunch and drinks will be provided.

Register at: [10-11-2025 Post Ordination Workshop Registration](#) before **Wednesday, October 1**. Follow-up emails will be sent to the email you enter so please be sure that your email is correct when you register. .

I am looking forward to seeing each of you once again.