

Diocesan Commission for Permanent Diaconate of Hong Kong Annual Report 2012

The Commission

Cardinal John Baptist Wu appointed on 1 February 1996 a Diocesan Ad hoc Committee to promote and establish the ministry of Permanent Diaconate in Hong Kong (now renamed as Diocesan Commission for Permanent Diaconate of Hong Kong).

Mission

2. - to be responsible for the planning, promotion, publicity, selection of candidates, formation and ordination
- to strengthen the acceptance of permanent diaconate in the Diocese and formation

Appointments

3. Bishop John Tong appointed/reappointed on 14 November 2011 the following persons to be members of the Commission for the period from 1 February 2012 to 31 January 2014:

Chairman: Rev. Dominic Chan, Vicar General

Members : Rev. Paul Kim Dong Ju, KMS, Rev. Benedict Lam, Rev. Francis Tam, Deacon Joseph Sung, Mr. Bernard Chan, Ms Jennie Chor, Mr. Peter Chan, Ms Susanna Cheung , Mr. Simon Li, Ms. Cecilia Ng, Ms. Louise Wong.

Meetings

4. During the year, 4 meetings were held on 27 January, 13 April, 6 July and 15 October respectively; and an Insight Day on 8 September.

Highlights

5. The highlights were focused on the strengthening of the spiritual formation, expanding the learning spectrum and service spectrum, organizing an Insight Day to map the future directions of the Commission, appointing an Assistant Formation Director to help in the administration of the Commission and the development of the diaconate ministries, updating the Handbook for Deacons and Candidates, and to activate planning of The Global Chinese Permanent Deacons Sharing Workshop 2013. Details are further elaborated in paragraphs 21 to 24.

Report of the Formation Director

6. The Chairman of the Commission, Rev. Dominic Chan, VG is also appointed to be the Formation Director. The Formation Director is responsible for the execution of the directives of the Commission regarding the planning, publicity, promotion, selection and ordination arrangements. At present, there are 17 Permanent Deacons in the Hong Kong Diocese. 9 candidates are under training on theology studies, pastoral and community services. For the better understanding and familiarization of the diocesan mechanism, Permanent Deacons and the Candidates as well, are appointed to the appropriate Diocesan Committees or organizations as members as detailed in Appendix I.

7. Ministry of Lectors and Ministry of Acolyte – On 21 April 2012 at the Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Pokfulam, the ministry of Lectors was conferred to **Candidates Kwong Kwok Chuen Cosmas**, and **Wong King Shing Peter**; the ministry of Acolyte was conferred to **Candidates Au Kar Wai Andrew** and **Chu Nim Cho Charles**.

8. Ordination – Mr. **Kwan Chung Wah Nestor**, Mr. **Lam Sair Ling Fraustus** and Mr. **Shiu Wai Leung Paul** were ordained on 14 July 2012 at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, officiated by Cardinal John Tong.

9. Admission – **Mr. Sinn Yiu Fat Anthony** and **Mr. Kwok Chi Keung Alexander** were admitted as Candidates at the Holy Redeemer Church, Tuen Mun on 29 December 2012.

10. The Commission has prepared guidelines for the Deacons and Candidates to follow in their training and attachment sessions, as well as helping the Parish Priests to assess their performance.

11. The Commission has published a prayer sheet for the intention to pray for the Permanent Diaconate ministry in gatherings and promotional activities. A copy is shown at Appendix II.

12. The Formation Director meets with the Permanent Deacons, Candidates and Aspirants regularly to understand their performances and aspirations, for the planning of their training needs, to give guidance and support.

12.1 Clinical psychologists are invited to give assessments to the aspirants and the admission of candidates.

12.2 Home visits are held to candidates, aspirants and applicants to have a better understanding from them and their family members on their responses to the deacon ministry.

12.3 For the Permanent Deacons, to pay attention to their growth in spirituality, and their family harmony.

12.4 The Formation Director arranges Spiritual Directors and mentors to accompany and support the Deacons, Candidates and Aspirants to grow in their spiritual lives.

12.5 For the strengthening of a community life and sharing of life experience, the Formation Director assigns Permanent Deacons to play the role as mentors for the candidates and aspirants.

12.6 The Formation Director meets with the wives of the Deacons and Candidates regularly to establish a "Walk in Company Programme" in the form of companionship for mutual support to help them share their life experience of their ministerial role as wives of Deacons through prayers and to walk in company. Ms Louise Wong had on 21 June 2012 presented a formation sharing to the wives of Deacons, Candidates and Aspirants. The title was "The role of the wives of the Deacons from the Sacrament of Matrimony" to strengthen and affirm their commitment and support in the ministry. A group of wives attended.

12.7 The Formation Director held an 8 day retreat for the three candidates and their wives during 11 to 18 June 2012 to strengthen their faith, in preparing their diaconate ministries prior to their ordination in July; and to develop a close solidarity among themselves.

Inflows

The Essen Diocese

13. Bishop John Tong accompanied by the Formation Director Rev. Dominic Chan VG, visited the Essen Diocese, Germany in May 2011. A familiarization visit was made to Bishop Franz-Josef Overbeck and

Deacon Michael Nieder, their Formation Director and their core members of the Essen diocese and to share with each other the formation experiences. Bishop Tong invited Bishop Overbeck for a familiarization visit to Hong Kong Diocese in 2012 for a better understanding. The Essen Team comprising Bishop Overbeck, Deacon Nieder, Canon Dr. Michael Doremann, Mr. Herbert Kleine, Personal Secretary of the Bishop and Dr. Thilo Esser, Principal of the Department for World Church affairs visited Hong Kong in March. The Commission hosted a dinner reception for the Essen visitors on 25 March. At the reception, Deacon Nieder highlighted the Essen formation programmes whilst the Hong Kong Commission members elaborated the Hong Kong experience, our deacons shared their ministerial experience and aspirations, and to establish an inflow opportunity.

Taipei Archdiocese

14. Archbishop John Hung of Taipei Archdiocese appointed a visit team comprising Rev. Augustine Hsu, Procurator, Rev. Paulus Sun, Rev. Roch Chow, Vicar Generals, Rev. Stephen Huang, Ms Huang Chin-Wei and Ms Agnes Lin, secretaries of the Archdiocese Office visited Hong Kong to seek the HK experience in the establishment of the diaconate ministries from Rev. Dominic Chan VG, Formation Director. The briefing team led by Rev. Dominic Chan VG, together with Mr. Bernard Chan, Deacon Joseph Sung and wife, Deacon Paul Yeow and wife, Deacon Edwin Ng and wife. The briefing was held on 21 May 2012 conveying the Hong Kong experience and to provide the resource materials.

15. Archbishop John Hung wrote to Cardinal Tong in June inviting a HK delegation team to visit Taipei in July as Speakers in a Symposium to elaborate the Permanent Diaconate ministry, sharing of the experience for the representatives of the 7 Dioceses in Tai Wan. The Taipei Archdiocese has decided to start establishing the permanent diaconate ministry on an experimental basis. Cardinal John Tong appointed Rev. Dominic Chan VG, Chairman of the Commission, Mr. Bernard Chan, Deacon Joseph Sung, Deacon Paul Yeow and wife to attend.

16. The symposium was held at the Taipei Archdiocese Office on 27 and 28 July 2012. More than 130 representatives from the 7 dioceses in Tai Wan attended.

17 Rev. Dominic Chan VG, presented his sharing on these aspects: “the historical development of the permanent deacons, past and present”, the continual formation of deacons-the way forward” , “the Hong Kong experience over these two decades in the planning, promotion, publicity, selection of candidates” .Deacon Joseph Sung and Deacon Paul Yeow presented their sharings on their response to the vocation calls, their formation and working experience on pastoral and charitable services, their growth in spiritual life dimensions and family life. Mr. Bernard Chan gave a presentation on the spectrum of the training and formation, and the strategies. Mrs. Yeow gave her sharing on “the role and vocation of the wife of the deacon” illustrating that being the wife of the deacon, she is responding to a vocation de facto with a unique mission” . At the closing ceremony of the symposium, Archbishop John Hung appealed to all representatives of the 7 dioceses in Taiwan to promote the understanding of the diaconate ministry. He confirmed that the Taipei Archdiocese would implement an experimental plan to establish the permanent diaconate.

18. With the kind arrangements by Archbishop John Hung, Rev. Dominic Chan VG visited Cardinal Paul Shan at the Jesuit House in the Fu Jen University to present Cardinal John Tong well wishes. Both Archbishop John Hung and Rev. Dominic Chan VG reported the progress of the symposium and requested Cardinal Paul Shan to pray for the developments of the permanent diaconates.

19. The Taipei visit was a tour with sharing, inflow and learning.

20. The Formation Director has included in the Vicar General's website (<http://vgoffice.catholic.org.hk>) a link to Permanent Deacons to establish information and the promotion of the ministry.

Highlights of the year
The Insight Day

21. The Commission held an Insight Day on 8 September 2012 at the retreat house of the Missionary Sisters of the Immaculate Conception at Jat's Incline to review and to plan the future directions. Rev. Dominic Chan VG in his introductory message highlighted the historical developments of the permanent deacons, the past and the present, the development progress in Hong Kong. With prayers and deliberations, the Commission had reached these directive resolutions:

- In the organization module – to establish a systematic structure to illustrate the identity of the diaconate ministry as a sign of the religious leading the faithful to build a social concern in the prophetic role.
- In the formation module – to enhance the deacons in raising awareness of social issues according to the spirit laid down in Lumen Gentium, to familiarize the characteristics of the parish where he is serving and to sanctify, to strengthen the pastoral training in participating parish activities actively.
- In the witness module – to enhance the spiritual formation for deacons stressing on prayer, the scriptures and Holy Communion to reflect the solidarity of sacraments in building the strength in the areas of evangelization, pastoral and witness life in fulfillment of the model being Salt and Light of the world.
- In the management module – to establish a resource centre housing the dossiers, records, collection of information on deacons for formation, training, research purposes.
- In the information module – to develop electronic platforms in the communication, dialogue and promotional media.

Revision of the Handbook for Permanent Deacons

22. The Handbook was introduced in October 2004 to list out the mechanism in the performance of the diaconate ministries and the related arrangements. A review was taken on the Insight Day taking into consideration of the experience gained over these years, and to incorporate the requirements according to the "Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons", the present and future

developments. The revised Handbook will give the Deacons and Candidates the guidelines to follow. The main subjects in the revision are related to the selection and formation arrangements, the implementation of continued learning in a structured module. The revised Handbook takes immediate effect on 8 September 2012.

The Global Chinese Permanent Deacons Sharing Workshop

23. The year 2013 marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of Permanent Diaconate of the Hong Kong Diocese. The Diocese has decided that opportunity is taken to review the progress of development and to seek the solidarity of our Chinese brother deacons serving in other parts of the world to share their witness lives and the organisation of the deacons communities. The proposed discussion subjects include:

- ✧ how to demonstrate the deacons' spirit in the communities
- ✧ the improvement of the marriage life through the diaconate ministry
- ✧ the bridging role linking the parish and community through the deacons
- ✧ through the diaconate ministry to bring self conversions
- ✧ To encounter God through the ministry and to encounter the presence of God in the ministry.

The Sharing Workshop will be held from 16 to 21 November 2013. A working group has been set up and liaison work has been carried out for the invitations. To mark this occasion, the commission intends to

- ✓ Ordain new permanent deacons on 16 November with all Chinese Permanent Deacons participating in the ceremony,
- ✓ Assign participating Chinese Permanent Deacons to all parishes to serve the Sunday Mass on 17 November as a sign of solidarity.

Appointment of the Assistant Formation Director

24. In view of the increase in the size of the deacons community, the complexities in the workload, and to follow up the implementation of the directives decided in the Insight Day as described in paragraph 21 above, the Commission has approved to appoint Deacon Edwin Ng to be the Assistant Formation Director to help, support and share the

duties of the Formation Director. Deacon Edwin Ng will also be appointed as the Executive Secretary of the Office of the Permanent Diaconate to carry out the administration of the Office.

Married Couples Spiritual Formation

25. Fr. Benedict Lam has since 2007 organized with the help of a number of Deacon/Candidate and their wives "family spiritual camps" aiming at promoting and sharing prayer life in families, to deepen their relationship with the Lord. The Fifth "Family Spiritual Camp" was held at Diocesan Retreat House at Stanley on 24 and 25 November 2012 with an attendance of 12 couples. The topic was "Faith in the Family"

26. Permanent Deacons being enriched in the basic spiritual life, after formation, can help develop spirituality in Catholic families as a response to one of the Diocesan Pastoral priorities i.e. the promotion of married couples spiritual formation. It is recommended that the deacons community will organize at deanery/parish level regular retreats for married couples on spiritual formation and reflections in collaboration with the Diocesan Pastoral Commission for Marriage as a promotion of Catholic family formation programme.

Focus learning.

27. The Commission arranges in the Permanent Deacons' monthly gathering a session for specific topic learning, visits to Religious Congregations, pastoral experience sharing, with a view to expanding their knowledge and vision:

Date	Speaker/Visit	Particulars
15 January	Rev. David Chan, Diocesan Procurator Rev. Dominic Chan, VG	Introducing the Diocesan Procuration Office Introducing Lectio divina
26 February	Visit to PIME	Understand their evangelization and pastoral work
25 March	Deacon Francis Tse	Sharing his pastoral ministries at St. Teresa Church, Houston, USA
22 April	Dr. Ying Chi Ho	Health talks, prevention of cancer
27 May	Daughters of Mary Help of Christians	Understand their evangelization and pastoral work

24 June	Sr. Cecilia Wong FDCC Episcopal Delegate	Personnel management, administration, learning and teaching in schools, the operation of the Incorporated Management Committee of schools
22 July	Deacons Kwan Chung Wah, Lam Sair Ling and Shiu Wai Leung and their wives	Sharing of the newly deacons and wives in their vocation encounters and their formation experience
23 September	Deacon Joseph Sung	Sharing on school pastoral work
25 November	Deacon Joseph Chow	Sharing of his change in the faith witness life
23 December	Deacon Edwin Ng	Sharing of the prison pastoral experience

Continual Learning

28. As required under Chapter 4 of the Directory for the Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons, a continuing formation system is introduced, encouraging deacons to undertake in a two year cycle professional development studies of an accumulated 25 hours. The subjects cover :

- (i) Enhancement of Leadership abilities: to require Permanent Deacons to participate in practical pastoral courses, theology and philosophy courses, personal growth and development course, enhancement of parish and resources management abilities, deepen their personal spirituality and encourage them to strengthen their commitment to the Church.
- (ii) Enhancement of Pastoral Effectiveness: to encourage Permanent Deacons to participate in spiritual formation to enrich their spirituality, to maintain solidarity with deacon communities in other places and affiliated church organizations through contacts and dialogue with a view to expanding their exposure and vision to serve for the formation of the faithful, the community and the Church more effectively.

29. The Permanent Deacons have to maintain these records for submission to the Formation Director for endorsement.

Annual Retreats

30. Retreats were held to deepen the spiritual formation of Deacons and Candidates:

Date	Target group	Venue	Spiritual Director	Topic
17-19 August	Deacons and wives	St. Paul's House of Prayer, Sheung Shui	Rev. Dominic Chan, VG	The spirituality of the laity, the historical development and future way forward of the diaconate ministry, in HK; the spirituality of permanent deacons and their continual learning needs

Formation Learning

31. The Commission arranges short term courses for Deacons, Candidates and Aspirants to strengthen their understanding on Church teachings, Church ministry, pastoral liturgies, prison pastoral ministry with a view to helping them in performing their ministries:

Subject	Date	Contents
The Church Social Teachings Dr. Anthony Lam	9 · 16 · 30 January	From Rerum Novarum (Leo XIII 1891) to Caritas in Veritate (Benedict XVI 2009) to understand the teachings in response to the signs of the time.
The Church Ministries Cardinal Joseph Zen SDB	6 · 13 · 20 · 27 February 5 · 12 · 19 March	To understand the Church ministries from the study of Lumen Gentium, the multi

<p>Rev. Stephen Chan OFM</p> <p>Ms Louise Wong</p>		<p>service targets of the diaconate in response of the needs of the community, coupled with the local cultural spirit in solidarity with priests to serve the deprived under the leadership of the Bishop</p>
<p>The Liturgical pastoral ministries</p> <p>Rev. Thomas Law</p>	<p>7 · 14 · 21 · 28 May</p> <p>11 · 18 · 25 June</p> <p>2 July (guided tour to churches)</p>	<p>Study of "The Missal" and "Do Not say Mass like this". To know about the vestments, the hymns, and the arrangements in liturgies. From the prayers used in the ordination of bishop, priest and deacons to understand the requirements to fulfill their ministries. The required personal character of "Elders"; to understand the faith nurtures culture. Guided tours to Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and St. Andrew Church</p>
<p>Prison Pastoral care</p> <p>Deacon Edwin Ng</p>	<p>10 · 17 · 24 September</p> <p>8 · 15 · 22 · 29 October</p> <p>5 · 12 · 19 November</p>	<p>To understand "Transference and Counter Transference", the care of the Church, the "Supervision" and rehabilitation" programmes, the Prison chaplain Handbook and regulations, the various lay prison evangelisation organizations and case studies</p>

Familiarization Visits

32. The Commission arranged for the Deacons and Candidates familiarization visits to diocesan organizations for a better understanding of their work. No visit was organized in view of the tight learning schedule in the year.

Promotion

33. All Deacons and Candidates will personally approach potential Catholics to encourage them to respond to the vocation of the Permanent Diaconate ministry. Arrangements have been made with the Holy Spirit Seminary for the promotion activity to the students of religious studies regularly. Promotion is also carried out in parishes where admissions, lectors and acolyte are administered.

Office of the Permanent Diaconate

34. For the development of the solidarity of the Deacons, the Diocese has previously allocated two classrooms at the former St. Jude's Primary School at North Point for use by Deacons in organizing gatherings and training purposes. The accommodation is called "The Deacons' Corner". Deacons, Candidates and their families will meet in the afternoon of the 4th Sunday of each month to practise Lectio Divina, pastoral experience sharing, Vesper practices and homilies. Approval has been given to allocate Room 697 at the Catholic Diocese Centre at Caine Road as the office accommodation of the Permanent Deacons. The North Point premises was returned in end June for parish use which is under heavy demand. The new venue was spacious with state of art facilities. The new premises will be used for office, meeting, training and resource centre purposes. The premises will also be made available to other institutions which have services related to the diaconate ministries for conducting meetings, training and gathering. All the renovation expenses are gratefully contributed by the Deacons community and benefactors.

35. Schools are the nursing ground for evangelization. The deacons and candidates are considered to be the most suitable resource persons to promote the evangelization because of their formation in

theology and catechism training to support the parish and school. The following programmes have commenced:

- regional catechism classes for teachers and staff
- to conduct religious liturgies and spiritual activities in schools

36. Permanent Deacons take part in the diocesan activities organized for the religious in the study days, celebrations and to conduct Benediction during the monthly gathering of the clergy. Deacons also conduct the prayer services at the Catholic cemeteries on the Chinese festivals remembering the departed relatives with the help of the parish bereavement groups.

37. The Hong Kong Deacons community maintains close contacts with other overseas Chinese Permanent Deacons through the electronic network for experience and information sharing. The activities and information of the Deacons are contained in the website <http://deacon.catholic.org.hk>

Review and Forward

38. The work of the Commission has been in progress as planned. The ministry of the diaconate has been developed fruitfully in the Hong Kong Diocese for over 15 years gaining the support from the Catholic and the public community. It is an encouraging sign that there is an increase in the number of applicants. The commission will follow up the directives as laid down in the Insight Day, to develop action plans and to implement accordingly.

Acknowledgement

39. We thank all clergy, religious, Spiritual Directors, members of the Commission, the organizations in the Diocese for their support, guidance and encouragement in the formation training, planning and guidance of the diaconate ministry. We also thank all Deacons, Candidates, Aspirants and their families for their dedication to promote Love and to witness Faith. May the Lord reward them fruitfully.

The Diocesan Commission of Permanent Diaconate of Hong Kong

31 December 2012

Hong Kong

Appendix I – List of appointments, parish pastoral work and community services

Appendix II – Prayer for the Permanent Deacons

Appendix I

List of Appointments, Parish pastoral work and Community services 2012

Permanent Deacons	Parish	Community service	Diocesan Organisations
Peter Lo	retired		
Karl Tsang	Holy Redeemer Church	Hospital pastoral care	
Paul Yeow	St. Jude's Church	Elderly	
Joseph Yung	retired		
Joseph Sung	Annunciation Church	Labour, school pastoral service	Diocesan Commission for the Permanent Diaconate, Hong Kong Catholic Commission for Labour Affairs, Commission for the

			ongoing formation of the clergy
Joseph Chow	St. John the Baptist Church	Reception of visiting religious from Mainland	
Edwin Ng	Epiphany Church	Prison pastoral service	
Francis Cheung	Pastoral work of the Dominican Order		
Peter Leung	St. Teresa's Church	Hospital Pastoral Care, Reception of visiting religious from Mainland	Diocesan Commission for Hospital Pastoral Care, Diocesan Ecumenical Commission, Hong Kong Catholic Commission for Labour Affairs, Spiritual Director of Catholic Scouts
Francis Fung	Rosary Church, Kowloon	Bereavement pastoral service	Diocesan Board of Catholic Cemeteries, Diocesan Commission for Interreligious Dialogue
William Li	Our Lady of Lourdes Church	Marriage Pastoral Care	Diocesan Pastoral Commission for Marriage and the Family(Chairman)
Bernard Tang	St. Margaret's Church	Elderly	Assistant to the Airport Chaplain
Bosco Wong	Overseas study		
Stephen Kwok	Mother of Good Counsel Church	Liturgy	Diocesan Liturgy Commission
Kwan Chung Wah Nestor	Star of the Sea Church	Prison pastoral service, Seamen pastoral service	Diocesan Commission for Pastoral Services to the Disabled, Diocesan Commission for Hospital Pastoral care
Paul Shiu	St. Andrew Church	Labour	

Lam Sair Ling Fraustus	Holy Cross Church	School pastoral care	Diocesan Building and Development Commission
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Candidates

Peter Ho	Our Lady of the Rosary Church		Diocesan Ecumenical Commission,
Louis Wong	St. Jude's Church	Marriage and family	
Ip Wai Wing	Mary, Help of Christians Church	School pastoral care, hospital pastoral care	Diocesan Building and Development Commission
Chu Nim Cho Charles	St. Teresa Church	Prison pastoral services	
Au Kar Wai Andrew	Catholic Cathedral	Prison pastoral service	Diocesan Lenten Organising Committee, Hong Kong Catholic Education Development Committee
Kwong Kwok Chuen Cosmas	St. Thomas the Apostle Church		Hong Kong Catholic Commission for Labour Affairs,
Wong King Shing Peter	Cosmas and Damain Church		
Kwok Chi Keung Alexander	Holy Redeemer Church		
Sinn Yiu Fat Anthony	St. Joseph' s Church (Kowloon)		

Appendix II

Prayer for Permanent Deacons

Almighty and Eternal God,

You have chosen our Permanent Deacons to assist the Bishops and their community of priests to evangelize, to participate in Christ's sacrifice and to foster love and care through their ministries.

May You send the Holy Spirit upon them so they can fulfill their mission loyally, particularly in preaching what they believe, to teach what they believe, and to live in the way they teach.

○ Lord, may they possess all the virtues as in the Gospels, to love without fear, to care for the deprived, to live with honour, to preserve with simplicity and to cooperate with obedience.

May they be totally loyal to the Church, to witness their faith with a pure heart, to be a fervent follower of the Son of God in this temporal life, and to live and reign with you in the day to come.