

For starters, no. I am not a priest, I am a deacon. Only those ordained to the Order of Christ the Priest can consecrate the precious body and blood during the Mass. There are three distinct orders in the Sacrament of Holy Orders: deacon, priest and bishop. Priests and bishops are “ordered,” or conformed to, Christ the Priest; the deacon is ordered to Christ the Servant, who came to serve, not to be served.

Priests and bishops fulfill all of the priestly duties we have come to witness in our everyday lives as Catholic faithful: baptism, reconciliation, Mass, marriage, confirmation, anointing, blessings, etc.

You will begin to notice that when the deacon is present at Mass, he has specific duties. It is proper for the deacon to proclaim the Gospel; he can preach a homily, read the prayers of the faithful, assist during the Liturgy of the Eucharist by preparing the Altar, and elevating the Chalice during the Eucharistic prayer. As an Ordinary Minister, he assists with the distribution of Holy Communion, and afterward purifies the vessels.

What people don't usually see is the service a deacon brings to his community. Deacons are asked to help those in need, bring Viaticum to the dying, visit those who are in nursing homes, minister to those who are imprisoned,

So...Can You Say Mass?

What is a deacon? And just what do they do?

Deacons are ordained to serve by assisting the priest and bishop at the altar, baptizing children, witnessing marriages outside of Mass, offering blessings, performing Benediction during Adoration, presiding over funeral services outside of Mass, leading public prayer services, and serving the needs of the community.

When people see the deacon assisting during Mass, it can be difficult to see a difference in the way they are vested, or dressed. Both the priest and the deacon wears a stole under their vestments; the priest wears his stole with both ends coming down in front; the deacon's stole drapes across his left shoulder, coming together at his right hip. On top of the stole, a priest wears a Chasuble; a deacon wears a Dalmatic. A Dalmatic has sleeves; both the stole and the dalmatic are designed so the vestment doesn't get in the way of the deacon's work or service.

and twice daily pray the Liturgy of the Hours for the Universal Church. However, not every deacon has the same type of service or ministry. While in formation, I spent each semester involved in different pastoral projects to identify my charisms, or gifts of service. As my diaconate unfolds and matures, Christ will direct my hands to where He wants me to serve. Together, with our parish family, I hope and pray we continue the incredible work God has put before us; in the process, we can grow closer to Christ our Savior.

Thank you for your generous prayers and support of me and Wendy through our 5+ years of formation. If you have questions, I would love to hear from you.

Deacon Roger Scholbrock
563-542-5519