

Charism Formation for Permanent Deacons

Help your deacons build a Holy Spirit-led vision for their service to the Church.

Who it's for

Deacons in active ministry, aspirants and candidates in formation, and wives — who we'd encourage you to include. This formation is valuable for all Catholics.

Why this formation is worth it

- A deacon who knows his charisms can be clear about what he can provide and what will need to come from someone else.
- Knowing a deacon's charisms can helpfully inform decisions about placement and long-term ministry assignments.
- Deacons who understand their own charisms are primed and ready to help lay people in their communities come to know their own charisms as well.

Using this for formation hours

The National Directory asks each diocese to set its own annual minimum for deacons in active ministry; the dioceses that publish theirs often land between 24 and 30 hours a year. A full day covers a helpful share of that. We are happy to document hours in whatever form your diaconate office uses.

What the day covers

1. **Identity comes first.** We start with what we believe about ourselves, God, and the relationship between us. This then leads into a deeper conversation about how this identity impacts how we live service and mission in our lives, and why clarity in this area has to come first.
2. **What a charism is.** Then we'll get into the theology of grace, charisms, and how these gifts differ from talents and from the Gifts of the Spirit discussed in sacramental prep. Everything is grounded in Scripture, Vatican II, and the Catechism, with easy-to-understand framing.
3. **The twenty-four charisms.** A walk through each charism on our list — both hallmarks of the gift and what it looks like in daily life.
4. **What happens next.** We end by breaking open how discernment works, starting with a most-likely list, not a definitive answer. We'll explain how to create test scenarios, the steps of the process, how long to take, and what commitment means.

What the full day adds

- **Time to reflect on identity.** A guided worksheet and time to pray before charisms are introduced, so people have processed where they are at personally in this aspect of their spiritual development.
- **"Is this you?" for all twenty-four charisms.** Three discernment questions per charism — the things we always ask when we have someone in front of us discerning a certain charism. These questions are often very clarifying and have people smiling knowingly across the table at each other.
- **Charism assessment time built in.** Everyone takes the assessment in the room on a personal device, with the presenter there to answer questions while they do.

- **Small-group discussion.** Thirty to forty-five minutes of feedback from peers about what gifts they see in each other. At many events, this is what really changes things for people.
- **All three stages of identity.** The full walkthrough — the work, the struggles, the virtues, and what discernment looks like at each stage. This foundational information is key to approaching discernment well, but it's too in-depth to make time for in the half-day workshop.
- **A finished plan.** Discernment worksheet time built in, so everyone leaves with a plan to move into commitment.

Format and cost

Recommended for this room: full day. We strongly recommend the full day format. The three-stage identity section is very helpful for understanding how you have approached service historically and where God is leading you next. The additional time also leaves space for questions, group discussions, and deeper moments of prayer.

WHAT	COST
Half day — roughly three hours	\$1,500
Full day	\$1,800
Travel	at cost
Charism assessment, per person	\$6.99

Assessments are billed after the day for the people who actually took one. No estimate of attendance, no block purchased in advance. If your group has already taken the assessment, that line is zero.

What people leave with

Their own results, a most-likely list of three or four charisms to test, and a plan for finishing discernment — so the day has somewhere to go.

A charism assessment is a starting point rather than a verdict — it names what someone most likely carries, and using it is how they find out.

Many Parts Ministries

To talk through a date: manypartsministries.com/diocese-booking-page
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