

*The Spiritual Journey of Richard Dubicki  
To be ordained a Permanent Deacon of the Archdiocese of Washington  
At the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception  
By Archbishop Donald Wuerl on June 26, 2010*



**Background:**

I was born and raised in east Baltimore, the youngest of five children (3 boys & 2 girls). We attended public school and learned the faith in Sunday school from religious sisters and brothers at St. Patrick's Church.

My parents, Anthony and Mildred, did not finish high school and insisted that we get a good education, including college. As a teenager, I wondered what I would do in life. I considered being an astronaut, pilot, scientist, teacher and, very briefly, a priest. I received my degree in mechanical engineering from Johns Hopkins University and a commission as an officer in the U.S. Army Reserve. I pursued a civilian career in Federal civil service as an engineer and completed my military obligation.

My future wife, Regina, moved to my neighborhood while I was in high school. After a courtship of almost 6 years we were married in 1972. (October will be our 38th wedding anniversary.) Our family grew as our marriage was blessed with three children – Jennifer, Steven and Timothy.



My career in construction, energy management and environmental mitigation took me to many interesting places. When we returned home from an overseas assignment, we settled in Waldorf in 1989 and joined St. Peter's parish. Regina and I serve the parish as catechists and coordinators of the Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion.

Since my retirement in 2007, I've focused on my studies for the diaconate and helping Regina with her business of distributing the Washington Post. I'm a volunteer counselor at the Forestville Pregnancy Center located in Marlow Heights and find time for my hobbies of reading, gardening, cooking and baking.

## **My Journey to Ordination:**

“Preach the gospel always. If necessary use words”  
– attributed to St Francis of Assisi

My journey to ordination has been slow and gradual. The priests and sisters of St. Peter’s have been role models of religious life. Two other people played important roles – Regina and Deacon Charles Wilson. The first time I met a permanent deacon was here at St. Peter. About 1990, I started thinking about the diaconate as I saw Deacon Wilson serve at the altar and proclaim the Word of God. I was not spiritually ready.

Regina’s example of faith, devotion, prayer and service were invaluable in helping my faith come alive. She has been a catechist for more than 40 years. As I helped her, I listened as she taught the children and remembered what the nuns had taught me long ago. She was the first to become an Extra Ordinary Minister of Holy Communion at our previous parish; I became one when we joined St. Peter’s. She encouraged me to take courses with her to continue learning about the faith; we became certified catechists and completed the Education for Parish Service program together.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,  
“Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?”  
“Here I am:” I said; “send me!” - Isaiah 6:8

As I learned more about our rich Catholic faith and heritage, my prayer life developed and expanded. I felt a stronger calling to do more for our parish, Church, and community. Several events prompted me to respond to this call to serve. One was the clergy sex abuse scandal. Becoming a deacon was a way for me to serve God and others and to help the Church and our good priests in a time of trouble.

## **The Permanent Diaconate Formation Program:**

The formation program lasted almost five years. A large part consisted of classroom instruction (two evenings a week) covering topics such as scripture, church history, theology, sacraments, spirituality and prayer. During the summer, we completed assignments in pastoral care (visiting the sick, pro-life activities) and social justice activities (helping the homeless, caring for poor and disabled). During this last year we’ve engaged in practical exercises to prepare for our diaconal duties – marriage preparation, baptisms, funerals, the Mass and homiletics (preaching). Regina has been by my side throughout the formation period and attended all the classroom and summer activities.

## **Thoughts on ordination:**

Regina and I started this journey five years ago. God willing, on June 26, all 20 of us candidates will be ordained by Archbishop Wuerl. Each of us will receive two assignments – a parish assignment and a social justice/pastoral care assignment.

Our pastors (Msgr. Pennington & Msgr. Parent), the priests, staff and parishioners of St. Peter’s have supported and encouraged me during my formation period. I will always be thankful and ask that everyone continue to pray for me, my family and my ministry.