

Deacon John Patrick “Pat” Derrington



On Sunday, August 9, 2009, Pat Derrington was among six men from our diocese who were ordained to the permanent diaconate at St. Joseph's Church in Rice Lake. He is the third parishioner at Immaculate Conception to be ordained to the permanent diaconate.

Pat, and his wife Jane, moved to Wisconsin about 15 years ago from St. Mary's Parish in Bellevue, Nebraska. There were two deacons in that parish that played a part in his recognizing the call to service. Pat says that he had been in the Air Force with the two deacons prior to their ordination. Their ministry, following their military service, demonstrated the different avenues for service. They were the visible examples of serving that gave Pat someone to see and to relate to in regards to the calling he was feeling in his own life. Even after Pat and Jane moved to Wisconsin, Pat continued to experience the call to respond. He finally responded to the call about 4-1/2 years ago. Pat found that the classes helped him to appreciate his Catholic heritage even more than before. He began to understand the depth of our Tradition and Church teachings. Through the four-year process, Pat was able to develop a bond with the other men and their wives who were in the classes.

Although there were many significant aspects of his ordination, Pat was especially touched by the laying on of hands by Bishop Peter Christensen. This being an unbroken connection with the apostles laying hands on the first deacons really hit home for Pat. The anticipation of the ordination did not prepare him for the feelings he experienced during the actual ceremony. He would encourage other men in the parish to remain open to the possibility of the permanent diaconate, remembering the Spirit often works in small ways to prompt us to make changes in our lives.

Pat and Jane, married 39 years, have four grown children and two grandchildren. Pat says that attending classes with Jane strengthened their relationship as well as their spirituality.