



**MOST REVEREND JOSEPH R. KOPACZ, D.D., PH.D.**  
CATHOLIC DIOCESE of JACKSON

January 22, 2020

May the blessings of our Lord be with you on this feast of St. Vincent of Saragossa, Deacon and Martyr. St. Vincent, like his counterpart in Rome, St. Lawrence, refused to submit to the pagan Roman Empire. His martyrdom became fertile soil for the burgeoning church in the Iberian Peninsula. It is on this feast day that I express and give thanks to God for the great gift of the Order of Deacon and their service to the Diocese of Jackson, for their life and ministry, and for their wives and families. With this letter, and on the date the Church honors St. Vincent the Deacon, I promulgate this Policy Manual for the Formation, Life, and Ministry of the Permanent Diaconate in the Diocese of Jackson, MS.

This is a “living” document, subject to change and improvement as frequently as necessary within the parameters of the needs of the Diocese of Jackson and the Community of Deacons. Moreover, this document is consistent with the provisions of the *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States*, promulgated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops on December 26, 2009, the Feast Day of St. Stephen.

I thank the Office of the Permanent Diaconate, the Deacon Vocations Board, Office of the Vicar General, and the Chancellor for their continued support of and ministerial collaboration with the Ministry of Deacon. By the Grace of God, I am grateful to our Permanent Deacons, ordained to the preeminent order of service, for their faithfulness, dedications, and sincerity with which they consistently perform their freely chosen ministries.

It is in that spirit of gratitude that I promulgate this document today, on the feast of St. Vincent of Saragossa, Deacon and Martyr, 22 January 2020.

Sincerely yours in Christ the Lord,

Most Reverend Joseph R. Kopacz  
Bishop of Jackson

Mary Woodward  
Chancellor

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