

[Back to regular view](#) • [Print this page](#)

Church ordains nine as deacons

(http://www.post-trib.com/news/1610811_deacons0607.article)

June 7, 2009

By Michael Gonzalez , Post-Tribune correspondent

GARY -- With all of the pomp and pageantry the Cathedral of the Holy Angels could unfurl before them, nine area men became ordained deacons -- a step before priesthood for one of them -- before hundreds of family members and guests Saturday.

The newly ordained deacons became Roman Catholic clergy who can now administer sacraments, such as Baptism, Communion and last rites, among other duties.

Each man is married, except for Ted Mauch, who took a vow of celibacy and is one year from being ordained a priest, and they all completed at least six years of training. Their commitment may become more demanding now than ever, said the Most Rev. Dale Melczek, bishop and head of the diocese.

"I assigned each of them to a parish, and they are charged with leading parishioners to service, reaching out to the poor, the needy, the sick and lonely," he said. "But the main emphasis is on service and getting parishioners to work with them to serve people in need."

Wearing brightly plumed hats and colorful

Guests sat beneath towering stained-glass windows, many etched in honor of families or as memorials, which lined the long walls of the cathedral.

"It just made me realize how important it is to the men who became deacons today," said Emily Hawkins, 26, standing beside her father and newly ordained deacon, Christopher Hawkins, 51, of LaPorte.

"It was somewhat overwhelming, at times, and emotional to see the support these men receive."

The ordination means taking his commitment to the Roman Catholic church to a higher level, said Christopher Hawkins, who was assigned to St. Peter Church in LaPorte.

"I guess we haven't realized it yet, but I'm out there for the people," he said. "All of a sudden, my scope of responsibility has been broadened."

Martin Brown, an employee with the Gary Sanitary District, who calls Holy Angels his home church, though he has been assigned to St. Casimir in Hammond, said the training was rigorous. The men studied lay ministry, Christology, and the Old and New Testaments.

"The training was really a little bit of everything," said Brown, who will also minister to nursing homes and youth centers. "It's like Samuel answering the call and saying 'Here I am Lord.' "

Affiliates: [YourSeason.com](#) | [RogerEbert.com](#) | [SearchChicago - Autos](#) | [SearchChicago - Degrees](#) | [SearchChicago - Homes](#) | [Local Area Jobs](#) | [Centerstage](#) | [North Shore Magazine](#)
© Copyright 2009 Digital Chicago, Inc. | [Terms of Use](#) • [Privacy Policy](#) • [Submission Guidelines](#)