



A Mini Retreat for Yourself or in a Group
35-40 minutes • Designed for Deacons

The Spirituality of Springtime

Leader: As the earth awakens from winter's quiet and new shoots break through the soil, we, as deacons, are invited to a similar rhythm of renewal within our hearts and ministries. "The Spirituality of Springtime" is a call to step away from the demands of service, creating a sacred space to reflect, renew, and rejoice, just as nature herself is transformed.

Spring mirrors the life of a deacon. Just as cold yields to warmth and barren branches bear blossoms, our ministries flourish when we are renewed in spirit. The season calls us to examine our hearts, sweep away spiritual complacency, and allow the Holy Spirit to refresh us, so that we may serve God and our people with renewed energy and love.

This mini retreat draws on the wisdom of the Church, Sacred Scripture, and exercises tailored to the diaconate, helping us embrace the renewal Christ offers. May this retreat strengthen our vocation and our witness.

All: Gracious and ever-living God, as spring brings life to the earth, we come before You as deacons, ministers of Your Word and servants of Your people, with hearts ready for renewal. Till the soil of our souls, remove the burdens and weariness of ministry, and plant seeds of humility, courage, and compassion that we may serve with joy.

Holy Spirit, sweep through our hearts. Clear what is lifeless, strengthen our faith, and guide our diaconal ministries. Renew our love for Christ and for those entrusted to our care. May Your grace flow through us to parishioners, families, and the wider Church.

Lord Jesus, walk beside us in our service as deacons. Cleanse and refresh us and breathe into us the energy to minister faithfully. May this time of retreat deepen our diaconal spirit, so that renewed, we may proclaim Your resurrection in every word and action. Amen.

Preparing for Renewal

Reader 1: To begin, let us acknowledge our hearts yearning for renewal. As the Catechism reminds us, "Conversion is first of all a work of the grace of God who makes our hearts return to him" (CCC 1432).

Find a quiet space. Light a candle, symbolizing Christ as the Light of the World. In silence, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal areas in your life and ministry needing spring cleaning—habits, burdens, or attitudes that limit your effectiveness in service to God's people.

Read, Meditate and Pray:

- **Read:** Psalm 51 ("Create in me a clean heart, O God")
- **Meditate:** Where am I holding on to resentments, fatigue, or discouragement that hinder my ministry?
- **Pray:** (Pray silently these following words)

Holy and loving God, You who call forth life from dust, we come with hearts seeking renewal. Sweep through the corners of our spirit, renewing our strength to serve.

Where there is weariness, breathe in Your power. Where old wounds linger, pour the oil of Your mercy. Open our eyes to Your grace, shaping us to serve parishioners, families, and the wider Church faithfully.

As we surrender, fill every empty space with Your peace that restores and overflows. Guide our thoughts, words, and actions, so our ministry reflects Your resurrection light.

Lord Jesus, through Your cross and resurrection, we are offered new beginnings. Renew us for service and hold us close as we step forward in love and humility. Amen.

Meditate and Journal

Like a diligent housekeeper of soul and service, take inventory using the Ignatian Examen:

- Where have I seen God's presence in my diaconal ministry today?
- Where have I resisted serving with grace or patience?
- What must I release to better serve my parish, diocese, and God?

Write freely on the lined paper at the end of this retreat, letting the Spirit guide your reflections.

The Cleaning—Confession and Forgiveness

Reader 2: No spiritual spring cleaning is complete without the blessed healing of reconciliation. The Sacrament restores the beauty of our soul, enabling us to minister with renewed joy (St. John Chrysostom). Prepare to receive the sacrament soon. Keep the following as your plan:

- **Prepare:** Examine your conscience with the Ten Commandments or Beatitudes.
- **Confess:** Approach this sacrament with humility, hope and healing.
- **Rejoice:** Receive absolution and the freedom and peace Christ offers.

Meditate on: Forgiveness of others, yourself and your internal spring cleaning. Strengthens your ministry. Clean out the clutter. Mend what is broken. Breathe in peace.

- Is there someone you need to forgive in parish life, or yourself for past mistakes?
- Reflect on Jesus' words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).
- Write a letter (even if you never send it) of forgiveness or speak words of mercy aloud. Let God cleanse and restore your heart, making room for fruitful service.

Cultivating New Growth

Reader 3: Planting Seeds of Virtue — After clearing out the old, cultivate the new. Your soul, like tilled soil, is ready for the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

- Choose a virtue to grow this spring season in your life of diaconal ministry.
- Establish a simple spiritual practice: daily gratitude, acts of kindness, or Scripture meditation, especially oriented toward serving others.

Nourishing Yourself with the Sacraments — Grace nourishes like a fresh spring rain. Commit to Mass, Eucharist, and, if possible, Adoration. Let the living Word and Sacraments of God strengthen you to serve with compassion, wisdom and transformation.

Sharing the Fruits—A Mission of Joy

Reader 4: Renewed for Others — The fruit of this retreat is meant to be shared. Ask God to show you whom you can serve, encourage, or bring hope to this spring season. As deacons, we live out the Resurrection promise by serving in parish and diocesan ministries, embodying Christ's love in tangible ways.

