

Thank you for welcoming me into your midst. Most of you know Bishop XYZ assigned me to St. Somebody's as a deacon, your very first deacon. I was called to this ordained ministry at St. Andrew's in Des Moines where I was lucky enough to watch and work with a deacon in action for several years before I was aware of my own call.

I bet a lot of you are wondering what I'm here for. My duties will fall into two big categories.

AT EUCHARIST:

If you read the italics (rubrics) in the Book of Common Prayer, you'll see that several parts of the Eucharist are assigned to the deacon. In my mind there are two biggies.

② ***Proclaim the Gospel:*** I will do this in two ways, reading the Gospel lesson in the church and by assisting you as ***we*** proclaim the Gospel to the world. More about that second part later.

② ***Dismiss you, the congregation*** to “go forth in the name of Christ.”

The deacon also gets to begin the confession, set the table for Eucharist, and help distribute the elements during communion. I also stand ready to assist with Prayers of the People; you seem to have a good crew of readers, so I'll be making sure that St. Somebody's prayer list is accurate and up to date. If you have a request, contact me.

IN THE WORLD:

The real “work” I've come here to do is assist with St. Somebody's ministry to the world. There are two reasons to minister to the world. On a somewhat secular level, there is a growing body of evidence that shows that growing churches are ministering churches. More importantly, this is the work of Jesus: he fed the hungry, he comforted the sorrowful, he clothed the naked, and he healed the sick. Just to be clear: I'm here to ***help*** you do the ministries ***you*** want to do.

I know you are already preparing a meal once a month for the homeless cafe, that you collect coats, hats, and mittens for local school children in need, and send an annual special offering to a hospital in Nigeria. I hope you are all very proud of these great ministries. They are all part of proclaiming the Gospel to the world. These activities are the work of Jesus and part of ***being*** the Good News.

In the weeks ahead, I'll be happy to pitch in with your existing ministries. I'm eager to see how you organize each of them and talk about whether and how we can involve more parishioners in them. I'll also be available to talk about additional ministries that you might be interested in starting. We can do coffee, meet at the church, or I'll come to your house.

Let's get busy and be Jesus to the world,
Eve