

## My Journey toward Ordination to the Diaconate

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In October 2006, I was assigned to St. Albans Church for a period of discernment and evaluation of my call to be a vocational deacon. The ministry of a deacon is focused from the door of the church out into the world to lead others in outreach ministry. In keeping with that focus, I was asked to find an outreach project as part of my journey. It took me a couple of months to find a suitable one, however, as I live in Newark and was unfamiliar with the non-profit agencies in the Brandywine Hundred section of Wilmington where St. Albans is located.

I was pointed in the direction of the Claymont Community Center to see if there was a need for volunteers in any of its programs. I learned that their Food Closet was in need of volunteers, and I agreed to work one afternoon the following week in order to get some hands-on experience. This seemed to be an especially fitting ministry, since the first deacons (mentioned in Acts 6) were called to provide food to the Greek widows.

The following Sunday I announced in church my intention to visit the Food Closet, and several parishioners agreed to join me. After the first afternoon, we were excited by our work at the Food



At the Food Closet: Sheila Sharpe, Andrea Davis, and Joan Lynch.

Closet and the project has continued to grow and blossom over the last two years. We started working just one afternoon each week and have gradually expanded our coverage to three or four per week.

The parish has also found other ways to give to the Food Closet. Those who are unable to volunteer in person have been very generous in donating non-perishable food items and giving money for the project. The vestry of St. Albans has also provided regular financial support. I have been overwhelmed by the parish's engagement with this project, and I thank God for the generous donations of time, talent, and treasure.

During my two years at St. Albans I have also been involved in many other aspects of parish life. I am a member

of the Pastoral Care Committee, Bible Study Group, serve as a Eucharistic Minister, and occasionally sing in the choir. I have been invited to preach several times, but generally my role at worship is like the rest of the laity.

While most postulants serve in their home parish during this time of preparation, it has been a wonderful growth experience for me to be in a new congregation. The people of St. Albans are most supportive of my journey and of my outreach project – I never cease to be amazed at the amount of food that is donated each week! No matter where the future may take me, I know that I have been blessed to be welcomed so warmly into the St. Albans family.

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