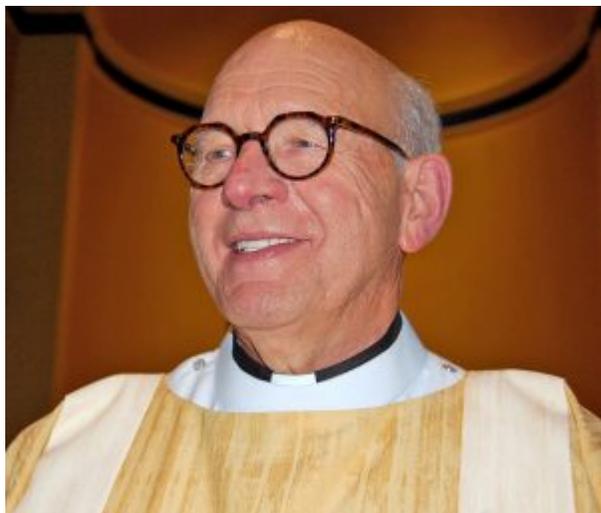


Ex-Mountie once battled terrorism, now among 9 new deacons in Regina



Deacon Harper Boucher Frank Flegel, special to Grandin Media

He was once a special representative for Interpol at the United Nations, working with countries developing anti-terrorism policies. Now he is Deacon Harper Boucher of the Archdiocese of Regina.

"I'm feeling very humbled, I'm feeling very blessed by the Lord. All night I could feel the Holy Spirit working within me. It's something I was really looking forward to," said Boucher, a provincial court judge and a 40-year veteran of the RCMP, following his June 15th ordination to the permanent diaconate.

"I am at a stage in my life where I have a lot of experience, I think I have a lot to contribute. Perhaps I will develop a program for the elderly in my parish."

Boucher's career as a Mountie took him to postings across Canada, including one as commanding officer of Depot Division, the RCMP training facility in Regina. The United Nations post was his last before retirement from policing and his appointment to Saskatchewan's Provincial Court.

Boucher's wife of 41 years, Roseanne, was excited after the ordination, saying, "I am very, very happy for Harper and all the deacons, that they did accomplish something for which they worked very, very hard."

Boucher was one of nine men ordained by Regina Archbishop Donald Bolen. They

are the first cohort of permanent deacons in the Archdiocese. They range in age from 45 to 69 and come from a variety of backgrounds. Eight are married and one lost his wife to illness just a few months prior to the start of the diaconate program.



Archbishop Donald Bolen blessing the nine candidates during their ordination June 15, 2018 in Regina, Sask. Frank Flegel, special to Grandin Media

Their careers vary from retired farmers and RCMP officers to a teacher, two pastoral assistants and another worked as a business product developer.

All felt a calling to do more to serve the Church beyond their volunteer and lay ministry activities.

“I was very excited, joyful and thankful for the Holy Spirit. I was praying I was worthy,” said Norbert Gaudet, a retired French teacher from Raymore, a town about 100 kilometres north of Regina.

The ordination ceremony, held at Holy Rosary Cathedral, was the culmination of a program to expand the permanent diaconate that began in September 2014 with the late Archbishop Daniel Bohan.

“He felt the need for an explicit diaconate ministry in order for the Church to be fully the Church,” Archbishop Bolen said during the ceremony.

“He wanted to leave us something concrete, something transformative, when he was gone. Today, we trust that in the power of the Holy Spirit, Bishop Dan is celebrating with us.”

Candidates for the diaconate attended 10 formation weekends annually over four years. Wives were encouraged to accompany their husbands and most did. They also participated in the ordination ceremony by promising to support their husbands in their ministry and by assisting with their vestments.



The newly ordained Permanent Deacons are the first cohort of permanent deacons in the Archdiocese of Regina. They range in age from 45 to 69 and come from a variety of backgrounds

– *Frank Flegel is a freelance writer based in Regina. He was a reporter for the Prairie Messenger from 1997 until the newspaper's closure this year.*