



## Permanent Deacons in the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings Wearing Clerical Shirt with a Roman Collar

Diocese of Great Falls-Billings

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In an effort to help permanent deacons in the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings become more easily identified as they minister, Bishop Michael Warfel has given all permanent deacons the option to wear the clerical shirt and Roman collar when actively engaged in diaconal ministry. The clerical shirt will be a **GRAY** color. It may be short sleeve or long sleeve. The clerical shirt is to have the Deacon Cross on it, which can be embroidered or a pin. This permission is effective October 1, 2019.

The Diocese has adopted guidelines for permitting deacons to wear clerical attire when they are exercising their ministry in an official capacity. This is especially true of deacons in Prison Ministry and Hospital Ministry but is not limited only to those times. It may be used in teaching classes for a Parish; meeting with parishioners on parish grounds; and meeting with committees and organizations of the Parish. The clerical shirt may also be used for the celebration of Mass, the Sacraments and Sacramental.

There are times when the clerical shirt is not permissible. This includes times when not directly engaged in ministry for the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings or one of its Parishes; any social function even if the social function is held at or sponsored by a parish and/or the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings; or while working or volunteering for any other organization and not carrying out deacon duties even if that organization has a relationship with the Diocese of Great Falls-Billings.

Permanent Deacons on suspension or who have had their faculties removed or restricted may not wear the clerical shirt.

The Diocese of Great Falls-Billings provides these guidelines to all Permanent Deacons in the Diocese and are important to be read with Canon 284, *Clerics are to wear suitable ecclesiastical garb in accord with the norms issued by the conference of bishops and in accord with legitimate local custom*. It is important to note that the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops specifies that Permanent Deacons should resemble the faithful in dress and matters of lifestyle. Each diocesan bishop should, however, determine and promulgate any exceptions to this law, as well as specify the appropriate clerical attire to be worn.

Please contact the Director of Deacons, Deacon Pete Woelkers (406) 727-6683 or email [pwoelkers@diocesegfb.org](mailto:pwoelkers@diocesegfb.org) for any clarification or comments.

Promulgated by:  
Bishop Michael W. Warfel  
October 1, 2019