

HCHC Diaconate Program Success



“...then let them serve as Deacons...” 1 Tim 3:10. In July, the summer session of the Diaconate Program took place on the campus of Hellenic College Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology (HCHC) and was met with resounding success. This summer at HCHC, 32 candidates in their first, second, or third year of the program were welcomed to campus for educational instruction, spiritual growth, and fellowship. The program was excited to welcome the V. Rev. Archimandrite Bartholomew Mercado as our Faculty Advisor as Dr. James Skedros took over the position of Interim Dean of the School of Theology. During the summer session, candidates took courses in Orthodox Theology, Sacraments of the Church, Scripture, Byzantine Music, and Teleturgics.

As the Diaconate Program has produced over 60 deacons, it has also grown in improvements. This year the program added a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) course where candidates will earn one unit of credit towards chaplaincy and three graduate credits. More importantly, they will receive the training to better minister to the faithful in their communities and extend the pastoral reach of the priests.

The Diaconate Program is thriving due to support from the Holy Eparchial Synod, clergy mentors, parish communities, the HCHC faculty and staff, and those who are called to a greater understanding of Orthodox Theology and desire to serve liturgically and pastorally in the Holy Church of Christ. The Holy Eparchial Synod

established the program in 2006, which placed its direction under the faculty of Holy Cross. It brings together candidates from throughout the Archdiocese who have a heart of service. Candidates for the program are often found assisting with a variety of parish ministries including at the chant stand, in the altar, serving on the parish council, teaching Sunday school, and ministering to the many needs of the community at the direction of their parish priests. After a rigorous process, with the blessing of their local hierarch, and with their parish priest's support and encouragement, they begin the journey to acquiring theological and practical skills at Holy Cross Greek Orthodox School of Theology with the ultimate goal of ordination to the Holy Diaconate after their successful completion of the program and approval from the Archdiocese.

The program always looks to improve so that it may best serve the needs of our Sacred Archdiocese and its devout faithful.

For more information about the Diaconate Program, please visit the website: <https://www.hchc.edu/certificate-programs/diaconate-program/>, or contact Rev. Deacon John Wise: [\[email protected\]](#).

Photos: Oksana Karle

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