

# Towards the implementation of the 2024 Provincial Synod resolution on the Diaconate

Certain canon law related requirements that will influence the implementation process:

## Representation of Permanent Deacons on Provincial Standing Committee

There was great deal of confusion from 2015 onwards on what representation the Permanent (Distinctive) Diaconate would have on the Provincial Standing Committee.

Canon 43 did clarify this:

### 3(a)(ii) Diaconate Representation

The Metropolitan shall, after due consideration, nominate two representatives of the permanent diaconate to Provincial Standing Committee who shall have been representatives thereof at the previous session of Provincial Synod (or who are permanent deacons in any diocese of the Province should there have been no such representatives at the said previous session of Provincial Synod). These nominated representatives shall have all the rights and privileges of elected representatives, including the power to vote.

Other sections of the Canon 43 clearly state that other Anglican organisations listed do not have a vote.

However the new (proposed?/approved?) PSC constitution in Section 7 listed in 1 (e) Two Permanent Deacons nominated by the Metropolitan, and in 1 (f) to (l) single representatives from a number of current Anglican organisations.

It then states that none, from 1 (e) to (l), of these will have a vote. We believe that this is in error and that it should read 1 (f) to (l), given that the deacon representatives were previously correctly included as full representatives with a vote (presumably as one of the houses of clergy – the bishops and priests and laity are already very fully represented with full voting powers).

Other sections of the Canon 43 clearly state that the other organisations listed do not have a vote.

Clearly, this anomaly needs to be cleared up. If the two deacons are there as representatives of the diaconate, they should have a vote. If they are there as simply representing an organisation or guild (the Fellowship of Deacons) then that is a different matter and it is unclear why they should get two representatives. It seems probable that the origins of this problem was simply a numbering error, (e) being incorrectly included in the list of organisations (f to l).

## Representation of Permanent Deacons at Provincial Synod

Currently there appears to be no reference in the Canon on Provincial Synod (see 2(a) and (b)) to representation of distinctive deacons, though Canon 43, 3(a)(ii) Diaconate Representation [on PSC] implies that there is, as seen where it says :

The Metropolitan shall, after due consideration, nominate two representatives of the permanent diaconate to Provincial Standing Committee **who shall have been representatives thereof at the previous session of Provincial Synod (or who are permanent deacons in any diocese of the Province should there have been no such representatives at the said previous session of Provincial Synod)**. These nominated representatives shall have all the rights and privileges of elected representatives, including the power to vote.).

This legislative aporia needs to be ended.

## The matter of the Archbishop's Commission on the Ministry of the Distinctive and Permanent Diaconate

The Commission was set up in late 2022 and produced a final report in April 2024. No termination date as given and the Archbishop has expressed a desire that a permanent Commission be set up and much of the implementation of the Resolution would be facilitated by having such a body.

There are two suggested actions:

- As an interim measure the Archbishop could simply extend the lifespan of the existing Commission..
- A longer term solution would be preparing a motion to set up such a Commission at the next Provincial Synod be prepared.

## The resolution on The Diaconate

Passed *nem con* on 26 September 2024 at the Provincial Synod.

THE DIACONATE		
	ACTION	AGENT
Whereas:		
1. The Provincial Standing Committee's in 2022 called on all dioceses to nurture and promote the ministry of distinctive deacons within ACSA.		
2. This Synod is thankful to the Archbishop for the report of the Archbishop's Commission on the Ministry of the Distinctive and Permanent Diaconate which has clarified the distinctiveness of the ministry of deacons, in relation to the other two orders, and in relation to the crisis-ridden context of our times.		
3. This Synod believes God is calling upon us to revitalize the diaconal order.		

	Action	Agent
<b>Synod resolves to endorse the following based on recommendations of the Commission:</b>		
1. There should be a concerted effort to remove any prejudice and discrimination against the diaconate at various levels, and this also applies to how transitional deacons are treated.	Enquire of bishops their assessment of progress here.	Bishops' Synod
	Enquire of Deacon representatives of progress here	Deacon representatives on Provincial Standing Committee (PSC)
2. Ordination services of deacons and priests should be separated as far as possible.	Individual bishops	Reports to (PSC)
3. Consideration should be given to lengthening the period of the transitional diaconate so that transitional deacons can be trained for, and have a genuine experience of, the diaconate, rather than only be treated as apprentice priests.	Individual bishops make decisions	Bishops
	Bishops' Synod to discuss	Bishops' Synod
	Diocesan Directors/Coordinators of Theological Education to be briefed	Commission/Fellowship of Deacons
4. Information and study materials about the nature of <i>diakonia</i> and the permanent diaconate should be produced.	Website to be created and regularly updated by Fellowship of Deacons	Fellowship of Deacons
		Link on ACSA website added
	COTT and TEEC to be requested to prepare courses	Letter from Archbishop
		Commission
Individual dioceses to prepare materials	Support from Commission	

	Fellowships of Vocation to be briefed	Commission
5. Relevant vocational discernment and training information, processes and resources that take the Permanent diaconate into account should be created.	Fellowships of Vocation to be briefed	Commission
	As per 4. above	Fellowship of Deacons website
6. Representatives from theological training institutions and diocesan training programmes should be asked to take forward the report's suggestions on a curriculum and programme for the education and training of deacons.	COTT and TEEC to be requested to prepare programmes and courses	Letter from Archbishop
		Commission
7. ACSA should endeavour to deal with the inevitable changes that a true restoration of the distinctive permanent diaconate would require: canonical, liturgical, and synodal, and the support needed to develop an effective network for the diaconate (the Fellowship of Deacons).	Ongoing liaison with: Canon Law Council, Liturgical Committee, Provincial Executive Officer, and Fellowship of Deacons	Commission
		Canon Law Council
		Liturgical Committee
		Provincial Executive Officer
		Fellowship of Deacon