



4th February 2016

Media Release

The first permanent deacons for the Catholic Diocese of Bathurst

Bishop of Bathurst, the Most Reverend Michael McKenna, will ordain Mr Charles Applin and Mr Terry Mahony to the diaconate on Friday, 5th February 2016 at 7.30pm, in the Cathedral of St. Michael and St. John. Charles and Terry, married men with many years as active members of the Church, have completed five years of preparation for this Sacrament.

Their ordination as deacons will be for life and will put them in a new and permanent relationship of service to the Bishop and Christ's faithful. Although this relationship is with the whole people of God, they will belong in a particular way to the local church of the Diocese of Bathurst.

Their wives, Joan and Christine, have accompanied them on this journey of discernment and formation and given their consent for Charles and Terry to make this life-changing commitment, which they will carry out in concert with their commitment to the Sacrament of Matrimony.

Bishop McKenna said, "The new deacons will be pioneers of this ministry in the Diocese of Bathurst. They and all of us will learn through trial and error what this call from God will mean in practice. However, we shall not be travelling without a map. The renewal of this ministry after the Second Vatican Council is based on a tradition that reaches back to the earliest days of the Church".

"They will carry out their ministry across the Diocese in different places at different times, cooperating with the local priest, at my direction. Although sometimes their work may be liturgical (leading or assisting worship; baptising; celebrating weddings and funerals), this will grow out of their broader task of connecting with the disconnected", explained Bishop McKenna.

Deacons directly help the Bishop in reaching out to people on the edges of Church life. These distances may be geographical (e.g. the smaller and more remote communities of our Diocese); or social and economic; or distances of the heart in faith and practice. They assist with works of charity, catechesis and coordination.

Bishop McKenna said, "We pray that God will bless them, and those who have helped them on the journey, with generous abundance".

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