Welcome! The Pope invites people of good will to come together and pray that deacons, faithful in their service to the Word and the poor, may be an invigorating symbol for the entire Church.

Getting started:
I find a quiet place and feel the presence of the Lord. I thank God for all the persons who offer their service to the Lord and who support those in spiritual and material need.

Short story:
Jose Pineda was born in Guatemala but later emigrated to the United States. In 2001, Jose began the permanent diaconate studies. He is married and has three children and four grandchildren. Jose is now a permanent deacon in the rural Holy Family mission in Lafayette, Tennessee and has been working as pastoral associate since 2016. “I’m here to serve and support the people of God and walk the extra mile any time to bring them the opportunity to know God and the true teaching of Jesus Christ.” As a pastoral associate, one of his biggest goals is to bridge the gap between the Anglo and Latino community. He also helps develop religious education programs, and liturgical workshops; coordinate and support different parish groups; work with community services and counselling agencies; visit the sick, inmates, migrant workers and other parishioners to tend to their needs and establish a personal connection; and assist with sacramental celebrations. Jose finds that his experience as an immigrant helps Fr Vic Subb better serve the community. “Also, assisting in celebrating the sacraments in English or Spanish has a big impact for the American community who can realize that not everybody is here just to work in the tobacco fields, but is here to serve as a minister of the Church for their families,” Jose said. He added; “There are many questions that arise from both groups about me and the other groups, and they feel comfortable asking me those questions. I find an opening that allows me to educate both groups and allows us to learn from each other.”

Time to reflect:
Do I realise the important work that permanent deacons do in areas where there are few priests? Am I aware that deacons can lead Liturgy of the Word services and offer communion with hosts that have been consecrated previously, when a priest is not available?

Let us pray:
Lord, fill the deacons with your Holy Spirit, that they may give their lives in service to the Church, announce your Word and become friends of the poor, and the voice of the forgotten.

Inspiration:
In answering the call to become deacon I have offered my life to God. For too long I listened to my own needs; now my prayer is that God uses me to reach the marginalized and neglected.

Delbert Allen

Hands on:
Although I may not be a deacon, I can offer my services to God and to the Church by joining or supporting a parish group and by visiting the sick and elderly within my community.