

The Diaconate Is Subject of New Publication

In 1963 a bishop of the Episcopal Church laid hands on the head of Richard T. Nolan and said "Take thou authority to execute the office of Deacon in the Church of God committed unto thee."

Three days later Nolan, who will teach "Contemporary Protestant Thought" and "Religions of the Orient" at St. Joseph College this fall, began a period of ministry in a parish where the rector was on vacation.

As a matter of curiosity, Nolan writes in the preface of his new book, "The Diaconate Now," (Corpus Books, Washington-Cleveland), "I took up the Book of Common Prayer to see again what specific functions I had as a deacon. Finding some tasks I felt unprepared for and others that perhaps were not to be done, I ministered as best I could for four weeks."

When Nolan returned to his regular post as a master in the Choir School, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York, he sought to deepen his knowledge of the diaconate.

In his book, "The Diaconate Now," editor Nolan of Bristol has included eight essays which survey the development of the diaconate from its Biblical origins. There is also a discussion of the office as understood historically and theologically in major Protestant denominations; an account of the most recent developments in the thinking and practice of the Roman Catholic Church; and a discourse on the problem of the diaconate in the Orthodox Church.