

### **Study Guide: Interview with Deacon Richard Ferreira**

Deacon Richard Ferreira, MSW, MAT, was interviewed for The Wisdom Figures of Preaching Interview series (a part of Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology's Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program) on March 4, 2026, in Lewis Hall. He is the Director of the Center for Diaconal Formation at ICSST.

Deacon Richard Ferreira was ordained to the permanent diaconate for the Diocese of Metuchen on May 14, 2022. Deacon Ferreira is bilingual; he speaks fluently in Spanish and English. He studied with the first Metuchen Spanish language cohort at ICSST's Center for Diaconal Formation, where he earned his Master of Arts in Theology. Deacon Ferreira also earned a Master of Science in Social Work from Columbia University, New York.

Additionally, he served on the formation board for the most recent Metuchen diaconate candidate cohort and is a Board Member of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Metuchen.

#### What does "Hospitalable Preaching" mean to you?:

- Deacon Ferreira desires to be a hospitable preacher; one who is welcoming and encourages others to be closer to God.
  - "How do we humble ourselves in a manner to where we share this Word, so that when we deliver it, that those individuals receive it in a manner that's not threatening, that's welcoming?" he asked.
- He is mindful of his delivery and tone; he also smiles with the hope of welcoming others and connecting with his audience.
  - "I feel like, you know, whenever you're preaching, there should be a moment of smile, of connectivity with the people that you serve" he said.
- He desires for his homilies to reflect God and His teachings.
  - "I think your general emphasis should be demonstrated through your love of Christ and through your love of the Word" he said.
- Deacon Ferreira's reflection questions about being a hospitable preacher:
  - "How do we deliver the Word of God to either an individual or a group of individuals?"
  - "How do we humble ourselves, so that it is not threatening?"
  - "How can we be welcoming?"

#### Memorable Homily: Reflection on Luke 10:38

- Deacon Ferreira shared his memorable homily on Luke 10:38. Jesus visits Martha and Mary. Martha welcomed Jesus to her home and focused on preparing a meal for Him; Mary stayed with Jesus and listened to his teachings.
- Sometimes we focus on the preparation of a gathering, but by doing so we lose sight of Christ asking us to be with others and Him; we are called to acknowledge and love each other.
  - "We lose the connection of what Christ really enjoys about gatherings, is that we acknowledge each other and how, you know, there is love" he said.

Favorite Preacher(s)/ The Beauty of Preaching

The beauty of preaching is how preachers deliver the Word of Christ.

- He named Pope Francis and Monsignor McCarren as two of his favorite preachers.

Deacon Ferreira's Responses to the Wisdom Figure Questions

1. How have you prayed with the Scripture in preparation to form your homily?

Deacon Ferreira's method:

- Start the week before
- Start with prayer
  - He asks the Lord for guidance. "What does He want me to tell your people?" he asked.
- He prints out the readings for that day
  - He highlights and reflects on the main points of the Scripture
  - Writes reflective notes (over the days)- into one core piece
    - He hopes to deliver the homily as "a seamless transition."

2. What lessons have you drawn from the Gospel reading that helped you invite, welcome, share, and offer compassion?

- Deacon Ferreira acknowledged that the Gospel reflects various emotions; all our life experiences can be found in Scripture, including joy and pain.
  - He stated, "There's things that we go throughout our lives that if you, even reading passages from the Old Testament, passages of the New Testament, there's such great pieces that we can use that really sort of help us connect with some of our life moments. Either that we are joyful or either that we need some reflection on painful things that we may be experiencing."

3. How would you describe your relationship with parishioners? What compelling stories have you heard from parishioners testifying the impact of your hospitable preaching?

- Deacon Ferreira said it is a blessing to be at his parish and deliver homilies in Spanish and English; he does two in English and one in Spanish weekly.
- He also noted a difference in how he delivers his homilies in Spanish and English.
  - He tries not to be monotone and uses more charisma when speaking in Spanish.

4. How have your parishioners inspired you in your preaching ministry?

- Deacon Ferreira reflected on the tragic event of a pregnant woman who lost her child. Although she was grieving, she received comfort from her community's loving outreach of thoughts and prayers. Deacon Ferreira reflected on the power of prayer.
  - Christ is always with us. "And at the end, even though the child had passed, she was so grateful at the fact that so many people took that moment to pray for her and her daughter and the baby. And I think that was something that always connected with me" he said.
- His wife is instrumental to his Diaconate journey.
  - "She is my best friend on this walk; she has encouraged me so many times" he said.

- She keeps him “on task” and encourages him, while he works on his homilies.
  - His wife is always present when he is preaching.
5. What three lessons of prayerful preparation and/or hospitality might you have for those preparing for ordination and for those preparing to give retreats, days of recollection, and spiritual presentations?
- Prayer- prepare your homily through prayer.
  - Be mindful and careful of too many talking points.
  - Know your audience- Who are you going to speak to?
  - Deacon Ferreira starts homilies with a smile.
    - “I feel like, you know, whenever you're preaching, there should be a moment of smile, of connectivity with the people that you serve” he said.
    - It encourages friendly conversation and welcomes connectivity.
  - Center Christ: Deacon Ferreira stressed that it is important to be committed to Christ.
    - He said, “Make it about Christ, and not yourself.”
    - He discussed the Litany of Humility, which states: “May all those be praised and me unnoticed. Jesus give me grace.” His mantra is to praise everyone but have yourself be unnoticed. It is not about him, it is about the message.

To view the video of Deacon Ferreira as a Wisdom Figure of Preaching, click [here](#).