

Vicar appointed for deacons

By Reggie Finney

The Permanent Diaconate Program in the Oakland Diocese has one of its own members as vicar. Leo Smith was named to that post recently by Bishop John Cummins.

Smith has served as administrative assistant at Holy Rosary Parish in Union City since his ordination in September, 1978. He will continue to use the parish as headquarters while handling specialized needs of the diaconate program.

Reflecting on a favorite adage, "Life is what happens to you while you're making other plans," Smith credits a Cursillo almost 20 years ago as a key factor in his commitment to ministry in the Church.

The new vicar is a native of Oakland, attended Castlemont High School, and graduated from University of California Berkeley with a degree in labor economics. He is single; he worked as the industrial relations manager for a plant in Fremont for 16 years prior to his association with Holy Rosary.

Smith sees his new role as heavily



Leo Smith
...Vicar for deacons

"public relations" for the deacons, their families, and the parish staff. He will be visiting each of the 47

men in their homes and at places they minister.

"It is important," Smith noted, "that the deacons and their advisors keep a proper perspective on their multi-faceted commitment, first to marriage and family then to job and the diaconate."

He noted also that deacons are often the "resident clergy" and can be integral to assisting in smooth transition of pastoral changes.

"The role of the permanent deacon is becoming crystallized," Smith explained. "Deacons are only justified in their liturgical function by what they are doing in their service ministries. Serving the community off the altar is both the hope and strength of the program."

"The public forum is the place for the deacon," Smith said. "He can reach out to the alienated, the needy, the poor. His courage can confront social injustices. Service in the community was the reason for the founding of the diaconate in the early Church."



Heads deacons

Newly-elected president of the deacon community is Frank Barnes, permanent deacon at Christ the King Parish in Pleasant Hill. A member of the first permanent diaconate class in the diocese, Barnes just celebrated his fifth year as deacon. During his two-year tenure Barnes will chair the permanent diaconate advisory board, maintain contact with deacons both individually and through small support groups, and represent the diaconate community at various events.

Hispanic ministry seminar focus

An opportunity for renewal of religious working in Hispanic

Sister Deck said workshop sessions will be "very spiritual, but also

participants will develop concrete plans to better serve the Hispanic

