

A DIACONATE CONTRIBUTION ON BEHALF OF DRUG ADDICTS

The formation of pastoral workers in the field of drug addiction

In the Grand Buenos Aires, Argentina

The Deacon Dr. Horacio Domingo Castellano, who resides in the Diocese of Morón, created and directed a training course in order to give the basic knowledge to those who want to collaborate in the recovery of those who fell in drug addiction.

Castellano was ordained as a deacon in 1989 and is a Doctor in Prevention and Care of addictions. He is incardinated in the Diocese of Morón, Argentina, of which he is the Diocesan Delegate for the Pastoral care of addictions.

He served as a member of the Commission of Pastoral care of the drug addiction that depends on the Episcopal Commission for Social Pastoral of the Bishops Conference in Argentina since 2007 to 2014. According to this function, he has given numerous courses, workshops and specific talks on the pastoral formation of those who work with addicts or are interested in this problem.

The formation of pastoral workers

Since 2007, Deacon Castellano, accompanied by other professionals, began to issue an annual course to train those pastoral workers who are interested in working with addicts, applying the training program on this matter, approved by the Bishops Conference in Argentina. This course had, in addition, its online version and was applied also to interested teachers.

This prevailing diaconal experience is developed more precisely in the Diocese of Morón, located in a densely populated region that includes the city of Buenos Aires and its surroundings, where more than 11 million inhabitants live, but which is open to the twelve dioceses that form the ecclesiastical province of Buenos Aires.

The course is designed to give the basic knowledge to the participants of the various stages of training, with the hope that, from the place of activity of each one, can contribute to the awareness of the implications of the problem, and act in consequence, promoting prevention, education and, in the specific case of recovery, the exercise of the freedom lost by drug.

Deacon Castellano has the support of his diocesan bishop, Mons. Luis Guillermo Eicchorn, and he carries out this unprecedented experience not only in this Region but, he also gives lectures on this topic in various Dioceses of his country and receives, in addition, personal consultations, thus combining his diaconate with his profession.

Permanent diaconate and pastoral of addictions

According to the book of the Acts of the Apostles (Chapter 6), deacons, taking as beginning the institution of the Seven, engaged in supporting and assisting widows and orphans, who were those most in need of that time. Jesus himself had taught them: "*whenever you have done with one of my little brothers you have done to me*" (Matthew 25: 31).

While Vatican II tells about permanent deacons that through the laying on of hands by the Bishop they are comforted with the sacramental grace and they serve the people of God in the Ministry of liturgy, Word and charity (LG, 29), in Argentina there are still more deacons engaged in the liturgy-sacramental Ministry than to Charity.

We know that charity is a duty of every Christian, but a Deacon, by his origin, history and the grace of his consecration is called to promote the charitable service in the whole Church, especially on behalf of the poor and needy. This is the most distinctive feature of his Ministry.

The problem of addiction in the pastoral work of the Church

The abuse of drugs has been installed with all its strength around the world and continues to grow. In Argentina, the people affected by the drug addiction, not counting the smokers, alcoholics, and occasional consumers, reaches 5%. It should be noted that this pandemic is going through all of society and all social classes.

The problematic consumers or drug addicts are currently one of the risk groups most vulnerable and under-served by the Church. They constitute an important portion of society. Thus, the Pastoral on Addictions becomes a real challenge for the Church and a pastoral appropriate area for the Ministry of permanent deacons in our time.

Therefore, the attention of this issue requires people well prepared to deal professionally with this addiction with the latest advances of science, illuminated by the pastoral criteria given by the Magisterium of the Church.

Complementary information

Member of the Commission of drug addiction at the Bishops Conference in

Argentina: <http://www.episcopado.org/portal/actualidad-cea/oficina-de-prensa/item/803-s%C3%ADntesis-conferencia-de-prensa-de-la-comisi%C3%B3n-de-drogadependencia-de-la-cea.html>

Courses for pastoral workers in other dioceses:

http://www.saladillodiario.com.ar/ampliar_nota.php?id_n=20509

http://www.rperez.mun.gba.gov.ar/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1760&Itemid=114

<http://www.chacabuconoticias.com.ar/2014/08/salud/no-hay-ningun-pueblo-del-mundo-que-pueda-decir-que-esta-exento-de-las-adicciones/>

<http://www.elpopular.com.ar/diario/2010/03/05/nota.html?idnota=74009>

<http://www.trabajosindrogas.com.ar/2013/06/968/>

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