August 10, 2020
Feast of St. Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr

Dear Brothers:

As we celebrate this great feast of Saint Lawrence, patron of Rome, and the evangelizing witness and ministry of charity of our permanent deacons in the Diocese of Rockville Centre, I want to thank you, your wives and your families, along with your pastors and the People of God in the parishes you serve, for your dedication to the Word of God and your dedication to charity expressed in the Spiritual and Corporal works of Mercy that you live, pray and practice so faithfully.

Thank you for all you have done and continue to do during these challenging times of the COVID-19 crisis. With all of you, I want to especially thank the permanent deacons who are serving as hospital chaplains and have supported patients, families and hospital staffs in truly heroic ways.

Thank you too for being beatitudinal peacemakers and witnesses to racial justice and harmony. Thank you for being courageous and zealous sons of Saint Lawrence – sons who recognize with their patron that the poor and the suffering are truly the treasures of the Church.

As deacons you are called to be servants who lead others to the Word of God and to the Eucharist. Just recently the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization issued a revised edition of the *Directory for Catechesis*. It is a great gift to the Universal Church and I encourage you to read, study and pray it to rekindle and renew your own commitment to both evangelization and catechesis in our parishes and apostolates.

Finally, I would also ask us all to pray for Terrence Culhane, Matthew Faughnan, Michael Durso, Gregory Fewer, John Heverin, Ronald Lacsa, Gerard Magaldi, George Sprance, Jr. and Vincent Sweeney as they prepare for their diaconate ordination on September 23, 2020. We give God thanks for the way these men and their families have been led by the Holy Spirit.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ John O. Barres

Most Reverend John O. Barres
Bishop of Rockville Centre