

Terttu Pohjolainen

THE DEACON IN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF FINLAND

The Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland has approximately 1100 deacons, 90% of whom are women. They are engaged in extensive diaconal work, supported by substantial resources, as the following account indicates. 75% have the title deaconess, which means that they are female deacons with a nursing background. The remaining 25% are deacons, that is either male deacons who are nurses or male or female deacons whose professional training is in social work.

Although deacons have a prominent place in church and society, there is ambivalence about the nature of their ministry. The Diaconate Committee, which was set up by the National Synod in 1994, published its report in 1997. The Synod has not yet come to any conclusions on the report's recommendations, though current expectation is that the decision will be taken in the autumn of 1999. This situation has created uncertainty, not least for deacons themselves. They are not officially and unequivocally recognised as ordained and as part of the threefold ministry, itself the subject of a variety of views in the Finnish Church. The contents of this paper reflect the ambiguity which exists at the time of writing

Historical Context

Finland remains what has traditionally been seen as a borderland between East and West. The earliest Christian influences reached its territory simultaneously from the East and from the West before the beginning of the eleventh century. The establishment of the Valamo Monastery on an island in Lake Ladoga was part of the Eastern Church's missionary work. The Western Church began sowing seeds in Finland in the early twelfth century with the arrival of the English-born Bishop Henrik, who suffered martyrdom in about 1155. The church spread quickly and extensively in Finland in the Middle Ages, the influence of Catholicism spreading from Åland in the West to Vyborg in the East. The Mediaeval Catholic Church laid the foundations of Finnish national culture and identity. Finland had six monasteries by the end of the Middle Ages.¹

The Finnish reformer, Mikael Agricola, later Bishop of Turku, was a graduate of the monastery and cathedral schools in Vyborg and Turku. He later studied in Wittenberg under Martin Luther and Philip Melanchthon. The complete Bible was published in Finnish in 1642. As in the Nordic countries in general, the Reformation in Finland was a peaceful process led mainly by Bishops Mikael Agricola and Paulus Juusteen. King Gustavus Vasa of Sweden-Finland gave his support to it. The Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland has an episco-

¹ Vikström, John. Report on the Situation of Religion in Finland, in *Documents of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland 1: Church in Finland. The History, Present State and Outlook for the Future of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland* (Helsinki 1989), pp.10-13.

palian organizational structure, and its characteristic features include Lutheran spirituality and a strong concentration on the word of God and the sacraments. The revival movements which originated in the nineteenth century remained within the church and still exercise a strong spiritual influence.²

Developments in the nineteenth century

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, in Finland as in other European countries, pastors took responsibility for the welfare of the poor, the sick and the vulnerable members of the community, as well as for public education. Pastors also taught people in the parishes to take responsibility for one another. The church was not prepared for the new problems and poverty brought by industrialization and urbanization. It was in danger of losing contact with the bulk of the population.³

The roots of modern diaconal work in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland lie in the nineteenth century, when the inspiration and influence of the German Home Mission spread to the Nordic countries. The Home Mission movement awakened the conscience of the Church. Its aim was to demonstrate that preaching was not enough if words were not matched by deeds. The pioneer of home mission, Johann Hinrich Wichern, took the view that 'love belongs to the Church just as much as

² *ibid.*

³ Ahonen, Risto, A. *The Development of the Diaconate in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland*. A Lecture (London 21.11.1997).

faith does'. 'Saving love' must also be shown in good deeds, so that people will believe.⁴

Wichern's vision of home mission, as holistic care of people, became a significant stimulus to the development of diaconal work in Finland. The organization of practical diaconal work was however first influenced by Theodor Fliedner, and for many years Fliedner's Kaiserswerth Diaconal Institution was the model for diaconal work and training.

The first Fliednerian Diaconal Institutions in Finland were founded in Helsinki by Mrs. Aurora Karamsin in 1867, and in Vyborg by the Hackman family in 1869. The Vyborg Deaconess Institution moved in 1939 to Lahti. The first deaconess in Finland, Matilda Hoffman, was qualified in Vyborg in 1872, and the first deaconess from Helsinki Deaconess Institution, Emma Wichman, was qualified in 1873. Thus Fliednerian practice was established, giving the church a voice and a presence in social and community affairs through concentrating on training deaconesses in nursing. Deaconesses and female nurse students were needed for nursing in the hospitals of the institutions. Some deaconesses were sent to work in homes, nursing and helping the poor of the parish congregations. However, deaconesses remained 'the daughters of the institutions'. The institutions gave them a home and provided for them for the

⁴ Ahonen, Risto, A. *Lähetetty kirkko. Näkökohtia keskusteluun kirkon uudistuksesta*. Kirkon tutkimuskeskus, Sarja A. Nro 69. 1996. Gummerus kirjapaino Oy, (Jyväskylä 1996), pp. 152-153. (Response to the discussion on the Church's renewal process.)

rest of their lives. Diaconal work was identified at this time with charitable and catechetical service.⁵

Other deaconess houses were founded later by Mrs. Jenny Ivalo in Sortavala in 1894 and by Mrs. Selma Stenbäck in Oulu in 1896. The Sortavala Deaconess House moved after the Second World War to Pieksämäki, where the institution began to train deaconesses in the nursing field and deacons in social work. The latter subsequently worked both in the church and in the secular social structures. In 1936, the Lutheran Institute in Järvenpää⁶ began to educate deacons and the Pori Deaconess Institution was founded by Mr. Antti Perheentupa in 1949.

In the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century diaconal work in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland was characterized by the Fliednerian parish home nursing system. In this system the responsibility for developing and leading diaconal work was concentrated in the deaconess institutions. However, at the turn of the century voices began to be heard, emphasizing that diaconal work was to be done by the parishes and the church. It was seen as important that the church should start to train diaconal workers for the parishes. Canon Otto Aarnisalo was among the first diaconal workers in Finland and the Finnish pioneer of diaconal service.⁷

⁵ Wirén, Edvin. *Verraton tie. Diakonian raamatullinen pohja, historiallinen kehitys ja nykyiset työmuodot* (Helsinki 1947), pp.156-162.

⁶ Wirén, Edvin. *Verraton tie. Diakonian raamatullinen pohja, historiallinen kehitys ja nykyiset työmuodot* (Helsinki 1947), pp.156-162.

⁷ Ahonen, Risto, A. *The Development of the Diaconate in the Evangelical-Lutheran-Church of Finland*. A Lecture (London 21.11.1997).

Reaction to 'diaconal work'

Aarnisalo sharply criticized German diaconal work for its loose links to the church. In 1899, in his book *The Issue of Diaconal Work in the Church of Finland*, he claimed that neither in Germany nor elsewhere was there 'any real church diaconal work,' but that the work was entirely concentrated in institutions and independent associations. For Aarnisalo, this unfortunate development was partly a result of the indifference of the church leaders who were out of touch with reality, and partly due to the pietistic origins of the diaconal revival. Aarnisalo, however, saw diaconal work as of the very essence of the parish and church, because the preaching of the Word and works of love are inseparable.

Another influential person in the discussion of diaconal theology in Finland between 1940 and 1950 was Bishop Eino Sormunen. As early as 1938, in his *Handbook of Diaconal Work*, he argued that diaconal work arises out of the self-sacrificing agape-love of God. For Sormunen, the seeking and serving works of love were the constitutive elements of the church. The central work of the congregation was preaching the Word of God and diaconal service. Bishop Sormunen had a significant influence on the decisions of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland, including its decisions on diaconal work. A significant foundation for the development of Finnish diaconal work was laid in 1943, when the Synod decided to require every parish, by ecclesiastical law, to create posts for one or more deacons. Only the poorer parishes were given the

right to request dispensation from this requirement. The decision set a national precedent, with the result that since the Second World War diaconal work has been the most typical and preferred working method of Lutheran parishes in Finland. With the 1943 decision, a new era of diaconal renewal and development began.⁸ The diaconal work of the parishes became coordinated with the church's central and parochial administration through elected officials at different levels. The diaconate thus became legally related to the official structure of the church. Since public healthcare and social welfare took a step forward with new laws on public health in 1970s and 1980s, the focus of diaconal work has moved towards the creation of aid networks, pastoral care and recreational activities, and away from healthcare and a focus on economic conditions. In the '70s and '80s the diaconal work of the church showed a clearer tendency towards taking civic responsibility and reacting to legislation and social practices. Diaconal work also extended into the international field, in its concern for human rights and for giving economic help where that is most needed.⁹

⁸ Ahonen, Risto, A. *The Development of the Diaconate in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland*. Lecture (London 21.11.1997).

⁹ Kirkon Diakonia ja yhteiskuntatyön keskus. Työryhmä. *Luonnos diakonia- ja yhteiskuntatyön kehittämissuunnitelmaksi* (Helsinki 1994), pp.1-2 / 32. (Draft development plan for diaconal and social work, 1994.)

The Present Situation

The overwhelming majority (in 1997, 85.4 %) of the Finnish population belong to the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland, which is a 'folk' church. It has about 4.4 million members, and represents the western tradition of the Church. There are eight dioceses in all, containing a total of 594 parishes. The Orthodox Church in Finland is the country's other folk church. It has some 56,000 members, or about 1% of the population, four bishops and three dioceses. Both the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland and the Orthodox Church in Finland have the status of 'bodies constituted under public law' and enjoy the right to levy taxes. Confessional religious education is delivered in schools. Parliament endorses ecclesiastical laws passed by the Evangelical-Lutheran Church Synod, but cannot alter the contents of these laws in any way. The Roman Catholic Church in Finland consists of one diocese, with five parishes and a total of 6,500 members. Of the other Christian bodies, the largest denominational grouping is the Pentecostal congregations, whose total membership is estimated at 48,000. Other Christian groupings in Finland include Protestant minority churches, such as the Evangelical Free Church of Finland, the Methodist Church of Finland, the Finnish Baptist Community, the Seventh Day Adventist Church and the Salvation Army. Relations between the Evangelical-Lutheran Church and other Churches and Christian bodies are good.¹⁰

¹⁰ Vikström, John. Report on the Situation of Religion in Finland, in *Documents of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland 1: Church in Finland. The History, Present State and Outlook for the Future of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland* Helsinki 1989.

This paper deals with the diaconal work of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland. In contemporary terms, its title, 'folk church' indicates that church life arises from among the people. Church fellowship is a part of their natural social intercourse. Many parishes are very large and the church needs to find new ways to express itself and to meet people. More than half of the parishes have at least 4000 members and may have more than twenty full-time people involved in active parish work. The Church's social mission is to speak for and on behalf of the weak. Care is needed by children and young people who lack guidance and faith in the future, by people who live under spiritual or material pressure, by the elderly and the sick, who are lonely and forgotten, and by the poor in Finland and abroad. Parish social service has had to face new tasks and challenges: because of financial and economic constraints, the public provision of health care and social services can no longer meet existing needs. In crises people turn to their local parishes for help. Material aid has become very important as well as counselling and helping the unemployed. Responsibility for our shared environment means engaging in discussion about the values represented by the Church. International responsibility is taken by supporting mission and international social work.¹¹

Finland is still a social welfare state in many respects. For some years, it has had a multi-level social security system, a well

11 Mäkeläinen, Heikki. The direction of the Church in 2000. In: Pirjo Töyryn-oja (ed.) *The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finnish Society. Documents of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland 6*, Church Council for Foreign Affairs (Helsinki 1994), pp.11-19.

developed healthcare system and a high standard of living. Income has been quite evenly distributed and the poverty scale only 3–4%. The majority of the population of five million used to be economically well placed. During the last decade, however, significant problems have occurred in relation to the standard of living, affecting approximately 350,000 Finnish households. The sick, families with children or the unemployed have been particularly affected and have multiple problems and a lack of basic security. Unemployment has been the most serious problem during the depression of the 1990s. Currently, the rate of unemployment is still 14.1% (October 1998). This means financial difficulties with housing costs and other loans, rents and other living expenses for many families. The need for social assistance has grown in recent years. Poverty and the lack of food are real challenges for the church's diaconal work¹²

Diaconal work encompasses the whole mission of the Church of Finland. Church law expects every member of the church to participate in it. Deacons and deaconesses give training in the parishes and are responsible for diaconal work together with other employees of the parish and elected or voluntary parishioners.

¹² Nälkärühmä. *Köyhyysohjelman ratkaisua hakemassa. Nälkärühmän kannanotto ja selvitys suomalaisesta köyhyydestä 1998*, Kirkkopalvelujen julkaisu 1 (Helsinki 1998), pp. 16–18 / 38. (Report of the Famine Group.)

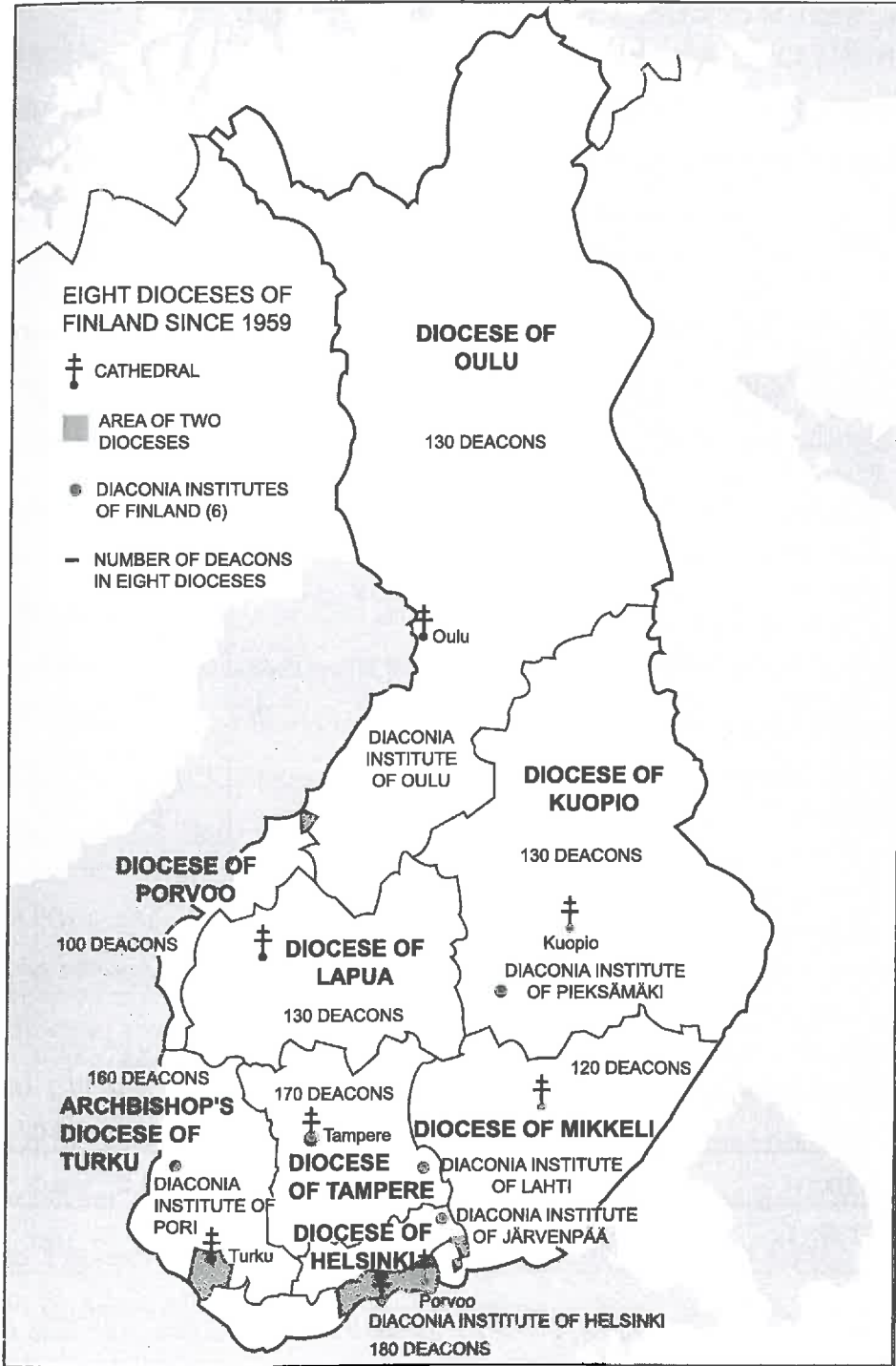
1. DEPLOYMENT

In the contemporary Finnish context the term 'deacon' means a diaconal worker, trained and made a deacon by a bishop, using the rite of the Ordering of Deacons, to carry out the diaconal work of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland. In some cases 'deacon' may also refer to a person who is trained and made a deacon by a bishop both for the diaconal work of the church and for social work in the public sector, as opposed to 'deaconess', the term which refers to a person who is trained and made a deaconess by a bishop both for diaconal work and for nursing and healthcare work in the public sector. Official diaconal posts in parishes are never filled by assistants or other untrained workers. Such posts can only be filled by people who have been trained for diaconal work, in accordance with the regulations of the Bishops' Conference.

Of the 594 parishes in Finland, 222 are in urban areas and 372 in rural areas. The decision of the Synod of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland in 1943, to have a post for a deacon in every parish, has been very important for the employment of deacons in the church. To meet the requirements of the Bishops' Conference, deacons and deaconesses have to have a dual vocational degree. Deaconesses must also be qualified nurses or health care nurses and deacons must be qualified social workers in the public sector. Every year about 100 new deaconesses or deacons qualify from the different diaconal institutes and are made deacons and deaconesses by the diocesan bishops. Since the parishes cannot employ all of them, many

are employed by hospitals, in public health care, or in welfare associations or organizations. They are paid by their employers, not by the church. They do not have close ties to their parishes or to the diaconal training centres where they received their education. This problem is an important issue in current discussion on the diaconate.

Map showing the dioceses in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland



Numbers of Deacons

The Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Finland has approximately 19,000 employees in different fields. About 42% are engaged in what is described as 'spiritual parish work'.¹³

The following table gives an overview of the different tasks and groups of employees within the church.

TASK	Male		Female		Total	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
SPIRITUAL WORK					8089	42.0
Priests	1369	76.5	421	23.5	1790	9.4
Parish Lecturers	0		42	100	42	0.2
Pastoral care in hospitals	59	47.2	66	52.8	125	0.7
Marriage guidance	45	36.6	78	63.4	123	0.6
Cantor organists	447	55.7	356	44.3	803	4.2
Deaconesses and Deacons	115	10.0	1032	90.0	1147	6.0
Youth leaders	478	39.6	729	60.4	1207	6.3
Child group leaders	143	1.7	2321	99.3	2464	12.9
Others	138	35.6	250	64.4	388	2.0
Financial administration and clerical work					2330	12.0
Garden & cemetery work					4335	23.0
Church service work					3957	21.0
Others					332	2.0
TOTAL	6031	31.7	13012	68.3	19043	100

¹³ Kirkkohallitus 1997. *Kirkkohallituksen toimintakertomus vuodelta 1997*. Liite 2. (Church Government Annual Report 1997.)

In the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland there were (in 1997), 1147 deaconesses or deacons working in the parishes. At the same time there were some 1790 priests, 42 lecturers, 1207 youth leaders, and 2464 trained children's group leaders. In 1996, 72 deacons' posts were vacant. About 75% of deacons' posts are filled by deaconesses and 25% by male or female deacons. There is approximately one deacon or deaconess per 4000 church members. Most of the deacons are working in the general diaconal field, a few have specialist posts. In many big parishes there are posts for deacons in specialist ministries. These include posts serving people with various disabilities, including physical handicap, hearing or visual problems, or psychological trauma. Some deacons in specialist posts work with prisoners, alcoholics, and refugees, in geriatric care, or manning pastoral care telephone helplines. In 1994, parishes with several deacons were given the right to establish a post for a head deacon. Head deacons are appointed to be team leaders and their main responsibility is the unity and organization of the parish's diaconal work.

About 200 deacons hold other types of church-related posts: the diocesan secretaries in all the Church of Finland's eight dioceses are deacons, and deacons and deaconesses are teachers in the six Diaconia Institutes of Helsinki, Järvenpää, Lahti, Oulu, Pieksämäki and Pori, which, from August 2000, will together constitute the Diaconal Institute of Higher Education in Finland. They also work as missionaries, and in Diaconal Foundations, as unit leaders, project workers, nurses or social workers.

ately
aged
and

%
2.0
9.4
0.2
0.7
0.6
4.2
6.0
6.3
2.9
2.0
2.0
3.0
1.0
2.0
100

liite 2.

ACON

Most deacons and deaconesses make their career choice in their twenties, after high school graduation. Nowadays, an increasing number of nurses and social workers from an older age group are also being educated for diaconal work, after many years of work experience in social work and healthcare. Most deacons and deaconesses see their profession as their lifelong purpose and style of living, from youth to retirement age (60–65 years).

In the rite for the Ordering of Deacons, the church sends the deacons out to 'serve the Church of Christ always and everywhere'.¹⁴ This means that deacons can serve the Church of Christ in international missions as well as at home. A large number of Finnish deacons work outside the church structures, in public sector social work and health care or in other vocational jobs. The Diaconate Committee intends to change current practice, so that only those who have completed their diaconal education and who have been called to work in a parish or some other ecclesiastical organization of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland will be made deacons or deaconesses by the bishop of their diocese (*vocatio, benedictio, missio*).

¹⁴ Suomen evankelis-luterilaisen kirkon kirkkokäsikirja III, Kirkollisten toimitusten kirja. Hyväksytty kirkolliskokouksessa 1984. Diakonian virkaan vihkiminen (Pieksämäki 1989), pp.140–146. (The Ordering of Deacons, *Ritual of the Lutheran Church of Finland*.)

Main tasks undertaken by deacons and deaconesses

In the present century there has been a lively discussion of the tasks involved in diaconal ministry. Until the 1950s, charitable and catechetical functions were more prominent. Diaconal ministry consisted, to a large extent, of caring for the sick and other people in trouble. In the 1960s diaconal work and ministry became the subject of systematic examination from the ecclesiological and christological perspective. An attempt was made to define diaconal work in relation to the essence of the Church and to perceive its connection with the factors that constitute the foundation of the Church and its fundamental mission (*notae ecclesiae*). Finnish Lutheran scholarship has emphasized the christological foundation of *diakonia*.¹⁵ For example, Professor Tuomo Mannermaa held that, in Luther's opinion, it is in faith and love that the very essence of Christianity is expressed: in faith man turns towards God, and in love he turns towards his neighbour. According to Mannermaa, love and *diakonia* not only follow faith but are an integral part of it, because Christ lives in man by faith.¹⁶

In accordance with Finnish Church Law (4:1§), and the Church Ordinance (4:3§), both dated 1994, the Church Government established principles and guidelines for diaconal parish work and service. Diaconal ministry is responsible for making charity

¹⁵ Ahonen Risto, A., *The Development of the Diaconate in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland*. A Lecture (London 21.11.1997).

¹⁶ Mannermaa, Tuomo. *Kaksi rakkautta, johdatus Lutherin uskonmaailmaan*. WSOY (Juva 1983), pp. 83–93. (Two kinds of love – a guidance to the world of faith by Luther.)

a reality in Finland and overseas. Every congregation and every parish member should work to attain wholeness of life, to relieve suffering, and to give help especially to those who are most in need and who do not receive it from elsewhere.¹⁷

A deacon's mission is to provide relief for all kinds of suffering by means of nursing and health care, welfare work and pastoral care. He or she is there to give help and holistic care. The goal is that people should find a secure relationship with God, should find peace with themselves and their environment and should be able to cope with the events that are bound to happen and to give faith to life, for example in the experience of sickness and death.¹⁸ The main tasks of a deacon are summarized in the guidelines on the diaconate. A deacon is required:

- 1) To develop diaconal work as part of holistic parish work, to identify where service is needed and the reasons which lie behind needs, and to seek ways in which the parish can help people in need.
- 2) To give direct help to those in need, to identify people's needs and to provide care for clients in their own homes and at the deacon's office during office hours.
- 3) To encourage parish members to take responsibility for others and for the environment and to lead them in the action which needs to be taken.

¹⁷ Kirkkohallitus. *Diakoniatyön mallijohtosääntö* (Helsinki 1994), pp. 1-6. (Ordinance on Diaconal Work.)

¹⁸ Kirkkohallitus. *Diakoniatyön mallijohtosääntö* (Helsinki 1994), pp. 1-6.

- 4) To train and support people (including diaconal lay personnel) in different tasks in diaconal parish work.
- 5) To disseminate information about diaconal work on different levels in the church.
- 6) To provide information on diaconal work inside and outside the parish.
- 7) To co-operate, in the vocational and voluntary field, with public social work and health care personnel.
- 8) To work on the parish board of diaconal work, to take the minutes of the board, make operational plans, and to draw up annual budgets and reports of diaconal work undertaken.¹⁹

In fulfilling these regulations a deacon has to work collaboratively as a parish worker, researcher, development officer, nurse or social worker, educator, counsellor, secretary, administrator, leader and so on. A deacon has to accept professional confidentiality in his/her work.

In a study published by Terttu Pohjolainen in 1996, it was noted that the holistic professional work of a deaconess in Finland has a variety of dimensions. These were identified as: diaconal nursing, pastoral care, church social service, education, work development and administration and also included the dimension of multicultural and international diaconal work. These dimensions may involve many activities in the situation of a single client, a family or a community. Deaconesses felt that

¹⁹ Ibid, pp.1-7.

their main competence within the professional groups of the Finnish social and health services was to be found in the nursing of human beings in a way which takes full account of their psychological and spiritual life. The identified aim of their work is to care for human beings in the multiple areas of their lives, in the context of the created world.²⁰

The deacon's field of work seems to be too wide. Deacons undertake a multiplicity of different tasks. They have about 300,000 clients and about 900,000 contacts with them per year. About 47% of the clients are of working age, that is between 18 and 64 years old. Deacons lead about 800 diaconal groups and about 1800 groups for the elderly. In the 'open doors' work deacons handled about 350,000 calls in 1996. The number of calls has increased in recent years because of the changes in Finnish society.

The 'open doors' work aims to help families, the elderly and the unemployed. It is carried out in cooperation between deacons, deaconesses, pastors, children's group leaders and voluntary group leaders in the parishes. Especially in the cities mothers with small children come to the church to meet each other weekly. 'Open doors' offers a varied programme for mothers and children. Many elderly people suffer from loneliness. For them there is the possibility of coming together with other elderly people once a week or a fortnight. Exercise, discussions and meals are included in the programme. Unemploy-

²⁰ Pohjolainen, Terttu. *Diakonissan työ seurakunnassa*. Pro gradu tutkielma, Tampereen yliopisto. Hoitotieteen laitos (Tampere 1996).

ed members of the church have organized programmes for themselves. They are able to exchange news or eat together. In 230 parishes, where deacons organized lunches for the unemployed, about 500,000 clients (10% of the total population) visited these canteens.

By the end of 1997, diaconal work had organized about 60 'food banks' in 170 parishes. This service began in Tampere in 1995. Financial support for the food banks is received from the church, from companies and from the European Union. Seppänen *et al.* (1997) in Lahti²¹ and Räsänen (1998) in Kuopio²² studied food banks and found that 80% of the clients who came to them were from homes with no income from employment. The second biggest client group were pensioners who need the service because of their poor mental or physical health. In the 1990s about 2 to 5% of Finnish households were suffering from hunger. For example, in the city of Lahti, 2.4% of all households used the food bank services. Providing families with food supplies made it possible for them to use scarce resources for other expenses (housing costs take about 50% of income) or necessary purchases. Food may be obtained from the food bank with a voucher from a deacon or deaconess. Deacons also teach their clients how to prepare healthy meals at low cost. Help from the food bank is regarded as a temporary measure.

²¹ Seppänen Marjaana, Hongisto Jaana, Linkola Elisa, Tynkkynen Markku. *Minun oli nälkä, tutkimus ruokapankista* (Lahti 1997), pp. 10, 43-49. (Study on food bank in Lahti.)

²² Räsänen, Päivi. *Seurakuntien ruokapankkitoiminta. Tutkimus Kuopion Ruokapankin asiakkaista*. Pro gradu-tutkielma. Kuopion yliopisto. Sosiaalitieteiden laitos (Kuopio 1998), pp. 82-83. (Master's Thesis on foodbank customers in Kuopio.)

Deacons' work is very challenging and wide-ranging. This makes it difficult for them to concentrate on what should be at the heart of their life as deacons: on the functions of the deacon in worship and spiritual care, which are not undertaken by secular nurses or social workers; on charitable service to people who do not get aid from elsewhere, whose cases fall outside the basic statutory provision; or on educative work aimed at encouraging parish members to help.

2. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Most of the deacons and deaconesses who are employed by the church work full-time. Some deacons prefer job sharing with young, otherwise unemployed, deacons. The state pays part of the salary for both. The poor financial situation of some small parishes means that they can only provide half-time posts for deacons. About 23,000 unpaid volunteers are trained by deacons to assist them in the parishes. The Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland spends some 350 million Finnish marks on diaconal parish work.

Contracts and financial status

It is the local parish councils who advertise vacant deacons' posts. Any qualified person may apply and applicants are interviewed by a selection team consisting of the pastor, deacon and a member of the parish council. The parish council chooses the new deacon for their ministry.

Parish deacons and deaconesses are the employees of the local parish council or of the common church council, if they are working in a large parish or special area where a group of parishes are working together. The Church Collective Labour Agreement regulates their working conditions in the parishes, including their salaries, appointment, hours of work, pension conditions and annual leave entitlement. In Finland, there is a Deacons' Association, which looks after the interests of deacons and to which most of the deacons and deaconesses working in the church structures belong. Deacons earn about as much as the specialist nurses or social workers in the public sector and have similar working hours. Their salaries are paid from the church tax collected from church members.

Regulations governing the deacon's ministry

The Finnish Church Law of 1994 (4:1§) and the Church Ordinance require the church to carry out diaconal work. According to the Church Ordinance (4:3§) every parish and every church member has to participate in this. There must be one or more posts in every parish for diaconal service (6:9§). The church council or parish council draws up detailed information and guidelines for practical diaconal work and for the ministry of the parish deacon.²³

²³ Voipio Jaakko, Träskman Gunnar, Halttunen Matti, Ventä Kari. *Uus Kirkkolain-säädäntö, kirkkolain, kirkkojärjestyksen ja kirkon vaalijärjestyksen kommentaari* (Jyväskylä 1997), pp. 34, 268, 280. (The Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland Law and Church Ordinance.)

Diaconal workers are covered by the Church Ordinance, the official orders, the guidelines on diaconal parish work and the ministry of a deacon, the guidelines of the Board of Diaconal Parish Work and the Church Collective Labour Agreement. Furthermore, deacons are covered by the Social Welfare Law (§ 57) and the Law on practicing a medical profession (§3, §7).²⁴ The regulations on the qualifications required for diaconal ministry were enacted by the Bishops' Conference. The bishop of a diocese commissions the candidates who have completed their diaconal education. Part of the rite of the Ordering of Deacons consists of a discussion between the bishop and the candidate. By this rite, deacons are bound to the Church for the rest of their lives.

3. SELECTION AND FORMATION

Discernment of vocation and selection criteria

Every candidate for professional diaconal training has to pass a psychological aptitude test and to have good physical health. Candidates must also be able and eligible to study at higher education level, and be well motivated for work in the Church. The qualification requirements are agreed with the Ministry of Education (for the nurse, health care nurse or social worker qualifications) and by the Episcopal Conference (for the eccle-

²⁴ Kirkkohallitus. *Diakonian viranhaltijan mallijohtosääntö* (Helsinki 1994), pp.1-7. (Diaconate Officer's Ordinance.)

siastical education). They both have details of the candidates' previous education.

The Diaconal Institutes in Finland are authorised to educate deacons and deaconesses and to recommend candidates to the bishop. Before they are made deacons or deaconesses, candidates must have passed the examination in diaconal ministry and have had a discussion with the bishop.

Education

Diaconal education is part of higher education in Finland. Deaconesses and deacons study for a total of three and a half to four and a half years full-time for a bachelor's degree in health care and social work. This carries 140 credits, including 60 credits for a one and a half year course in ecclesiastical studies approved by the Episcopal Conference. The ecclesiastical studies programme includes 10 to 15 credits in theology and a further 45 to 50 credits in parochial and multi-cultural diaconal work, pastoral care, family work, social work, biblical studies, and diaconal ministry.

Since 1992 there have been a great many changes in the education of deacons and deaconesses. Since that time Lahti Polytechnic, Institute of Parish Social Services and Oulu Polytechnic, Institute of Diaconal work have been training deaconesses at polytechnic level. In 1996, the Diaconal Institute of Higher Education in Finland (a temporary polytechnic incorporating Diaconal Institutions in Helsinki, Pori, Pieksämäki, Järvenpää,

Turku and Kauniainen) also began to deliver diaconal courses at polytechnic level. This institution will be a permanent polytechnic by August 2000. All diaconal education is currently organized by these three polytechnics. After 1st August 2000, all education of deacons and deaconesses will take place in the Diaconal Institute of Higher Education in Finland, with which the Diaconal Institutes in Lahti and Oulu will merge. The Institute of Parish Social Services in Lahti is already developing Diaconal Science in Finland, collaborating with two German universities (Heidelberg's Faculty of Diaconal Science, and Freiburg's Faculty of Caring Science) and with Helsinki University's Faculty of Practical Theology.

The institutes or faculties of the three polytechnics offer different degree programmes and pathway options for specialization in diaconal work, in health care, social services or education. The polytechnics aim to deliver the highest standard of vocational education in the field they represent. In pursuance of this, students are trained as independent professionals with scientific knowledge targeted towards applied research. Teaching at the polytechnics has a scientific and applied orientation, as shown by the practical training and development projects which the students undertake. All the polytechnics work in cooperation with other polytechnics and universities in Finland and abroad.

Currently the two permanent polytechnics of Lahti and Oulu have the opportunity to develop specialized courses of 20 to 40 credits at a higher level in *diakonia*. The learning programme

is being closely linked to the deacon's professional work. The specialist areas may include, for example, family work, or work with refugees. By 2000, the Diaconal Institutes at polytechnic level will be able to mount postgraduate courses carrying 60 to 80 credits, which may eventually lead to a further degree. In 2000, a small number of Finnish polytechnics will be given permission to submit proposals for such a degree.

4. AUTHORISATION

Authorisation to minister as a deacon in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland is given by the bishop. As described above, the Finnish distinction between deacons and deaconesses arises out of historical developments. At the present time the distinction between the terms deacon and deaconess relate to the different types of work for which deacons and deaconesses have been educated and trained. It does not indicate two different orders of ministry.

Terminology

According to Ahonen, the issue of the early church's threefold division of ministry (bishop, priest, and deacon) came to the fore in the 1970s under the influence of ecumenical discussion and study. In 1975 an authoritative working group of the Church Committee for Diaconal Work issued a report in favour of the threefold division. The working group concluded that the diaconate had 'essentially been narrowed down to only one sub-

area, to the charitable aspect of diaconal work'. They also noted that the official books of the Church exclusively emphasized the charitable aspect of diaconal ministry, ignoring its catechetical and liturgical roles.²⁵

At about the same time another significant report was published, the final report of the Ministry Committee set up by the Synod. The report emphasized that 'there should be no ministry in the church which does not have a function in the church's worship' and which does not manifest the indivisible unity of liturgy and service to one's neighbour. In the report the diaconate was understood as an essential part of the one ministry of Christ. The Synod rejected the Ministry Committee's views on the diaconate. At that time, Archbishop Martti Simojoki and later Archbishop Mikko Juva were among those who regarded such views on ministry and diaconate as contrary to the Lutheran tradition.

Discussion on the development of the diaconate in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland became submerged for more than ten years due to the intensive and harrowing debate about the ordination of women as pastors. Once the first women pastors were ordained in 1987, the debate on developing the diaconate recommenced. The immediate stimulus was provided by many representations made to the Synod and the Episcopal Conference, attempting to solve some of the problems related to the diaconate. Previously, in 1985, on behalf of the Evangeli-

²⁵ Ahonen, Risto, *The Development of the Diaconate in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland. A Lecture.* (London 21.11.1997)

cal-Lutheran Church of Finland, the Synod had replied as follows to the questions raised by the Faith and Order Commission's report on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*:

There is reason to re-examine the threefold division in our church. According to the Confessions, the ministry is one, but they are acquainted with the threefold division of ministry and can accept it as a human arrangement. The foundation, nature and practical applications of ministry demand continuous research and this is a challenge to the church.²⁶

In 1989, the Episcopal Conference commissioned Risto Ahonen to prepare a study on the ways in which the threefold division of the ordained ministry and the diaconate were understood in the Lutheran Churches and the kind of options the church had for developing the diaconate. The study was completed in 1991 and concluded that the diaconate is both an essential part of the one ministry of the church and an independent, lifelong vocation with its own special ministry within the church. The diaconate's principle area of responsibility is that of loving service, but it should always be closely connected with divine worship and the Holy Communion. Its ministry proceeds from the altar and always returns there.²⁷

²⁶ Suomen evankelis-luterilaisen kirkon piispainkokouksen 12.2.1992 asettaman työryhmän mietintö. *Kirkon virkarakenteen kehittäminen*. Suomen ev.lut. kirkon keskushallinto, Sarja B 1993:1 (Helsinki 1993), pp. 2-4. (Developing the official structure in the church.)

²⁷ Ahonen, Risto, *The Development of the Diaconate in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland. A Lecture*. (London 21.11.1997)

In 1992 the Episcopal Conference of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland set up a working group led by Bishop Erik Vikström, with the commission to draw up a proposal for a theologically tenable position on the structure of ministry. The group's report was entitled *Developing the Church's Order of Ministry*. It concluded that the ordained ministry could be conceived as containing within it, in the classical tradition, episcopal, presbyteral and diaconal ministries and that it was justifiable to reform the diaconate as a broad ministry of service. However, the chairman of the working group, Bishop Erik Vikström, submitted a dissenting report, arguing that the diaconate should be developed as a lay ministry. Vikström was the only bishop on the working group.²⁸

The Diaconate Committee, which was subsequently set up by the Synod in November 1994, published its report in 1997. In the Finnish debate, many representatives now expect that a decision on the diaconate will be taken by the National Synod in the near future.

The basic line taken in the 1997 report was as follows:

1. The church understands the diaconate as a part of 'one Ministry'. Although the report did not mention the concept of threefold ministry, it supported it in practice and recognised the possibility of two different ministries: the ministry of word and sacrament and the ministry of word and service.

²⁸ Suomen evankelis-luterilaisen kirkon piispainkokouksen 12.2.1992 asettaman työryhmän mietintö. *Kirkon virkarakenteen kehittäminen*. Suomen ev.lut. kirkon keskushallinto, Sarja B 1993:1 (Helsinki 1993), pp. 2-4.

2. The diaconate may consist of three kinds of special 'areas': deacons, church musicians, and education officers (youth workers).
3. All workers who are part of the diaconate should be ordained by the bishop in the cathedral of the diocese.
4. The tasks carried out by the diaconate will vary, depending on training and local parochial needs. However, the basic tasks would be essentially charitable, catechetical and liturgical.²⁹

In summary, the debate in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland has focused on two opposing ways of understanding diaconal ministry. On the one hand, the diaconate has been viewed as an integral part of the ordained ministry, and on the other it has been considered an important lay ministry. In Finland it has also been emphasised that, in spite of different premises, it is possible to find common goals in diaconal development. In practice, deacons and deaconesses have taken an increasingly active part in worship in local parishes, for instance by assisting in the distribution of Holy Communion. In other ways too, their parish work has recently moved towards giving expression to the diaconate's ecclesiological and christological nature.

The liturgies used for the making of deacons, pastors and bishops are quite similar. The use of similar rites and the

²⁹ Kirkkohallitus. *Yhdessä kirkon virassa. Suomen evankelis-luterilaisen kirkon vuonna 1994 asettaman diakonaattikomitean mietinto*. Suomen kirkon keskushallinto Sarja A 1997:9 (Helsinki 1997), pp.95-104.

evidence of ministerial practice seem to put deacons and deaconesses clearly within the ordained ministry. In discussion, however, two opposing views exist on their position, and a synodical decision is still awaited.

5. RELATIONSHIPS AND STRUCTURES

As a body, all members of the diaconate hold professional qualifications to bachelor's degree level, their work is regulated by state legislation, by the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland Act and the Church Ordinance. They also have an employment association which ensures that they have adequate terms and conditions of service.

When working in the parishes, they are employed by parish councils and are on a level equivalent to that of the pastor of the parish. They are normally independent practitioners in the parishes where they are employed, though in some cases, as outlined above, there is a head deacon or even a pastor in overall charge of diaconal work.

6. DEACONS' SELF-UNDERSTANDING

Deacons and deaconesses are able to work either within the church or in the secular social structures. However, most of them are unable to find posts within the church. Their personal vocation therefore leads to charitable work in public sector social work and healthcare, where they continue to fulfill their vocation to serve Jesus Christ.

The self-understanding of deaconesses and deacons has been described in studies of their diaconal work in the church. In 1995, Åstrand published the findings of research in which 141 deacons and deaconesses took part. The findings indicate that the work in which they are involved falls into three categories: spiritual, educational and practical.³⁰ The underlying purpose they see in this work, as outlined by Pohjolainen³¹ is to help their clients to be aware of God's love through personal experience. Christian love of neighbour is the expression of God's pure love. This and the fact that we all need our neighbour's love gives identity to diaconal ministers and their work.

Deaconesses and deacons see themselves as professional specialists and independent practitioners, working on a wide variety of assignments. Their professional identity is formed by their personal lives, their education, and their understanding of the Church's diaconal mission, as well as by their experience in practical diaconal work. They aim to ensure that every client feels respected as a human being and an individual. At the same time, they understand that their work has a spiritual significance. It depends on their own faith and Christian outlook on life. Their own spiritual development is an essential presupposition to enable them to see the spiritual distress of other people and to support them in searching. Spirituality gives their work

³⁰ Åstrand, Kaisa. Käytännöllistä ja hengellistä työtä. Tutkimus diakoniatyön vaativuudesta. Diakoniatyöntekijöiden liitto (Helsinki 1995), pp. 26-30. (Study of the demands placed on diaconal workers.)

³¹ Pohjolainen, Terttu. Diakonissan työ seurakunnassa. Pro gradu tutkielma, Tampereen yliopisto. Hoitotieteen laitos (Tampere 1996). (Master's thesis on the parochial work of deaconesses.)

its reason and meaning. The work they do demands an extensive knowledge of their audience and its situation. The personal life, faith and personality of deacons and deaconesses influences their ability to carry out their duties. The fact that they belong to the diaconate makes them delegates of the Church in every situation, even in their free time and private lives.

The work that deacons and deaconesses do is in areas which concern their parishioners most. One deaconess described her 30-year diaconal career as follows: 'This has been a wonderful job. Every day has been different and I have been given the strength to do this work. I feel like a channel of living water, I do not need to be something else. I have self-respect. I can be the icon of God too.' No doubt many deacons and deaconesses could express a similar sense of fulfillment, and when they cooperate with their colleagues in the public sector, they are respected as specialists in their own right. Despite all this, the theological discussion on Finnish *diakonia*, has shown that deacons and deaconesses are unsure of their place in the ministry of the Church. They are educated to see themselves as part of the threefold, spiritual division of the Church's ministry. They have a lifelong deacons' authorisation, having been made members of the diaconate by the bishop. They have a personal vocation and a calling from their parish to serve Christ. They have their own specific area of work among other spiritual employees in the parishes. Nevertheless, uncertainty is created by the fact that the Church has not officially and unambiguously recognized the deacon as an ordained minister.

As far as the liturgical aspect of their ministry is concerned, deacons have not been very visible in worship. At Holy Communion and at other services, some deacons sometimes have a role, for example on special occasions such as *Diakonia* Sunday, when they plan the worship with pastors. In recent years deacons have begun to read the Gospel in the service and, on rare occasions, some deacons have been invited to preach. They may also be intercessors or assist with the distribution of Holy Communion. The possibility of deacons taking extended Communion to the sick and house-bound has been discussed but there are no regulations yet to enable this. Many deacons and deaconesses are hoping this will be permitted, but the matter is bound up with the discussion about the diaconate as a whole.

7. THE WAY AHEAD

In the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland *diakonia* and diaconate are seen as belonging to the essence and mission of the church. As described above, *diakonia* is the responsibility of deacons and the common responsibility of parish members. Parochial diaconal work is well organised, and in each parish there must be a post for a deacon. The education of deacons is at the highest vocational level in polytechnics, which helps pastors and deacons to consult and work closely together. Pastors also participate in diaconal work and bring to it their theological expertise. Volunteer community workers support the development of their own community and work with deacons to help those who are in difficulties. In bigger towns and cities

there are *diakonia* centres for the general tasks of *diakonia*. The deaneries help needy parishes with the training of volunteers, and they organise other resources. Dioceses give help in planning diaconal work and give expert assistance for deacons in parishes. This work is centrally co-ordinated by the Division for *Diakonia* and Society, which plans, develops and supports the diaconal and social work of the church and links it to the country's health care and social system.

Despite these positive aspects to *diakonia* in Finland, there is still discussion about the diaconate and questions about whether the diaconate has a legitimate role in the Ministry of the Church (*ministerium ecclesiasticum*). Deacons and deaconesses are made deacons by the bishop through the rite of the Ordering of Deacons. The historical development of the diaconate has posed many questions for the theology of the diaconate in the Finnish Church. As mentioned above, a Diaconate Committee was set up by the National Synod in 1994 and published its report in 1997. This report has already been discussed in the Synod. It recommends that the diaconate should be reconstituted to include deacons, deaconesses, church musicians and youth workers. The church understands the diaconate as a part of the one Ministry, and in future, it is intended that only candidates who have been educated, called and appointed to a post in a parish will be ordained into the renewed diaconate. The 1997 report is to be discussed again in the National Synod.

The need for a renewed diaconate has been recognised but it seems to be very difficult to achieve. In the different discussions

which have taken place, the thoughts of the committee seem to be theologically and practically moving in the right direction towards renewal. This renewal needs to be backed up by precise church regulations, and further work is needed on this. One possible outcome may be that deacons and youth workers will be accepted as part of the diaconate in November 1999, when the National Synod is expected to debate this again. Whatever happens, deacons need to have their theological and legal status in the church clarified. The renewal of the diaconate would provide a stronger spiritual identity for deacons and their practical work in the church. It should also create a much stronger basis on which to develop diaconal education programmes.

Ecumenical Contacts

Finnish deacons and deaconesses have some international contacts with deacons of other countries or other Churches. Within the Nordic region, there are regular meetings at different levels of diaconal work. The Diakonia World Federation brings deacons from all over the world together every two years. The Kaiserswerth General Conference gives opportunities to meet deaconesses from different countries.

In Finland the Orthodox Church has a small number of deacons. Other churches and parishes have very few deacons involved in their work. There is not much actual co-operation between deacons of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland and deacons of other churches, except for occasional contact at international conferences.

One real means of co-operation is the research group for *diakonia* in Finland. This project, in which the Orthodox Church of Finland is also participating, is in its initial stages and involves representatives in universities and polytechnics. The aim of the research is to establish what the content of *diakonia* has been in Finland and what it is at present, and to seek a way of understanding *diakonia* in Finnish society according to a Finnish model. In pursuit of these aims, the project programme involves an analysis of the concept of *diakonia* and its content in different contexts, an evaluation of innovations in diaconal work and a survey of the relationship between models of *diakonia* and other traditions of care. The project seeks ways of implementing a high standard of co-operative research between the Finnish universities and polytechnics. In time there will also be active co-operation with international researchers in *diakonia*.

Selected References

- Ahonen Risto, A., *The Development of the Diaconate in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland*. A Lecture (London 21.11.1997).
- Ahonen, Risto, A. *Lähetetty kirkko. Näkökohtia keskusteluun kirkon uudistuksesta*. Kirkon tutkimuskeskus, Sarja A. Nro 69.1996. Gummerus kirjapaino Oy, pp.152-153 (Jyväskylä 1996). (Ahonen, Risto, A. *The missioned Church. Perspectives on the discussion of the renewal process of the Church*. The Research Centre of the Church, Series A, Number 69, 1996, Gummerus Printing House Ltd, pp. 152-153, (Jyväskylä 1996).
- Åstrand, Kaisa. *Käytännöllistä ja hengellistä työtä*. Tutkimus diakoniatyön vaativuudesta. Diakoniatyöntekijöiden liitto (Helsinki 1995), pp. 26-30. (Åstrand Kaisa, *Practical and Spiritual Work: a study of the demands placed on diaconal workers*. Diaconal Workers' Union (Helsinki 1995),
- Kirkkohallitus. Diakoniatyön mallijohtosääntö pp.1-6 (Helsinki 1994). (The Ecclesiastical Board, *The Ordinance of Diaconal Work*.)
- Kirkkohallitus 1997. Kirkkohallituksen toimintakertomus vuodelta 1997. Liite 2 9The Ecclesiastical Board, The Ecclesiastical Board, Annual Report, 1997, Appendix 2 (Helsinki 1997).)
- Kirkkohallitus. Diakonian viranhaltijan mallijohtosääntö pp.1-7 (Helsinki 1994). (The Ecclesiastical Board, Diaconate Officer's Ordinance.)
- Kirkkohallitus. Yhdessä kirkon virassa. Suomen evankelis-luterilaisen kirkon vuonna 1994 asettaman diakonaattikomitean mietinto pp.95-104. Suomen kirkon keskushallinto Sarja A 1997:9 (Helsinki 1997).
- Kirkon Diakonia ja yhteiskuntatyön keskus*. Työryhmä. Luonnos diakonia ja yhteiskuntatyön kehittämissuunnitelmaksi pp.1-2 / 32 (Helsinki 1994). (The Division for Diakonia and Society, Work Group, The Draft for the Development plan for diaconal and societal work)
- Mannermaa, Tuomo. *Kaksi rakkautta, johdatus Lutherin uskonmaailmaan* pp. 83-93. WSOY (Juva 1983). (Mannermaa, Tuomo. Two kinds of love - a guidance to the world of faith by Luther. WSOY (Juva 1983).)
- Mäkeläinen, Heikki. The direction of the Church 2000. In: Pirjo Töyryn-oja (ed.) *The evangelical Lutheran Church in Finnish Society. Documents of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland* 6, pp.11-19. Church Council for Foreign Affairs. Church Council (Helsinki 1994).
- Nälkäryhmä. *Köyhyysongelman ratkaisua hakemassa*. Nälkäryhmän kannanotto ja selvitys suomalaisesta köyhyydestä 1998 pp. 16-18 /38. Kirkkopalvelujen julkaisuja 1 (Helsinki 1998). (The Famine Group. Resolving the problem of poverty. Famine group opinion and report of the Finnish poverty in 1998 Publishing of the Church Services 1, (Helsinki 1998).)

- Pohjolainen, Terttu. *Diakonissan työ seurakunnassa*. Pro gradu tutkielma, Tampereen yliopisto. Hoitotieteen laitos (Tampere 1996). (Pohjolainen, Terttu. Deaconess's parochial work. Master's thesis in Tampere University, Faculty of Nursing Science, (Tampere 1996).)
- Räsänen, Päivi. *Seurakuntien ruokapankkitoiminta. Tutkimus Kuopion Ruokapankin asiakkaista*. Pro gradu-tutkielma. Kuopion yliopisto. Sosiaalitieteiden laitos pp. 82-83 (Kuopio 1998). (Räsänen, Päivi. Foodbank activities in the parishes. Master's Thesis on foodbank customers in Kuopio. Kuopio University, Faculty of Social Sciences pp.82-83, (Kuopio 1998).)
- Seppänen Marjaana, Hongisto Jaana, Linkola Elisa, Tynkkynen Markku. *Minun oli nälkä, tutkimus ruokapankista* pp. 10, 43-49 (Lahti 1997). (Seppänen Marjaana, Hongisto Jaana, Linkola Elisa, Tynkkynen Markku. I was hungry, Study on foodbank in Lahti. Pp.10, 43-49, (Lahti 1997).)
- Suomen evankelis-luterilaisen kirkon kirkkokäsikirja III, Kirkollisten toimitusten kirja. Hyväksytty kirkolliskokouksessa 1984. Diakonian virkaan vihkiminen pp.140-146 (Pieksämäki 1989). (The Manual of the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church III. Rituals of the Church, Approved in the Synod 1984. The Ordering of Deacons pp. 140-146 (Pieksämäki 1989).)
- Suomen evankelis-luterilaisen kirkon piispainkokouksen 12.2.1992 asettaman työryhmän mietintö. Kirkon virkarakenteen kehittäminen. Suomen ev.lut. kirkon keskushallinto, Sarja B 1993:1 pp. 2-4 (Helsinki 1993).
- Vikström, John. Report on the Situation of Religion in Finland, in *Documents of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland 1: Church in Finland. The History, Present State and Outlook for the Future of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland* pp.10-13. (Helsinki 1989).
- Voipio Jaakko, Träskman Gunnar, Halttunen Matti, Ventä Kari. *Uusi Kirkkolainsäädäntö, kirkkolain, kirkkojärjestyksen ja kirkon vaalijärjestyksen kommentaari* pp. 34, 268, 280 (Jyväskylä 1997). (Voipio Jaakko, Träskman Gunnar, Halttunen Matti, Ventä Kari. The new Church Law and Church Ordinance pp. 34, 268, 280 (Jyväskylä 1997).)
- Wirén, Edvin. *Verraton tie. Diakonian raamatullinen pohja, historiallinen kehitys ja nykyiset työmuodot* pp.156-162 (Helsinki 1947). (Wirén, Edvin. The incomparable road. Diakonia in the Bible, historical development and current practice.