

## Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey

### Commission on Ministry Report to the 225<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Report

The Commission on Ministry is composed of the chairs of the Committee on Priesthood, the Committee on the Diaconate, the head of the School for Deacons, the chairs of the Committee on Life Long Christian Formation and the head of the Ministry Institute. Canon Elizabeth Geitz serves as our liaison from the diocesan staff. We meet periodically throughout the year to report on each others initiatives and to support each others program. Below please find reports from each of these committees and ministries.

Respectfully submitted  
The Rev. John C. Belmont  
Chair

Attached Reports:  
18 A - Committee on Priesthood  
18 B - Committee on the Diaconate  
18 C - Committee on Life Long Christian Formation  
18 D - Ministry Institute

Document 18 A

### Committee on the Priesthood Report to the 225<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Convention – 2008-09

#### Current Status of Individuals in the Process

- Ordained to the Priesthood
  - Of the three transitional deacons ordained to the diaconate in June 2008:
    - Four were ordained to the priesthood in December 2008.
    - The fifth has additional work to complete before being ordained.
- Postulants and Candidates
  - There are currently six postulants and candidates at various stages:
    - Juniors or middlers in seminary (5): Five postulants are attending seminary full-time – one junior and three middlers. One of these middler seminarians is attending part-time.
    - Senior in seminary (1) – One postulant was approved for candidacy in the spring of 2008. This individual will take her GOEs in January 2009.
- Others in Process
  - Recently approved (2) – There were two applicants to the priesthood in 2008 who was interviewed for further ministry discernment in September 2008. These individuals were accepted as nominees into the process, had COP liaisons appointed for guidance, and were placed in a parish, other than their home parish, for further discernment. These nominees will be interviewed for postulancy in late January 2009.

- There are other potential applicants in various stages of completing work with their Parish Committees on Ministry.
- There are also four clergy from other denominations seeking ordination in The Episcopal Church through the Diocese.

### **Visits with Seminarians**

Members of the Committee on the Priesthood periodically visited our seminarians at General Theological Seminary in New York City. The GTS seminarians joined Bishop Romero, the Canon for Ministry Development and Deployment, and the Co-Chairs of the COP for individual conversations and then lunch in December 2008. One of the Co-Chairs visited seminarians at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia, in February 2008.

In June 2008 the COP held its second afternoon of fellowship and bible study at St. Matthews in Pennington so that seminarians and members of the COP could get to know each other better and to ensure that there is interaction before the seminarians are interviewed for candidacy. Also invited to attend were the summer interns from the inception of the summer program.

### **Recruitment**

The Subcommittee on Recruitment/Development of Clergy of Diverse Racial and Cultural Backgrounds and the Recruitment Subcommittee were combined under the leadership of The Rev. Greg Bezilla into the new Subcommittee on Recruitment. The new subcommittee has been quite active in developing new approaches to recruitment, including supporting Passion and Purpose Sunday, planning a retreat for young adults for May 2009, connecting more frequently with summer interns during the year, and developing a video aimed at attracting more young adults to the priesthood.

The Recruitment Subcommittee placed four college students in its 5<sup>th</sup> summer internship program to encourage college students to consider the priesthood. This brings the total number of summer interns supported by the diocese over the five years to 19. Funding to support this effort was obtained from members of the COP, the Girl's Friendly Society, churches, rectors, and individual donors. Interns receive \$3,000 each - \$2500 stipend and \$500 for books and materials.

### **Discernment Shepherds**

The subcommittee formed to provide guidance and training to Parish Committees on Ministry continued to shepherd discerners and PCOMs. All PCOMs with nominees in the process have been trained. This committee also monitors the progress of each nominee at the very early stages.

### **Financial Aid**

With the approval of the Standing Committee, the COP awarded \$81,000 in financial aid to six postulants attending seminary in the 2008-09 academic year. All postulants who applied for financial aid received assistance.

Submitted by  
The Rev. John Belmont and Ms. Constance White  
Co-Chairs, Committee on the Priesthood  
January 2009

**Committee on the Diaconate  
Report to the 225<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Convention**

**The School for Deacons** continues to grow and evolve as a viable asset to continuing education in the Diocese under the leadership of the Rev. Linda Moeller, director. The Venerable Victoria Cuff, archdeacon for discernment is the liaison between the School for Deacons and the COD.

**The Committee on the Diaconate** is responsible for interviewing, identifying and recommending applicants to the School for Deacons. It also continues to shepherd students in the school through the ordination process. The Committee works closely with the Rev. Elizabeth Geitz, Canon for Ministry Development, to assure that the discernment, selection process and preparation of those who have expressed a call to the diaconate is thoughtful, intentional and fair.

**The Archdeacons** have oversight and for deacons in the Diocese in three special areas.. The Venerable Keith McCoy is Archdeacon for Deployment in the diocese. The Venerable John Hanson is Archdeacon for Pastoral Care and the Venerable Victoria Cuff is Archdeacon for Discernment. The Archdeacons report directly to the Bishop.

**Candidates** in the class of 2009 are Rose Broderick, Susan Cushinotto, Judith Krom, Christopher Cox, David Lawson-Beck, Joseph Sweeney, and Carmen Viola.

**The COD** is involved in the North American Association for the Diaconate, which through publication and conferences, works within the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Church of Canada to promote the Diaconate, to educate the church about the diaconate, and to support deacons in ministry.

**The Committee on the Diaconate**, co-chaired by the Rev. Lynn H. Johnson, Dcn and the Ven. Victoria Cuff, Dcn. consists of the Rev. Anna Powell, the Rev. David L. LaQuintano, The Rev. Debra Brewin-Wilson, the Rev. William Parker, the Rev. Carolsue Cummings, Dcn., the Rev. Tom Sweeny, Dcn., the Rev. Emily Holman, Dcn, the Rev. Catherine Esposito, Dcn., Mr. Carroll Wilson, Mr. Cedric Richardson. Ms. Nancy Miller, Ms. Nancy Metcalf.

Respectfully submitted,  
The Venerable Victoria Cuff, Deacon, Co-Chair  
The Reverend Lynn H. Johnson, Deacon, Co-chair  
2008

**Committee on Life Long Christian Formation  
Report to the 225<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Convention**

The Committee on Life Long Christian Formation offers workshops, resources, and assistance to Christian educators throughout the Diocese.

On January 19, 2008 the Committee held a Christian Educator's Day with Our Bishop, presenting Storytelling for All Ages, led by Joanne Epply-Schmidt. This day, meant to support and honor both lay and clergy educators, focused on the art of storytelling, and how to engage the purpose and potential for stories in all areas of Christian formation. It was well received by all in attendance.

A Godly Play Certification training was held at Trinity Church, Princeton from March 6 to the 8<sup>th</sup>. Accommodations for the 19 attendees, from our Diocese as well as others, were provided by Princeton Theological Seminary, and there was interest in more Godly Play events for the future.

Every parish in the Diocese of New Jersey continues to have the opportunity to utilize the Audio Visual Resource Library (AVRL), which is in the Diocese of Pennsylvania. Videos, DVD's, and audio tapes can be ordered by phone (215-627-6434, ext.110) or email ([AVRL@diopa.org](mailto:AVRL@diopa.org)). The AVRL Catalog can now be accessed online at [www.mrconline.org](http://www.mrconline.org), or through the link as provided on our Diocesan website (please choose 'About the Diocese', then 'Committees', and then click on this committee's name for the link). This service is free to all parishes in our Diocese. There is a variety of material available for children, youth, and adults, encompassing areas from Scripture and liturgy to history, social values, and prayer.

Materials for our own Diocesan Resource Center are purchased as budget allows, and during 2008, we had a subscription with Church Publishing that allowed us to acquire one copy of every new Church Publishing publication for that year. The Rev. Bill Breedlove has graciously and generously spent much time to set up our Resource Center so that it may be accessed on line through the Diocesan website, with the assistance of Sarah Paige. It can be accessed in the same manner as the AVRL link.

The Committee also supports the Hightstown Conference, an ecumenical Christian Formation conference, held in March of each year, as well as supporting Diocesan sponsored Christian formation programs. We are happy to assist any parish that is looking for help with their own Christian Education/Formation program.

We would like to thank all members of the Committee who have served this year: Susan Legnani, and Michael Redpath, Co-chairs; The Rev. Gina Walsh-Minor, co-chair; The Reverends Gregory Bezilla, Lisa Caton, Sheelagh Clarke, Polly Kasey, Emily Griffin, Andrea Hayden, and Mary Jean Metzger; The Ven. Victoria Cuff; Lori Cooper, Donna Devlin, Nancy Miller, Lisa Hoffman, Deb Ellwood; The Rev. Lisa Mitchell, EFM Coordinator; The Canon Kep Short and Debbie Crall, Staff Liaisons.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Debbie Cook, Chair  
2008

**Document 18 D**

**Ministry Institute  
Report to the 225<sup>th</sup> Annual Diocesan Convention**

Again, I wish to thank all the commissions and committees and staff of the Diocese – without you the Ministry Institute would not have had such a splendid year. Your continued efforts at ensuring that everyone in the “Diocese of New Jersey (has) opportunities for Christian formation, spirituality, and ministry learning and development” are most appreciated, particularly since most of the offerings are planned by the commissions and committees of the Diocese.

The Spring and Fall 2008 Institute offerings were presented in the fourth and fifth semesters of the Institute.

In Spring 2008, there were twenty-two different courses, workshops, or events offered: fifteen planned for everyone, including two for adults working in youth ministry planned by the Youth Ministry Office, one planned specifically for the laity, one planned specifically for vestry members, and five planned specifically by and for the clergy. The Ministry Institute staff was especially pleased to again offer a class in the School for Deacons, open to everyone, and a lay retreat lead by Bishop Councill - "Preparing for Lent". Of the activities presented for everyone or the laity, 429 individuals registered.

In Fall 2008, there were seventeen different courses, workshops, or events offered: eleven planned for everyone, including two for adults working in youth ministry planned by the Youth Ministry Office, one planned specifically for the laity, and five planned specifically by and for the clergy. Of the activities presented for everyone or the laity, 311 individuals registered.

For Spring 2009, twenty-two different courses, workshops, or events are being offered: fifteen planned for everyone, including two for adults working in youth ministry planned by the Youth Ministry Office, one planned specifically for the laity, four planned specifically by and for the clergy, and, for the first time, two specifically planned for young adults. The Institute staff is delighted that Bishop Councill will lead a lay retreat "Preparing for Pentecost" in May 2009.

Submitted by,

Constance White  
Co-Director of the Ministry Institute  
January 2009