

Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey
Report of the Committee on the Priesthood to the 228th Annual Diocesan Convention
Annual Report – 2011-12

The Committee on the Priesthood oversees the journey of those discerning a call to the priesthood. Its responsibilities include reviewing applications, interviewing nominees, placing nominees in parishes other than their own for further discernment, recommending to the Bishop those who should become postulants and proceed in the process to become priests, and supporting those in the process from beginning steps, through seminary, to being ordained, including the award of diocesan grants for seminary study.

Current Status of Individuals in the Process

- **Ordained to the Priesthood**
 - In December, three transitional deacons were ordained to the priesthood at Trinity Church, Princeton. A fourth transitional deacon is anticipated to be ordained early in 2012 in Los Angeles, California where he is serving.
- **Transitional Deacons**
 - One candidate was ordained to the transitional diaconate in December and is expected to be ordained to the priesthood late spring/early summer. This individual took the General Ordination Examinations (GOEs) in January 2011.
- **Candidates**
 - There are currently two candidates who took their GOEs in January and who are expected to be ordained to the transitional diaconate in May. These two candidates required only an Anglican Studies year to qualify for ordination. Since they have not been in the diocesan process very long, a decision was made not to ordain them on the earlier schedule (fall ordination to the transitional diaconate and then early summer ordination to the priesthood). They are expected to be ordained to the priesthood in the fall or early winter.
- **Postulants**
 - There are currently nine postulants in seminary. Eight postulants are in the junior year (first year) and one is a middler (second year). One of these seminarians was approved as a postulant in September 2011.
 - It should be noted that two seminarians are enrolled in the Anglican Studies Program at the Lutheran Theological Seminary of Philadelphia. This program was approved by the Bishop and the Committee Co-chairs, after an in-depth examination of this program, for students living in southern New Jersey who would be unable to attend another seminary due to their work or family situation.
 - Recently approved (2):
 - There was one nominee to the priesthood in 2011 who was interviewed for further ministry discernment in September 2011. This individual was accepted as a nominee into the process, had a COP liaison appointed for guidance, and was placed in a parish, other than their home parish, for further discernment for six months. This nominee was approved for postulancy in January 2012.

- One nominee to the priesthood in 2011 is currently attending a non-Episcopalian seminary in the senior year. As a nominee, with the approval of the Bishop, upon recommendation of the Committee Co-chairs, this individual began discernment at a parish in the fall of 2011 for six months. Upon the interview with the Committee in January, the Committee deemed that this nominee had sufficient discernment and was worthy to be recommended for postulancy. This new postulant will begin an Anglican Studies program at an Episcopalian seminary in September
- Others in Process
 - There are other potential applicants in various stages of completing work with their Parish Committees on Ministry.
 - There is one individual ordained in another denomination seeking ordination in The Episcopal Church through the Diocese who took the GOEs in January 2012.

Visits with Seminarians

Members of the Committee on the Priesthood periodically visit those on this journey at their seminaries. A member of the Committee visited one of the seminarians at the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia. Other committee members visited with individuals at General Theological Seminary in New York City and at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Connecticut.

In June 2011 the COP held its fifth 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 continues to be active in developing new approaches to recruitment. There was the third Passion and Purpose Sunday on May 8, 2011. The fourth P & P Sunday will be held on April 22, 2012.

The Recruitment Subcommittee placed two college students in its 8th 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 eight years to 27. Interns receive \$3,000 each - \$2500 stipend and \$500 for books and materials.

In addition, the Subcommittee continued the Committee on the Priesthood's "Discerning a Call to the Priesthood" workshops with one on October 8, 2011, held at Trinity Church, Princeton.

Discernment Shepherds

The subcommittee formed to provide guidance and training to Parish Committees on Ministry (PCOM) continued to shepherd discerners and PCOMs. All PCOMs with nominees in the process were 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 \$90,500 in financial aid to eight postulants attending seminary in the 2011-12 academic year. All postulants who applied for financial aid received assistance.

January 2012

Respectfully submitted,
The Rev. John Belmont and Ms. Constance White
Co-Chairs, Committee on the Priesthood