

Committee on the Priesthood
Report to the 230th Diocesan Convention
Annual Report – 2013-14

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

There are currently thirteen individuals who are postulants, candidates, or transitional deacons journeying toward the priesthood. Three individuals have been recently ordained to the priesthood.

- Ordained to the Priesthood (3)
 - In June 2013, three candidates were ordained to the transitional diaconate at Trinity Cathedral. Then in December, they were ordained to the priesthood in the churches where they are serving.
- Transitional Deacons (4)
 - One candidate took the General Ordination Examinations (GOEs) in January 2013 and was then ordained to the transitional diaconate at Trinity Cathedral in June. In October another three candidates were ordained to the transitional diaconate at St. George's, Rumson and then took the GOEs in January 2014. All four of these transitional deacons are expected to be ordained to the priesthood late spring/early summer 2014.
- Candidates (2)
 - There are currently two candidates who took their GOEs in January 2014 who are expected to be ordained to the transitional diaconate on June 5 at Trinity Cathedral. They are expected to be ordained to the priesthood in the fall or early winter 2014.
- Postulants (7)
 - There are currently three postulants in seminary. One postulant is in the junior year (first year) and two postulants are in various stages of their middler year (second year).
 - Approved for postulancy in 2013 (4):
 - There is one deacon who is journeying to the priesthood who was approved for postulancy in May who will begin seminary in September.
 - There were two nominees to the priesthood in 2013 who were interviewed for further ministry discernment in September 2013. These nominees were accepted into the process, had COP liaisons appointed for guidance, and were placed in a parish, other than their home parish, for further discernment for six months. These nominees were approved for postulancy in February 2014.
 - One nominee to the priesthood in 2013 who completed a Masters of Divinity degree from Princeton Theological Seminary was approved for postulancy after an interview with the Committee on Priesthood in September 2013 and a COP liaison was appointed for guidance. Given the extensive work of this individual in various Episcopal parishes and Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE), no further discernment was deemed required. This new postulant will begin an Anglican Studies program at an Episcopalian seminary in September 2014.

- Others in Process
 - There are other nominees who have completed their work with Parish Committees on Ministries and submitted applications to the Diocese or are discerners (potential nominees) who are working with their Parish Committees on Ministry.

Visits with Seminarians

Members of the Committee on the Priesthood periodically visit those on this journey at their seminaries or when they are home. One member of the Committee is on the Board of Trustees at General Theological Seminary (GTS) and often visits with the Diocese's seminarians while there. In addition, Bishop Stokes has shared a meal with seminarians at GTS and at Virginia Theological Seminary. He has recently been named to the Board of Trustees at GTS.

In June 2013 the COP held its seventh 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 attending were several interns from the summer program. Traditionally, all interns from the inception of the program are invited to attend this afternoon of fellowship.

Recruitment

The Subcommittee on Recruitment/Development continues to be active in working to recruit individuals into the process. The fifth Passion & Purpose Sunday was held on April 14, 2013. The sixth was held on February 9, 2014.

The Recruitment Subcommittee placed four college students in its 9th 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 nine years to 33. Interns receive approximately \$2,500 to 3,000 in stipend, books, and materials.

In addition, the Recruitment Subcommittee continued the Committee on the Priesthood's "Discerning a Call to the Priesthood" workshops holding one on February 23, 2013 at Trinity Church, Princeton.

As reported last year, the Committee revised the Manual for Lay Ministries early in 2012 and held its first training for Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers and Eucharistic Visitors on October 20, 2012 at St. John's Church, Salem. This workshop was extremely well-received and additional workshops have been conducted: the second workshop on April 6, 2013 at Grace Church, Plainfield, the third workshop on November 9, 2013 at Trinity, Princeton, and the fourth workshop will be held on May 3, 2014 at Church of St. Mark's and All Saints', Galloway.

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 \$95,000 in financial aid to seven postulants attending seminary in the 2013-14 academic year. All postulants who applied for financial aid received assistance.

Respectfully submitted,
 The Reverend Canon John Belmont and Canon Constance White
 Co-Chairs, Committee on the Priesthood
 February 2014