

Committee on the Priesthood
Report to the 235th Diocesan Convention
Annual Report – 2018-19

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.

The Committee on the Priesthood has been working at the request of Bishop Stokes on two new approaches to raising priests locally for calls within the diocese. One approach is aimed at raising laity to the priesthood without a formally structured seminary program and the other is an approach to raise vocational deacons to the priesthood without a formally structured seminary program. The Committee has already completed work with one vocational deacon who was ordained in 2018 as a priest. The Committee is working with other individuals toward their becoming priests.

Current Status of Individuals in the Process

As of the end of 2018, there were 15 individuals who are postulants, candidates, or transitional deacons journeying toward the priesthood. There were also two vocational deacons who have been accepted into the process to become priests. In addition, there have been five individuals who were ordained to the priesthood during the past year who were raised from among the churches in the diocese.

- Ordained to the Priesthood (5)
 - On October 20, 2018, The Reverend Carmen Viola was ordained to the priesthood after many years as a vocational deacon in the Diocese. He was the first vocational deacon to be raised locally as a priest in this diocese in recent years.
 - On June 9, 2018, Bishop Stokes ordained five candidates to the transitional diaconate at Trinity Cathedral. Three of them were ordained to the priesthood later in the year. They were:
 - December 7, 2018 – The Reverend Graham Marsh
 - December 15, 2018 – The Reverend John Francis Maher
 - December 22, 2018 – The Reverend Sharon Patterson.
 Then on February 2, 2019, The Reverend George Rambow was ordained to the priesthood. The fifth ordinand to the Transitional Diaconate, The Reverend Kije Mugisha Rwamasirabo, is a Wisdom Year student at General Seminary and will be ordained to the priesthood in late spring/early summer of 2019.
- Transitional Deacons (3)
 - Bishop Stokes ordained Allison Burns-LaGreca and Tammy Young to the transitional diaconate on December 8, 2018, at Trinity Cathedral. He then ordained Daniel Somers to the transitional diaconate on December 13, 2018 at Trinity Cathedral. These transitional deacons are expected to be ordained to the priesthood in the spring or summer of 2019.
- Reception (1)
 - Stephen Connor, a former Roman Catholic priest, was received as a priest in The Episcopal Church on June 30, 2018.
- Candidates – Approved (1) and Upcoming (4)
 - The Standing Committee approved one postulant for candidacy in January 2019.
 - There are currently four individuals who will be interviewed for candidacy by the Standing Committee later in February. They are expected to be ordained to the transitional diaconate on

June 9, 2019 at Trinity Cathedral. Then in the winter of 2019, they are expected to be ordained to the priesthood. Three of them, all with M.Div. degrees, are completing their Anglican Studies year and the fourth, who also has a M.Div. degree, is working on a Ph.D.

- Postulants (6)
 - There are currently six postulants in seminary or completing other requirements for the priesthood.
 - Four postulants are in their middler or second year.
 - One postulant is taking a year off.
 - One postulant is completing local requirements.
- Vocational Deacons (2)

Under a new program established by the diocese, two vocational deacons are working toward being raised locally as priests in the Diocese.
- Nominees

As of the beginning of 2019, there are several nominees to the priesthood in various stages of the process. One nominee will be interviewed by the Committee on the Priesthood for postulancy in February. Others have had their initial interviews with the COP Co-Chairs and The Reverend Canon Brian Jemmott, staff liaison to the Committee. These nominees are completing their medical and psychological evaluations and then will be interviewed by the full Committee to determine whether they will require further ministry discernment or, depending upon the strength of the interview and prior formation applicable toward the priesthood, they may be recommended for postulancy.
- Others in Process
 - There are other nominees who have completed their work with Parish Committees on Ministries (PCOM) and submitted applications to the Diocese or are discerners (potential nominees) who are working with their Parish Committees on Ministry.

Recruitment

The Subcommittee on Recruitment/Development continues to be active in working to recruit individuals into the process. The Subcommittee placed one college student in its 14th summer internship program to encourage college students to consider the priesthood. Interns receive approximately \$2,000 in stipend, books, and materials.

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 \$ 115,700 in financial aid to eleven seminarians for the 2018-19 academic year, all from endowed scholarships dedicated to this purpose. All 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 12, 2019