

BISHOP'S REPORT

Dear Friends in Christ,

It has been just a year since my ordination and consecration as Eighth Bishop of the Diocese of Pittsburgh. In some ways it has been one of the most challenging years of my life, but it has also been one of the happiest. Betsy and I could not be more delighted than to be here in Pittsburgh among all of you. We are so grateful for your consistent hospitality and many kindnesses shown to us and Evan, even since before we arrived in August of 2012. We truly feel part of this diocesan family and look forward to serving among you for many years to come.

I must say that being a bishop is, in some ways, easier than getting ready to be a bishop. My episcopal colleagues repeatedly warned me, before my ordination, that “only thirty percent of what you have done over the last thirty years is transferrable.” That was a little daunting, and they were right. The learning curve has been steep. Add to this, the upheaval of the move and of finding a place to live, all coupled with the loss to cancer of Betsy’s sister, Annie, and the first few months were simply dizzying. But God is good, all the time, and He has carried and sustained us especially through the prayers of all of you, the work of our devoted and tireless diocesan staff, and the kind companionship of clergy and lay people we have found at every turn. We are now well-settled in our condo in Edgewood, Evan is out of college and working in Pittsburgh, and Betsy has established a private psychotherapy practice in Shadyside. And I find my day-to-day ministry as your bishop deeply fulfilling.

I have nearly completed an entire cycle of visitations, and I am enormously heartened by the vibrancy of local life in our congregations. I cannot tell you how much joy you give Betsy and me as we visit you from week to week. Our parishes encompass a great diversity of contexts and styles, and getting to know the clergy and people in their spiritual homes has been nothing less than a revelation.

Beyond this, the work of the past year has partly consisted in building on the legacy of Bishop Price, continuing to help us move from the crisis of the past few years into an emerging diocesan identity as a forward-looking network of mission-based churches. This transformation will not be easy or quick, and the groundwork will need to be carefully laid. As part of this, we need to continue the work of trust-building begun during the interim. Our diocesan conversations around matters of the blessing of same-sex unions and the ordination of partnered gays and lesbians have been a significant part of this. Designed by a diocesan planning team working with the Public Conversations Project, and financed mainly by the Constable Fund of the Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society, these structured dialogues were carried out from late spring of this year through September. They have been very helpful for those who have participated in understanding the deeply held convictions of others and in opening up the prospect of life together in the future without further division. I am hopeful that a policy decision in these areas can be made in mid-November, and that we will finally move successfully beyond what has been a source of deep antagonism for many years.

I have tried to spend as much time as possible listening to your hopes, fears, and dreams for the future. I believe one of my most important roles is as pastor to the clergy and their families, and I have been touched and honored at the extent to which my ordained colleagues have allowed me access to their lives. In September, many of us came together for a two-night clergy conference at the Antiochian Village, featuring Mike Moynagh, the Director of Research at Fresh Expressions (UK), who gave us a challenging and exciting picture of the many new ways churches in the United States and abroad are building new communities and revitalizing old ones through the missionary power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This was also a chance to spend informal time together, including one late night gabfest around theology and mission with a number of our younger clergy that left me bleary-eyed but happy the next morning. I have

been delighted to be included in two luncheons honoring our retired clergy, and Betsy has been working closely with clergy spouses toward an upcoming retreat in November.

When I arrived here, I was hopeful that a collaborative-style of episcopal leadership could become the norm in the diocese, and thus far I have not been disappointed. I find that people across the diocese are grateful to be consulted and not shy about speaking their minds. Having said that, I am still in the early stages of my tenure, and I obviously have a lot to learn. I have, for example, never served in a diocese where such obvious tension existed, historically, between laity and clergy. As an important next step in our future, I have convened, with the approval of Diocesan Council, a second stage of an earlier strategic planning group, now called the Task Force on Strategy for Mission. This includes a wide array of clergy and lay leaders from governing bodies, staff, and parishes. The earlier group offered observations concerning the strategic use of our parishes and assets, including mission opportunities in areas where we currently have no presence. A major focus of their vision was the principle of partnership in mission, where congregations with matching gifts and needs collaborate. I have asked "Task Force 2.0" to decide how best to implement this and further consider ways to advance three strategic goals:

1. **A Public Gospel.** *How do we more effectively bring the proclamation of God's mercy and hope in Jesus Christ out of our churches and into the public square?*
2. **Missional Communities.** *How do we re-create ourselves, from an assembly of isolated and settled, inward-looking religious associations, into a network of mutually supportive outward-focused apostolic societies?*
3. **Leadership Formation.** *How do we develop effective local leadership, lay and ordained, for the ongoing formation and empowerment of these communities?*

I will expand on these subjects in my address at the 2013 Convention. Suffice it to say that these will be the priorities I will be setting before the diocese over the next decade, and while our work in pursuit of these may vary from year to year, I think if we are able to make substantial progress in reshaping our common life so that these things can be clearly seen as normative, we may rightly give thanks to God for His having done a mighty work among us.

Outside our parishes, but related to them, I have established a warm relationship with Sheldon Calvary Camp, visiting that wonderful place three times this past summer, preaching and celebrating in the chapel, talking with the staff and directors, and hanging out with the kids. Evan was an aquatics counselor there and had a tremendous time. I was asked, and gladly consented, to introduce the video describing the upcoming capital campaign, and I have heard from many Calvary Camp families as a result. I look forward to many years of collaboration.

In the broader affairs of Pittsburgh, I have been active in the Christian Associates of Southwest Pennsylvania, and have begun to develop those ecumenical relationships. I am grateful for Bishop David Zubik's invitation to join him and other judicatory leaders in celebrating Tenebrae at St. Paul Cathedral during Holy Week, and for the Chrism Mass our clergy shared with my friend, Bishop Kurt Kusserow, and our other Lutheran brothers and sisters. Kurt was one of the principal co-consecrators at my ordination, and he and I have already been talking about ways to collaborate, to make the "call to common mission" between the ELCA and the Episcopal Church more of a reality in Pittsburgh. I have also made more than one appearance in meetings of organized labor in our area, including the Pittsburgh Labor Council, last year's IBEW District 3 Progress Meeting, and the recent United Way Breakfast convened by the local AFL-CIO. I am especially proud in these meetings to be by the side of Father Jack O'Malley, a Roman Catholic priest, who for decades has been a spiritual force within the labor movement and who was a hero of mine for years before I came to Pittsburgh.

I have been active beyond the diocese on several canonically-mandated trips related to the House of Bishops (one week in March and one in September); the College for Bishops (a week in January and a week in June); the Church Pension Group's introductory conference for new bishops and spouses (a few days last December); preaching engagements at the General Theological Seminary and at Wycliffe College, the University of Toronto; and ten days on mission in Uganda in my capacity as President of Pilgrim Africa. I was privileged with an honorary doctorate from General in May, and while in New York, I also ordained William Ogburn to the transitional diaconate.

I was honored to ordain my first class of priests in December: Charlie Hamill, Terry Johnston, Gwen Santiago, John Schaeffer, and Todd Schmidtter. In June, I ordained the remainder of my first crop of transitional deacons, who are already taking on exciting and interesting ministries: Frank Yesko is the new Deacon-in-Charge of St. Barnabas, Brackenridge; Eric McIntosh is Deacon-in-Charge of Saint James, Penn Hills, and is being supported through an Episcopal Church Foundation Fellowship; and Ben DeHart is filling a number of pastoral duties at St. Thomas, Oakmont, UPMC St. Margaret, and Nativity, Crafton.

In July, I welcomed the Rev. Dr. Catherine Brall as Canon Missioner from her most recent post as Provost of Trinity Cathedral. Cathy will be working with the other canons, and with lay and ordained leadership in our parishes, to promote missional development on the congregational level. The Rev. Timothy Hushion was appointed Priest-in-Charge of Trinity, and we are working with the chapter to prepare the cathedral for the next phase of its ministry.

Our Treasurer, Carl Hockenberry, left the staff in the spring to concentrate on his private practice. Carl did excellent work for us during his time with the diocese for which I am grateful, and as of this writing, I am hoping I will be able to announce his successor very soon. Marlene Rihn deserves special recognition for taking on a lot of additional work during the interim and handling it with great efficiency and constant goodwill.

Finally, I wish to express my deep thanks to all the staff of our diocese: our canons, Scott Quinn, Jay Geisler and Cathy Brall; our communication professionals, Rich Creehan and Andy Muhl; our financial assistant, Marlene Rihn; our property administrator and archivist, Joan Gundersen; our youth leaders, Vickie O'Brien and Brent Hansen; our chancellor, Andy Roman; and especially my executive assistant, Judi Rogers. I am more grateful for their work than I can possibly express.

Faithfully your bishop,
+Dorsey

BISHOPS' STATISTICS

September 1, 2012 – October 20, 2012

Bishop Kenneth L. Price, Jr.

Episcopal Visitations	8
Confirmations	16
Receptions	9
Baptisms	4
Marriages	0
Burials	0
Ordinations	0
Renewal of Vows	0

October 21, 2012 – August 31, 2013

Bishop Dorsey W.M. McConnell

Episcopal Visitations	19
Confirmations	44
Receptions	13
Baptisms	5
Marriages	1
Burials	0
Ordinations	9
(Order of Deacon 4; Order of Priest 5)	
Renewal of Vows	1