

CANON FOR ORDAINED VOCATIONS

As Canon for Ordained Vocations, I have focused on working with the Commission on Ministry on recruiting, preparing, and examining those who believe they have been called to the diaconate and priesthood. By God's grace we continue to be blessed and have had several ordinations in the last few years with other women and men moving toward that possibility.

I continue to work with the seminarians at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge and at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (PTS). Last year, Bishop McConnell and I taught a course at PTS: the "Anglican Way of Theology." Canon Cathy Brall continues to work with Episcopal students (as well as Presbyterian) at PTS as the Director of Field Education.

We have been blessed by many seminarians in the last ten years in the rebuilding of our diocese. I am concerned, however, with the "boomer" generation of clergy beginning to retire and the lack of young clergy and seminarians in the Church overall. The amount of debt that students take on in college, and then the additional debt from seminary, has caused the "seminary bubble." This educational debt and the lack of full-time clergy positions have caused a perfect storm. I believe our diocese is entering this bubble now: Not enough full-time positions and not enough younger clergy willing to work part-time. We are entering a period of clergy shortages in our diocese. We will need to be creative. For an interesting article, follow these links to the Rev. Jerry Bowyer's articles on the seminary bubble in *Forbes* magazine.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jerrybowyer/2011/04/20/the-seminary-bubble/>

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jerrybowyer/2011/05/11/bursting-the-seminary-bubble-part-ii/>

We will need to rely on our clergy even more as a result of the clergy shortage. Some parishes may need to have lay-led Morning Prayer on occasion rather than the traditional Sunday Communion Service.

We are hoping that more laity will be able to attend the Pittsburgh Pastoral Care Conference, which is held each April or May. This annual training conference for both clergy and lay leaders has successfully completed its eighteenth year. Dates for the upcoming 2019 conference will be announced soon.

If anyone has any comments, ideas, or suggestions for improving the formation of the people of God, please contact me at 412-414-3337 or send me an email at jgeisler@episcopalpgh.org.

Peace & Prayers,
The Rev. Canon Dr. Jay Geisler
Canon for Ordained Vocations