

Report of the Bishop 2019

The past year has seen a number of efforts come to fruition, some of which we have been working on for several years. A partial list includes the following:

- The Cathedral Working Group, in conjunction with Cathedral Chapter and the Board of Trustees, authorized commercial real estate firm Collier's International to issue an RFP (request for proposal) for the development of Trinity House, simultaneously seeking a possible tenant willing to occupy the existing building on the basis of a triple-net lease.
- Following the retirement of the Very Reverend Scott Quinn, Interim Dean of Trinity Cathedral, and with the unanimous endorsement of Cathedral Chapter, I appointed the Reverend Aidan Smith to a three-year term as Provost of the Cathedral, beginning in May. Aidan's ministry is already bearing fruit, and I am grateful for his faithful leadership.
- Thanks to a grant from the Widows' Corporation funding half his salary, the Reverend Canon Dr. Jay Geisler began a series of engagements with other dioceses in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, focusing particularly on the education of clergy on the dynamics of addiction and recovery. He has been instrumental in creating three-quarter-way houses for recovering addicts in this diocese, the latest in development at Saint Paul's Monongahela. Jay's other responsibilities include supervising the ministries of parishes in the Mon Valley.
- A diocesan-wide lay formation program, the Love+Teach+Heal Academy (LTH), was begun earlier in the year. Under the dynamic direction of the Reverend Canon Natalie Hall, two dozen lay leaders completed the first round of LTH. The curriculum will be continued and expanded in the fall.
- We have successfully launched the Anglican/Episcopal Track at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, with its first students matriculating from three dioceses in the fall of 2019.
- With the support of the Standing Committee and Diocesan Council, we launched Project CREED (the Committee to Re-Envision the Diocese), a broad-based, grassroots effort to discern where God might be calling our ministries in the future. Sixty-six volunteers initially committed to four working groups on the following topics: Governance, Communications, New Initiatives and Meeting Our Neighbor. They will offer substantive resolutions in each area for consideration at the 2019 Diocesan Convention.
- After ten years of dedicated service as Executive Assistant for the Diocese, Judi Rogers retired in May. Andy Muhl has succeeded her in a new consolidated position of Executive Assistant and Communications Specialist and is already doing a superb job..
- The Reverend Canon Kimberly Karashin was ordained to the priesthood in June and is preparing to take on the role of Director of Administration in January 2020, when Kathi Workman will reduce her hours, continuing as Treasurer on a part-time basis. Kathi has done extraordinary work as Director, and Kim+ is a worthy successor. Kim+ will remain

Canon for Mission, but we anticipate an additional half-time position will need to be filled in 2020 to help her balance those responsibilities. Kim+ is a great asset, not only in encouraging new initiatives in mission, but also for her dedicated care shown to so many of our parishes.

- The Reverend Dan Isadore, our University Chaplain, received a grant from the Episcopal Church enabling him to expand his ministry at Chatham University and the University of Pittsburgh. Through this work, as well as the regular gatherings in their home, Dan+ and his wife Hallie continue to build a growing community of young disciples.
- Interfaith and ecumenical relationships remain an important part of my work. Following the October 2018 massacre at Tree of Life synagogue in Squirrel Hill, I began meeting regularly with Rabbi Ron Symons of the Pittsburgh Jewish Community Center, to help build relationships with the Jewish community. Canon Hall reached out to Rabbi Jeremy Markiz of Temple Beth Shalom, resulting in a Shabbat-morning visit from members of the diocese, followed by a Q&A featuring Senior Rabbi Seth Adelson and myself. Canon Hall and Rabbi Markiz are also offering a summer course on seven rites of passage in Jewish and Christian tradition. Among many other engagements, I have also been in conversation with Som Sharma a leader in the Hindu community, about joint work in support of peace and non-violence we may be able to create in the coming year, and I joined with Rabbi Jeffery Myers and Imam Abdul Dickenson at an evening gathering (iftar) to break the fast of Ramadan. Sponsored by Peace Islands Institute and the Turkish Cultural Center, we spoke of texts in our own traditions that condemn violence and build reconciliation.
- I continue to work in any way I can to promote racial reconciliation in Pittsburgh and the region, meeting regularly with leaders of African American churches. I was invited to address a united gathering of the local Pentecostal Association at their revival on the evening of Pentecost, an invigorating three-and-a-half hours in church! Relationships among several members of our diocese and members of the Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church continue through Church Without Walls, though many groups have concluded their meetings. I am very proud of the ongoing work of our diocesan Commission on Race and Reconciliation, which has expanded its membership and included ecumenical partners.
- Our full-communion relationship with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America continues to deepen. Following the calls of Pastor Torrey Johnson as Priest-in-Charge of Holy Cross, Homewood, and our own Sara Irwin+ as Pastor of Saint John's Lutheran Church in Carnegie, Bishop Kusserow and I jointly presided at the institution in June of the Reverend Doug Kinsey as the new pastor of Saint Matthew's Lutheran Church in Crafton. As always, on Tuesday of Holy Week we celebrated the renewal of ordination vows in a joint gathering of Lutheran and Episcopal clergy at First Lutheran on Grant Street, with Bishop Kusserow presiding and myself in the pulpit. Next year we will do the same at Trinity Cathedral, with the bishops reversing their roles. Other joint work includes our support of the Episcopal Lutheran Alliance at Holy Cross Homewood in their after-school and summer programs for neighborhood children, and the thriving Episcopal-Lutheran Congregation of Saint Mary Magdalene, which meets on Sunday afternoons at Saint Stephen's, Wilksburg, under the energetic and faithful care of its ELCA Pastor, the Reverend Canon Natalie Hall.

- We have significantly increased the opportunities for the clergy to gather with one another and with me, beginning with a Clergy Convocation last fall, and three regional clergy-bishop Bible Studies. In June we also had a day of fun together at Topgolf in Pittsburgh (look it up: topgolf.com/us/pittsburgh/), featuring good food and some fine coaching. (Thanks, Shawn Malarkey+!) This array of offerings (three Bible Studies and two clergy days) will continue in the coming year, to supplement the annual clergy conference in September, which will remain a feature of our life together.
- We have substantially increased the presence of the Diocese, both in social and traditional media. Among the stories that were reported by news sources are the following:
 1. Reaction to the Tree of Life shooting, October 2018 -- multiple local and national news outlets.
 2. Profile of Kris Opat+ and the growth of St. David's, January 2019 -- Episcopal News Service and syndicated publications.
 3. Partnership with PTS for Anglican/Episcopal Studies, March 2019 -- multiple national religious news publications.
 4. Aidan Smith+ Appointed Cathedral Provost, March 2019 -- multiple national religious news publications.
 5. Ash Wednesday "Ashes to Go" distribution, March 2019 -- KDKA-TV and Post-Gazette.
 6. St. Paul's, Mt. Lebanon, Live Donkey Palm Sunday, April 2019 -- KDKA-TV.
 7. Trinity Cathedral Bells Ring for Notre-Dame de Paris, April 2019 -- all three local TV stations and Post-Gazette website.
 8. Telling Easter Stories to Children, April 2019 -- Post-Gazette.
 9. Trinity House Offered for Development, June 2019 -- Post-Gazette, Pgh. Business Times, ENS, The Living Church, and others.
 10. St. Paul's Goes Solar/Blessing Ceremony, June 2019 -- Post-Gazette, ENS, KDKA-TV, WTAE-TV, MtL Magazine.

The following is a short list of parishes who have gained publicity on their own:

1. Profile of Jay Geisler+ offering half-way houses, July 2018 -- Post-Gazette.
2. Trinity Cathedral Hosts Quantum Theater, September 2018 -- Post-Gazette.
3. Advent Brookline's Christmas Meals, December 2018 -- Post-Gazette.
4. Diocesan Social Justice & Outreach plastics initiative, starting January 2019 -- multiple local and national news outlets, incl. Washington Post.
5. St. Mark's, Johnstown, flood anniversary, May 2019 -- Tribune-Democrat, Daily American, and Altoona Mirror.
6. St. Mark's, Johnstown, labyrinth, June 2019 -- Tribune-Democrat.

My thanks especially to Rich Creehan, Director of External Affairs, and Andy Muhl, who manages our social media accounts, for their excellent work.

- Finally, the agreement reached last year between our diocese and the ACNA “Dennis Canon” parishes has begun to be implemented with relatively little difficulty and a great deal of goodwill. I am especially grateful to Russ Ayres, President of the Standing Committee; to

our Chancellor, Andy Roman; and to Kathi Workman and Marlene Rihn, our finance staff, for many patient hours working out the details with the parish leadership. This is the culmination of work that has taken many years, and has, in my view, resulted in a model of conflict-resolution, in a spirit of charity and reconciliation.

I will be on sabbatical from August 1 through November 3, and I am grateful that the Right Reverend Kenneth Price has agreed to return to Pittsburgh to fill in for me during my time away. +Ken and Mariann are well known in the diocese, and I know you will enjoy them as much as they delight in being back in our region. Please keep, +Ken, Mariann, Betsy and me in your prayers, and join me in frequent thanksgiving for our wonderful staff— Rich Creehan, our Director of External Relations; Canons Jay Geisler+, Natalie Hall+ and Kim Karashin+; Executive Assistant and Communications Specialist Andy Muhl; Kathi Workman, our Treasurer and Director of Administration; our Financial Assistant and Property Administrator Marlene Rihn; and our Chancellor Andy Roman. They are a superb team. I am deeply grateful for their partnership and service, as I am humbled and thankful to be your bishop.

Faithfully and respectfully submitted,

+Dorsey

Statistics for September 1, 2018 through August 31, 2019:

Visitations: 35
Confirmations: 33
Receptions: 27
Baptisms: 3
Marriages: 1
Burials: 1
Ordinations: 5 (Order of Deacon 2; Order of Priest 3)
Renewal of Vows: 1