

Annual Report 2021 – Canon for Mission & Director of Administration

Throughout the past year, your diocesan staff has worked hard to keep up with the usual demands of our roles while also addressing a variety of new and complex needs. I want to take this opportunity to commend, in particular, my colleagues on the diocese’s administrative staff, who daily assist our parishes, clergy, governing bodies, and committees in ways both large and small, and who do so with diligence and grace. Especially during these last many months of pandemic and transition, the value of their ministries has been beyond measure. I hope that, whenever you have the opportunity, you will join me in offering a word of thanks to Mr. Andy Muhl, Canon Kathi Workman, Ms. Marlene Rihn, and Ms. Jo Ann McLaughlin-Klemencic.

The following are highlights of my own work and ministry over the past year, as I continue to serve as Canon for Mission and Director of Administration:

- *Pandemic response:*
 - Coordinated the review and approval of Parish Mission Grant applications, including many related to our parishes’ new digital ministry initiatives.
 - Coordinated (and sometimes facilitated) our regular Clergy Zooms, designed to help keep clergy in touch and in tune with the guidance and expectations of our bishop with regard to the pandemic, as well as to help develop and maintain for clergy a network of advice and encouragement.
 - Participated in regular Bishops & Canons Coordination Calls, co-led by the Presiding Bishop’s Office and Episcopal Relief & Development. These calls primarily concerned the Church’s response to Covid-19, and were a valuable source of information and guidance as our diocese continued in its own response to the pandemic.

- *Parish & diocesan transitions:*
 - Provided support and encouragement to Church of the Redeemer, Squirrel Hill, in their search for a new rector, and to St. Brendan’s, Franklin Park, as they began discernment around the search for their next priest-in-charge.
 - Served on the Convention Planning Committee, helping in the planning and execution of the June 26 Special Convention to Elect the IX Bishop of Pittsburgh.
 - Developed a “decision tree” for the handling of regular diocesan functions, as well as any emergencies that may arise, during the period between Bishop McConnell’s retirement and Bishop-Elect Solak’s ordination and seating.

- *Special projects:*
 - Worked with Canon Kathi Workman to develop and implement a set of financial assistance request forms. Asking parishes and mission organizations to complete these forms allows the Diocese to evaluate funding requests against a standard set of criteria, allowing for more consistency and transparency around funding decisions.
 - Provided administrative support to Vice-Chancellor Sue DeWalt as we took necessary measures in response to the Boy Scouts of America bankruptcy case. Collected information about parishes with past or present Boy Scout affiliations.
 - Worked with Bishop McConnell and Canon Kathi Workman to design and fill the diocesan staff’s new part-time Administrative Specialist position.

I continue to be grateful for the opportunity to serve the diocese, its people, and our communities in these and other ways and look forward to learning where and how God will lead us in the year ahead.

In faith,

The Rev. Kimberly Karashin
Canon for Mission & Director of Administration