

## **ADVISORY TASK FORCE ON COLLABORATION**

The Advisory Task Force on Collaboration was created in response to a resolution of the 144th Annual Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh. The mission of the task force is to study and identify “opportunities for mutual and collaborative ministry partnerships” between the Dioceses of Pittsburgh and Northwestern Pennsylvania, and to explore resources for shared ministry with other neighboring dioceses and the programs and resources available through Province III.

With the advice of the Standing Committee, Bishop Price appointed these members to the task force in 2010: Mr. Lionel Deimel of St. Paul’s, Mt. Lebanon; Mrs. Annis Rogers of St. Mark’s, Johnstown; Mr. Ken Stiles of Calvary, East Liberty; the Rev. Kristian McInnes of St. Paul’s, Mt. Lebanon; the Rev. Canon Scott Quinn of Nativity, Crafton, and Canon to the Ordinary; the Rev. Dr. Wm. Jay Geisler of St. Peter’s, Brentwood, and Canon for Formation; the Rev. Dr. Bruce Robison (chair) of St. Andrew’s, Highland Park; and the Rev. Vicente Santiago of Advent, Jeannette. Bishop Price also participated actively with the task force, and we have appreciated the valuable participation as well of Mr. John Rogers and the Rev. Gwen Santiago.

Members of our task force and a peer group from the Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania met several times in 2010 and 2011 at Epiphany Church in Grove City. The Northwestern Pennsylvania task force also includes both clergy and laity, and is chaired by the Rev. Adam Trambley of St. Paul’s Church in Sharon. Bishops Price and Rowe, and the Canons to the Ordinary of both dioceses, participated in those gatherings.

We developed in those meetings some specific goals for collaborative ministry. The highlight and “first fruit” in a programmatic way of the task force’s work was a very successful and well-received “shared” Pittsburgh/Northwestern Pennsylvania Clergy Conference hosted by Strength for the Journey/CREDO and held at Seven Springs Resort and Conference Center in the spring of 2011. We at that time pledged to continue to focus on collaborative projects related to youth, mission and outreach, small church ministry, “back office” administration, communications, and Title IV procedures – very much looking forward to the participation and guidance of our new bishop as we would move forward in 2013.

I would highlight as well the work of Bishop Price and our Commission on Ministry in the collaboration with the Diocese of Southern Ohio on a program for the preparation of vocational deacons; and of continuing conversations between Bishop McConnell and Bishops Rowe and Klusmeyer (Diocese of West Virginia) about shared resources for the local preparation of ordinands for the priesthood.

The motivating rationale for the creation of the Task Force on Collaboration emphasized themes of mutuality and good stewardship in the context of a renewed spirit of connectedness between our diocese and the wider Episcopal Church. In that context, I would simply express my deep appreciation for the hard work and creative engagement in our first years of work on the part of Bishop Price, the members of our task force, and Bishop Rowe and our friends in Northwestern Pennsylvania. I believe there can be many good results from this conversation in the days and years ahead, and I have appreciated the encouragement of Bishop McConnell as we seek to continue along the way in 2014.

Bruce Robison  
Chair, Advisory Task Force on Collaboration