

CANON FOR FORMATION

As Canon for Formation, 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 year and more possibilities in the future.

I continue to work with the seminarians at Trinity School for Ministry in Ambridge and, in addition, have begun to work with the seminarians at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary (PTS). In 2015, the bishop and I taught two courses at PTS: the "Anglican Way of Theology" and "Liturgy as Pastoral Care." This dovetails nicely with Canon Cathy Brall's work with students at PTS fulltime as the Director of Field Education.

In September 2015, we had a Recovery Retreat in Foxburg, PA, with the clergy of the Episcopal Diocese of Northwestern Pennsylvania. The focus was on understanding addiction and its treatment. I wrote a grant request to the Widows Corporation of Pennsylvania, which funded the full event. It was wonderful cooperating with the clergy of our northern neighbor. This year we will be inviting clergy from the Episcopal Diocese of Central Pennsylvania.

Formation, however, is more than working with the clergy. In the upcoming year we hope to expand formation from being focused on clergy to helping form the laity to carry out the mission of the Church as found in the "Great Commandment."

Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."
Matthew 22:37-40

The diocese has also begun a new initiative called "the Mission in the Mon Valley." We will be working with those churches that are struggling in this distressed economic area that was the "steel heart of our nation" during World War II. I will be working with Canon Kim Karashin, and with clergy and laity of both Episcopal and Lutheran Churches.

We are hoping that more laity will be able to attend the Pittsburgh Pastoral Care Conference, which is held each year in April or May. This training conference has successfully completed its 15th year. The 2017 conference is scheduled for Friday May 5, 2017, at Christ Church Grove Farm. Go to www.pghpc.org for updates.

If anyone has any comments, idea, or suggestions for improving the formation of the people of God (both clergy and laity) please contact me at 412-414-3337 or send me an email at: jgeisler@episcopalpgh.org.

Peace & Prayers,
The Rev. Canon Dr. Jay Geisler