

# NEWS

**The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts**

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## **Biography: THE RT. REV. M. THOMAS SHAW, S.S.J.E.**

Marvil Thomas Shaw III was born in Battle Creek, Mich., on August 28, 1945, the son of Marvil Thomas Shaw II and Wilma Sylvia (Janes) Shaw. He is a graduate of Alma College and holds a Master of Divinity degree from General Theological Seminary in New York and a Master of Arts degree in theology from the Catholic University of America. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1971 and served as curate at the Church of St. Mary the Virgin in Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, England, from 1970 to 1971 and as assistant rector of St. James' Church, Milwaukee, from 1972 to 1974.

In 1975, he entered the Society of St. John the Evangelist, a religious order of priests and lay brothers in the Episcopal Church. Life professed in the society in 1981, he served a term as its superior, beginning in 1983, during which he established the retreat center at Emery House in West Newbury, Mass.; began Cowley Publications, an Episcopal and Anglican book publishing house; and developed a Boston-area program for inner-city boys and their families. In demand nationwide as a preacher, retreat leader and spiritual director, he served in 1993 as chaplain to the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church. He has written extensively, including his 2007 book, *Conversations with Scripture and Each Other* (Rowman & Littlefield).

Bishop Shaw was elected bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of Massachusetts on the first ballot at a special diocesan convention held on March 12, 1994, at the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Boston. He was consecrated a bishop on September 24, 1994, and succeeded the late Bishop David E. Johnson in January 1995 to become the 15th bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts.

Bishop Shaw is an active witness and voice for peace with justice in Palestine and Israel. He travels frequently and leads groups to the Holy Land, Africa and Central America, developing and strengthening mission relationships within the Anglican Communion and partnerships to further the church's work of reconciliation and service in the world, with a particular focus on eradication of poverty and disease. Bishop Shaw contributed to the work of the 1998 Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops on international debt and economic justice issues. In the spring of 2000, he spent a month in Washington, D.C., as a congressional intern, exploring the church's role in public life. He is a past chair of the Episcopal Church's Standing Commission on National and International Concerns and the Advisory Council for the Anglican Observer to the United Nations. He currently serves on the program planning committee for the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops and its program for formation of new bishops.

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Bishop Shaw is a founding member and the chair of the board of the Epiphany Middle School, a tuition-free, inner-city Boston school, and has initiated the Youth Leadership Academy in the Diocese of Massachusetts, a Christian leadership training program for high-school-aged Episcopalians. The completion in 2003 of the Barbara C. Harris Camp and Conference Center in Greenfield, N.H., is the result of his vision and leadership toward building strong lay and ordained leadership and ministering to children and young people to bring about their full inclusion in the life of the church, as is his 2008 initiation of a young adult relational evangelism ministry in the Diocese of Massachusetts. Recognizing that the current generation of young adults is more inclined to seek out faith connections through engagement with their peers rather than through institutions, the relational evangelism program trains and deploys young adult “relational evangelists” to help campus and young adult ministries grow at established sites.