

REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON MINISTRY 2010

The Commission on Ministry has the privilege of working with the bishops as they select and guide the formation of postulants and candidates in preparation for ordination to both the diaconate and priesthood. Our work is supported by many others, including sponsoring parishes and clergy, parish discernment committees, internship and field education parishes, seminaries, spiritual directors, and the families and friends of postulants and candidates.

We are grateful for the support and guidance of many in this diocese and beyond in helping to prepare those in our diocese who are called to ordained leadership in the church. We are particularly grateful for the support of clergy and laity in preparing postulants and candidates for diaconal ministry and for the support of divinity school faculty.

The Commission strives to uphold the ministry of all baptized people but most of our work centers on recruitment, discernment, and formation for ordained leadership in the Episcopal Church. We work collegially with the bishops, Standing Committee, officer for ordained vocations, diaconate program coordinator, examining chaplain, and COM chaplain.

Members of the COM continue to serve as liaisons to parish discernment committees, advisors to postulants and candidates, and meet monthly with the bishops and officer for ordained vocations. They continue to work in collaboration with the Standing Committee to make the ordination process accessible and to improve coordination and communication for all involved.

This past year the Commission received commitment forms from 25 individuals, of which 11 filed applications for postulancy. Of those 11, 3 were accepted as postulants to the diaconate and 4 to the priesthood effective June 1, 2010.

The COM continues to award scholarship assistance to those preparing for Holy Orders. Funding for this assistance comes from a diocesan endowment created in 2001 to support theological education and from donations to the bishops' discretionary funds received during parish visitations. This year \$40,400 was awarded to postulants and candidates. Scholarships ranged from \$2400 to \$8000 per person. These scholarships help to address the significant amount of debt incurred by those in the ordination process, which has long-term effects on deployment decisions.

The Commission reports the following data for the past year:

In January, six transitional deacons were ordained to the priesthood. In June, one candidate was ordained to the diaconate and five to the transitional diaconate.

Over the past year two postulants have withdrawn or been removed from the ordination process.

Prior to ordinations in June, there were 35 people in the ordination process. Following June ordinations, a total of 34 remain in the process as postulants, candidates and transitional deacons – 18 for the priesthood, 11 for the diaconate, and 5 transitional deacons. They come from 30 sponsoring parishes throughout all 12 deaneries in the diocese.

The average age of new postulants this year:

Year	Priesthood	Diaconate	Combined
2010	36	61	47

The average age of new postulants over the preceding five years:

Year	Combined
2009	45
2008	No new postulants accepted
2007	33
2006	43
2005	36

Submitted by:

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