

Commission on Ministry (COM) report to Diocesan Convention 2015

The commission on ministry consists of six lay persons (David Crosson, Davey Gerhard, John Gruenig, David Mealy, Brad Peterson, Mary Wood), three deacons (Carolyn Bolton, Margaret Deeths, Margaret Dyer-Chamberlain), and six priests (Philip Brochard, Kathy Crary, Alan Gates, Vanessa Glass, Stephen Hassett, Julie Wakelee-Lynch). We deeply mourn the death of the Rev. Brian Barnes, Arch Deacon, who was completing his second term on the COM this year. His passion for diaconal ministry will be missed by all. The chair of the COM in 2015 is John Gruenig. David Cross will be chair in 2016. We hope to increase the COM membership to its maximum allowable number of 20 in 2016 to accommodate increased responsibilities and task force work. We also look forward to “adjunct” partners who can bring expertise and experience to particular discernment and vocations work.

In December 2014 we ordained one transitional deacon, three priests, and one priest was received from another tradition. In June 2015 we ordained three vocational deacons, four transitional deacons, and two priests (one on behalf of another diocese). Following the Vocations Conference in December 2014, seven people were accepted as postulants, two for the vocational diaconate and five for the priesthood. There are currently seventeen people in the process towards ordination, fifteen of those for priesthood and two for the vocational diaconate.

Updated guidelines and forms for the ordination process were completed in early 2015 and were posted on the DioCal website. In addition, on-site education was provided for people in discernment for ministry in daily life, new postulants, local discernment committees, and other interested groups.

The following are the current task force groups of the COM:

- Local Discernment Committees for those seeking ordination
- Guidelines for reception from other traditions
- Review and update of Postulancy and Candidacy requirements
- Ordaining to the current and future church
- Empowering Lay Ministry (in collaboration with Dept. of Faith Formation)

In 2015, the COM was asked to assume responsibility for administering the financial aid programs for those undertaking theological education. The Board of Examining Chaplains, a long-established task force of the COM continued its work evaluating GOE results as well as reading and evaluating the portfolios candidates are now required to submit prior to ordination.