

1. Bishops are called to be one with the apostles in proclaiming Christ's resurrection. How would you describe your relationship with Christ, and where do you find abiding joy in the Gospel?

I cannot remember a time when I did not know that God loves me, has always loved me, and always will love me. Since I was baptized at Grace Episcopal, Ellensburg, WA in 1969 on a Tuesday evening with the children's choir present I have been nurtured in small and large Episcopal congregations wherever I've lived. As I grew, I got to know Jesus, to be awed by how he lived his life; welcoming the other without fear, offering healing and forgiveness without judgment, and speaking truth to power. As an adult I came to know Christ; the one who was so authentically himself, so rooted and confident in God's love, that he drew others to himself and shared unity with God through his willingness to walk in God's way, even to the cross and grave. My call to the priesthood came through the encouragement of several communities and it is in relationship with others that I experience God and God's call to share the Gospel and share joy. Yes, there is much trauma and sorrow in our lives, but there is always joy and connection with the holy. The privilege of sharing in the unfolding stories of people's lives brings me joy overflowing. That joy began with the great gift my parents and the Church gave me, the knowledge that God loves me; that joy continues because I know that nothing at all can separate me or you or anyone from the power of God's love.

2. Bishops are called to a ministry of reconciliation. How have you facilitated healing through your ministry?

I received a text a few days before Christmas; my colleague was ill, could I offer last rites to his parishioner that lived nearby? Of course, I could! But there was more to it than that. Several years earlier this person had been a parishioner of mine and had been the instigator of the first real "fight" I experienced as rector, challenging my leadership. (In sum, I had made a good decision but handled it poorly and learned a lot - but that is a different essay!) There were conversations, a consultant, but in the end, she left the parish. Though I was angry and hurt I never shut the door on our relationship. We checked in occasionally and she continued to attend parish events. I walked to her house that winter day, grateful that a wise person once told me that we don't fight with people we don't love and that we continue to work on relationships because forgiveness and new life are always possible.

James Keenan, SJ, says mercy is "the willingness to enter into the chaos of another." I am not afraid of the chaos I find in my own life, in the lives of others, or in communities. This is the way I approach reconciliation corporately, especially when establishing relationships with new priests in my Deanery. Reaching out matters in maintaining a relationship with an alderman after bitter and hateful public meetings, or reaching out, on behalf of our bishop, to a church separated after

a lawsuit. Reconciliation is possible through the hard work of relationship. That work is showing up and listening, even to people we don't like or who have hurt us. As a leader it is to always be the first to reach out, seek forgiveness, and welcome back or let go.

3. Bishops are called to guard the unity of the church. What strategies would you use to build bridges across the identified divides in this diocese, particularly urban/rural, large/small, and red/blue?

The convention floor erupted in applause when a group of twenty Episcopalians stepped forward to request their churches be welcomed into our diocese. Their diocese had split, some aligning with ACNA, others faithfully praying, worshipping and working to remain in TEC. What a joyful reunion it was! And a highlight of my time leading the Congregation Commission of the Diocese of Chicago. Our charge was to connect, encourage, and build relationships with mission congregations in rural, suburban, and urban communities. Congregations were of varying sizes and health, disconnected from each other and the diocese because of size, distance, and/or political divides – and because of the assumptions made on either side about what those signified. As a liaison I drove long distances to meet the lay and clergy leaders, to experience their unique ministries and hear about their community and its struggles. I formed trusting relationships so that I could connect them to diocesan resources (people, programs, money), and so that our bishop could tell their stories to the rest of the diocese. Just as the ministry of reconciliation is rooted in solid relationships, so too the ministry of unity is built in relationships. Unless we are willing to know each other and listen to each other across economic, cultural, and political divides we cannot truly be part of the body of Christ. I want to lead a diocese that is unified, not because we all look and think alike, but because we are committed to staying in relationship and even discovering strength through our divisions and differences.

4. Bishops are called to follow him who came not to be served but to serve. How do you embody humility and service in your ministry?

“You are the most non-anxious priest I know” said a colleague to me recently. I think my confidence in my leadership and ability to share power comes from a deep sense of God's love for me which I believe is present in everyone. When I was an assistant rector my mentor's motto was, “We don't say, ‘that is not my ministry.’” The music director and I laughed while we used the wet/dry vac to hold back the flooded basement while that rector was on vacation, but his motto has held true for me. Though each of us is called to particular ministries in the church, we are all called to serve. My wardens and vestry are in charge of buildings and money, and they are my partners in framing, reviewing, and carrying out mission, formation, and worship. Sometimes I call the plumber, the administrator welcomes strangers, and the sexton can be an evangelist. I am grateful that my current parish never put me on a pedestal but understands that I am the best

priest and pastor when I am fully myself, sharing my vulnerabilities and mistakes, and dancing my heart out at parties. When I live my authentic Christian life, I am a model for others to do the same. We are the only institution that exists primarily for those outside our doors, but we also exist to support and care for each other, and we do both those things best when we are clear about our gifts and deficits and together, work to bring about God's kingdom.

5. Bishops are called to "boldly proclaim and interpret the Gospel of Christ, enlightening the minds and stirring up the conscience of their people." How would you equip leaders to grow the church through evangelism, liturgy, and advocacy?

I believe that we live in an Episcopal moment. The world is hungry for ancient rites, vibrant music, and an embracing theology. The next Bishop of Rochester must be adept in forming lay and clergy leaders in discernment. There is no one program or tool that guarantees successful evangelism, perfect worship, and effective advocacy. If, as I believe, our best perspective is "We are building the plane as we are flying it," we must train people in discernment. We need varied tools that spark creativity and inspire, help us assess needs and gifts, set the vision, begin the work, and continually review and modify. I have found the College for Congregational Development a rich toolbox with models that work in small/large, traditional/emerging, and differently resourced churches. CCD trains lay and clergy leaders to use these tools in their various ministries. I have used them in my own parish and as a leader in our diocese, serving as a consultant for vestry retreats, mutual ministry reviews, and conflict resolution. Mostly, we must remember that God that grows the church; we are the workers in the vineyard, tilling the soil, pulling weeds, checking the weather, and harvesting the growth. The harvest is still plentiful!

6. Bishops are expected to be stewards of our diocesan gifts and ministries. What have been your successes and challenges as you have prioritized objectives, marshaled limited resources, and implemented plans to further the mission of the Church?

One of our challenges is the theology of scarcity. How often we say, "We don't have the money to..." and the frequency of the related question "Who do we know who can do this for free?" As if we have forgotten the feeding of the five thousand! I do not believe that if you build it the money will come; rather, my experience of the abundance possible in communities comes from practical transparency, creativity, and ongoing formation in the gospel. Transparency in financial statements helped my growing parish begin to live out of a theology of abundance, rather than scarcity, and established the trust needed to make three capital campaigns successful. Always, the goals behind a capital campaign, or the Vitality Grants I helped access as a member of the diocesan Congregation Commission were grounded in our gospel mission. How will building accessibility fulfill our mission? How will a new kitchen benefit the wider community? How can new technology help a struggling rural congregation? Ultimately, money is not the answer to

every challenge. We must also invite the right people to the table, explore the resources within and around the community, and form partnerships to solve problems in new, creative, and more sustainable ways. When the stewardship of all our gifts is rooted in our faith and fed by our Gospel values, we experience the abundance of God unleashed by human creativity.