



Bp. Mike with the priest at St. Willibrord - Munich

August 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

For me, Summer is always an opportunity to explore. Besides going to new (or old) places and making the trips to museums, parks or homes...it is for me, also (and especially) an opportunity to visit Churches.

This past Summer, Marsha and I had the opportunity to visit several different places ...

We began the summer with a trip to Vienna, Austria (not West Virginia), where I would be attending a meeting. We arrived a few days early to see the city, and to explore all that Vienna had to offer. We then went off to the Abbey in Melk, where the meeting was to be held. The Abbey is a large structure overlooking the Danube. The Guestmaster for the monks was very hospitable, and we were able to use the grounds as we needed. The people who served in the Abbey were most gracious and welcoming, and allowed us to get into some of the 'back halls' and various locations that may or may not have been open to others. We were certainly given access to the whole place, with our own keys to open certain doors, that would take us to 'restricted areas.' It was most interesting to 'go where most people have not gone before.' (Sorry Captain Kirk)

After the conference, we traveled to Munich for a short visit. Beyond the various routine places to see, we decided that we would go to an Old Catholic church for Sunday Eucharist. We looked on the web, and found a church nearby, and we learned what the times of Liturgy were.

Sunday morning, we walked to the Church with plenty of time to spare. As we approached the building, several people passed us by as they headed for the open door. No one said anything to us, but then again, they could have thought we were just walking by.

Then we walked in the Church building to find about a dozen people sitting and wandering around. We found the prayer books and bulletins and sat down. No one greeted us, or made mention of our presence. We sat for the whole Eucharist, and passed the Peace with those around us. At the time for the sharing of the Bread, we all gathered around the altar, and the priest and lay reader distributed Communion. We returned to our pews, with no conversation. Following the Mass, we exited the door, passing by the priest. We explained that we had been to the Old Catholic Bishops' Conference, and that I was an Episcopal Bishop from the US. He was certainly excited to hear this, and welcomed us. As we left, someone from the congregation came running after us to invite us to Coffee Hour. We weren't able to stay, due to our next item on our itinerary...but we thanked them for the invitation.

Our next two Sundays were taken by other similar visits - anonymous and invisible.

Finally, I visited one congregation that greeted us and welcomed us. They spoke about the programs at the Church, and I asked them how and why they were growing. Their response was, 'We welcome people, and we want them to become involved in our lives here at this Church.'

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News from Around the Diocese

In early August, over 40 children discovered five of God's Promises for them as they enjoyed a week of Adventures on Promise Island VBS at **Good Shepherd, Parkersburg**. Twenty teens and 20 adults served as guides, activity leaders, helpers or support staff. The whole building was alive with activity. In addition to skits, crafts, stories, games and songs, Dr. J and Dr. W had a science station which added to the excitement. About one third of the kids came from Good Shepherd or Trinity, Parkersburg; the rest came from the church neighborhood. Lunch was provided as part of the summer feeding program for low-income neighborhoods by the local school district. The photo shows some of the kids discovering God's promise for Thursday - I will save you.



St. Mark's, St. Albans has initiated a 3-phase capital campaign called the "Ring the Bell Campaign" to raise \$850,000 for all of the buildings, property and parking lot repairs. This five year campaign will repair the roof and floor joists of the old Church, repair drainage in the main Church, elevator shaft and parking lot. Bathroom renovations and other updates will be made, including a handicapped accessible entrance. We wish them great success with their campaign!

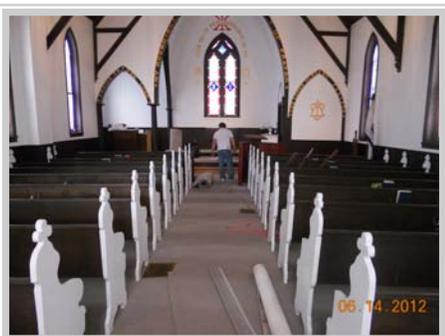


Canon Donald Vinson, the Rev. Theresa Kelley and Ms. Lori Osborne launched our first **Reading Camps** this summer at St. Luke's-on-the-Island in Wheeling and the Highland Education Project at Premier Park. Children in grades 2-4 were taught in a safe and stress-free atmosphere that made learning fun. In this photo, West Virginia author Belinda Anderson is shown reading to the campers.

We thank all of our Reading Camp volunteers and donors, as well as the students, for making our first camps a great success!

"Dark Night of the Soul," a webinar presented by **ConneXions** will be held Thursday evenings, October 11, 18, 25, and November 1 and 8, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Canon Faith Perrizo will lead participants in discussions and readings, and access is available by computer or by telephone. An optional retreat is planned for November 30-December 1 at the West Virginia Institute of Spirituality in Charleston. More information and registration details are on the ConneXions page of the diocesan website.

Mark your calendars now for next year's **Women's Conference!** The annual conference, sponsored by Women's Ministries, will be held at Peterkin the weekend of May 17-19, 2013. The program will be about prayer and action for women's ministries. More information will be available early next year.



Thanks to a generous donation from congregants George and Ellie Crump, **Emmanuel, Moorefield**, was able to renovate the Sanctuary. Cracked horse-hair plaster, faded paint and worn carpet were all upgraded. The results of the renovations are shown in the photo at left.



Health Ministries reminds us that we need to start considering our health needs for fall and winter. Make sure that flu and pneumonia vaccines are up to date, especially if over 65, to ensure a much healthier winter season.



UTO

**United Thank Offering
Grant Award
Fall Ingathering
at Convention**

The United Thank Offering is an outreach of the Episcopal Church started by the women in 1889. One hundred percent of the offerings are awarded every year around the world, and requests always outweigh the amount available. In late spring, the United Thank Offering awarded the High Rocks Academy in Pocahontas County \$21,101 for expansion of the kitchen, the first grant awarded in WV in several years. Now is the time to develop grant ideas for this fall. The applications will be available soon and must be completed online. Only one application can be submitted for each diocese.

An Ingathering will be held at Diocesan Convention. Checks can be brought to the Ingathering but are not necessary. Many churches have held Spring or Fall Ingatherings and have sent their donations at that time. All churches are asked to participate to show support for the UTO. Offerings should be presented to Becky Szabo at Convention, or mailed to her at 1328 Main St., Follansbee, WV 26037. Email: Becky8910@aol.com. Phone: (304) 527-2537.

General Convention

The 77th General Convention of the Episcopal Church was held in July in Indianapolis. Those attending from our diocese were Bishop Mike and Marsha Klusmeyer, the Rev. Cheryl Winter, the Rev. Stan and Joan Holmes, the Rev. John and Bertha Valentine, the Rev. Paul Hicks, Sissy Poland, Beth Marquart, Linda Comins, Toni Lynn DeVore, Becki Krzywdik, Becky Szabo and Debbie Ventura. Even with a full agenda to cover in a relatively short time, time was found to visit with old and new friends.



Bishop Mike and Marsha are pictured with Bishop Jim and Gloria Waggoner. Bishop Jim was Canon to the Ordinary and a member of Diocesan staff in the Diocese of West Virginia prior to his election as Bishop of Spokane.



Congratulations to Debbie Ventura, *Chair of Health Ministries* in our diocese. Debbie was elected Church Periodical Club (CPC) National Board Secretary for a second term, and CPC Province III President. In this photo taken at General Convention, Debbie (in glasses) is shown with Rebecca Markert, the newly elected National President of the CPC. The CPC provides gifts to our seminarians for books for their personal libraries, and *Forward Day by Day* for the Women's Prison in Alderson, WV and the Highland Educational Project near Welch. Visit their national website at churchperiodical.com.

Bishop Klusmeyer's message continued

We are genuinely active in greeting people and making them feel welcome!

And...to tell the truth...we felt welcomed and wanted. We felt that if we were in the area, we would certainly have come back and tried to make that church our parish home.

Why is it so difficult to welcome the stranger? Why do we recede into our old habits of being comfortable? Why do we not reach out to make others feel at home here in our own home church?

This is something which I hope we will work on in the coming years here in WV.

I pray you welcome the stranger, and make them feel at home.

Faithfully,



The Rt. Rev. W. Michie Klusmeyer
Bishop





“HERE AM I, CHOOSE ME! CHOOSE ME!”

*AN APPENDIX TO “A VOLLEY FROM THE CANON, NUMBER 141:
REDISCOVERING THE SACRAMENT OF UNCTION*

Hard as it is to get anyone to agree to undertake any form of ministry in the church, I am about to lay upon you an additional impediment.

Never ask for, or accept, volunteers.

At least, not quickly, spontaneously, or without the same vetting and discernment process that is in place for others being considered. Oh, there is not such a process in place? Then make one. This is important.

Here’s why. All ministry roles require contact with other human beings. Such ministers, lay or ordained, staff members or volunteers, represent the church. It is imperative that they do so with charity, hospitality, humility, good humor, graciousness, and generosity of spirit. They require the trust and respect of the congregation. Perhaps most of all, they need an attitude of selflessness. They need the capacity to remove themselves from the picture and focus on God and the person needing the ministry. Would that all those attributes applied to everyone in our congregations, but alas, that is not always the case. These ministries are too important just to assign to the first person who says, “I’d like to do that.” When was the last time the easy way turned out to be the best way? There is no ministry role in the church that just anyone is equipped to do effectively. Sadly, very often the ones who want the role are the least capable of it, or at least the ones most likely to make it all about themselves. Whether the congregation needs a lector, a chalice, a lay Eucharistic visitor, a catechist, a pastoral visitor, a volunteer receptionist — or a new Rector — the fact is that it would be better to leave that ministry undone for a while than to put in place someone not suited for the role.

Suppose you want to institute a healing prayer ministry that includes both lay and ordained healing ministers. The priest member of the team is to offer the sacrament of unction, the anointing with oil. The lay member(s) of the team will join with the priest in the laying on of hands, with prayer silent or spoken. Imagine the consequences to the ministry, and to the sick person, if the one laying on hands is a gossip, a busy-body, or a bottomless pit of personal, emotional neediness, intent (consciously or unconsciously) on siphoning off as much as possible of the Spirit’s power present for their own needs!

Ouch! That sounds harsh! I do not charge all volunteers with such ulterior motives. In such a scenario, you might well receive a volunteer who would make an outstanding, superlative healing minister for the congregation. The problem is, you would get one or more of those others, as well. The purpose of discernment is valuable for both, to fathom which is which. If the process is disappointing to the one not discerned to have the charism for a particular ministry, it is in equal measure encouraging and empowering to the one affirmed in that role.

I am not saying that the ordained are exempt from any such hazards, for they are not. However, the clergy have experienced an extensive examination requiring the approval of a number of persons at many levels prior to their ordination or call as rector/priest-in-charge. The lay ones need to undergo a similarly careful consideration. The dangers are that grave.

The bottom line is to remember that you are not soliciting persons to come forward to take on a particular ministry role in the congregation. You are seeking recommendations of persons to enter the process of discernment possibly leading to selection and preparation for such a role. What a huge and important distinction that nuance makes!

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