

Report of the Commission on Ministry
to the 43rd Convention of the Diocese of El Camino Real

Your diocesan Commission on Ministry (COM) assists with discernment and formation for those seeking Holy Orders or licensing for lay ministries. We work in close consultation with the Bishop, accompanying people throughout their entire discernment process. The following are some highlights from the past year.

Your current 2023 COM consists of these faithful folks: Holly Cooper, Mary Ann Gee, Nancy McGuffin, Matt O'Connor, Rita Welsh, and the Revs Susan Arnold, Ricardo Avila, Karen Cuffie, Aaron Klinefelter, Rich Towers, and Alejandra Trillos. We are ably assisted by Dr. Donald Fennell and Kirstin Nielsen.

This year saw the re-launch of the Diocesan Discernment Committee (DDC, we love our acronyms), whose five members comprise the initial group with whom a new discerner meets, once they receive approval from the bishop to do so. We currently have one person meeting with the DDC, and we pray more "inquirers" or "discerners" or "aspirants" will be starting the process in the coming months. The church can always use more able shepherds!

Thanks be to God, the Rev. Jen Crompton was ordained to the priesthood this year and the Rev. Joel Martinez to the transitional diaconate. COM is grateful to have been part of their discernment process. Both are doing wonderful ministry already, as we knew they would.

Our recently-revamped 21-page guide for those entering the process of discernment, *Discernment Process for Ordination*, continues to prove a valuable guide. This document, also available in Spanish, is on the ECR website for any wishing to explore a possible call to ordained ministry.

COM meets monthly on Zoom, checking in with Bishop Lucinda as needed. We continue to widen the parameters of our spiritual sharing when we meet, looking at scripture passages, poems, songs, and artwork through the *lectio* process, gaining insights together. We also held our yearly all-day in-person COM Retreat at Sargent House, Salinas, in March, always a fun and prayerful time.

Serving on the COM requires a commitment to serve Christ's Church through authentic engagement with persons in discernment. We will continue to work closely with the Bishop to further streamline our processes, and we hope to offer a Ministry Discernment Retreat in the new year. Your Commission on Ministry serves with joy and gratitude, giving thanks to God for the plentiful harvest, and laborers enough for the reaping.

Respectfully submitted by
The Rev. Ricardo Avila
COM Chair
November 1, 2023