



May 2024 Diocesan Update



## By way of DCS

Pictures left to right: 1-2. The setting apart of Dss. Fleming and the ordination of Fr. Barto at Holy Trinity Church, Chantilly. Participating in the service: Fr. Bart Gingerich, Fr. Josiah Jones, Dss. Michelle Caldwell, Fr. Jonathan Kell. 3. Visit with Fr. Ken Mills at his home following his recent hospitalization. 4. Institution of Fr. Jeff Hubbard at Trinity Church, Mason. Participating in the service: Fr. Duane Veley, Fr. David Truax, and Fr. Richard Palmer.

### Sermon excerpt from the Ordination of Fr. Bill Barto and the Setting Apart of Dss. Shelley Fleming, May 18, 2024

Fr. Bill, you are joining that group which is uniquely called and given a place in overseeing the vision and entire process which St. Paul has laid out for us: the Temple construction united and moving forward...the members of the Body equipped to build up itself in love. In our prayers and in our meditations, we clergy never cease asking,

“What must I do to protect Christ’s flock from the wolves that come to divide and to devour them?”

“What can I do to move every member along toward the unity and maturity Jesus desires and to challenge every member to emulate and follow Jesus’ way of life and love?”

Dss. Shelley, you are joining women who throughout the ages have devoted themselves to our Lord and to a life of selfless service and works of charity...women set apart and focused on directing people’s attention to Jesus, to the love of God and to that which is good, refreshing, pure and true.

People who don garments of service in Christ’s Church are great gifts to us, to our lives and to our world. We should esteem them for receiving the call to serve God’s people and the world in this way...especially in a world and culture derisive and even hostile to “religious” people in general and to those wearing these garments and accepting this call in particular. Where would we be without faithful clergy and deaconesses?...People scattered as sheep without a shepherd was Jesus’ heart-breaking assessment of where we would be!

Unfaithful clergy are undoubtedly a blight, a scourge and a curse. Their negligence and abuse impoverish our world and bring ruin to us all. Their unfaithfulness is particularly embarrassing, inflicting shame upon those who wear these clothes. The extreme reaction towards unfaithful ministers only highlights how important and vital sacred ministry is to the well-being of all.

Without faithful clergy, who is there to unite us and equip us to serve our Lord and His Kingdom? Who will call us together to worship God and to pray...who baptizes us, marries us, and is with us at the hour of death? Who instructs us in the Scriptures, hears our confessions and pronounces absolution for our sins? Who feeds us the Bread of Life?

Christ's Church, with its many members, is a gift to the world...salt holding back corruption, light clearing the darkness. Those in sacred ministry...leading the Church, announcing God's love and salvation and offering a better way are ever in need of our love, support, encouragement and prayer. Fr. Bill and beloved Dss. Shelley...as we all move on from this place, and as you begin your priestly/servant work and your deaconess/servant ministry, know we are with you, we are for you and we are praying for you. Thank you for serving us and our world as vital members of Christ's Church.

+Peter



*We speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (1 Corinthians 2: 6-8).*

