

**Identity**

*What invigorates you, and what concerns you in your ministry? How does this relate to your sense of call to be considered for the office of Bishop in the Diocese of Bethlehem?*

Recently, our Comptroller sent our diocesan staff a video of parrots dancing to guitar music.

<https://youtu.be/2v6DZYhTQLM>

We cannot stop watching it. Aside from the fact that it's hilarious, the video reflects conditions for ministry that invigorate me: whether we're the one dancing with wild enthusiasm or the one holding up a hand to say "enough already" in any given moment, we are responding together to the music we hear—namely, God's song of invitation. I am most invigorated when God invites me to exercise creative and skillful ministry to address real challenges together with other committed and gifted ministry partners who sometimes goad me on enthusiastically and other times help restrain me from my own overly zealous moves, but who always walk alongside me quite closely in the work.

The times that concern me in my ministry occur when I become misaligned with the work of my ministry partners and find myself unable to move together with them. Those times usually happen when one or more of us eclipses God's song with the sound of our own anxieties, insecurities, and fears. Working in a community of leaders on complex challenges gives me joy and increases my energy. I love diocesan level work; it gives me opportunity to serve the clergy and laity across a diocese in ways that help bring together a ministry of compassion and care with a strategic vision for the future. I see this opportunity in a myriad of tasks—from addressing conflict in a parish to preaching at a stewardship event to managing needed organizational change adaptively to support future ministry.

I hear in the words I've read and heard about you that you're poised for a season of collaborative, creative work in a community of leaders eager to work from a foundation of trust that is built as an investment over time. I hear that you have known the pain of broken trust, of having that pain sometimes eclipse the song of God, and that you have done some important healing as well as some thoughtful preparation in the areas of

leadership and spiritual growth and are now eager to work closely with a bishop who loves you to do creative work together to build the future of the Church in Bethlehem, a Church with ears attuned to a song that keeps calling you beyond your own life and into your communities, where substantive needs and issues require your leadership. I am drawn to a vision of working collaboratively with you to listen for God's song and respond together, crafting our mission and ministry in response to the call we hear in that song. That work would bring me joy.

### **Leadership**

*We all bring strengths and weaknesses to our ministry as leaders. Please tell us about some of your strengths and give us some examples of how these gifts have strengthened others in ministry. Tell us about some of your weaknesses and give us some examples of how you have worked with others to strengthen ministry, despite your weaknesses.*

People tell me I'm a bridge builder, and I do think building consensus is a strength of mine. I've been blessed to have been invited to work across lines of difference in the Church. I've helped architect and implement numerous processes at parish and diocesan-wide levels over the past two decades to bridge divides. I have strengths in my capacity to listen to disparate views and pull the relevant threads to build common understanding. Using these skills, I helped our bishop rebuild the collegium of Colorado at a time when we could have moved toward a split. Instead, we were able to build a strong common life despite widely divergent theological and political points of view in a diverse state. I am also able to help hear and articulate a vision; I am not conflict avoidant and do not shy away from difficult and demanding conversations. I am willing to exercise prophetic ministry when needed, while maintaining a clear sight line to the impact of my actions on the whole body of Christ. I have much enthusiasm for preaching and speaking, and I am told I am effective in these areas in giving voice to a vision that may be nascent but carrying great potential. We were able to do significant work in my parish on racial justice and reconciliation and are now doing work in the same area at a diocesan level, and my role has included helping to articulate the vision and create the structures and processes that support the strategic leadership of others to accomplish our goals.

I also work well with high volume, and I have good supervisory and administrative skills. I am not easily overwhelmed by a fast-paced, demanding work load; I tend to enjoy it. These tendencies strengthen others in the office by helping them experience being supported by my leadership.

I love great liturgy. However, I think the details of putting together a liturgy is not a strength of mine. I know it when I see it, but there are others more gifted than I at the design work. When I was rector of St. Thomas, I worked closely with my colleague to create dynamic worship. She would often craft a liturgy, and then together we would fine tune it to get a great result.

Likewise, I do not have strengths in visual design that translates a creative idea into something people can access visually. I am better with words and ideas, and even if I have some sense of what materials may need to look like (such as websites or other visual tools), I need help translating my ideas. I have worked over the past several months with our Communications Director, Mike Orr, to develop means of communicating important initiatives across the diocese. I help generate the ideas, and Mike masterfully translates them into visually accessible realities.

### **Adaptability**

*We are a diocese of small congregations who are continuously challenged to be adaptive to changing contexts and diminishing resources. Tell us about an experience where you and those you have led demonstrated adaptability in order to pursue the mission of the church?*

We too in Colorado are a diocese comprised mostly of small congregations who face the challenge of changing contexts and diminishing resources. This landscape requires we marshal diocesan resources in new ways to serve their needs. Historically, as one part of its mission, our diocesan Foundation offered significant stewardship programming to congregations. This was accomplished by the direction of a large annual stream of diocesan income to the Foundation to manage and use for operations

and programming. In recent years, we began to see opportunity costs in persisting with this older structure and use of resources. The leadership structures and flow of revenue, while initially useful, over time created a separation between the Foundation and the Standing Committee and Bishop that we began to see was hindering us in working as one body all moving in the same direction.

We were becoming clear that serving small churches with diminishing resources required a new structure, new roles, and new ways of directing the revenue stream that had been stewarded faithfully for decades by the Foundation. We needed to work in alignment with one vision and purpose to support local ministries, rather than have two “guardians” of the diocese. Yet there were stakeholders in each part of the structure who did not initially welcome the idea of change and saw risks of losing priorities and roles important to them. To change required a well thought out process. It was daunting to me at first because I held relationships dear with those who held divergent positions on the best path forward. Nevertheless, my bishop asked me to craft conversations and process to effect structural change that would allow both the Foundation and the Standing Committee to best serve local communities.

Our adaptive work involved shifting from an assumption either that the status quo would suffice or that the outcome would require us to throw some people and interests under the bus to achieve the aims of others. I had to believe we could in the end hear together one call from God. The first phase of the work was to get a clear, comprehensive picture of the range of concerns and points of view. The second phase involved exploring options that might address the most substantial concerns on all sides. The third phase involved testing a draft of a plan and gauging buy-in then course correcting where necessary. In each phase, I brought together key stakeholders deemed to have the best skill set for that part of the work – all under the bishop’s guidance. By the time we got to the step of actually implementing the change, we had done the kind of thorough work that led us to an outcome that seemed truly right to everyone. The decisions made allow the Foundation to sharpen its focus on stewarding our financial resources while also allowing the diocese to initiate new offerings in areas of stewardship development, outreach, and back office support that will tangibly support the mission of our smaller congregations.