

## TRINITY EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

### REPORT OF THE DEAN TO THE VESTRY

FEBRUARY 25, 2021

I permitted myself precisely one evening to mope about the call of the Reverend Canon Andrew Grosso to St Michael and All Angels Church in Dallas, Texas. I had occupied my seat in the Dean's office for just over one month when Andrew shared his exciting news. Even my brief tenure was time enough for me to see what an extraordinarily gifted priest and invaluable colleague he is. We all acknowledge that while his departure is a loss for Trinity Cathedral it is a tremendous step for him and a great gain for the people of St Michael's Church. We wish Andrew and Diana all the best as they prepare for their move, and will continue to hold them in prayer as they begin their new ministry.

Having concluded my moping, I awoke the morning after Andrew shared his news and began to realize the thrilling possibilities that this transition opens for Trinity. As we prepare to emerge from COVID hibernation in the coming months (God willing!), we now have the opportunity to re-envision our staffing arrangement, and to reinvigorate our core ministries. These are intimidating gifts, because they demand of us honest self-assessment, and a willingness to venture great things for the Kingdom of God. But these are amazing gifts nonetheless, and must be received as such!

No matter what, there are four things that will always happen on the 1100 block of Sumter Street, Columbia, South Carolina. We will always worship together—even when we are physically apart! We will always nurture and inspire Christians as we grow in our faith—a growth that begins at birth and continues right up to the grave (and even beyond, for as the Prayer Book tells us we go “from strength to strength in the life of perfect service in thy heavenly kingdom...”). We will always care for one another in this community—an effort that includes the pastoral ministries of our clergy and lay chaplains, our prayers for wholeness and healing, our support of those in need or in crisis, and our occasions of joy and fellowship and community building. And we will always reach out to the world around us to share and spread the love of Christ in word and deed—right here in Columbia, in the mountains of Haiti, and beyond.

Worship, formation, pastoral care, and mission and outreach. We have always known that those things matter. Now we have the chance to reflect on, plan for, and implement a vision for our staff that will allow us to bring to bear the full resources (individual, institutional, and financial) of this extraordinary place in that extraordinary work.

And we will need to be creative in that reflection, planning, and implementation. We need to consider carefully where the ordained ministry of a priest or deacon is best utilized, and boldly imagine where a well-equipped and fully empowered layperson's gifts might shine. We need to ask ourselves whether our staff has the resources needed to accomplish their goals, and we need to ask whether those goals have been adequately and appropriately articulated.

I am sorry for the loss of Andrew as a day-to-day colleague. (I specify day-to-day because I look forward to further collaboration with him and his new congregation in the years ahead.) I am thankful every moment for Dorian Del Priore, Patsy Malanuk, Donald Benson, Jared Johnson, and all our talented, committed staff. And I am excited for the challenge and joy of these next steps we will take together in faith. God has given us a great gift in this moment. May we receive it gratefully, and use it faithfully.