

The Diocesan Transition Officer *Guiding the Transition Process*

The period between leave-taking and new beginnings is a critical time for both parish and priest. Diocesan transition ministers guide this process, working directly with their diocesan bishops to understand local adaptations of that process, which may vary in different dioceses and provinces of the Episcopal Church.

In the Diocese of Indianapolis, the Canon to the Ordinary for Congregational Development and Leadership and the Associate for Transitions and Congregational Development oversee this process in guiding parishes toward calling their next Rector.

Parishes can rely on the canon/transition officer to:

- Work with a departing Rector and with the church's Wardens and Vestry to prepare for the priest's leave-taking from the congregation
- Provide expectations and guidelines for healthy boundaries between the parish and priest once he or she has left the congregations
- Meet with the Wardens and Vestry to offer input, tools, and support throughout the interim process
- Provide recommendations for suitable interim clergy during the transition
- Work with the Interim and the Bishop to integrate the search process with the developmental tasks of the interim period
- Be available to provide informational meetings for the congregation
- Be available to lead a training retreat on the transition/interim period and the work of the Vestry and Search Committee
- Assist the Vestry and Search Committee with tasks related to the call process
- Train Vestry and Search Committee leaders to facilitate a series of Holy Conversations
- Equip the Search Committee to analyze the data, develop a parish profile, fill out the requisite forms from the national office, create interview questions, conduct interviews, set measurable goals and ministry skills as indicated by the data
- Provide a checkpoint for the Search Committee to ensure that they are providing Vestry and Bishop with necessary information at key points in the process
- Input the data with the national Office of Transition Ministry to open the search process
- Support the search process by conducting both initial and formal background checks of applicants for a position
- Forward nominations to the Bishop for approval, then to the Search Committee chair
- Be available for questions and consultations throughout the process
- Provide advice and support materials for communications with candidates
- Share clergy and congregational resources, including diocesan expectations for a Letter of Agreement, recommendations for a job description, etc.
- Offer liturgical celebration resources and recommendations for hospitality in welcoming a new Rector

- Provide a ministry of presence at worship and in the life of the congregation during the transition process
- Support the new Rector in the months following his or her new call – offering support, counsel, resources to help her or him to become acclimated in the community and in this new role