



I received an email some weeks ago inviting me to attend a diocesan workshop on transitions. I agreed to go and spent last weekend down in Casper with about 40 other people, both clergy and lay, and a couple of trainers from the Interim Ministry Network. The IMN is based in Baltimore and has become a nation-wide program helping train and prepare people for interim ministry.

Ultimately all clergy are interims as nobody stays in one place from ordination to death. That said, interim ministry is a special vocation in which a clergy person is called to get a parish from where they were under the previous priest to a place where they are ready to call a new priest. This ranges anywhere from 12 to 24 months, sometimes longer if needed.

Before anyone begins wondering – No, I am not looking to become an interim minister and I am very happy to be where I am for a long time.

So why was I asked to be part of this weekend session of interim ministry? Because, as it turns out, the focus wasn't on interim ministry as much as it was on transitions and how to work through a time of transition.

We here in the Diocese of Wyoming are in a period of transition. After Paul-Gordon Chandler resigned, the diocese entered a period of transition. The Standing Committee, and SC President Mtr. Megan Nickles, stepped in to assume canonical authority, and they called the Rt. Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori as our Assisting Bishop. The Standing Committee is currently in a search for an interim bishop under whom the work of searching and calling a Diocesan Bishop will take place.

We are in a period of transition. What came out of the weekend was a recognition and understanding that we, as a diocese, need to first do some good, internal work about defining who we are so that we can call a bishop who will join us on our journey. What we can't do, and shouldn't do, is to call a bishop as a quick-fix solution. Transitions take time.

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A good example is Moses and the people of Israel. Notice that the Israelites didn't go from Egypt to the Promised Land immediately. It took time - 40 years as a matter of fact. As someone once said, "It took 40 days for the Israelites to get out of Egypt, but it took 40 years to get Egypt out of the Israelites."

So, while I am not an interim minister, we are all on a journey of transition and we will make that journey together, eventually ending up where God is calling us to be. I ask you to be patient and open to this process and, if possible, refrain from grumbling, "We have nothing to eat and we hate this detestable food."

Blessings,

Todd+

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