



Highlights of diocesan news in printable format — May 15, 2024

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## From the Bishop

### How you can support the newly Confirmed, Received and Reaffirmed

*This is a transcript of a video message.*

This is Bishop Hughes in the Diocese of Newark. The last few weeks have been full of incredible joy and hopefulness as it is Confirmation season in the diocese. Usually a weekday and on a Saturday or a Sunday, there's been a Confirmation service in one of the regions of the diocese, there's another one tonight, and then the last one is this coming Saturday.

And every time I go to those services, I have been so moved, inspired and overjoyed, listening to the enthusiasm and excitement of those who are about to profess their faith. And then of course, being in it with them, getting to pray over them as the congregation and I all pray for the Holy Spirit to come, and help them lead the life that they are called to lead and to serve God the way God would like them to serve, wherever they are in the world. It's a very humbling, it's a very moving, and it is a very touching experience to be with them at this really tender time of their spiritual life.

In my last blog post, I talked with you about this notion of growing the faith. Rather than spending all of our time focused on how to grow the church, how to have more numbers of people, to really truly look at growing the faith. And Confirmation and people who prepared for Reception into the

Episcopal Church, or also Reaffirming Baptismal vows, are such an incredible example of how we come together to help people grow in their faith. To learn more about who they are, as people of faith, learn more about what God is asking them to do or be, and helping them develop practices for living into that faith.

And every service, one of the things I do is talk to the people, the parents, friends, family, sponsors of those who come to profess their faith, and I ask for their help. I ask them to surround these people, to be in conversation with them after the fact. That the act of Confirmation or Reception or Reaffirmation doesn't end with that service, it actually begins fresh as they leave, that they're a minister in a new kind of way. And when I say minister, I mean a person who is serving God's people, wherever God's people are to be found, which is everywhere, because God created all people.

And there they are, with all of that excitement about going out to serve and having professed their faith. And when they go out, go back to their homes, go back to their friends, go back to work, go back to school, they really do need places where they can talk with people about the faith.

When I talked about growing faith, I suggested two things. One is fellowship, this creating places where people can talk, and the other is evangelism, learning to get to the place where we can actually share faith with other people beyond just our friendship groups.

# Diocesan Announcements

## Clergy ministry transitions

### Arrivals

- **MAY 1: The Rev. Deacon Jacqueline McLeod**  
Deacon,  
Christ Church, Bloomfield/Glen Ridge
- **JUN 16: The Rev. Melina Dezhbod**  
Assistant Rector for Church Growth,  
St. Elizabeth's, Ridgewood

### Departures

- **MAR 31: The Rev. Hilario Albert**  
Priest-in-Charge,  
Grace, Union City

So as these Confirmands and those who have been Received into the Episcopal Church or Reaffirm their Baptismal vows, make their way back to your congregation, I want to invite you to ask them about their faith. Ask them how they feel like God is calling them, ask them about their gifts for ministry, how God might be gifting them, to serve people. Ask them how they feel like they have been sent by God into something, just in the last few weeks, just since they participated in professing their faith.

When you do that with these folks, you are creating that fellowship with them. You're creating that sense of friendship and safety and closeness and understanding that encourages them to continue to grow in the faith and to talk about the faith and claim the faith. This is this piece of supporting people in the faith of growing our faith and growing other people's faith. This is a fundamental act of Christianity, of living into relationship with God and living into relationship with other people.

They are coming home to you, all of these wonderful people who have professed their faith. Please be there for them, be in fellowship with them, be their support team, be their nurturers. Help them to continue to grow in faith.