



Highlights of diocesan news in printable format — May 29, 2024

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From the Bishop

This summer, share your gift of faith

This is a transcript of a video message.

This is Bishop Hughes in the Diocese of Newark. We have been talking about growing the faith for about a year now, and it's really stayed on my mind as we finished up Confirmation season – I talked about this in the last blog post.

And I want to talk about it again today, in part, because I was remembering a conversation that I had with a dad in the diocese, a man who's very active in his church and also active in committees on the diocesan level, bringing ministry to things we do here, across churches, not just in one church. Incredibly faithful, thinks a lot about what he hears in how sermons in Scripture match up with what he sees in life, prays for people, wonders about how he can help, how he can make things better.

And he talked with me last spring, primarily because he was worried about his children. And not worried that anything was going wrong, but worried that time was passing so quickly, they were in that tween-teen stage. And that life was moving so fast, and they were changing so fast, and he was afraid he was going to miss it. And it wasn't just about missing all the changes, but realizing he didn't want to miss the opportunity to help shape and nurture and grow them into good, healthy young adults. I don't know that at the top of his list,

he was thinking, I'm gonna form really faithful young people in my children. But the reality is, he's a very faithful man. So if he's helping to shape them as who they're going to be as people, chances are, he's going to be shaping them to be faithful because he is faithful.

And that's exactly why this happened. I know this because this dad wrote me a note lately, recently, in it telling me about a sermon that he and his child had listened to. And they were talking about something associated, a related topic. And his child said to him, "But Dad, didn't you hear what was in the sermon! This is how we're supposed to work through these things." And he, anyway, he wrote me to say how, what a humbling and wonderful experience it was to realize that his child was trying to school him – and as a matter of fact, did teach him something about the sermon in Scripture that particular day.

This is what growing faith looks like. All of us, at some point, there was someone like that dad, and it may not have been a parent, it may have been a friend, it may have been a Sunday school teacher, it may have been an aunt or an uncle. It may have been a godparent, it may have been a teacher in school, it may have been somebody, somewhere that had no children, even. But somebody who talked with us about faith, whether it was kind of working through something, how to make sense of it, or explaining to us that we were loved by God and created by God, and that we're fantastic exactly as we are, because God didn't make a mistake in the way that we were created. It was

somebody who explained Jesus to us. And if you're an Episcopalian, it was somebody who shows you how to use the prayer book, and how to hold your hands to receive Communion. And explained that that wonderful feeling that happens when you receive Jesus, whether it's in a prayer or in a song, or in a conversation, or when you receive Communion. But that wonderful feeling of having your heart so full of love is one that you're not ever meant to be without. All of this is what growing faith looks like.

Now, listen to me. Someone did that for each of us. At some point in our lives, someone did that for us, and we were given the gift of faith. That person handed off faith to us, and God gave it to us through that person. And each of us has the opportunity to now hand that faith to someone else.

We're on the brink of summer. And you are going to be around all kinds of people and many of them will be young, whether they're your children, or grandchildren, or nieces or nephews, or friends of kids or kids of friends. You are going to be around young people this summer. Look for those opportunities. Talk about the complicated things. Don't run away from them. Encourage them to know that they are beloved by God as well as beloved by you.

You've got the gift of faith. Turn around and share it with someone else. Grow the faith this summer.



Diocesan Announcements

Convention Corner: Meet the groups planning Convention

The 150th Annual Diocesan Convention is less than 6 months away! With the onset of summer, that six months from a practical standpoint is actually *less* than six months. There is a lot of work and preparation that is going into this Convention. Plans for this event have been developing for most of the past year – since the February 2023 Convention adjourned!

There are multiple groups that have been hard at work meeting, discussing, and planning what the 150th Annual Diocesan Convention will look like. Convention any year is a large undertaking, but when you are marking the 150th, there is an opportunity to plan for the enormity of the occasion. You have been hearing about some of the work throughout the year in *The VOICE Online*.

So, who has been working on Convention so far?

150th Anniversary Committee – This committee is developing a series of programs and events for the 2024-2025 program year. Convention is serving as one of the tent-pole events for this Committee, and along with the Bishop they developed the theme of this year's Sesquicentennial Celebration, which also serves as the theme for Convention itself: ***Diocese of Newark: Yesterday, Today & Forever – Learning Our Past, Embracing Our Present and Inviting You into Our Future***. They are going to announce soon the plans for the whole year.

Arrangements Committee – This Committee of the Convention is the group of volunteers that works closely with the Bishop's Staff to plan and execute the event. From the registration of Deputies, to hospitality, to event logistics that support the behind-the-scenes portions of the agenda, the Arrangements Committee has been working throughout the year to increase the overall size of the Committee and to optimize how they themselves operate. They are always looking for more volunteers to get involved.

Diocesan Youth Commission – This group has been working to develop, in conjunction with Cross Roads, an event for youth to run parallel to the Convention at the hotel. It will begin on Thursday evening and run through the end of Convention. Youth will be able to gather, have fun making new friends, learn more about the church, and meet with the Bishop and other church leaders to gain a better understanding of what it means to be an Episcopalian, and to explore their own faith.

Liturgy & Worship Committee – This committee works to develop the integral heart of our gathering as a community. Transforming a hotel ballroom into a space for worship is not an easy feat, but the Liturgy & Worship Committee brings together various talented musicians, choirs and all the “smells and bells” that are always a highlight for anyone who attends the Convention weekend. The service of Holy Eucharist is mandated in the Diocesan Constitution – originally, it had to take place prior to the beginning of business sessions. A few years ago, Convention modified that requirement to mean that the service must be part of the agenda for the Convention, which allowed us to move the main service to Saturday morning, an open the invitation to the entire diocese for this primary diocesan service.

Together with the Bishop and her Staff, all these committees have had liaisons working in between them, sharing and coordinating their efforts. Each one is working towards making the 150th Convention of the Diocese of Newark something special to remember. We hope to see you there!

Summer schedule for *The VOICE Online & The VOICE Digest*

During June, July and August *The VOICE Online* and *The VOICE Digest* will be published monthly on the second Wednesday of each month, as follows:

- WED, JUN 12
- WED, JUL 10
- WED, AUG 14

Publication will return to its regular schedule after Labor Day.