

A045 TASK FORCE

Membership

Ms. Sarah Taylor Harte, <i>Co-Chair</i>	New York
The Rt. Rev. Peter James Lee, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Virginia
The Very Rev. David T. Chee	Los Angeles
The Rev. Ann Coburn	Rhode Island
Mrs. Pauline Getz	San Diego
The Very Rev. Scott H. Kirby	Eau Claire
The Rt. Rev. John Lipscomb	Southwest Florida
Ms. Diane B. Pollard	New York
The Rt. Rev. Catherine Roskam	New York

WORK SUMMARY

The 73rd General Convention's Resolution A045 directed the Executive Council to establish a Task Force "to visit, interview, assess and assist" the bishops, leaders, and people of the Dioceses of Fort Worth, Quincy and San Joaquin in plans for full compliance with the canons regarding the ordination of women.

These are the A045 reports from the teams who visited each diocese. We accomplished the first three of our tasks: to visit, interview and assess. We found that the intrusion of an unwelcome and uninvited group made it impossible "to assist."⁴ We are a diverse church, committed to inclusivity, but some of our behavior sends to self-described traditionalists a message of unwelcome.

Report of the Fort Worth Team

On October 9, 2001, team members, The Very Rev. David T. Chee, Ms. Sarah Harte and The Rt. Rev. Peter James Lee, met with The Rt. Rev. Jack Iker and diocesan leaders at the Diocesan Center for Ministry in Fort Worth. Representatives from the Commission on Ministry, World Mission Committee, the Standing Committee, Bishop Iker's Canon to the Ordinary and a diocesan vice chancellor were present.

Bishop Iker, in his opening remarks, made clear that he viewed the presence of the A045 Committee as "An unwelcome intrusion into the life of the Diocese...interfering with the internal affairs of the Diocese." He said, "We think that A045 is headed towards punitive action" to the three dioceses named in the resolution. Bishop Iker declared that, "We don't have any trust in the Executive Council, the General Convention, and the Presiding Bishop...we feel abused and unappreciated and now under attack."

Task Force representatives were impressed by the diocese's vitality in mission. We saw a short video, heard about congregational growth, and a successful capital drive, and were assured by a Standing Committee female member that "women are full partners in the ministry of this diocese." We were told that over half of the diocesan convention delegates are women, two of the three lay Standing Committee members are women, and virtually every parish has women vestry members while many have women wardens.

The Dallas/Fort Worth Plan lets women with a vocation to priesthood have access to the ordination process. A woman in this plan is interviewed by Bishop Iker and, if approved, is referred to the Diocese of Dallas for the ordination process. Three women priests from the Diocese of Fort Worth, whom we met at our next meeting, are now serving in the Diocese of Dallas. The Bishop has made it clear that any Fort Worth parish who wishes to call a woman as an assistant or rector could ask for Episcopal oversight from the Bishop of Dallas. No parish has taken advantage of this plan.

We returned on March 6, 2002 meeting at Trinity Church, Fort Worth. In our October meeting, we had told the Bishop and the diocesan leaders that the General Convention resolution required us to meet with "the

⁴ The report prepared by the entire Task Force included a second part to this sentence. It reads, "and we encourage the Executive Council and General Convention to avoid such intrusive policies in the future."

people” of the Diocese. We wanted to identify a cross section of lay and clergy who might have different views than the leadership community we met in October. A letter dated February 5, 2002, from Bishop Lee, informed Bishop Iker of our plan to return. He had already heard of our intentions from people we had invited to our meeting. He, with the Standing Committee of Fort Worth, objected strongly to our presence. When we arrived at Trinity Church, Fort Worth, on March 6, 2002, we found the Diocesan Standing Committee present with a Pastoral Direction from the Bishop. It directed the Trinity Church Rector to make it possible for the Standing Committee to attend our meetings.

We met with three groups. The first was a randomly selected group who served on the Diocesan Executive Committee representing various views. One lay woman read a written statement which expressed her loyalty to the Episcopal Church. She said, “What a wonderful church, holding Jesus in his proper place, apostolic succession of our bishops, women under the covering of their husband and/or their priest moved freely in their activities.” Her opposition to the ordination of women was held by a number of the leaders we met. Another woman, however, described her participation in a strategic planning process for her parish. None of the parish focus groups had any objection to the ordination of women or to an ordained woman serving in their parish.

The second group was composed of clergy and lay persons we had invited on suggestions from others and from email requests asking they be heard. Support for the ordination of women was much more widespread in this group than among diocesan elected leaders.

The third group included three women priests originally from the Diocese of Fort Worth serving in the Diocese of Dallas. Each was positive about Bishop Iker’s encouragement as she moved through the ordination process. Each also said that she could not imagine serving as a woman priest in the Diocese of Fort Worth because of the widespread opposition to women’s ordination.

In summary, we witnessed much vitality and strong mission work in the Diocese of Fort Worth. We recognized that much of the diocesan leadership opposes the ordination of women. They also share the Bishop’s opinion that people in the Diocese of Fort Worth are marginalized by the Episcopal Church because of their traditional views.

We encourage the people in the Diocese of Fort Worth to expand their experience of the wider church so that they might see the value of women in ordained leadership, a value now widely rejected in the diocese. We do sympathize with the feeling of marginalization that seemed evident in the Diocese. Those for the ordination of women and self-described traditionalists both feel marginalized by the wider church.

Report of the Quincy Team

Team members, The Rev. Ann Coburn, the Rt. Rev. John B. Lipscomb and Ms. Diane Pollard, traveled to St. Louis, Missouri and met with Diocese of Quincy representatives on October 1, 2001 at the Diocese of Springfield offices. The sub-committee outlined some of the issues after introductions. We stressed that this was an initial visit and we hoped to schedule a follow-up visit. Everyone agreed to a second visit.

A second visit was made on August 29, 2002. The conversations were to be held at the Diocese of Springfield offices. Instead they were held at St. John’s Church, Quincy. Bishop Ackerman and Father Herrmann had to be present at the church because of a fire. It seemed best to have the conversations even with the distractions and the reduced participants from Quincy.

We continued the past year’s conversation after Morning Prayer and Eucharist with Bishop Ackerman and Father Herrmann, the diocesan Chancellor and the Commission on Ministry Chair. The diocesan representatives present expressed a willingness and expectation to observe the canons of the church by providing equal access to the ordination process for women and men. Currently, the diocese has several women postulants preparing for the vocational diaconate.

When the question was raised regarding ordination to the priesthood, the response was the diocese intends to follow the canons with equal access to the ordination process even though to date no woman has presented

herself for discernment. Bishop Ackerman has chosen not to develop a policy such as Fort Worth's because he wants the freedom to deal with each individual as a unique person and as a moment for discernment. There are no plans for a third conversation.

Report of the San Joaquin Team

Team members, Mrs. Pauline Getz, The Very Rev. H. Scott Kirby and The Rt. Rev. Catherine Roskam, visited the Rt. Rev. John David Schofield in the Diocese of San Joaquin on July 12, 2001. Bishop Schofield arranged for us to meet at ECCO, the diocesan camp and conference center. He had invited a dozen people to meet with us, including himself.

We were greeted with what might be described as gracious hostility. It was very clear that the bishop and most of the clergy were convinced we had come to dig up information to bring charges against him. Bishop Schofield and most of the clergy present were defensive and often angry, even though we reiterated several times that we had come to listen. Our articulated position was that we cannot fulfill the General Convention charge until we know what is going on in their diocese. It was clear that many clergy do not share the bishop's position on the ordination of women, although it was equally clear that they support him.

We learned that Bishop Schofield has been supportive of women pursuing ordination. Several women are currently in the process. When asked what will happen when they are ready for ordination, he said, "They will be ordained." He would not address the future, but made it clear that, if it were today, it is not likely he would ordain them. In the past, he arranged for a woman who became a deacon in his diocese to be ordained in the Diocese of California. He indicated one woman serves in the diocese with his permission, but he will not license her.

Bishop Schofield's position seems to be that, while he is open to the movement of the Holy Spirit in this matter, he is not convinced that the General Convention, in revising the Canons, was in fact reflective of the will of the Holy Spirit. Therefore he is not convinced that women who go through ordination are truly ordained. He is concerned they are "make believe" priests, and that any person who believes they receiving a sacrament from such a woman is actually being barred from grace.

Instead of another diocesan visit, we felt it would be more helpful to offer Bishop Schofield an opportunity to personally experience the ordained ministry of women in different circumstances and in an environment where their ministry is a given. Bishop Schofield has been invited by Bishop Roskam to visit the Diocese of New York. He and a priest, who is the past president of the diocesan Standing Committee, will spend time with her in October 2002.

They will have three different experiences: being present at ordinary events in the Diocese of New York in which ordained women are an integral part, observing the particular ministries of ordained women, and participating in a theological discussion on women's ordination. It is hoped that this visit will give everyone a deeper understanding and offer the Holy Spirit a welcome environment to move and touch hearts.

Conclusion

We expect all dioceses to respect people of different convictions. We rejoice in the gifts of ordained women and encourage a conversation throughout this church that will enable people of differing convictions to learn from one another. We believe the way forward is one of inclusion and respect. We offer the following resolutions as a process to strengthen the church's unity.

Resolution A017 National Conversation on Women's Ordination

- 1 *Resolved*, the House of _____ concurring, That the 74th General Convention receive with thanks the report
- 2 of the visitors representing the Executive Council in the implementation of Resolution A045 of the 73rd
- 3 General Convention; and be it further
- 4 *Resolved*, That we give thanks for the work of the Holy Spirit within our communion through the life-
- 5 giving ministry of ordained women; and be it further

- 6 *Resolved*, That, inasmuch as the 72nd General Convention in resolution A052 clarified that the canons
 7 regarding the ordination of women are mandatory, we engage in a national conversation drawing on the
 8 best theological resources available to assist the whole church to promote, explore and develop ways to
 9 facilitate the ordination of women in every diocese and their full and equal deployment throughout the
 10 church; and be it further
 11 *Resolved*, That such conversations be sponsored by the Executive Council of this Church and begin in the
 12 year following this General Convention in preparation for a day of dialogue and reflection to be held at the
 13 75th General Convention in 2006; and be it further
 14 *Resolved*, That the 2004-2006 Triennium budget include \$50,000 for this national conversation.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HIV/AIDS

www.episcopalchurch.org/gc/ec/ccs/echa/default.html

Membership

The Rev. Richard F. Brewer, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Long Island
The Rt. Rev. Rodney R. Michel, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Long Island
The Rev. Billy J. Alford	Georgia
The Rev. Gordon Chastain	Indianapolis
Mr. E. Bruce Garner	Atlanta
Ms. Lyn Headley-Moore	Newark
Ms. Mary Ellen Honsaker	Wyoming
Ms. Elizabeth Payne	Texas
The Rev. Valerie B. Thomas	Florida

WORK SUMMARY

The Executive Council Standing Committee on HIV/AIDS (the Committee or HIV/AIDS), first established in 1994, is charged with monitoring the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The Committee met four times during the triennium and has been asked to recommend how to increase other Commissions, Committees, Agencies and Boards' response to the pandemic. HIV/AIDS participated in a Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC) consultation resulting in a proposal to collaborate with other CCABs in addressing the societal issues related to HIV/AIDS prevention and education. HIV/AIDS encourages more consultations so that CCABs may collaborate further.

Continuing the work assigned, the Committee responded to these General Convention resolutions: *GC Resolution 2000-A050* called for more training in prevention, education materials, and that these ministries expand to young adults by adapting materials or developing new resources. This was a timely resolution because of new infection statistics but the \$40,000 was not allocated.

The National Episcopal AIDS Coalition (NEAC) utilized support from the United Thank Offering, the Centers for Disease Control, and its own budget for a revision of the **Youth in the Age of AIDS** materials. This is a joint project with the Youth Ministries cluster at the Episcopal Church Center. NEAC is also revising the **Teen Aids Prevention** (TAP) curriculum to be more accessible for parish use. The Committee applauds the NEAC in seeking funding other than the National Church's program budget. Ministry is hindered without needed funding.

GC Resolution 2000-A051 asked the US government to make drugs affordable and to continue research. The USA has urged companies to make drugs affordable in Africa by limiting their royalty claims because many in and outside the USA do not receive life-extending drug therapies.

GC Resolution 2000-A052 called the church to recognize justice issues which hinder an effective response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. It asked that prevention and pastoral needs be addressed. The Committee is heartened by Episcopal Life's increased coverage of the world wide AIDS pandemic and the assistance given by organizations such as ERD this triennium. There is a tendency to focus on the HIV/AIDS pandemic in