



Transition Update by Peggy Bean, Canon for Parishes

This past week I attended a conference at the Nicholas Center in Chicago with Province V, VI and VII Transition Ministers and we are seeing a trend. Over the past year and half at these gatherings, we have had more churches looking for clergy than clergy seeking a new call. The numbers at this conference were just over 60 congregations looking (for full time or interim) and only just over 20 clergy seeking a new call.

Hmmm . . . what does this mean? We do know that clergy are staying put for a few reasons, such as: a spouse has a good job, full health insurance, or to be in an area where they can get a job; often they need to be closer to family for a variety of reasons, or the ministry opportunity where they are is just what they are looking for.

One area we as Transition ministers want to look at it is the way we do recruitment - first question, are we actively recruiting people for the priesthood and what skills are we looking for? Do we look for good leadership skills, for skills to engage communities in new ways of ministry, and skills to collaborate and partner with other churches and denominations?

The landscape of the church is changing just as our day to day life is. We need to not only be aware but also to be proactive in preparing for the now and later. We heard this message at our two leadership days and will continue to hear it, so let's talk about it and then do something. If you haven't read the [People of the Way](#) or [The Agile Church](#) (both books by Dwight Zscheile) it is a great way to get the conversation started. A great summer read! I would then love to hear how your church is responding to the changing environment and how you are getting our young adults interested in the ministry? It is an exciting time to be in ministry if we are open to hearing the Spirit work among us and with us in new and challenging ways. You can always reach me at bean@diomil.org or by calling me at the diocesan office at (414) 272-3028 / ext. 158.

Of related interest is the [Religious Landscape Study](#) by Pew Research which presents trends in Wisconsin on people's religious beliefs, church attendance, the importance of spirituality, and more.