

Greetings! As I prepare for Sabbatical time, I want to keep clergy and the people of the Diocese of Western Michigan informed about activities that will be affecting my availability over the next six months. During my absences, the Diocesan staff will be available to handle your concerns. I will be in touch weekly with the staff.

Here is an outline of my plans:

- July 7<sup>th</sup> through the 11<sup>th</sup>, I will be traveling to San Antonio, Texas with the youth of our Diocese for a pilgrimage to the Episcopal Youth Event.
- After a very short time at home, I leave for England for the Lambeth Conference on July 14<sup>th</sup> through August 3<sup>rd</sup>. During my stay, I will be participating in many opportunities for growth which I look forward to sharing with the Diocese. Some of the topics that excite me about this trip are:
  - \* An introduction and who's who in the Anglican Communion, accessing resources from the Anglican Communion Office in London, etc.
  - \* Global Concerns: dealing with such items as HIV/Aids, addictions, greening our dioceses, migration, dealing with trauma, fair trade, where Christianity is minority, etc.
- From August 1 until August 31<sup>st</sup> will be vacation. During this time, I will not be available to the Diocese. If you need assistance, please feel free to call Michele, my Administrative Assistant (Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday), or Bill Spaid, Canon to the Ordinary.
- My sabbatical begins on August 31<sup>st</sup> and continues through November 30<sup>th</sup>. The sabbatical will be a time of renewal and refreshment as I will take an opportunity to reconnect with family and friends on the East coast. I will also be studying the dynamics around new leadership in the Diocese and also will work to finish my Doctor of Ministry degree. During a trip to Palestine, I hope to be in conversation with our brother and sister Christians and see what life is like for them.

During my sabbatical, I will be in touch with the Diocesan staff weekly. Parishes in the process of calling a Rector may continue to move forward with that process. They need to continue to communicate regularly with Anne Reed. Clergy Council will continue under the leadership of Bill Spaid and Executive Council under the leadership of vice president Sue York.

During January, a joint meeting with the Diocesan staff, Standing Committee and Executive Council will be scheduled to reconnect and share our experiences of sabbatical time.

I ask for your prayers during this time leading up to and including these important events in my life and the life of the Diocese of Western Michigan. I am grateful for the opportunity.

Sincerely,



The Rt. Rev. Robert R. Gepert  
VIII Western Michigan