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Guidelines for the Bishop's Visitation

As bishop, it is my duty to make a visitation to each clergyperson and each community under my care. It is my intention to start making the visitations annually, as I am able within time and money constraints. I would like to make the visitation a time of shared prayer and reflection on the particular ministry of each cleric and community. I will most likely have briefer visitations with communities and clergy in Philadelphia whom I see on a more regular basis and longer visitations with communities and clergy that I cannot see as often.

1. Liturgy

During the visitation, I would like to pray Morning and Evening Prayer together with the community and/or clergy, as well as celebrate the Eucharist and preach. If there are baptisms, confirmations, or minor ordinations, I will happily do them at the principal Eucharist during my visitation. I am happy to follow local custom in terms of the liturgy, in accordance with our commitment to liturgical diversity, so long as the rubrics of the particular rite are followed and the liturgy is done reverently.

2. Reflection

I will have a session with the community at large, if there is one, with each cleric, and with each layperson who desires to meet with me. The purpose of this reflection session is to discern the community and/or cleric's ministry – the hopes, dreams, and visions under the guidance of the Holy Spirit – and to prayerfully explore how the local community, clergy, and the jurisdiction at large and the bishop can work together to bring these into being.

Here are helpful reflection questions that clergy and communities can use to prepare for this discussion, adapted from the Customary for the Bishop's Visitation of the Episcopal Church's Diocese of Newark:

- a. When are you as a ministry/ordained minister at your best?
- b. What is your ministry's purpose?
- c. What are your challenges? What gets in the way of living out your mission?
- d. What would you like to ask me or want me to know so that the jurisdiction can be of assistance in supporting your mission and ministry?

It is my prayer that these visitations may be occasions of reflection that will help the clergy, the local communities, and the jurisdiction as a whole grow in our life and ministry together.