



The Rt Rev'd David E. & Helen R. Richards

## COLLEGE *for* BISHOPS

### **Peer Coaching Program Basics**

After accepting an invitation to be a peer coach, the bishop peer coach will establish contact with the new bishop to begin their coaching relationship. Due to the fact that elections are held at all times of the year, the time when a relationship begins will differ for every coach and new bishop.

The coaching relationship is intended to continue throughout the three-year Living Our Vows formational program. Below is a general outline of the relationship:

#### **Step One: Peer Coaching/New Bishop Training Session**

The appointed coach and new bishop will attend a special training session for coaches and new bishops via Zoom.

#### **Step Two: Introductory Phone Call**

Once coaches have been assigned their new bishop, they should call him/her to introduce themselves and talk about overview of program, as well as begin planning for the site visit.

#### **Step Three: Site Visit**

The peer coach will schedule a full-day site visit with the new bishop assigned to him/her. Ideally this will take place before or immediately following the new bishop's consecration but this may not always be possible. This visit also serves to begin the peer coaching relationship and for the peer coach to learn about the new bishop and their diocese. During this visit we encourage peer coaches to schedule time to meet with the staff as well as the spouse (if there is one).

During this visit we ask:

- The coach and new bishop to begin to establish expectations and goals for their relationship. These will be the basis of a written and signed 'covenant' that the coach will submit to The College for Bishops office within one month of the site visit. (see drafts in section4)
- The coach and new bishop set up a schedule of monthly coaching sessions. These sessions should be between 40 minutes and an hour. Most often, these will take place over the phone/Zoom but may be in person whenever feasible.

#### **Step Four: Begin Monthly Coaching Sessions (~45 minutes)**

Sessions are usually over the phone but may be in person when possible. The coach's responsibility is to make sure the sessions are focused, brief (~45 minutes) and uninterrupted. Other contact is at the discretion of the peer-coach and the new bishop.

### **Step Five: Ongoing Peer Coach Training**

Trainings and support sessions with a peer coach trainer and other bishop coaches in the program are held during the year. Attendance at these sessions is expected even if a coach doesn't have a current assignment.

### **Step Six: Periodic Evaluations & Conversations**

From time-to-time, you will be given evaluation forms to fill out to help us continue to monitor and improve the effectiveness of the Living Our Vows coaching program.

### **Step Seven: Coaching Before and After Summer Residencies**

The peer coach will have coaching conversations with the new bishop both before and after the annual Living Our Vows Residency. This could include reviewing the expectations for the upcoming program and incorporating new learnings and insights from the Residency into the new bishops goals and plans.

### **Step Eight: Closure**

After attending the third Residency, the new bishop has completed the Living Our Vows program and there should be a coaching session held to formally complete the coaching relationship.

### **Face to Face Meetings**

Face-to-face meetings should occur at each meeting of the House of Bishops and at other times when possible. These meetings should be intentional and focused and can replace the particular month's phone conversation if preferred.

### **Support for Peer Coaches/New Bishops**

Support for peer coaches and new bishops is available at any time. Please contact bishop Mary Gray-Reeves if you would like support. [bishopmary@collegeforbishops.org](mailto:bishopmary@collegeforbishops.org)

### **Time Commitment**

The total time commitment for this program ideally will not exceed approximately 4 days per year of scheduled time for each peer coach. Peer coaches will not be assigned more than 2 newly-elected bishops.

### **Expenses**

The College for Bishops will pay the travel costs and expenses for the initial site-visit meeting,

### **Honorariums**

The College for Bishops will provide the peer coach with a modest honorarium of \$300 for a full year of peer coaching and \$150 for a partial year.



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### **On-Site Visits**

We suggest that peer coaches use the following information as a guide to help them have a productive visit with their new bishop.

#### **Materials to Gather before the Visit**

Diocesan Profile  
CDO Profile  
Resume'  
Response to Questions during Election Process

#### **Other suggestions:**

Last Convention Address  
Current Copy of Diocesan Newspaper  
Convention Journal  
Staff Profile  
Description of Diocese (Demographics)

#### **Key Elements of an On-Site Visit**

Definition of Purpose and Agenda  
Permission (Includes Developing a Covenant)  
Discovery (Curiosity and Powerful Questions)  
Design (Includes Developing Goals for the Relationship)  
Logistics (Includes Meetings Schedule)  
Tools (Skills as Developed)  
Gremlins/Challenges (Watch Out for Them and Name Them)  
Evaluations

#### **Various Learnings from Past Visits**

1. Time appropriated for the visit provides data for the Coach: make your expectations clear.
2. Clarify differences between coaching and mentoring when they occur.
3. Multiple venues for the visit are best: a variety of settings during the day is best.
4. Social time with spouse is preferred.
5. Time with staff is preferred: "What do I need to know that would help your bishop?"
6. Timing of the visit has variables to consider: if new bishop has been in the position for months prior to consecration then visit soon after consecration.
7. Meet with the Chancellor if possible: "If you could identify 2 to 3 things the bishop should focus on in the next few years?"
8. Explore different models of Episcopacy previously experienced by the new bishop.
9. Try to set up the visit during a period of time when the new bishop isn't too limited by time.
10. Amount of time for the visit varies: take into account personality types and try arriving the night before, and meeting the next day with departure the following morning.

11. Resistance needs to be addressed: ask probing questions and do not avoid the resistance.
12. Best to observe a staff or other type of meeting when bishop is chair.
13. Leave with actions steps to be taken by the new bishop.



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During the three years of the Living Our Vows program, in accordance with Title III, a new bishop attends the following programs:

### **First Year:**

#### **January - New Bishops and Spouses Conference**

This four-day offering provides an opportunity for reflection and support during this important time of transition for both the bishop and spouse. The primary content of this conference is to assist the participants in examining transition issues each is facing as he/she enters a new location, new expectations, and new responsibilities. Bishops are able to begin building relationships with other newly-elected bishops in which they become fellow “classmates” over the years of exercising episcopate’, and spouses form similar relationships with those who are in attendance. This retreat not only provides “time out” for couples, but also allows time for offering insights into the common life experiences that all bishops share.

#### **March - Spring HOB Meeting**

#### **May/June - Living Our Vows Residency**

Held during June every year, the 5-day residential program offers time with a Faculty Team and outside speakers (in such areas as leadership, ecclesiology, and Biblical studies), vocational and spiritual inventory instruments, peer group consultation and worship. Each annual residency consists of bishops who have been in office for differing periods of time. The plenary portion includes all bishops, and the collegial portion separate into groups based on consecration/class years.

#### **September - Fall HOB Meeting**

### **Second Year:**

#### **March - Spring HOB Meeting**

#### **May/June - Living Our Vows Residency**

#### **September - Fall HOB Meeting**

### **Third Year:**

#### **March - Spring HOB Meeting**

#### **May/June - Living Our Vows Residency**

Unofficial completion of Living Our Vows program. Coaching continues through September.

#### **September - Fall HOB Meeting**

New bishops’ official completion of Living Our Vows program is recognized at HOB meeting.