



# Ascension Alliance

SPIRITUALITY IS A RENEWABLE RESOURCE

## Newsletter

Volume 2, Number 2 • April, 2011

### Master of Pastoral Counseling Program

Ascension Theological College, the seminary of the Ascension Alliance, has had its curriculum for the degree of Master of Pastoral Counseling (MPC) reviewed by the Washington (state) Higher Education Coordinating Board.

As a result, we have received religious-exempt status for our pastoral counseling program. This means that we may now lawfully grant credits and confer the degree.

The program builds on a core of courses we developed for the ordination program in such areas as theological formation, world religions, new cosmologies, story of Christianity, and scripture. In addition, candidates will complete nine courses in pastoral counseling; two pastoral counseling practica; and a specialization, project, or thesis.

### New Faculty

Several new faculty have joined Ascension Theological College, each of whom will be teaching in specific areas.

Bishop Michael Adams will be teaching the course on the science of the sacraments. Autocephalous bishop and hermit Dale Caldwell will be teaching the course on Christian mysticism. Father Ted Feldman will be developing and teaching the course on new cosmologies. Father Carl Matthews-Naylor will be teaching courses in pastoral counseling. Father Jack Sweeley has developed the course on the Eucharist and will be teaching courses in liturgy.

Mother Sara Yonce, Father Chuck Cooper, Dr. Patricia Picket-Cooper, Bishop Bernie Finch, and Presiding Bishop Alan Kemp continue as members of the faculty.

### IRS Update: Group Exemption

As you may know, the Alliance applied to the IRS for its group exemption. Once granted, the group exemption will clear the way for chartered ministries to share in our 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status.

The IRS has processed our application and we have had two exchanges so far.

We think that once we have our group exempt determination, future charter applicants will benefit from a much quicker and easier process.

### New Clergy & Candidates

Revs. Doug and Jenni Walker of Santa Fe, NM, were ordained to the priesthood for the Alliance by Bishop Daniel Dangan. Rev. Kathy Diederich of San Diego, CA, was ordained to the priesthood for the Alliance by Bishop Roberto Foss.

Rev. Owen Couch from Darrington, WA; Robert Hoffman from Santa Fe, NM; and Claudia Patchen from Gig Harbor, WA, have been admitted to Ascension Theological College. Claudia is our first pastoral counseling student.

### Mailing List Corrections

You have received this newsletter because we thought you might like to receive news from us. If you do not wish to be on our mailing list please send an e-mail with your name to:

cosmas@concentric.net

In the subject line simply say, "Remove from mailing list." We will remove you from our databases immediately. In this event, we apologize for any inconvenience.

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## ***Chaplaincies***

Rev. Carl Mathews-Naylor, a certified chaplain, who also serves as the director of pastoral care for St. Joseph of the Pines Health System, has been appointed as Coordinator of Chaplaincies. He will be responsible for heading up our process of supplying endorsements to clergy who work in organizations that require them, i.e. healthcare facilities; military.

Bishop Patsy Grubbs continues to serve as Coordinator of Clergy Care. She is responsible for providing pastoral support and outreach to clergy and seminarians in the Alliance.

## ***New Role for Bishops?***

While the Alliance does not currently have dioceses in geographical regions, we are exploring the idea of establishing "ordinariates." An ordinariate is a jurisdiction in which clergy have an ecclesiastical relationship with a specific bishop, who then serves as mentor and spiritual companion. If we adopt this model, clergy and seminarians will have the option of affiliating with an ordinariate based on their calling and needs. The bishop would be responsible for pastoral leadership, support, and faculties.

## **About the Ascension Alliance**

### **One small branch of the Mystical Body**

- A "Free Catholic" and "Emerging" Church. We are born of a free Catholic vision, in the tradition of a fledgling Independent Catholic movement, inspired by the intuitions of the Emerging Church, and following in the example of Jewish Renewal. We require rigorous preparation for ordained ministry but encourage maximum self-determination and a creative response to the needs of today's world. Our bishops and priests trace their apostolic succession as far back as that of even the most ancient of Catholic and Orthodox communions.

- We are about fellowship, the spiritual path, and love. Honoring the legacy of Archbishop Herman Adrian Spruit, we strive to be a fellowship of spiritual pilgrims. Without imposing dogma, we give ourselves and others the freedom and encouragement we need to live the truth and become ever more renewed and transformed. For us, Christ's ministry is the law of love and truth. Saint Augustine may have said it best, "Love and do as you will."

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