

**AED's Archdeacon & Deacon Directors' Conference**  
**ATLANTA, GEORGIA**  
**February 22-25, 2018**

**OPEN SPACE TECHNOLOGY REPORT – BISHOP SEARCH**

*Prepared by Patty Soukup*

Five Archdeacons from dioceses that are in the process of calling a new bishop participated in the discussion. Two of the dioceses will announce their slates within the coming two weeks; three dioceses will begin the search process later this year.

The following are recommendations regarding the Archdeacon's involvement with the profile:

- Encourage the Search Committee to write a new profile; do NOT replicate a previous one, as much within the diocese will have changed.
  
- The Archdeacon should send the Chair of the Search Committee a short report (one paragraph) about the Community of Deacons, should the committee wish to include this in the profile. In addition, it is recommended that the ministry of deacons in the diocese be mentioned throughout the profile.

Challenging situations often arise during the search process, and these difficulties are frequently a source of concern for the deacons in the diocese. The Archdeacon can best support the Community of Deacons by:

- Fervent prayer
- Shaping and formulating questions to be asked during the walk-about
- Keeping in contact with the deacons and asking for their input
- Reminding the deacons not to dwell on the updates that are published; these really are not important in the grand scheme of things.

If possible, at least one deacon should be appointed to the Search Committee, and at least deacon should be appointed to the Transition Committee. The role of the deacon on the Search Committee is to represent the Community of Deacons and to guide the Search Committee members in coalescing with the values of the diaconal community. If possible, candidates should be asked to specifically describe their experience in working with deacons. They should also be asked to expound upon the role of the deacon in the liturgy (do they view them as demi-priests?)

Once the slate of nominees has been announced, deacons should conduct research on each of the nominees to learn about them. A portion of this research should include contacting deacons in the dioceses from which the nominees hail to learn about the nominees' interaction with deacons in those dioceses.

The Archdeacon should advise the Transition Committee that the Community of Deacons expects to have at least one deacon-developed question asked at each walk-about session (ask the Transition Committee to guarantee this!). In the Diocese of Georgia, a separate walk-about session specifically for the deacons was arranged, and it proved to be very effective.

At the walk-about, nominees should be asked specific questions about how they have worked with deacons and how they envision deacons being out in the world with them and advocating for issues that impact their community. Do NOT ask whether they support deacons; ask open-ended questions!

Remember – God is in control!