

# THE KEYS



Church of St. Peter the Apostle  
Anglican Catholic Diocese of the Mid-Atlantic States  
[www.dmas-acc.org](http://www.dmas-acc.org)

The Rev. Canon Peter Geromel OHI, D.Min., Rector  
July 2022  
<https://stpetersacc.org>

## Introducing Mr. Gregory Seeley, M.Div. incoming Curate at St. Peter's



Graduation photo of Mr. Seeley and his wife, Shannon, in Nashotah House Master of Divinity hood.

I was born October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1967, in Pasadena California. My father was born a Catholic but had fallen away; my mother was an Episcopalian, and we went to the Episcopal church as a family, so I was raised in the American "Church of England". I have one sister who is a few years younger than I am. I was raised in Southern California in a suburban village called Westlake, located between Los Angeles and Ventura. My youth was mostly uneventful and pleasant, and I attended private and public schools, our local church and I played Field Hockey as a hobby. As I was graduating high school, I became attracted to the idea of a vocation in the Church. I approached the priest and he explained what was needed, a university degree and then study at seminary. As I began to consider ministry and the priesthood more seriously, I found that I had many reservations about how the Episcopal Church was evolving; everything seemed very contemporary and casual, and I longed for a deeper sense of the history of the Faith and a more profound connection to the sacred.

I began my road of discovery in a little store in my hometown called the Sacred Heart shop. The shop was run by two sisters who were traditional Catholics loyal to the Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX), also a young man worked there who was about to enter the seminary. The shop was a religious goods shop and was filled with art, music, and books from the history of the Catholic faith: everything I was looking for. After speaking to the owners, and many of the faithful who socialized at that

shop, I began the process of converting to Roman Catholicism. I was conditionally baptized at a small chapel in 1990. About that time, from one of the many books I read during my conversion I became interested in pursuing vowed religious life and began looking for religious houses (I was very drawn to the spiritualities of St. Francis and later St. Bernard). I looked for traditionalist monasteries and found one in New Mexico: a Benedictine monastery. I made a retreat there and then entered in 1991. The monastery was very new and was still under construction. Thus, as I learned the Divine Office and Gregorian chant, I was also learning how to lay cement blocks. It was a lot of work, but it was also a great learning experience. I was there until 1994 and learned a great many things but ultimately was not cut out for that life.

I was still interested in a vocation in the Church but was more interested in an active order; so, I looked for some traditional Dominicans. The only house I found was in France, and I wrote to them asking about applying. (I had become attracted to the study and preaching charism of the Dominicans). I began to learn French and spent a year living at a retreat house in preparation. I went to France in 1996 and was with the Dominicans for over 2 years. I had a difficult time in that monastery. I found them very prejudiced against Americans and left rather confused but still hearing a call. I discovered the Carthusians while traveling France with my mother. I wrote to the Novice Master (a former SSPX seminarian) and arranged to make a retreat. I was fascinated by their life, but unsure if it was my vocation to live a hermetical life; the Fr. Novice Master let me try it out and I spent 6 months in that life. I left not really knowing where I was called.

I came home and began university at City College of San Francisco, and then transferred to the University of San Francisco. and worked at a Barnes & Noble bookstore, waiting for God to give me some guidance. I continued to attend Mass at the local SSPX chapel. When I graduated with degrees in History and French, I continued in my desire to serve the Church and asked about looking into the SSPX seminary. I was allowed to live in an SSPX priory for a couple of months, but my student debt prevented me from entering. I returned to the world and got a job at a non-profit tech company, then beginning to date a lady I knew through mutual friends. After several months I thought about it and decided to propose marriage and she accepted. We were engaged for about a year.

My fiancée and I began attending the Mass of a local independent, semi-retired priest who celebrated the Latin Mass. I served the Mass and trained men and boy altar servers. Not too long after, the Archbishop of San Francisco put out a call for

more Latin Masses to be offered in his archdiocese. Because of my work with the elderly priest, I was asked to come to a church in San Francisco and assist the priest in residence with the Latin Mass; I did and began working with him and serving at the church every Sunday. It was a wonderful experience and after a couple of months we had a beautiful Mass with several younger altar servers.

It was after one Sunday Mass, sitting at breakfast that my fiancée told me that she could not marry me. She explained to me “Serving the church is what you love to do, and you’re good at it. I believe in your vocation and if that means being celibate and not marrying me, we should trust in God’s plan for you”. I told her that I had tried and not succeeded. She pointed out to me that I had tried to become a monk, and that I was not personally suited to being alone in a cell; I was a people person and would likely never have been happy long term in a monastery. I admitted to her that I longed for the church, and was not happy where I was, but was not sure where else to go.

I remained the main Master of Ceremonies at that church for about 6 years and continued to teach servers and coordinate ceremonies. I also often assisted priests who came to the church because they wanted to celebrate the Latin Mass and my crew assisted them. While I was there, I made a couple of retreats to communities like St. John Cantius but was not accepted due to my age. I also wrote to other communities about making a retreat there but either my age is an issue, or they are a modern community and do not pray a traditional liturgy. I began to associate with a bi-ritual monastery (Latin/Byzantine) in the Fall of 2017 and I stayed with them for several months and really came to appreciate their life, but the prior there and I agreed that I was not cut out for their contemplative lifestyle.

In the Fall of 2018, when I was rather confused about my vocation, and unsure of where God was calling me, I was talking with a priest friend of mine. He suggested that I look into the Traditional Anglican Movement since I was initially raised in the Episcopal Church and thought that I should check it out. I had never heard of such a movement, so I looked into it. It turned out that a Traditional Anglican priest lived not far from my mother. I paid him a visit and told him a bit about myself, and he referred me St. Mary of the Angels in Hollywood. He said that the ceremonies there were similar to what I was used to, and that the church could use my serving experience. I went there and found a beautiful church where they were celebrating a Missal Mass: I was hooked. I worked for that church for a little over a year. During that time, I married the lady to whom I had been engaged previously.

The ACA diocese in California was not prepared for vocations and a visiting Canon to the Ordinary recommended that I look into a seminary and, while I was studying to look for a diocese who found me suitable for ordination. He also gave me the name of a bishop he knew who was supportive of vocations. I chose Nashotah House Seminary after it was recommended to me by a seminarian who was visiting that bishop- my wife and I visited campus for a few days, and it seemed like the place God was calling us to be. I have now graduated and believe it was a good choice.

I feel called to work in ministry with people who may have difficult backgrounds, or who struggle with sin in their lives. Ultimately, I would still like to use the skills I learned in religious life, and the evangelical witness I discovered there to create a religious community based on the charism of the Anglican Church, specifically with no strict upper age limit, and to allow people to participate who have had troubled pasts, as long as they are not active criminals or have deep moral impediments. There is a history of this kind of witness. Little Gidding is a famous example. Creating a community where people can live in prayer and charity, even if they do not fit the traditional “ideal” of the religious life. I would also like to create a school where the religious could teach, and where the children could be formed in the religious community in prayer and charity. This would also allow single mothers or single fathers to join the community. I have myself worked in education, teaching Latin in a Catholic school, as well as a substitute teacher. I think this would be a powerful witness in the Church today.

### **News and Information**

July 28<sup>th</sup>, St. James the Apostle (transferred) – Mass at Noon.

**NO VESTRY THIS MONTH**

JULY, 2021						
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
[31]	<b>LEGEND: HC - Holy Communion; FHE – Festal Holy Eucharist; HE - Holy Eucharist; SS – Sunday School; PG - Prayer Group; EP – Evening Prayer; MP – Morning Prayer; P&amp;HU – Prayers and Holy Unction</b>				[1]	[2]  5:00 p.m. HC
[3] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS  TRINITY III	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]  12 noon HC	[8]	[9]  5:00 p.m. HC
[10] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS  TRINITY IV	[11]	[12]	[13]	[14]  12 noon HC	[15]	[16]  5:00 p.m. HC
[17] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS  TRINITY V	[18]	[19]	[20]	[21]  12 noon HC	[22]	[23]  5:00 p.m. HC
[24] 8:00 a.m. MP & HC 10:00 a.m. HE, SS  TRINITY VI	[25]	[26]	[27]	[28]  12 noon HC  ST. JAMES	[29]	[30]  5:00 p.m. HC

### IN THE LORD'S SERVICE

If you cannot fulfill your assigned duty because of an urgent reason, PLEASE SECURE A REPLACEMENT.

	July 3	July 10	July 17	July 24	July 31
<b>Altar Guild</b>	M. Slayton	V. Williams	J. Butterfield	M. Slayton	V. Williams
	B. Higginbotham	B. Higginbotham	B. Higginbotham	B. Higginbotham	B. Higginbotham
<b>Coffee Hour</b>	S. Darby	C. Pappas	L. Olver	E. Paisley	C. deRosset
<b>Ushers</b>	M. Slayton	M. Slayton	G. Terrell	G. Terrell	M. Slayton
	D. Drysdale	P. Pappas	M. Slayton	M. Slayton	P. Pappas
<b>Sat. Epistoler 5 p.m.</b>	A. Butterfield	A. Butterfield	A. Butterfield	A. Butterfield	A. Butterfield
<b>Epistoler 8 a.m.</b>	G. Mauney	D. Drysdale	C. Von Claparede	D. Drysdale	G. Mauney
<b>Epistoler 10 a.m.</b>	G. Terrell	P. Williams	P. Williams	T. Paisley	G. Terrell
<b>Server</b>	W. Paisley	P. Williams	W. Paisley	P. Williams	W. Paisley
<b>Crucifer</b>	P. Williams	W. Paisley	P. Williams	W. Paisley	P. Williams

2022 Vestry (term end): Dan Drysdale (‘23), Lisa Olver (‘24), Ted Paisley (‘24), Marnie Slayton (‘22), Clemens Von Claparede (‘22), Phil Williams (‘23)