



# Bexley Hall Episcopal Seminary

on the campus of Trinity Lutheran Seminary

Administrative Office:

583 Sheridan Avenue, Columbus, OH 43209

*Bexley Hall is an Accredited Seminary of the Episcopal Church*

The Rev'd William A. Doubleday  
Associate Dean for Operations & Professor of Pastoral Theology

Phone: 614-231-3095; Fax: 614-231-3236  
E-mail: wdoubleday@bexley.edu

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The Rt. Rev. Wendell N. Gibbs, Jr.  
Episcopal Bishop of Michigan  
4800 Woodward Avenue  
Detroit, MI 48201

Dear Bishop Gibbs,

The Faculty of Bexley Hall Episcopal Seminary is pleased to offer an Evaluation of Richard Creighton Sauerzopf, now a first semester Senior M.Div. student at this institution. Further, we unanimously recommend him for Candidacy for Holy Orders. If he were already a Candidate, it is the mind of the Faculty that we would also recommend him for Ordination to the Transitional Diaconate.

Richard C. Sauerzopf has demonstrated a high level of academic accomplishment throughout his studies at Bexley Hall. All of his work has been in the A and B range, with a distinguished number of A+ grades. Though he sometimes starts with rather pronounced views on a subject, he consistently demonstrates his openness to listening to new ideas, insights, and approaches to theological and pastoral issues. He is a valued voice in class discussions and is well respected by Faculty and students alike.

Richard is a person of deep Christian spirituality. Something of a mystic, he brings his sense of beauty and creativity to the spiritual life and the practice of ministry. He has led the effort to enhance the St. Helena Chapel at Bexley House, our house of study here in Columbus. He is a regular participant in and contributor to worship in the Bexley Hall and Trinity Lutheran Seminary communities. He has availed himself of spiritual guidance and pastoral counsel. He has a profound sense of hospitality to the stranger and the outcast which he models in our community life.

Richard has grown greatly as a pastor and leader in his time at Bexley Hall. His field placement at Trinity Church, Capital Square, Columbus, has brought him into a dynamic urban parish led by an effective mentor, the Rev. Richard Burnett. He has chosen to continue in that ministry for a second year. This past summer, Richard did a Supervised Clinical Ministry at the Lutheran Village of Columbus, a 450 resident retirement community with multiple levels of care. The 400 hour program was in every way equivalent to a standard basic unit of Clinical Pastoral Education and was supervised by the Rev. James K. Jensen. In Spring quarter 2007, Richard also took a course in pastoral care in which he demonstrated a readiness to engage with a variety of pastoral issues in an appropriate, insightful, and compassionate way.

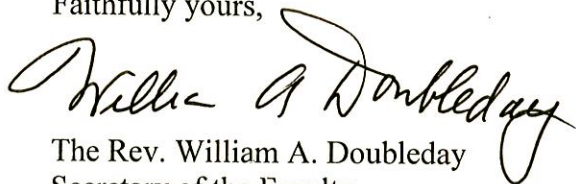
Richard continues to discern the exact shape of his priestly vocation. He clearly has real potential and promise in the realm of urban ministry, especially as it touches on liturgy, spiritual formation, and pastoral care of and advocacy for the poor and the marginalized. In the past year he has also expressed interest in exploring a monastic vocation. The Faculty has encouraged this exploration, and several of us have particularly suggested that Richard spend some time with the Society of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge, Massachusetts, as a part of this discernment process – he certainly would be attuned to their spirituality, liturgy, and commitment to the poor. Finally, a number of Faculty members at Trinity Lutheran Seminary and Bexley Hall have noted the true excellence of Richard's mind and academic work. We believe he and the Church would be well served if he remained open to undertaking a Th.D., Ph.D., or D.Phil., with several urging him to consider Oxford or Cambridge. We urge the Diocese of Michigan to journey forward with Richard as he continues to explore, embrace, or integrate one or more aspects of his gifts and vocation.

Richard has valiantly weathered health challenges in his childhood and adult life. His spirituality and pastoral sensitivities have been deepened by this experience. Occasionally he can be a bit of a curmudgeon, but this is balanced by his generously hospitable spirit, his sly wit, and his occasional willingness to be the object of others laughter and fun. He is not a morning person and will occasionally run a little late if a liturgy is not involved.

Richard Sauerzopf is a beloved member of the Bexley Hall seminary community. He has played an active role in strengthening our relationship with our Lutheran partners at Trinity Lutheran Seminary. He is a person of prayer who integrates study, service, and community fellowship in a rich and rewarding way for all who come to know him.

We commend him to you with enthusiasm as you consider him for Candidacy for Holy Orders in the Diocese of Michigan.

Faithfully yours,



The Rev. William A. Doubleday  
Secretary of the Faculty,  
Associate Dean for Operations,  
And Professor of Pastoral Theology  
Bexley Hall Episcopal Seminary

Enclosure: Transcript