



Ottley accepts position in Diocese of Long Island

Assistant Bishop James Ottley announced to the Executive Board at its Mar. 27 meeting that he has accepted a position as assistant bishop in the Diocese of Long Island, beginning June 1.

“I have had a good ministry here,” he told the board. “I have learned a lot, and I have tried to give the best of myself.”

“I would like to put the blame on the Holy Spirit and say that the Lord called me...but it is in part my own decision, too, for me and my wife.”

Ottley has served in this diocese since the fall of 2001, when Bishop Leo Frade asked the Diocesan Convention to approve the creation of the position of assistant bishop with a specific focus on minority and multicultural ministries.

Born in Panama to a West Indian father and a Costa Rican mother, Ottley brought to the position a strong history of international and multicultural ministry, particularly in Central America. He had served as bishop of Panama, bishop of El Salvador and Anglican Observer to the United Nations, and was interim bishop of Honduras after Frade became bishop of Southeast Florida.

“Bishop Ottley and I have been friends for about 30 years and have worked together in another province,” Frade said after the Executive Board meeting. “It has been a great pleasure to be able to have him as my assistant bishop.”

Frade praised Ottley’s work in “helping us to carry out our mission among the black, Caribbean and Hispanic communities in our diocese”, and said that he had also been “a voice for justice in our community as he fought racism and unjust labor practices affecting janitorial workers.”

In addition to his ministries in the diocese, Ottley currently serves as chairman of the Board of Trustees of Interfaith Worker Justice, an organization that was instrumental last year in helping striking janitors at the University of Miami join a union and negotiate a better contract. The organization has also organized protests on behalf of condominium workers in the area.

Ottley says that between now and June 1 he will continue to meet with the multicultural, minority and social justice ministry groups that have been under his oversight and guidance for the past five-and-half years, in order to insure a smooth transition for them. After his departure these ministries will continue with oversight from Frade and the archdeacons.

Frade admits that Ottley’s departure will “increase the workload of the diocesan bishop”, but says that he does not plan to call for another assistant bishop, and that he

expects the present schedule of confirmations not to be affected. He has asked retired Bishop Calvin O. Schofield, Jr., and retired Bishop Suffragan John Said, as well as Bishop Onell Soto (a retired bishop of Venezuela now living and frequently doing supply ministry in our diocese) to assist with those commitments.

He adds that we may also use “rent-a-bishops”—contracting with retired bishops from other dioceses to assist with confirmations.

(Use miter mug of Ottley)