Archbishop Robin Eames Delivers Sprigg Lectures at Convocation

At the 2005 Alumni Convocation at Virginia Seminary, held on October 4-5, the Most Rev. Robin Eames, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, delivered the Sprigg Lectures to over 300 graduates, students, faculty members, and friends who had come to hear Eames speak on The Anglican Communion. Eames, who served as chair of the Lambeth Commission on Communion, is considered a leading authority on the Anglican Communion. The first of the two lectures, entitled The Anglican Communion: A Growing Reality, was delivered on Tuesday, October 4th. The second lecture, The Anglican Communion: What Communion?, was given the following morning on October 5th.

In an interview with PBS’ Religion & Ethics, immediately following the second Sprigg Lecture, Archbishop Eames said, “I think we’ve had a much better reception [to the Windsor Report] than we dreamt was possible. People have said, ‘while we don’t agree with every page of your report, we agree with what we say is the spirit of Windsor’, and that is more important than even the words we use. There were too many assumptions made in the world Anglican Communion before all of this boiled up, too many bland statements. There were too many bonds of affection which weren’t worked out in terms of concrete relationships. I pray that as future generations look back to the Windsor Report… that they’ll say, ‘Well at least they compelled people to think about what was important to them’. Let’s turn a problem into an opportunity, and let’s build on that, because reconciliation, understanding, and brotherhood shouldn’t be fractured by differences over some of these things.”

The Sprigg lectureship is named in honor of the Rev. Daniel Francis Spigg, a graduate of Virginia Seminary in 1846 and a long-time member of the Board of Trustees. The lectureship was established under the generous provisions of the Rev. William D. Morgan of Baltimore (1855-1942). Copies of the Sprigg Lectures can be obtained by visiting www.vts.edu/news.

During his visit to Virginia Seminary, Archbishop Eames was also awarded a Doctor in Divinity degree by the Rt. Rev. Peter J. Lee, Bishop of Virginia, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Virginia Theological Seminary. ⋆

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“Call and Community”: Virginia Seminary Welcomes Class of 2008 as August Term Begins

“Call and Community” were dominant notes sounded in the welcome sermon delivered Monday, August 15, 2005, by the Very Rev. Martha J. Horne, dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary, to the incoming Class of 2008. Fifty-five new students, representing 28 U. S. dioceses and three international dioceses attended Monday’s chapel service which celebrated the beginning of the August Term. Falling on the Feast of St. Mary the Virgin, Dean Horne’s sermon focused on Mary’s unwavering response to God’s call and reliance on community for support, two hallmarks that shape student life at Virginia Seminary.

“Call and community are two hallmarks of Christian life and discipleship”, said Horne, “My hope for you is that this community will be a source of strength and comfort as you make your way forward, sure of your call, but uncertain where it may lead you… God is faithful to those who believe.”

The August Term for new students consists of three weeks of orientation that includes classes in biblical languages and oral interpretation of scripture, and which help students develop the routine and disciplines of worship, study, prayer, and fellowship. Sixty-five percent of the entering students this year are working toward the Master of Divinity degree (MDiv), while the remaining 35% are working toward a Master in Theological Studies (MTS), a Master of Arts in Christian Education (MACE), a Master of Arts in Christian Education/Youth Ministry (MACEYM), or are enrolled in the Anglican Studies program. *

VTS AWARDS FIVE WITH HONORARY DOCTORATES

At the annual Academic Convocation of the Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria on October 4th, honorary doctorates were conferred upon five distinguished recipients that included four bishops — three from the wider Anglican Communion – and the Dean of the School of Theology at the University of the South. The degrees were awarded by the Rt. Rev. Peter J. Lee, Bishop of Virginia, and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Virginia Theological Seminary.

Awardees included The Right Rev. Hilary Garang Deng, Bishop of Malakal, Episcopal Church of the Sudan; the Most Rev. Robin Eames, Archbishop and Primate of All Ireland; the Right Rev. Howard Kingsley Ainsworth Gregory, Bishop Suffragan of Montego Bay, Jamaica; The Right Rev. David Joslin, former Bishop of Central New York; and the Very Rev. William Sutherland Stafford, Dean of the School of Theology at the University of the South at Sewanee. *

Virginia Theological Seminary: Offering Prayers and Relief in Times of Need

Hurricane Relief:

In response to the extensive damage from the recent hurricanes, a VTS community-wide effort collected enough clothing, personal items, batteries, and supplies to fill a small truck, which was driven to Hattiesburg, Mississippi by junior Matt Tucker (Diocese of New Jersey).

“The fury of Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma and the devastation they have wrought are powerful reminders of our human vulnerability,” said the Very Rev. Martha J. Horne, dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary, “With three new students from Louisiana, two from Mississippi, and many alumni in the affected areas, our community waited anxiously as connections were made with missing relatives and friends.”

The community offering collected at the first Wednesday Eucharist of the new academic year brought in $3,000 and was sent to Episcopal Relief and Development for Hurricane Relief.

At the Alumni Executive Council (AAEC) meeting in October, discussion revolved around ways in which the Seminary can stay in touch with graduates in times of crisis, particularly, the present hurricanes. On behalf of the graduates of Virginia Seminary, the AAEC adopted a resolution expressing gratitude to the Church Pension Group for all the effort they made in their initial response to the needs of the clergy, parishes and dioceses.

Social Relief:

The VTS Social Concerns Committee held a three-part series on prison ministries this past September and October entitled, *Doing God’s Work in Prisons*. Guest speakers included Joyce Minor, of Prison Fellowship Ministry, Robert Aikin, from the Adult Detention Center, in Fairfax, Virginia, and Dr. W. Thomas Beckner, of Good News Jail Ministry in Richmond, Virginia.

War Relief (above):

The Rev. Beth H. Echols (VTS ’89), Chaplain in the United States Army, reflected with students at a lunchtime forum on October 11, 2005, on her year in Iraq and how she ministers to the soldiers in hospitals and in her unit.

Several student volunteers helped load up a truck bound for Mississippi with Hurricane Relief donations.

Rob Aikin (left) of the Adult Detention Center, and Joyce Minor (below) of Prison Fellowship Ministry, speak to students about their ministry with prison inmates and their families.
Lifetime Theological Education: Providing People With New Maps and a New Compass

The Center for Lifetime Theological Education (LTE) at Virginia Seminary has a vital ministry in this time of rising need for continuing education and rising expectations in the church.

There is a growing demand on the part of clergy leaders for leadership training and the enhancement of managerial skills—skills which many of our graduates discover to be sorely lacking in their first several years out of seminary.

LTE seeks to provide resources for answering these demands through leadership training and organizational analysis, especially family systems, and by providing nuts and bolts training in parish management in the senior year. However, in answering these needs, we do not want to become so focused on instrumental learning that we become nothing more than a resource for in-service training and a means of professional development.

“The challenge,” says the Rev. Dr. Roger Ferlo, director of the Center for Lifetime Theological Education, “is to embrace not just the deep desire for knowledge but also for understanding, not so much for know-how as for know-why. VTS is particularly equipped to recognize and nurture that desire for wisdom among our clergy, not just at the start of their ministry but in the middle of it, when life’s storms and disappointments call into question not just our managerial skills but our experience of God in our lives, and in the lives of those we serve.”

LTE also has a role to play in offering continuing education to lay leaders. For over 30 years people have been taking courses in the Evening School of Theology (formerly known as the Lay School) in order to enhance their theological understanding and for the opportunity for reflection guided by seminary faculty and adjunct instructors. The Fridays at the Seminary lecture series, the Summer Refresher and programs devoted to preparing for retirement are some of the other programs that have been of particular interest to lay people—both locally and around the country.

The primary task in LTE is to provide people—both lay and ordained—with new maps and a new compass as the theological ground shifts beneath our feet. We seek to foster leadership for the whole church, a leadership that is pastorally skilled, theologically informed, and unafraid to grapple with faith’s deepest questions.

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DMin in Ministry Development: Providing Know-how and Know-why

As with short-term programs offered through LTE, the Doctor of Ministry program seeks to nurture the desire for knowledge and wisdom necessary to grapple with “life’s storms and disappointments” and the demands they make on those who serve God’s people.

The DMin program, with specialization in Ministry Development, has as its primary goal to provide skills and resources for the ministerial leadership that is needed in forming a community of faith for the shared practice of ministry. It is both ecumenical and strongly experientially based, utilizing case studies in colleague groups.

Says the Rev. William Carl Thomas, rector of Saint Matthews Episcopal Church in Charleston, West Virginia, and current student in the DMin for Ministry Development program, continued on next page...
DMin continued...

“I started the DMin program at the 15 month mark in my current parish. I would not have undertaken an in-depth study of the history of my parish without the demand and discipline of the congregational study. The work done to date has kept me from making some poor decisions that might have compromised my effectiveness as a leader.... I am making better decisions for the parish and myself as I have information that might have taken a number of years to learn.”

Peter Barbernitz, a Roman Catholic deacon who is also currently enrolled in the DMin program, agrees. “I was very attracted to the program because of the use of the case-study methodology and the resulting discussions around them... a crucial learning for me was the objective stance with regard to the congregation and key events in it, coupled with the process of theological and behavioral analysis. Prior to the program, I was less able to distance myself from situations enough to analyze them clearly.”

The DMin program offers ways to help leaders understand themselves and how they may be more effective in ministry, to understand and articulate the mission of the church and its ministry in the changing cultural contexts of society, and to draw upon contemporary behavioral sciences in order to develop effective strategies for ministerial leadership.

For more information about the Doctor of Ministry programs in Ministry Development and Educational Leadership, contact the Rev. Dr. Barney Hawkins, the program director at bhawkins@vts.edu.

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the SUMMER COLLEGIUM

Work is progressing and excitement is building for the launch of the first Summer Collegium, scheduled for June 21-29, 2006. The Summer Collegium, headed by Dr. Marilyn Johns (pictured right), is a 9-day all-expenses-paid conference for the clergy of small congregations, along with their spouse/partner. Singles are also invited to apply.

Application materials became available on September 1, and since then, large numbers of people have downloaded applications or requested that they be sent. It is clear that there is a hunger for connection and support for those who pastor small congregations, which include nearly 70% of all mainline churches.

Virginia Seminary received a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. to fund this project, which will continue each summer through 2010. Twenty-five clergy from a wide variety of denominations will be invited to the campus each summer for workshops led by experts in the field of small church ministry; for uplifting worship; spiritual growth; and relaxation.

An important part of the week will be the contributions of our artists-in-residence, Susan Sherard and Horace Clarence Boyer. They will encourage participants to develop the arts in their congregations, and to look at art in new ways. A one-day Small Church Religious Arts Festival will take place on the Seminary grounds on Saturday, June 24, 2006, highlighting the arts and crafts of local small congregations.

If your congregation would like to participate in the Summer Collegium, or in the Small Church Religious Arts Festival, visit our web site www.vts.edu/education/collegium, email SummerCollegium@vts.edu, or call 703-461-1752. Applications for the Collegium must be received by December 15, 2005.

Participants in the 2005 Summer Refresher take a reflective pilgrimage through Trotter Bowl.
What brought you to Seminary?

The call was definitely more of a process, but there were a couple of moments when I felt specifically called. One, when I was about 12 and was studying the prophets at a private school where they had bible classes. I thought it would be really cool to be able to talk and have one-on-one conversations with God like Samuel - and a lot of the other prophets - did. So prayed that I would be able to have that type of relationship with God. I felt a warmth and a presence there saying, “yes, I want you to do that” so… that was the first time. Of course, it took me 17 years to do anything about it!

Later, after college (University of Memphis) where I majored in International Economics and English Literature, I still wasn’t sure what I wanted to do. During my job search process, I continued doing church stuff, youth ministry – working with Happening – and different things in the diocese. So I was applying for business jobs on the one hand and youth ministry jobs on the other and it ended up that the best offer was in youth ministry – better pay and better hours. Heard a pretty clear call that way… took that job and was at Grace – St. Luke’s in Memphis for 5-6 years – loved it. Had a blast working with kids and other youth ministers, sort of learning to find both my voice as a minister – not as an official priest – but finding the pastoral voice and finding the voice for proclamation at the same time. I just had fun.

After awhile, I felt like I had done what I could do in Youth Ministry – or at least at Grace – St. Luke’s – and felt like I needed to do something else. I was also feeling a tug and a call toward ordained ministry, to wanting to perform the sacraments and wanting to not just talk to kids about God but to a whole congregation about God. My call evolved gradually through that process.

My biggest surprise was that I enjoyed Greek because I had always hated foreign languages. I had taken French and a little bit of Spanish and just struggled with them. I took Greek and just loved the language, the process of the language and loved how it related to faith and related to reading scripture. If you had told me that I would be tutoring Greek before I came here I would have laughed at you.

Let’s talk about the student body. There is such a wide age range of students – do you sense any issues arising from such a diverse group?

That’s one of the things I’d like to address as student body president: in the last 4-5 years, it’s become a bigger demographic shift – and a big one – and it doesn’t seem to be changing, it seems to be the new model. And so part of what we’re talking about in Student Government is how to address the different needs of the 20-something age group and how they affect life here. Some of their needs are classic. For example, the 20-somethings are straight out of school so they don’t need to have every ounce of the Academic Orientation that someone out of school for 30 or so years might need, and they don’t need the lecture on study habits because they’ve only been out of school for four months.

Another issue for the younger students is resources. This becomes a huge issue because 20-somethings typically don’t have home equity that they can convert into payment for Seminary. They don’t have the resources that a 50-year old might. They are coming in with pennies in their pockets and significant educational debt from college. Of course, in the end, this affects financial aid because suddenly, you have 40% of the class needing 100% financial aid which is what the administration is trying to address.

And then there’s the issue of good old fashioned dating… all those kinds of issues that the Seminary might not have... continued
seen in a long time… which isn’t bad, it’s just different.

I think the larger issue is how we focus on the 20-somethings and make them feel that their needs are being met without making the 45 and older set feel like they’re being abandoned or ignored… it’s a balance of the two.

So there are wildly different needs, and a lot of what we want to do this year is to just try and assess the situation… maybe conduct a survey to get pure data and to then present the results to the Dean, the Faculty, and the Board of Trustees.

Where do you hope to go from VTS? Back to Tennessee?

Yes, West Tennessee. It’s very nice in that they have almost a GI Bill approach where they cover health insurance for me and my wife which covers a big chunk. And there’s the unstated but very real expectation that you will return to the diocese to work for two or three years, which is fine because my family is there and my wife’s family is from Birmingham.

Do you think your focus will continue to be in Youth Ministry?

My heart will always have a soft spot for Youth Ministry because I just love it. It’s fun and it’s honest and open and real (laughs)… if you don’t want to have an honest opinion, don’t go into youth ministry. I love it but I don’t want to go back and be a youth minister by itself – I want to go back and work with an older group – getting the whole parish life aspect of it down… whole families, rather than just the kids. ☺

Summer Missions & Trips

Right: VTS seniors James Derkits (kneeling) and Nathan Rugh (far right) are pictured with students from the College of the Transfiguration in Grahamstown South Africa, the only residential theological college in the Anglican Province of Southern Africa. James and Nathan were participating in the Contextual Theology Program this past July and August.

Left: Several VTS folk visited St. Phillip’s Theological College in Kongwa, Tanzania this past June. From top left we have Rev. George Okoth ’04, Rev. Sandra McCann ’03, Allison Sandlin ’06, the Rt. Rev. Jacob Chimelbyda ’03, and Rev. Jacques Hadler. Bottom row: Caron Gwynn ’06 and Leslie Steffensen ’06.

Right: VTS senior Holly Gloff (far right) pictured with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, and fellow Virginia Diocese student Gideon Pollach in Canterbury, England where they participated in the Canterbury Scholars Program. The program was started by VTS Dean and President, the Very Rev. Martha J. Horne.

Left: A rousing welcome for VTS MTS student, Bartholomayo “Bol” Deng, as he arrives home for the summer by his village in the Sudan.
Dear Friends,

Sunshine, crisp air and extraordinary conversations marked our Fall Convocation. The Sprigg Lectures and the reunions drew many of us to Campus. On Tuesday, after the Academic Convocation, we gathered for an “Irish Evening” in honor of our honorary degree recipients and in particular, our speaker and special guest, Archbishop and Mrs. Eames. The Celtic Group provided music to lift the spirits, including an original work composed for this occasion by VTS senior Debbie Brewin-Wilson, harpist and coordinator of the Celtic Group.

Monday, prior to the beginning of the Convocation activities, the Class Stewards gathered for their annual meeting. More than 40 Stewards attended and participated in sessions with Mitzi Budde, our Librarian, Susan Shillinglaw, Public Affairs Director, and Alix Dorr, Journal and Publications Editor. In addition to these sessions, Dean Horne briefed the Stewards on the Seminary community, our new programs and continuing engagement with the formation of persons for ministry. The Stewards, renewed by this event, will be contacting their classmates to share some of their learning and encourage support of our Annual Fund. It would be wonderful if every class achieved a 50% level of participation.

Do you remember the pink flamingos that appear on campus in unusual places at odd times? Well, something new has taken hold in our Virginia Seminary Community. It is the Pink Flamingo Society. This is a group of student volunteers who assist the Institutional Advancement Office with the ministry of hospitality to visitors to VTS, help with the phonathon, and participate in special efforts, such as, Theological Education Sunday. This is an energetic and deeply committed group of students and we enjoy thinking of ourselves as Pink Flamingos.

It is a joy to facilitate the continuing community of Virginia Seminary Alumni.

Faithfully,

Rosemari Sullivan
Director of Alumni Affairs

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VTS ON THE ROAD:

November 10, 2005 - VTS in Mason City, Iowa.

November 17, 2005 - VTS in San Francisco, California.

January 14-15, 2006 - VTS in Detroit, Michigan

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

February 14-15, 2006
AAEC Meeting

June 18, 2006 - VTS General Convention Dinner at the Athletic Club in Columbus, Ohio.

October 2-4, 2006
Alumni Convocation

October 4-5, 2006
AAEC Meeting
Convocation 2005

Clockwise beginning at top left: members of the Class of 1955; members of the Class of 1945 - the Rev. Canon Frederick F. Valentine, the Rt. Rev. Melchor Saucedo-Mendoza, and the Rev. Rollin S. Polk; the Rev. Shelby Owen ('04); faculty lecture attendees; the Revs. Rob Marston and Pat Thomas, both from the Class of 1979; members of the Class of 1985; the Rev. Benjamin Speare-Hardy ('90), and the Rev. Alistair So ('04); the Revs. Irene Jones ('03) and Sam Portaro ('73); the Very Rev. Martha J. Horne; the Revs. Bob Burch and Peter Lane ('98), members of the Class of 1964; the Rev. Kathleen ('93) and Joseph Bobbitt.

Photographs by Alix Dorr and Susan Shillinglaw
Thinking about a Career In Youth Ministry?

There’s an advanced degree program designed with you in mind.

Virginia Theological Seminary offers a unique opportunity to earn a Master of Arts in Christian Education with a concentration in Youth Ministry during summer terms while interacting with young people at Kanuga Conferences, Inc. in North Carolina.

Most students in the program are currently employed or volunteer as youth ministers. Churches who wish to employ a youth minister are encouraged to hire a person and support him or her in the program for professional education and training.

For more information, contact the Center for the Ministry of Teaching at 703.461.1885, by email at cmtcirc@vts.edu, or through our web site at www.vts.edu.

Resources Offered at the Center for the Ministry of Teaching

A number of resources are available for parish and school education programs at the Center for the Ministry of Teaching. Please stop in for a visit or check out our web site at www.vts.edu. Some of the resources include:

- **WebPac** of over 8,000 books on Christian Education and related fields. This is a union catalog with the Bishop Payne Library and includes their collection of almost 200,000 items.

- **Video Membership Program & Catalog**
  A collection of over 2,000 videos on topics such as Faith Development, Bible Study, World Religions, Youth Ministry, Episcopal Church, Prayer & Spirituality, and more.

- **Christian Education Curricula**
  Purchase curriculum material for children, youth, or adults from a list that includes the major denominational, independent, and evangelical publishers.

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**FAITH, WORK, & VOCATION FORUM**

*December 13, 2005 8:00 a.m.*

National Press Club
Washington, D.C.

featuring guest speaker

John Vanderstar, Esquire
Member, Executive Council of the Episcopal Church (Province III).

For more information, contact Eliza Saunders at 703.461.1715
Thank you for considering our Annual Appeal.

In this season of thanksgiving, we are mindful of the generosity of so many who keep the mission of Virginia Seminary alive. As the demands on leadership are changing rapidly within our Church and society, the Seminary is striving to meet them in a variety of new and creative ways.

For example, this past year we launched our renewed Racial and Ethnic Diversity Initiative, dedicated the new African American Episcopal Historical Collection at the Seminary’s Bishop Payne Library, inaugurated a new degree program - Doctor of Ministry in Educational Leadership - for leaders who serve Episcopal Church schools, and this coming summer will mark the beginning of our Summer Collegium, to support mid-career clergy serving in small congregations.

An expanding number of exciting programs throughout the year help us pursue our timeless mission to form men and women for lay and ordained leadership in the Church and the world. These new programs invigorate and deepen the Seminary’s critical work with our students, but they can only be sustained by a growing Annual Fund.

Most importantly, your gift to the Annual Fund enables the Seminary to send our students out to begin their new ministries without the oppressive burden of significant educational debt.

In the past academic year we awarded $2.6 million in financial assistance in the form of scholarships and housing subsidies to 132 students, nine more students receiving assistance than the previous year. This was an increase from $1.4 million during academic year 2003-2004 – a significant jump.

This level of assistance would not be possible without the generous support of those graduates and friends who over the years have made endowment gifts that provide support for our students. We know that such gifts are their own expression of gratitude, from those who understand the critical work of Virginia Seminary.

Tuition, room, board, and fees for the 2005-2006 academic year are $15,980 for on-campus students; the second lowest of the eleven Episcopal seminaries, yet an increase of 75% over the past 11 years. These charges do not begin to meet the actual costs of educating students, which are subsidized by the Seminary. Colleges, universities, and other seminaries have increased tuition, room, board and fees at a greater rate.

Our goal for undesignated giving to the Annual Fund for the fiscal year ending May 31, 2006 is $725,000, with an increase in overall alumni giving to the 50% level.

An overriding priority for the Seminary in the next several years is to increase undesignated Annual Giving to the $1 million level, to provide ongoing funding for many of the new programs initiated in the past few years.

As the holiday season approaches, we hope you will join us in giving thanks with your own Annual Fund contribution. In doing so, you enable the Seminary to continue its efforts to strengthen the ministry of the Church and its witness to the world. Please know that we are grateful for your gifts and for your prayers.

Thank you. Your support of the Seminary does make a difference!

Ed Hall
Vice President for Institutional Advancement
Four of the Missioners of the Episcopal Church came to Virginia Seminary on September 20th, for a one-day meeting with members of the faculty, staff, and students on the growing diversity in the Episcopal Church and the opportunities created by this growth. The Missioners included the Rev. Angela S. Ifill, Office of Black Ministries, Janine Tinsley-Roe, Office of Native American Ministries, the Rev. Dr. Winfred Vergara, Office of Asian American Ministries, and representing the Office of Hispanic Ministries, the Rev. Isaias Rodriguez, Hispanic Missioner from the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta.

“We are pleased to be working in partnership with our national Church and its missioners,” said the Very Rev. Martha J. Horne, dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary, “as together we seek to attract, welcome, and meet the needs of our Asian, African-American, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American brothers and sisters called to leadership in the Episcopal Church.”

The Missioners presented to faculty and students their various office goals and identified the particular areas of need that are most pressing in the communities they represent. They also discussed their plans to partner with VTS in building the Church of the future – a church that fully reflects the Kingdom of God.

The visit represented a continued move forward for the Seminary’s Racial and Ethnic Diversity Initiative (REDI) which was formed in the fall of 2002 to enhance its programs and initiatives related to racial and ethnic diversity on campus and in the wider church. Under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Margaret McNaughton-Ayers, associate dean for Admissions and Community Life, and the Rev. Joseph M. Constant, assistant for Admissions and Community Life, VTS continues to make an explicit commitment to racial & ethnic diversity in the recruitment of students of color, its academic curriculum, worship, and other aspects of community life.