



Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts
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Biography: The Rt. Rev. Gayle Elizabeth Harris, Bishop Suffragan

The Rt. Rev. Gayle Elizabeth Harris was ordained and consecrated a bishop on Jan. 18, 2003, at Trinity Church in Boston. She serves as bishop suffragan (assisting bishop) in the Diocese of Massachusetts.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, she graduated from Lewis and Clark College and holds a Master of Divinity degree from the Church Divinity School of the Pacific in Berkeley, Calif., which awarded her an honorary Doctor of Divinity degree in 2002.

She was ordained to the priesthood in 1982 in the Diocese of Newark, where she served as assistant to the vicar at Grace Church (Van Vorst) in Jersey City. She served as urban resident at St. Philip the Evangelist Church in Washington, D.C., from 1982 to 1984, and as priest-in-charge of Holy Communion Church from 1984 to 1992, also serving at that time as nave clergy at Washington National Cathedral.

While in the Diocese of Washington she served as president of the Standing Committee and served on the Nominating Committee for the Bishop Suffragan, the Search Committee for Dean of Washington National Cathedral and the Committee on Budget and Finance. She also served two terms on both the Episcopal Church's Program, Budget and Finance Committee and the Committee on Church Structure.

In 1992, she was called as rector of St. Luke and St. Simon Cyrene Church in Rochester, N.Y., where she served until her June 1, 2002, election as bishop.

Prior to her election as bishop, she served the Diocese of Rochester as a dean and was a member of the Commission on Ministry, the Worship and Liturgy Committee and Companion Diocese Task Force. She served on the Rochester Commission on Christian Jewish Relations, the Center for Progressive Christianity Advisory Board and the Interfaith Forum of Rochester Steering Committee. She was also an adjunct professor at Colgate Rochester Divinity School. She was twice elected as deputy to the General Convention (1997, 2000).

Bishop Harris completed service in 2006 as a member of the Joint Nominating Committee for the election of the former presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church. She is a past vice chair of the Church Pension Fund Board of Trustees and has served on the Board of Directors of CREDO (a national resource program fostering Episcopal Church clergy leadership and wellness) and the Steering Committee for Bishops Working for a Just World. She received an honorary Doctor of Humanity degree from the New England School of Law.

Bishop Harris currently chairs the House of Bishops Pastoral Development Committee and the Board of Directors of the Episcopal Church Investment Group. In the Diocese of Massachusetts she is on the board of the Old North Church Foundation and serves as vice president of Episcopal City Mission. She is the immediate past president of the Massachusetts Council of Churches and currently serves on its Working Board and Advisory Board.

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