



## **New York Theological Seminary announces new Direct-Elect of signature Master's Degree program at Sing Sing Prison.**

*Rev. Canon Petero A. N. Sabune*

**February 1, 2016:** New York Theological Seminary announces the **Rev. Canon Petero A. N. Sabune** has assumed the position of Director-Elect of the Masters of Professor Studies (MPS) degree offered inside Sing Sing Correctional Facility as of January 2016. Rev. Sabune will serve for six months as Director-Elect alongside the current Director, the Rev. Dr. Edward L. Hunt, before assuming the full position on July 1. Dr. Hunt is expected to continue to serve as Professor of Preaching and a member of the Seminary's Core Faculty after July 1, 2016.

Rev. Sabune is no stranger to the MPS program and to the New York State correctional system. A graduate of Vassar College (BA) and Union Theological Seminary in New York (M.Div), he was ordained to the Episcopal priesthood in 1981. He served in ministry in several parishes in New York and as a Grants Officer for the Global South at Trinity Wall Street and Dean of Trinity and St. Philip's Cathedral in Newark, NJ before being called as Vicar for Community Ministry at St. James' Episcopal Church in New York City. In 2004, he left St. James to become Dr. Hunt's successor as the Protestant Chaplain at Sing Sing, where he served for 5 years. He left Sing Sing to head up the Africa Partnership Officer for the Episcopal Church USA, but then returned to corrections where he has served as Liaison for Reentry for the New York Department of Corrections and Community Service (NYDCCS) for the past several years. Rev. Sabune will continue to serve part-time in NYDCCS as he transitions into administrative leadership of the MPS program.

"It is an honor to follow in the footsteps of Dr. Hunt as Director of the NYTS master's degree at Sing Sing," said Canon Sabune. "NYTS is at the cutting edge of theological education. I look forward to an exciting time of adventure as we introduce community leaders in and out of correctional facilities. It is my hope and prayer that our North Campus will continue to be a beacon of hope and a place of learning, healing and transformation."

"Rev. Sabune brings a wealth of experience both as a religious leader and administrator and is eminently qualified to assume the responsibility as director of the MPS program. We welcome him to the NYTS family" said the Rev. Dr. Kirkpatrick Cohall, Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Academic Dean.

"The MPS is a signature program embodying the mission of NYTS" said President Dale T. Irvin. "Rev. Sabune has been involved with it from its inception more than three decades ago. He has the vision and passion to carry it forward into the future. "

“The MPS program is in good hands with Canon Sabune,” said Dr. Hunt. “I look forward to continuing to teach in the program as I work with him in the coming year to make a successful transition.”

*About the MPS degree program*

NYTS has been offering the MPS inside Sing Sing since 1982. This intensive, one-year 36-credit degree is fully accredited as a graduate degree offering of the Seminary. More than 450 men have now graduated with the MPS. Many are serving in correctional facilities throughout the state as peer counselors, program leaders, chaplains’ assistants, tutors, or teachers. Outside the correctional system graduates who have returned home have continued to carry on the transformative work of redemption. NYTS MPS alumni are serving as pastors of churches, leaders of other faith-based institutions, professors in colleges and universities, directors or staff members of non-profit corporations, counselors, and in the for-profit business world. A number have gone on to earn other graduate degrees, either at NYTS or at another institution.

The MPS program has been recognized nationally for its innovation and social value. A recent accreditation report to the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools calls it “exemplary.” NYTS receives no government support for this program, despite the obvious benefits it provides in the form of reduced recidivism rates (under 10% over the life of the program) and other social outcomes. Students in the program pay no tuition or fees. The Seminary provides 100% scholarship support.

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