

Pastoral Letter to be Read in All Churches
of the Diocese of San Joaquin
Sunday, November 18 and Sunday, November 25, 2007
III.12.3(b)

Dear Friends in Christ,

By overwhelming affirmative vote, last year's Diocesan Convention, meeting in Fresno, December 1st and 2nd, 2006, adopted a constitutional change that will realign our Anglican identity so that the "Diocese shall be a constituent member of the Anglican Communion and in full communion with the See of Canterbury." To secure our place in the Anglican Communion, last year's Diocesan Convention mandated the following Resolution:

"The Bishop, Council and Standing Committee to assess the means of our affiliation with a recognized Ecclesiastical structure of the Anglican Communion and bring to the 48th Convention of this diocese a detailed plan for the preservation of our relationship with the Anglican Communion"

The members of both Standing Committee and Diocesan Council appointed a sub-committee to accomplish this task which they have done. The Diocese's place in the Anglican Communion and full communion with the See of Canterbury has been assured through an invitation extended by the Anglican Church of the Southern Cone which is offering the Diocese membership on an emergency and pastoral basis until the Episcopal Church, among other things, repents and complies with the requests of the Windsor Report and accepts the pastoral plan proposed by the Primates of the Anglican Communion in Dar es Salaam in February 2007. The pastoral plan, created in Dar es Salaam was designed to protect the orthodox faithful of the Episcopal Church, including our Diocese, and was unanimously endorsed by all the attending Primates in February 2007, including the Presiding Bishop, Katharine Jefferts Schori. Sadly, when this plan was presented to the Executive Council and the House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church it was rejected.

Our Anglican brothers and sisters within the Province of the Southern Cone have now responded to the situation by offering us the protection intended by the Primates at Dar es Salaam. At its meeting in Valparaiso, Chile November 5-7, 2007 the Provincial Synod of the Anglican Church of the Southern Cone of South America adopted the following resolution:

We recognize with great thankfulness the dioceses and parishes, clergy and laity of the Episcopal Church in the USA who have continually made clear their desire to remain faithful to the historic faith and order of the Anglican Communion.

Given that resolution 1.10 of the Lambeth Conference of 1998 articulated the clear teaching of the Anglican communion with regard to human sexuality, and that this

teaching has been widely ignored by many dioceses, parishes and clergy of The Episcopal Church in their life and teaching;

Given that The Episcopal Church, against the clearly expressed voice of the Primates at their meeting in October 2003, notoriously consecrated as bishop a priest who was in a known homosexual relationship, an act which has torn the fabric and trust within the Communion;

Given the failure of the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church to give a clear and unequivocal response to the Windsor Report;

Given that the House of Bishops and the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church have rejected the pastoral scheme proposed by the Primates in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania in February 2007;

Given that September 30, 2007, has come and gone – the date set by the Primates in Dar Es Salaam for a response from the Episcopal Church – and that no adequate response has been made, and that a significant number of the Bishops have publically expressed their intention to permit the blessing of same sex unions;

Given the widespread use of lawsuits and threats against dioceses and parishes, as well as bishops, clergy and laity who seek to remain faithful to the historic faith and order of the Anglican Communion;

Until the Episcopal Church:

- repents and complies with the requests of the Windsor Report;
- respects the conscience of the parishes and dioceses which wish to adhere to the theological, moral and pastoral norms of the Anglican Communion, once held also by the Episcopal Church;
- and its Presiding Bishop and officers cease to pursue and intimidate these dioceses and parishes by means of lawsuits, confiscations and depositions;

Or

Until adequate, effective and acceptable alternative primatial and episcopal oversight be offered as recommended by the Primates in Dar Es Salaam;

Or

Until the Archbishop of Canterbury takes clear action and responds effectively to the legitimate and urgent concerns of the “alienated” parishes and dioceses of The Episcopal Church offering pastoral leadership to protect them;

We, the Provincial Synod of the Anglican Church of the Southern Cone of South America meeting in Valpariso, Chile in November 2007, welcome into membership of our Province on an emergency and pastoral basis, those dioceses of the Episcopal Church taking appropriate action to separate from The Episcopal Church.

We do this in order that such dioceses may continue in the mainstream of the Anglican Communion and be faithful to its Biblical and historic teaching and witness; and we pray for God’s grace and help to resolve the painful and critical situation in our beloved Anglican Communion.



On December 8, 2007, at the 48th Annual Convention of the Diocese of San Joaquin the clergy and lay delegates will be asked to vote on the second reading of the Constitutional changes first adopted on December 2, 2006. The changed texts read:

Article I

Title and Territory

This Diocese shall be known as the Diocese of San Joaquin. Its territory shall embrace but not be limited to all that portion of the State of California included in the counties of San Joaquin, Alpine, Stanislaus, Calaveras, Mono, Merced, Mariposa, Tuolumne, Madera, Fresno, Kings, Tulare, Kern, and Inyo.

Article II

Anglican Identity

The Diocese of San Joaquin is constituted by the Faith, Order, and Practice of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church as received by the Anglican Communion. The Diocese shall be a constituent member of the Anglican Communion and in full communion with the See of Canterbury.

Article III

Sec. 2 The Ecclesiastical Authority of the Diocese is the Bishop. In the Bishop's absence or inability to act, the Bishop Coadjutor shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority. If there is no Bishop Coadjutor or if the Bishop and the Bishop Coadjutor are absent or unable to act, or if the Episcopate becomes vacant, the Standing Committee shall be the Ecclesiastical Authority

Article XII

Sec. 1 All Diocesan trust funds now or hereafter created shall be vested in the Corporation Sole of which the Bishop of the Diocese is the incumbent. The terms of any trust shall be the sole measure of the extent and use to which it may be put.



Should the second reading of the Constitutional changes receive the necessary two thirds of each order voting affirmatively next month, this will mean that the Diocese is free to accept the invitation of the Province of the Southern Cone. This enables us: 1) to receive the protection contemplated by the Primates in Dar Es Salaam that was originally agreed to by the Presiding bishop, but later rejected by the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church; 2) to remain a diocese with full membership within the Anglican communion where the orders of our clergy are recognized; and, 3) to assure that we remain within the Anglican Communion through a Province in full communion with the See of Canterbury. According to well-informed sources, the Archbishop of Canterbury has been fully informed of the invitation of the Province of the Southern Cone and described it as a “sensible way forward.” Indeed, it is the sensible way forward and a

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decision by the Diocese to move in this direction is by no means irrevocable as was seen during the 1860's when the Dioceses of the Southern States left the Episcopal Church and at the conclusion of the Civil War returned to the Episcopal Church without punitive action. As the Southern Cone invitation makes clear, the Diocese may return to full communion with the Episcopal Church when circumstances change and the Episcopal Church repents and adheres to the theological, moral and pastoral norms of the Anglican Communion, and when effective and acceptable alternative primatial oversight becomes available.

Membership in the Southern Cone will not adversely or significantly impact our rules of governance. Similar to the Dioceses of Argentina, Northern Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, Chile, Peru, and Bolivia who each maintain their own Constitutions and Diocesan Canon Laws in separate nations, our Canon Law and the requirements we have that are unique to being citizens of the United States of America will be fully honored.

At the upcoming Diocesan Convention our voice will be heard by the orthodox faithful throughout the Anglican Communion who pray for a momentous decision that will enable the people of San Joaquin to retain all that is precious to Episcopalians: our Book of Common Prayer, the orthodox faith based on Scripture, Tradition, and Reason, as well as to know that the high calling of God to live in accord with His moral and ethical dictates will be honored without compromise. Free, too, shall we be to respond to the Great Commission where Jesus commands:

“Go forth therefore and make all nations my disciples; baptize them everywhere in the Name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all that I have commanded you.” -

Matthew 28:18-20

Faithfully yours, in Christ,

The Rt. Rev. John-David M. Schofield, SSC
Bishop of San Joaquin