



## The Anglican Diocese of the Eastern United States

The Right Reverend William Bower, SSC  
Bishop Ordinary

Beloved in the Lord:

Greetings and peace from our Lord Jesus the Christ!

I am truly humbled and moved that you have elected and enthroned me to be the third Bishop Ordinary for the Anglican Diocese of the Eastern United States. This is a time of transition as we move our diocese, our parishes, and ourselves, back to the primary mission of Christ's Church – the proclaiming of the Gospel and the salvation of souls. God has a plan for us which is clearly spelled out in the Acts of the Apostles. As one that stands one hundred generations in Apostolic Succession from the original twelve, it is my duty and my privilege to call us all to action.

As part of our Christian vows made by us, or for us, in Baptism, we are called to “not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.” Indeed, the call for all Christians is to not be ashamed of our faith but rather to actively proclaim it! Moreover, we are each called by our Lord to follow the Great Commission to preach salvation to all.

Jesus said, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”

Please note the sense of action in the words of our Lord. His words are a command to all Christians to not only share His love, but to go, teach, and baptize. These actions, our actions, provide the gateway for all of those that do not know God. It is our duty to introduce others in our daily lives to the saving power of Christ Jesus, because without salvation, the rest of what the Church has to offer is merely religious theater. Or as one wise old priest once told me, “Teach the faith and they will beg you for the rest.”

Almost everyone will agree that we are living in troubling times. Each day on the news we hear of tragedies of war, of famine, of people killing one another in the streets. We are constantly bombarded with stories that reflect a people without faith and hope, an American society that is seeking solutions from places other than God and His holy Church. If there was ever a time in American history for the Church to arise it is now.

In the coming months I will be visiting each parish and speaking to each of you about evangelism and outreach and giving you tools for outreach and evangelism. We won't be talking about filling pews or meeting budgets; we will be talking about introducing people to authentic Christianity. We will be introducing people to a faith that is real, and that brings genuine peace. And we will be bringing those who were once without hope into a lasting relationship with God.

God has created you and called you according to His will and purpose. Now is the time for each of us to recall our common baptism and to live out our faith. We can do this by the power of the Holy Ghost imparted to each of us through the Sacrament of Confirmation.

May God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost bless us, guide us, and watch over us, both in this present moment, and forevermore. Amen.