

Dear Friends in Christ:

Grace and peace to you through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I write to you regarding the December 8 decision of the Convention of the Diocese of San Joaquin to break away from the Episcopal Church. I refer you to the Episcopal News Service article of the same date for further information at http://www.episcopalchurch.org/79901_92524_ENG_HTML.htm

I hope that you will notice in particular the statement of our Presiding Bishop: “The Episcopal Church receives with sadness that news that some members of this church have made a decision to leave this church. We deeply regret their unwillingness or inability to live within the historical Anglican understanding of comprehensiveness. We wish them to know of our prayers for them and their journey. The Episcopal Church will continue in the Diocese of San Joaquin, albeit with new leadership.”

What I have said of other recent, similarly motivated departures applies here: this is a sad, unnecessary, and tragically schismatic action, which distracts the Church from faithfully carrying out its mission. The Diocese of Northern California will continue to seek to focus on Christ’s mission in a way that truly honors our heritage of Anglican diversity. We will also continue, in concert with other neighboring dioceses and under the direction of our Presiding Bishop, to offer support to all our sisters and brothers in San Joaquin who wish to continue to live as Anglican Christians within the Episcopal Church. I will have more to say to you about that in due time. In the meantime, and always, dear brothers and sisters in Christ, pray for the Church.

Yours in Christ,
+Barry