



First Sunday after the Epiphany

January 13, 2008

Dear faithful and loyal friends in the Continuing Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin:

I cannot tell you how pleased and honored I am to be asked by Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori to be with you in this time of transition. I will be present in the diocese for an extended period of time, January 21-26, and am scheduled to be in Stockton, Modesto, Fresno, Bakersfield and Visalia, Monday through Friday, and then at the diocesan-wide meeting in Hanford on Saturday, January 26<sup>th</sup>. I am very much looking forward to this time and I hope to be able to meet with as many folks as possible. For those of you who, for whatever reason, cannot get to one of the gatherings, please contact Nancy Key or Mark Hall so they can tell you where I am.

I do not claim to “know” what you all are experiencing. I have not walked in your shoes. But I have observed the Episcopal Church in the Central Valley over the years through my family connections, and as a priest of the church toiling in vineyards to your north, namely in the dioceses of El Camino Real and California. I regret my tendency at that time to dismiss some of the messages that I was hearing about your situation because it was easy to do, not being on the scene or directly affected.

What has happened is, of course, unprecedented in modern times, and we are breaking new ground almost with every decision. Thus the unknown is facing us at every turn and in that unknown there is anxiety and doubt. But I believe in the very depth of my being that God redeems everything. And I believe in the very depth of my being that from this chaos will come a rebirth, and regeneration of the Episcopal Church which will most assuredly be a wonderful and sacred mystery.

I was blessed to be able to be in Atwater on December 23. I saw the church come alive and express support through presence and in prayer from many different locations within San Joaquin. I have received so many encouraging e-mails, phone calls and personal messages, pledging prayer support for all of us in this time and on this journey. They have been an incarnate reminder of how this church can rise up and be such a glorious thing to behold. I have enjoyed talking and e-mailing with many of you in recent days, and I do look forward to my time with you next week. Please know that I am desirous of talking with as many of you as possible. There is no theological litmus test as part of my role.

May God continue to be the light for all of us in this present time of darkness and keep each and every one of you as the apple of God’s eye.

Faithfully,

Bob Moore