

THE DIOCESE OF SAN JOAQUIN

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH - THE CENTRAL THIRD OF CALIFORNIA

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December 5, 2007

The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori
Presiding Bishop and Primate
815 Second Ave.
New York, NY 10017-4594

Dear Bishop Schori:

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ, our one and only Lord and Savior.

I have read your letter of December 3, 2007 and thank you for your prayers. There is a pastoral tone to this letter which is much appreciated. Informing me that you are not writing with any threats is most encouraging also. One would hope that this indicates your serious consideration of the Primates' specific request that deposition and litigation under the present circumstances be abandoned as unacceptable behavior among Christians.

Please know I do not share your feelings that I am isolated. My understanding of the authority of the Holy Scriptures, as well as Catholic Faith and Order are shared by the Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Orthodox Churches and by some 60 million faithful Anglicans worldwide. It is The Episcopal Church that has isolated itself from the overwhelming majority of Christendom and more specifically from the Anglican Communion by denying Biblical truth and walking apart from the historic Faith and Order.

It is true that the House of Bishops has ignored my views for nearly twenty years. After this length of time, one wonders how genuine the offer of change for the Church can be by having the "loyal opposition" present at the table. Despite all of this, we are not pining away here in the Diocese of San Joaquin; we are rejoicing in the truth of God's word!

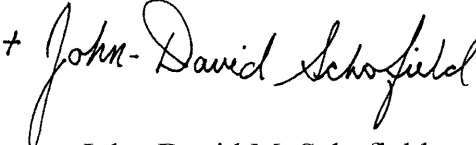
The decision to be made by our Annual Convention this Saturday is the culmination of The Episcopal Church's failure to heed the repeated calls for repentance issued by the Primates of the Anglican Communion and for the cessation of false teaching

and sacramental actions explicitly contrary to Scripture. For years, I have tried in vain to obtain adequate Primatial oversight to protect the Diocese from an apostate institution that has minted a new religion irreconcilable with the Anglican faith. Hopes were raised in February 2007 when leaders of the Anglican Communion met in Dar es Salaam. The direction given by them for the formation of a pastoral council would have provided the protection we requested and would have averted the need for the Diocese to seek sanctuary from another Province. You were in Dar es Salaam, and in the presence of the assembled Primates you verbally signified your agreement to this direction. By the time you returned to the United States, however, you denied your public statement and declared you had only meant to bring it back for further consideration. It was no surprise, therefore, when the Executive Council and the House of Bishops of The Episcopal Church later denounced the plan for a pastoral council that you went along with them. This was a clear signal that our religious freedom to practice the Historic Faith as this Church has received it would not be protected by The Episcopal Church. My Ordination vows require me to be a faithful steward of God's holy Word and to defend His truth and "be ready, with all faithful diligence, to banish and drive away from the Church all erroneous and strange doctrines contrary to God's Word; and to use both public and private monitions and exhortations..." I can do no other.

The Anglican Church of the Southern Cone has graciously offered the Diocese sanctuary on a temporary and emergency basis. This action is unprecedented but so, too, are the apostate actions of The Episcopal Church that make these protective measures necessary. The invitation of the Southern Cone is a matter of public record. In essence it embodies the solution agreed upon by you and the rest of the Anglican leaders at Dar es Salaam to provide adequate, acceptable Alternative Primatial Oversight. To endorse this as a way forward need not be a final nor irreconcilable commitment. Should it be the will of the Annual Convention to accept this most generous gift, I will welcome the opportunity implied in your letter to discuss how it impacts our relationship. In the event that the clergy and laity reject this offer from the Southern Cone, I would, of course, follow your recommendation to participate as a dissenter of the present unbiblical course of action being pursued by the House of Bishops. To do anything else would be to abandon God's people of San Joaquin and, in the end, prove to be a hireling and not a shepherd. For me, at least, this is the honorable course the Lord would have me follow.

You will remain in my prayers,

Sincerely,

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+John-David M. Schofield
Bishop of San Joaquin