



ANGLICAN PROVINCE OF AMERICA

DIOCESE OF THE EASTERN UNITED STATES

The Most Reverend Chandler Holder Jones, SSC
Bishop Ordinary, Presiding Bishop

The Episcopal Charge to the 57th Annual Synod of the Diocese of the Eastern United States

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who by thy Holy Spirit didst preside in the Council of the blessed Apostles, and hast promised, through thy Son Jesus Christ, to be with thy Church to the end of the world; We beseech thee to be with the Council of thy Church here assembled in thy Name and Presence. Save us from all error, ignorance, pride, and prejudice; and of thy great mercy vouchsafe, we beseech thee, so to direct, sanctify, and govern us in our work, by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, that the comfortable Gospel of Christ may be truly preached, truly received, and truly followed, in all places, to the breaking down the kingdom of sin, Satan, and death; till at length the whole of thy dispersed sheep, being gathered into one fold, shall become partakers of everlasting life; through the merits and death of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

The Mission of our Synod

Praised be Jesus Christ! It remains the greatest privilege of my life to stand before you on this day for the Diocesan Synod, the fourth of my ministry amongst you and for you as Diocesan Bishop. As I said to you four years ago, a phrase repeated this year by the new Bishop of Rome, 'What I am for you terrifies me; what I am with you consoles me. For you I am a bishop; but with you I am a Christian. The former is a duty; the latter a grace. The former is a danger; the latter, salvation.' Thus spake Saint Augustine of Hippo. His sentiments are exactly mine as we assemble here today. I love you all – and I go to the Altar of God with all of you on my heart. The Church is ever ancient, ever new, again as Saint Augustine proclaimed. It is our task perpetually to renew the life and operation of the Church by the Holy Ghost. The historic Catholic Church of this country, our particular expression of the Mystical Body of Christ, true Anglicanism, is alive and vigorous.

We are nothing less than the Orthodox and Catholic Church of the Seven Ecumenical Councils and the Seven Holy Sacraments, the Church of the Apostles, Confessors, Doctors, Martyrs, and Virgins. Here gathers the very fullness of the Church as created by and founded on Our Lord Jesus Christ and established in the Apostles and their successors. Of your Christian charity, please pray fervently for this Synod and for its ministry and work, as we seek to conduct the administrative business of the Church according to the mind of Christ and His Gospel and to advance the mission, governing, sanctifying, teaching, and evangelistic outreach of our unique expression of Christ's Body. We are here because we believe in the project called the Anglican Province of America. Today's charge will be all about *Mission*.

We encourage everyone to take a serious interest in the meetings and events of this Synod. Most critically, we invite everyone to enter into the spirit, significance, and purpose of Synod by prayer. Thank you all so very much for your loving support and encouragement during this special time in our corporate life together.

The Mission of the Continuing Church

The Continuing Church in our own jurisdiction, the APA, is growing. Over the past year, our Diocese grew by 2%, and the Province by approximately 1% in the United States alone. Not even to reference our sister Churches in Haiti, the Philippines, Ecuador, and India. The American Province constitutes a minority of our total membership. What we are doing is being blessed by Our Lord. The present and future of the Anglican Province of America have never been brighter.

And as the Anglican Joint Synods communion continues to coalesce, with the impending union of the Anglican Church in America (ACA) with the Anglican Catholic Church (ACC), we can joyfully exclaim that the Anglican Joint Synods (G2) relationship is progressing, strengthening, and drawing us all more closely together. Far from being a failure, the Saint Louis Affirmation Churches are advancing by the grace of God. We are Anglicanism, full stop. The APA remains fully committed to our full communion agreements with the Anglican Catholic Church (including the ACA) and the Traditional Anglican Church (TAC). Together as one communion, we are the singular, viable, sound option for all orthodox Anglicans throughout the world. All other communions of churches are theologically or morally compromised. As an example of what is developing, the APA will soon establish the Missionary District of Indonesia. More about that soon. We are the orthodox continuation of the Anglican Communion, and we always have been. As has been the case since 1992, wherever the Canterbury Communion fails and falls into error and heresy, a new Continuing Church arises. The Saint Louis Affirmation Churches are One Sacramental Body, moving forward together in synchronicity, as one, in mission and ministry.

A note, please about where we stand in our current American situation. The entire Christian world is being seized at this very moment by a remarkable and earth-shaking revival of interest in orthodox and traditional liturgical worship, especially amongst the young. This revolution is being reported in mainstream news articles and videos, and amongst podcasters and vloggers. Over the last year, this phenomenon has been reported by everyone from the UK Spectator to the New York Times.

Generation X, Millennials, Generation Zed, and Generation Alpha people are flocking to traditional Churches in the Western world, particularly in the United States. As the pagan culture around us continues to transmogrify our environment, younger people and their children are turning to the traditional Church. We are seeing this very procession into most of our own parishes and missions in the APA. Holy Tradition in the Traditional Mass and Traditional Sacraments is making inroads into the lives of younger believers in a way we have not seen for

decades. And we, as traditional Anglican Catholics, are at the forefront of this Spirit-driven restoration and promotion of the Church's ancient Faith and Practice.

What is imperative for us, and for our place, in this literally radical movement, this movement back to the radix, the root, is our fidelity and unswerving pledge to the historical and classical Anglican liturgical patrimony, to the form and substance of the Western Catholic tradition. The heretical liturgical experimentation and novelty of the past 60 years has now been proven quite definitively to be precisely what we always knew it was, a disaster for the Faith. We must, with courage and fortitude, advance the ancient Catholic Faith as articulated in the 1928 American Book of Common Prayer and the Anglican and American Missals. 'It is the Mass that matters.' Ours is a communion of love, joy, and freedom – all of us in this hall today, and all those seeking for us all round us, are here voluntarily, and long for the same Deep Church in worship and in spiritual and theological formation that shapes us as faithful Christians. We are neither high nor low, but Deep Church.

As proven by the dramatic growth and depth observed in our Diocesan parishes and missions, we are neither frozen in time nor fossilised or ossified. A fresh wave of Holy Ghost's power is with us. We are not stuck in the past, but alive and vibrant in the present. 'Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat.' (Saint Matthew 7.13). We have been shown the way of orthodoxy by Our Lord, the Holy Apostles, the Fathers of the Church, and the Saints, right worship, right glory of the Holy Trinity, in faith and life, and we are following it. Ours is the Faith Once Delivered unto the Saints. We have been redeemed by our Saviour for this moment and for this calling. It is our Catholic and traditional distinctiveness that attracts people of all kinds and backgrounds to us.

We shall safeguard and transmit this sacred legacy to our posterity. This Diocese remains firmly established in the Common Prayer we have received from our forefathers, the Mass of the ages, the Mass and Sacraments of the traditional Anglican Rite. The errors of modernism, relativism, indifferentism, latitudinarianism, 'big tent religion,' 'tepid centrism,' and the like, whatever we wish to call them, in doctrine or worship, have no place amongst us and clearly no longer have any place in the hearts of seriously-intentional Christians. We are called to be heralds of the Holy and Apostolic Tradition as instantiated in our own liturgical patrimony, a patrimony which should be celebrated and hallowed with dignity, reverence, solemnity, and the beauty of holiness. It's only the real Prayer Book and real Missals for us! We are real orthodox Anglicans after all. Now is precisely *not* the time even to contemplate any deviation from our present course.

Please allow me to affirm here how truly appreciatory I am to our APA House of Bishops that resides in our Diocese, as constituted in our Bishop Suffragan of the Eastern United States, Bishop William H. Perkins, Junior, our Missionary Bishop for Global Partnerships, Bishop David W. Haines, and our Presiding Bishop Emeritus, Bishop Walter H. Grundorf for their charitable, visionary, collegial, and wise leadership, and for their loyalty and dedication to this

Church and to me personally as the Presiding Bishop and Bishop Ordinary of this Diocese. Together, I believe, we make a simply awesome team. We share a common devotion, a common ethos, and a common bond in service to this Province and Diocese - unfailingly. The APA is our family and our home.

The Mission of the Priesthood

Our prayers are being answered. Last year, I challenged us to pray and work for an increase of vocations to the Sacred Ministry of the Church. Our Lord certainly heard and answered our prayers, as we now have 29 persons enrolled in various stages of the formation programme of the Diocese. We have received so many applications and enquiries that the Examining Chaplains, and especially Archdeacon Mark Menees, our hero and Chairman of the Board, are working themselves to the point of practical exhaustion! Let us thank the Board of Examining Chaplains for the supernal work it conducts on behalf of our Church and Diocese. And let us please never relent in our daily prayers for a continual increase of vocations to the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Let's keep the BEC as busy as possible.

Asked last year... Are you praying for an increase of vocations in your parish or mission? If not, please start now. Are you praying for vocations yourself? Now is the time. And how often do we enquire of men if they might have considered a vocation to the Holy Priesthood or Holy Diaconate? Sometimes, only the question itself is enough to spark discernment. There are many more men called to the ordained ministry than those who respond and accept in faith. Only a fraction of those men called to be priests and deacons by God actually heed the call.

The Church always gets the kind and number of priests she deserves. Why do some places have so many vocations? Because the people, deep in their faith, want priests, and they pray to be given the priests they want. Why do some places have so few? Because few people, even few parents, pray for priests. Can we hope to receive if we do not ask? There are hundreds of vocations dangling from heaven on cords; prayer is the sword that cuts them down for us. The labourers are available in the heart of Christ; it is our petitions that actualise them. Do we pray for the Lord of the harvest to send forth labourers into the harvest? What we want most ardently, the Lord of the harvest will grant. That is why Our Lord told us to pray. The search for vocations is basic - it begins on our knees. If we pray with our hearts and souls, God will answer our prayer. God gives us what we truly want. Please pray.

Building Mission Churches – our next challenge

'And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in.' As we approach the next Synodical year, another season of renewal and change, we can be often reminded of the priorities of life, the people and pursuits that really matter to us. Our efforts in this regard truly make a difference in people's lives. Our prayers matter. Our gifts matter. Our mission matters. We should never be tempted to believe falsely that our parishes and missions, although comparatively small in comparison to other churches of other traditions, do not make a difference or do not in some powerful way touch and transform lives for good.

Rest assured, our APA Churches make all the difference, and have the capacity to transform lives in ways we have not yet begun to imagine.

All we have to do is freely unleash the supernatural gifts we have freely received.

Today we reiterate what we all already know in our hearts and souls, that orthodox Christianity is the Life of the Holy Ghost, the genuine article, the real thing, and it belongs 'out there,' amongst the people who so desperately need it and perhaps do not even know they so need. Catholic Faith, Apostolic Order, Orthodox Worship, and Evangelical Witness have the inherent power to transform society - in times past, it transformed the ancient world, the Europe of the Middle Ages, and the Americas of new discovery and promise; it certainly has the power to convert in our own backyards and neighbourhoods.

But it must convert us first to a sacrificial life of self-giving Gospel obedience and service, before we in turn can be used to change our surroundings. Traditional Anglican Catholicism has been 'America's best kept secret' for far, far too long, and it is high time to reverse that posture in our own personal lives of Christian consecration and in the life of our beloved parishes and missions as a whole. The more earnestly we take our profession of Faith, the more effectively God will use us for His glory. May our heavenly Father grant us new opportunities in the future for missionary outreach and greater graces to launch into the deep to make His Son known, loved, and adored by all, in our own communities and round the world. God desires us to be the unique instrument by which He reunites heaven and earth and restores communion between God and man. We are called to deify and sanctify the universe as the Sacrament of Jesus Christ, Himself the Greatest Sacrament.

We are the Body of Christ. God has blessed our Churches and has placed us where we are as we are for a time such as this.

Our Faith should continually remind us that Our Blessed Lord has not merely given a mission to the Church, but rather, God has constituted His Church a Mission in herself - a mission to transfigure the whole of creation and of mankind in love by the proclamation of Jesus Christ and the fullness of His Gospel to ends of the earth. Mission is of the nature of God Himself. Mission is God's very essence, His very character. The Father in love sends or missions His Son and His Holy Ghost to us - God is the primeval missionary, the One Who gives and is given. God is Trinitarian, Lover, Beloved, and the Love shared. The Church is nothing less but the very Body and Bride of Christ, the *totus Christus*, the Head and Body of Christ united together as one corporate personality, Christ Himself in action, Christ in mission.

Our mission is the Great Commission of Jesus Christ, which sacred charge and task is not an option but a commandment (Saint Matthew 28.18-20). As faithful disciples of Our Lord and Saviour, we seek to fulfil the commission in our place and circumstances according to that Providence which has placed us here today. Ultimately, as we devoutly and conscientiously practise our Catholic Religion, which is nourished by Word and Sacrament, by Scripture and

prayer and Eucharist, filled with the Holy Ghost, we are challenged to recall that mission, the high calling which is ours in Christ Jesus, is not about a mission's financial solvency or fundraising, not about worldly standards of success or failure, and not even about church growth: mission is about God Himself, for He is the One who has called us to mission and has promised to strengthen us by His life and power to accomplish that which He has commanded and desired. Christian mission is about proclaiming the Thrice-Holy God we love and know to others, and manifesting His reconciling grace and salvific glory in the world and to the age in which we live.

There can be no authentic Christianity, no New Life in Christ, without mission. 'As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you.' The Lord Jesus Christ is the Divine Apostle of the Father, the One whom the Father sent into the world to save, sanctify, and glorify it. In turn, this Heavenly High Priest and Apostle calls every adopted son of God, every baptised and confirmed Christian, literally to go out; to be apostled. We are to be 'Godsends,' men and women of Apostolic calling and zeal who carry Christ to others, thus inaugurating in Christ the New Creation, a world redeemed and divinised by grace. Jesus reproduces His life and love, His mission, in us.

The Spirit bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

So the next time we hear someone utter the word 'mission,' let us be mindful of all that that little word means and implies. That little word is our charter, and the course to our glorious destiny in Christ. With all of this in mind, I should like to offer another challenge to the Diocese of the Eastern United States this year!

The challenge this year is simply this: let us resolve that every Deanery of this Diocese of the Eastern United States will establish a new mission within every Deanery within the next three years. We can do it! If every Deanery is willing to pool and allocate personal and financial resources from the parishes and missions within each Deanery, we shall surely be able to achieve this lofty goal. Going forward, the Diocese will use the Deanery system as the best and most efficient way for planting mission Churches. Each local Dean is asked to oversee the process of a Church plant in his own region.

Already, even before mounting this coordinated effort within and throughout our Diocese, we are witnessing groups of faithful Anglicans independently organising themselves into mission Churches for the Continuing Church without our APA initial assistance. Such is the desire in our wider community to see orthodox Anglicanism re-established and made accessible. The Church of the Holy Communion in Pensacola, Florida and Christ the King Church in Staunton, Virginia have already assembled and appealed to the APA. God willing, these congregations will soon join Saint Columba's Church, Shreveport, Louisiana as our newest missions. Plans have also been proposed for the creation of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament on the Space Coast of Florida. We are invited now to join the trend and erect new mission Churches in each Diocesan Deanery. I shall be working closely with each Dean in our mutual effort, as we begin

this essential plan. Financial support will, of course, be made available from the Diocesan Mission Fund, but we hope and trust that parishes and missions within our Deaneries will rally round the cause and contribute as much as possible in each location. Thank you so much for collaborating with us in this holy undertaking. At this time, let us please acknowledge the Deans of the Diocese: the Very Reverend J. Gordon Anderson, the Mid-Atlantic States; the Very Reverend Paul A. Rivard, Appalachia; the Venerable Mark Menees, Central and Eastern Carolina; the Very Reverend Matthew E. Harlow, the Deep South; the Very Reverend Brian Oldfield, North and Central Florida; and the Right Reverend William H. Perkins, Junior, South Florida. Please pray with the most heartfelt fervour for the endeavour we are about to undertake!

O CHRIST, the Rock upon which thy Church is built, whereon thy People,
as living stones fitly framed together, grow into a spiritual house;

Defend thy Church, O Lord.

O Christ, the Vine of which thy People are the branches, that they may
bring forth fruit an hundredfold;

Defend thy Church, O Lord.

O Christ, the Head of thy Body, the Church, whereof all thy People are the
members;

Defend thy Church, O Lord.

O Christ, our Prophet, who teachest the way of God in truth;

Defend thy Church, O Lord.

O Christ, our Priest, who didst offer up thyself upon the Cross, and ever
liveth to make intercession for us with the Father;

Defend thy Church, O Lord.

O Christ, our King, who reignest over all the earth, and makest us the
citizens of thy heavenly Kingdom;

Defend thy Church, O Lord.

O Christ, who didst send the Holy Ghost upon the Church at Pentecost,
enduing it with power from on high;

Defend thy Church, O Lord.

Our Digital Media Director – a Missionary

Since March 2022, Matthew (Stu) Stuart has produced a tremendous service on our behalf, upgrading Provincial, Diocesan, and parish websites, creating the new APA telephone application, which includes the Daily Office, and launching new social media accounts on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. That brilliant work has now expanded into a whole new range of internet ministry, including podcasting and vlogging. ‘Mining the Mysteries’ is well worth our time. A new video is supplied each month as part of the Comprovincial newsletter. Please remember to visit anglicanprovince.shop and purchase your APA swag! Stu has become quite irreplaceable in the mission of our Diocese and Province. Let us all thank Stu for everything he is doing for us.

Diocesan Synod Presentations – all about our Mission

During this Synod, we will hear particular presentations on some of the main activities underway in our Diocese. There are too many to include in one Synod, so specific developments have been selected in order to highlight them and draw them to your attention. Please be sure to remain in place and attend the presentations at Synod!

- + Consecrated building, Saint Peter the Apostle Church, Kingsport, Tennessee, Father Paul Castellano and Ms. Rosalind Cantrall.
- + Consecrated building, Saint Gabriel's Church, Coral Springs, Florida, Mr. Wayne Haefner.
- + Parish update, Saint Matthias Church, Dothan, Alabama, Father Aaron Ott.
- + Mission update, Saint Columba's Church, Shreveport, Louisiana, Deacon Jason McInnis.
- + Building project, Saint Paul's Church and School, Melbourne, Florida, Father Brian Oldfield.
- + Building project, Holy Cross Church, Knoxville, Tennessee, Father Scott Greene.
- + Building project and funding update, Saint Dunstan's Academy, Roseland, Virginia, Father Mark Perkins.
- + Mission update, Saint Luke's Church, Port Orange, Florida, Father Daniel Squires.

Concluding remarks for all of you, missionaries

It would be an everestian goal adequately to thank everyone who has offered so much to Our Blessed Lord to extend His Kingdom in this holy Church and Diocese. If I begin to thank everyone personally, we would be here for many days! So a litany of thanks will not be attempted, to your discernible relief. I shall make exceptions here and thank Lisa Ulrich, our Provincial and Diocesan Executive Administrator, without whom I would be totally overwhelmed by administrative and logistical expectations. Thank you so very much, Lisa. I also wish to thank our Treasurer, Dan Wilder, and his staff, especially Debbie Harman, for generously providing tireless hours in handling the Provincial and Diocesan book of business, as well as Charles Miller, our trusted Chancellor - both of whom provide their professional services complimentary to us. To all of you - please know how very much I love and appreciate each one of you, and how much I gratefully acknowledge your service and labour in the Lord. Please remember that the purpose of my whole life is to support you, to guide you, and to serve you – so please never hesitate to contact me at any time with any joy, request, or concern. I am here for you. Please pray for me as I always pray for you.

As we conclude, we commend this prayer for your use every day as we seek to fulfil God's holy will and to extend his Kingdom:

O GOD, who hast made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the whole earth, and didst send thy blessed Son to preach peace to them that are far off and to them that are nigh; Grant that all men everywhere may seek after thee and find thee. Bring the nations into thy fold, pour out thy Spirit upon all flesh, and hasten thy kingdom; through the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty God, give us priests! Almighty God, give us mission Churches!
Commemorating our most holy, immaculate, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Walsingham, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

God bless you all.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.