

## **Standing Committee's Theological Statement on the Episcopal Transition Process in the Diocese of El Camino Real**

The election of the Fourth Bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real is an event of great significance in the life of our diocese. The Office of the Bishop provides continuity and context for mission and encourages and equips the baptized people of God for ministry in the world. The bishop is also an important sign of unity and community for all members of the Body of Christ.

The vision of this diocese is to be a resilient and dynamic Gospel presence, empowering people to lead faithful lives in a rapidly changing world. This vision is driven by our values: Christ-Centeredness, Reconciliation, Passion, Integrity, and Innovation and Creativity.

As we embrace this time of transition and discernment, we commit ourselves to working according to these values and to the practices of prayer, conversation, listening, and Sabbath time. Regular time to reconnect with God, family, friends, selves, and the world in which we live allows us to hear the direction of the Spirit more clearly.

We are followers of Jesus, guided by His teaching and example to love God and our neighbor. In all things we are committed to honor and support every tradition, lifestyle, and point of view that seeks to increase understanding among the peoples of the world. We embrace the powers of grace and reconciliation, seeking to live them out in our communities and with all whom we encounter. We invite you to worship with us and walk with us in our commitment to nurture, heal, and foster joy among those who face life's struggles. With compassion, humility, and creativity, we strive to realize the timeless peace that God intends for us all.

We believe that, being energized by the Holy Spirit, God will guide this transition process to deepen our relationship with Jesus, our understanding of God's mercy, and our relationship with one another. We believe that with passion and integrity, we will discover new and engaging ways of sharing the rich gifts of our faith. We believe that God works with and through our human processes and structures as we seek together to understand and to be faithful to God's call. We believe that prayerful processes call us to be open to the issues and concerns of all in our diocese, and we will strive to be genuinely pastoral with all who participate in each phase of this challenging and hope-filled work. We believe that the Holy Spirit will help us choose a bishop who will share the responsibilities of leadership in a spirit of mutual love and respect, striving for transparency in all that we do. Therefore, we will do this holy work in God's time, seeking God's will, supported by the prayers and faith of all the people of El Camino Real. May we be made new as you are making the world new through the presence of your Spirit with us.

### **Prayer for the Episcopal Transition Process in The Diocese of El Camino Real**

*Gracious and loving God we pray for grace, guidance, and faithfulness to follow your leadership of our lives and of this discernment process for our fourth bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real. We pray for Bishop Mary and her family and give thanks for the health her leadership has brought our diocese. We pray for those whom you have called to serve on our Standing Committee, Search Committee, and Transition Committee. Give them listening and prayerful hearts for this most important process. This we ask in the name of the one who said, "Come, follow me." Amen.*

## **Standing Committee's Charge to the Search Committee for the 4<sup>th</sup> Bishop of the Diocese of El Camino Real.**

The Standing Committee of the Diocese of El Camino Real charges the members of the Search Committee:

- To remember always that you are doing God's work and ask continuously for the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit in all phases of your search. Give your prayerful and careful attention to this process.
- To listen to the diverse voices of the Diocese through a variety of methods and create a story of our Diocese that becomes the Profile used in the search, as well as a list of the gifts, strengths, abilities, and attitudes of heart and mind that we seek in our next bishop.
- To develop an online application aligned with our profile that will elicit candidates with the gifts we seek, receiving applications from across the church.
- The Standing Committee places no restrictions on applicants other than they must meet the canonical requirements of the Episcopal Church. No candidate may be excluded "because of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disabilities or age." (Canon III.1.2).
- To do a thorough vetting of each candidate, including background and reference checks, deep conversations about addiction and impairment, commitment to the Episcopal Church and personal integrity and behavior, including but not limited to sexual harassment.
- No serving member of either the Standing Committee or the Search Committee may be considered in any part of the process for nomination without first resigning from the committee. A member of either committee whose spouse/partner, sibling, parent or child becomes a candidate must also resign. If the candidate is eliminated from the process, the committee member does not rejoin the committee. If any member resigns from either committee, that person will not be replaced.
- To commit to establishing a level playing field for all nominees. The Search Committee must make known to any candidate for nomination that communications with members of the diocese relevant to the Search, Nominations, and Election process must be restricted to official Search events and communications sponsored by the Search Committee and the Transition Committee.
- All matters before the Search Committee are to be held in the strictest confidence, including names, parishes and dioceses of persons being considered, both during and after the search process.
- To organize and lead a discernment conference for a pre-screened list of nominees of semi-finalists.
- To present to the Standing Committee three (3) to five (5) qualified, vetted candidates by the beginning of March 2019, exact date to be determined. Upon approval by the Standing Committee, the slate will be announced publicly and a petition period, designed by the Standing Committee, will open to allow additional candidates to come forward.  
Walkabouts for the nominees will be held May 6-11, 2019. The Special Electing Convention will take place on June 1, 2019, and the consecration of the 4th Bishop of El Camino Real on January 11, 2020.
- To report progress to the Standing Committee, in writing (email), before their meetings on the first Thursday of each month. To keep the diocesan community informed of your progress through the established channels.
- Members of the Search Committee will not sign petitions for additional candidates during the petition period, nor will they say for whom they will vote or express their personal opinions about the candidates until after the Special Electing Convention.
- The Search Committee may offer routine updates (dates of listening sessions, progress reports as they work through the process) directly to the diocese, the media, and the wider church in consultation with the diocesan Communications Director. More substantive communications (for example, a summary of learnings from listening sessions or the results of a survey) should be approved in advance by the Standing Committee.
- To use the services of the Search Consultant, Judith Stark, hired by and Chaplain appointed by the Standing Committee.
- To pay careful attention to the needs of the nominees and their families. The Standing Committee is committed to a process that upholds the dignity of everyone involved.
- Finally, please know that you have our full trust and gratitude for this work to which you are committing yourselves on behalf of our diocese. The Standing Committee and the people of the diocese thank you and will pray daily for you and your work.