



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH

The Rt. Rev. Jack L. Iker, D.D., *Bishop of Fort Worth*

September 19, 2017

*“Rejoice always, pray constantly, give thanks in all circumstances,
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” I Thessalonians 5:16-18*

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the strong name of our Risen Lord. I write you on behalf of the Standing Committee of the Episcopal Diocese of Fort Worth, which met on Monday, September 18, 2017, to review and discuss with our bishop, the Rt. Rev. Jack Iker, the recent College of Bishops Statement on the Ordination of Women.

FIRST, we express our deepest gratitude to Bishop Iker who, in the 25th year of his episcopate, has steadfastly, resolutely, and without wavering, witnessed to the catholic Faith in all circumstances. We reaffirm our support of his apostolic ministry within our diocese, to the wider Anglican Communion, and before our Ecumenical partners in the Gospel.

SECOND, concerning the Statement on the Ordination of Women, we recognize the Statement was unanimously agreed to by the College of Bishops and we receive it as a statement of fact, representing a specific point in time in the life of the ACNA, not a statement of ideal. We are thankful for the clarity the Statement provides in articulating that the practice is both an “innovation” and lacks sufficient “scriptural warrant” to make it “standard practice” in the Province. We also acknowledge that a change in the status quo would require a change in the Constitutions and Canons. Accordingly, we commend to you the Forward in Faith North America Council Statement of September 18, 2017, and, in particular, we would draw your attention to Paragraph 6. We find the FIFNA Statement consonant with our thoughts, hopes, and concerns in the Diocese of Fort Worth.

THIRD and finally, as this letter is crafted on the Feast of Theodore of Tarsus, whose episcopacy was begun during a time of division and dissension in the English Church and who, surely mindful of our Lord’s words that “a house divided against itself cannot stand,” engaged his task in his time, willingly and obediently, and finally achieving the unity of the same through his persistent efforts; therefore, aware of our own calling in our own time, we invite you to pray constantly with the Standing Committee and the Bishop, for wisdom and discernment to know and to do our part, toward the health and welfare of our own Communion, and the reunion of the whole Church. “May they all be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they may also be in us, so that the world may believe that thou has sent me.” John 17:20-21.

Gracious Father, we pray for thy holy Catholic Church. Fill it with all truth, in all truth with all peace. Where it is corrupt, purify it; where it is in error, direct it; where in any thing it is amiss, reform it. Where it is right, strengthen it; where it is in want, provide for it; where it is divided, reunite it; for the sake of Jesus Christ thy Son our Savior. Amen.

In Christ,

Fr. Christopher Culpepper
President, Standing Committee