

Grace to you and peace from God our father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. The Eucharistic Creation of a Both/And Church

“The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving.” Most of us in this room, unless we are brand new to the Episcopal faith, recognize these words as those with which the host is given to the faithful during a Rite I Holy Eucharist. They are much older even than Rite I. They were the words of administration in the 1928 Book of Common Prayer. They were the words of administration in the 1892 Book of Common Prayer and in the 1789 Book of Common Prayer and in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer, which is the official Prayer Book of the Church of England to this day.

The corresponding words in Rite II are much simpler. There are only eight of them—one simple statement, “The Body of Christ,” and a parenthetical, “the bread of heaven.” The traditional words are not simple at all. There are 42 of them divided into two sentences using a total of four commas, three main clauses, one nonrestrictive clause, and one subordinate adverb clause. But the most important thing to notice is that the two sentences in the traditional language say two entirely different things and two theologically inconsistent things. The first is this: “The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life.” The bread that is delivered is not merely bread. It is the Body of Christ, capital B. Roman Catholics call it the Doctrine of Transubstantiation. The Eastern Orthodox call it the Doctrine of Consubstantiation. Anglicans call it the Doctrine of the Real Presence. That is the first point.

There is a second sentence: “Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving.” The second sentence contains an entirely different Eucharistic theology. It says that the bread is intended to remind the faithful of what Christ has done for them in the past. It is a profound reminder to be sure, but it is a mere reminder nevertheless.

Back when the very first Prayer Books were written, people were literally killing themselves all over Europe over whether that little piece of bread, which tastes a little bit like a water soluble tongue depressor, literally became the physical Body of Christ or was merely a reminder of the Last Supper. Ah, the good old days.

In the very first Prayer Book of Edward VI in 1549, Thomas Cranmer included the first sentence only. It was a gentle beginning to the reform of our Catholic tradition. "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life." By the second prayer book in 1552, Cranmer and the English Reformation had taken a more Protestant turn. The first sentence of the words of administration was gone and replaced only with the second. "Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving." There was a return to the exclusive understanding of the first sentence under Edward's successor, Mary, a devout Roman Catholic, during her reign and more violent debate, in which Cranmer himself was martyred. They don't call her Bloody Mary for nothing.

Now, I will admit that killing each other over what the Eucharist means has a certain inherent logical consistency. Either the bread is the tangible Body of Christ or it is not. Either the bread is merely a reminder of the Last Supper or it is not. Logical consistency, however, as comforting as it was in the good old days, was not characteristic of the Reformation in England. I'm not sure I know why that is. I think you could make an interesting argument that part of the reason is that the Continental Reformation among Protestants and the Counter-Reformation among Roman Catholics both tended to look for inspiration to the parallel development in the culture of the Renaissance and eventually the Enlightenment, both of which saw the world as logically consistent and subject to invariable laws of science in a way the more ancient world did not. It was to the more ancient world, especially the first four Christian centuries, that the English Reformation under the influence of Thomas Cranmer looked for inspiration. The early church was not nearly so concerned for logical consistency, or for that matter with the good old days, as we tend to be. The earliest Christians took strife for granted and looked with passion to a vision of the world not as it had been but as God was re-making it in Christ. The first centuries of the Christian experience were perfectly comfortable with logical inconsistency. Even Scripture, which some of the earliest Christian writings became, cannot be judged by logical consistency. Scripture is full of logical inconsistencies as to where Jesus was born, as to who came to the tomb, the order in which the world was created, and whether Jews could intermarry with Gentiles. Logical consistency is a lens we impose on Scripture from a later time. It was not the concern of our ancestors in the Faith and it is most certainly not the judge of what is true in a biblical sense.

Perhaps the English Reformation had a higher tolerance for logical inconsistency because it was confined to the people of a single island nation who had their national identity to bind them together when issues of faith seemed to divide. Perhaps it is because the architects of the English Reformation were equally or maybe even more concerned with restoring peace than with doctrine. Perhaps it is because they realized that a both/and way of thinking was more creative and more

constructive than an either/or way. Perhaps it is because they realized that truth is in God's hands and that both/and thinking, though it is a less comfortable, less quick, and less easy path to God's truth, is ultimately a surer path than either/or thinking is. But perhaps it is because they understood that the Eucharist is more about what is in your heart than it is about what is in your head. Perhaps it is because they understood that what it is to be the family of God is not all that different than what it is to be a family period. And perhaps it is because the architects of the English Reformation understood that by far the priority of the Gospel was on love and that Christians could not begin to proclaim a Gospel of love unless they could find a way to gather around a common table to share in God's grace together. On the one hand, the Continental Reformation produced Protestantism in general and Lutherans, Presbyterians, Moravians, Baptists (that would be the First Baptists, the Second Baptists, the Southern Baptists, the American Baptists, and the Cooperative Baptists) in particular. Division is one way to have an either/or approach to God. It is not faithful. On the other hand, the Counter-Reformation of Roman Catholicism produced papal infallibility, the magisterium, and the curia. Enforced uniformity is another way to have an either/or approach to God. I believe it is not faithful either. The English Reformation, which found its mature expression in the 1559 Prayer Book of Elizabeth I, found faithfulness in logical inconsistency by abandoning an either/or approach because an either/or approach is too small for God's love. The 1559 Book of Common Prayer, and all subsequent Prayer Books, have taken a both/and approach for the sake of the Gospel. The reason is that the Gospel is more about love than it is about opinion.

II. The Eucharistic Priority on Love

Nothing could get closer to the core value of the Gospel, not anything in Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, or Acts, not anything in the epistles, not anything in Revelation, than the teaching Jesus gave his disciples on the night before he died. In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, Jesus institutes the Eucharist, which is why the Eucharist is the center of our mission imperative. In the Gospel of John, Jesus teaches the one value that is most important for his community of disciples, and it is not unrelated to the Eucharist. And what Jesus said was this: "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." What we are called to stand up for, to endure for, to stand against opposition for, to be true to, which is what the word abide means, is to keep Jesus' commandments. That is what Jesus said. If we would abide in Jesus, we must keep Jesus' commandments.

My dear friends, I have searched the Scripture and find one and only one commandment given by him. One and only one. It comes in the very next verse after the one about abiding. Jesus said, "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you." We abide in Jesus in only one way, by keeping his commandment. We keep his one and only commandment by loving one another. We abide in Jesus, my dearest brothers and sisters, by, and only by, abiding in one another. Jesus' one and only commandment to us is to love each other. I wonder why it is that we don't put that on granite monuments and enshrine it in courthouse lobbies. I wonder why we don't want to put that on framed plaques in every public school classroom. Could it be that it would be far too threatening to the way things are than some of us really intend to be?

III. The Eucharistic Family Around God's Table

The theme of this convention is "We are Family." I know full well that that theme is not a comfortable one for all of us right now. Some of us are mad, some hurt, some grieving. Some of us lack the trust we once had in one another. Some of us are not sure exactly how we feel right now. None of those feelings, though, is inconsistent with being family. Indeed, together with love, they get at the very reality of what living in a family is all about. What we believe is that in the waters of Baptism God has made us God's own family. Blood is a strong bond, but in Christ, water is even stronger. And if families can realize, even despite the strongest differences of opinion, that family matters more than opinion, how much more is that the case in the family of God whose defining characteristic is love. When it comes to family, how I love matters more than how I think, and matters of my heart matter more than matters of my head, and when it comes to the family of God, living out the one commandment of Jesus with respect to those around me matters more than how many other commandments, laws, or rules I can quote or how many specks I can see in the eyes of others while ignoring the log in my own. We are the family of God, whether that feels any more comfortable to us right now than being part of our own families sometimes does.

Jesus was not so naive as to think that being family meant we would be in perpetual agreement, that we would always like each other, that we would never have problems living together. That is not what families are like. Still, it seems undeniable to me that the priority of the Gospel is just that. We are family, not because we are sinless or right or worthy, but because God loved us exactly in that condition and continues to love us in exactly that condition, difficult or not. Family, after all, is family. God has made it so, difficult or not.

The truth is that we liberals and conservatives are each other's brothers and sisters. There is nothing we can do about that, even if we go to another church. Those in Hazard are brothers and sisters of those in Lexington, and those in Lexington are brothers and sisters of those in Morehead, and those in Morehead are brothers and sisters of those in Georgetown, and those in Georgetown are brothers and sisters of those in Somerset, and those in Somerset are brothers and sisters of those in Lagos, and those in Lagos are brothers and sisters of those in New Delhi, and those in New Delhi are brothers and sisters of those in London. And dare I say those at St. John's Church, Versailles are brother's and sister's of those at St. Andrew's in Versailles. It is what the Eucharist is all about. We may sometimes want to deny it. Still we cannot change what God has done, try as we might. The truth of the Gospel is that we need each other. We need each other to be the object of each other's love. We need each other to be the partner of each other's abiding. We need each other, we liberals and conservatives, because the truth of the Gospel is there is no Jesus for us any other way. And so we abide.

IV. The Eucharistic Principle and Human Sexuality

The way we abide is that we are a both/and church instead of an either/or church. That is our peculiar inheritance as the spiritual children of the English Reformation. That is our precious birthright in the waters of Baptism as Anglican Christians. Let me tell you how that is relevant for our life right now.

For one thing, on the subject of sexuality, I am committed to this diocese being a both/and place. It is not necessary in this diocese now, and as long as I can help it, never will be necessary, to take an either/or position on homosexuality. As far as I am concerned, there is room in the Diocese of Lexington for those who think that Gene Robinson should be a bishop and for those who think he should not. As far as I am concerned, there is room in the Diocese of Lexington for those who think that same sex unions need to be supported in the community of faith and for those who think they should not be. As far as I am concerned, there is room in the Diocese of Lexington for those who think that same sex orientation is part of the created order ordained by God and for people who think that same sex orientation is a distortion of the created order. And there better be room for people who think all those things because all those people are here in this room now. They are family, whether we like it or not. As far as I am concerned, the one thing that there is no room for in the Diocese of Lexington is not making room. As far as our current debate on sexuality, the failure of charity is the one thing—the one thing—I will not allow.

My dream for our little diocese is that we will show the rest of the church a higher way to hold to the Canons, a way to be a both/and diocese in the best of Anglican tradition. I know from my experience as the bishop here that there are differences among all our congregations. We are not alike. There is no one size fits all solution to this situation. Our salvation is along the path that Anglicanism has always shown us. "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving." Both/and. Eucharistically is the only way I see to negotiate the sexuality issue.

What I as the bishop of all of you would like to see is a pastoral policy that makes room for all of us, no less than our Eucharistic theology does. That can only be accomplished in a both/and way and not an either/or way. What I as the bishop of all of you would like to see is what some might argue is logically inconsistent, a policy that recognizes that we are fallible human beings trying our best in good faith to discern the will of God. What I as the bishop of all of you would like to see is a policy that makes room among us for those who believe, out of love, that celibacy is the only sexual expression that God permits for homosexual persons; that makes room for those who believe, out of love, that homosexuality is a brokenness that God can restore; and that makes room for those who believe, out of love, that homosexuality is part of the order of the human creation and can find holy expression in intimate relationships marked by love and mutual respect, monogamy, and lifelong intention, and that such relationships need the pastoral support of the community of faith. For now, at the very least, we are going to have to hold our positions lovingly and faithfully and make room for others to do the same. We are going to have to listen respectfully, but more importantly, lovingly, to the different voices among us, including liberal and conservative voices and gay and straight voices. What I would like to see is parishes, led by rectors and vestries, after prayer and the study of Scripture in the light of our tradition, and the applying of the minds we have been given, acting in love to care pastorally for homosexual persons as the parish community of faith determines to be most true to the mind of God.

The fact is that the people of this diocese are at very different places on how best to care pastorally for the people in our church who are homosexual. Homosexual people, for that matter, do not speak with one voice about how best to care for homosexual people seeking to lead the Christian life. And that would be a problem if we were going to take an either/or approach. What is an appropriate pastoral solution in the context of Calvary Church, Ashland, St. Andrew's, Church, Ft. Thomas, and Christ Church, Harlan might not and need not be the same as what is an appropriate pastoral approach in the context of Trinity Church, Covington, St. Michael's Church, Lexington, or St. Paul's Church, Newport. St. John's, Corbin and St. James, Prestonsburg might be different still. What we must strive to find is a place

where each can find room to stand and at the same time accept that others are standing in somewhat different places. It is the genius of Anglicanism to do this. What is an appropriate pastoral solution in the context of the United States, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand, and England may not be an appropriate pastoral solution in Nigeria, Uganda, or Singapore. It is a principle that we have applied in Anglicanism before. Just as the Lambeth Conference of 1988 made room for polygamy as an appropriate pastoral response in the context of the emerging African churches but would not make room for polygamy as an appropriate pastoral response in the West, so now Anglicanism must continue to make room for a variety of pastoral practices as the church seeks to proclaim the Gospel in particular times and in particular places.

It is not opinions about sex or pastoral care or even the Bible that bind us together as family. It is that we are irrevocably made brothers and sisters in Baptism and drawn around the one table of the one who is the Father of us all. If we can come together around that table even with our disagreements about what happens there, surely we can come around that table with sincerely held disagreements arising from our understanding of what love requires with respect to the pastoral care of some of us. What binds us together has never been our opinions. It can only be our love. We need not be of one mind about issues. What we must be of one mind about is love. It is the first priority of the Gospel because it is the one and only commandment of Jesus.

V. Eucharistic Movement Outwards

The issue of homosexuality might not have been the issue I would have picked to spend so much time on if I were setting the agenda. It is God, however, who sets the agenda, and if this is what we need to be dealing with right now, then it is my job as bishop to deal with it. We have, without a doubt, and I do not know a single bishop of the Episcopal Church who would say otherwise, treated our homosexual brothers and sisters shamelessly. We have not, in clear contradiction of the words of our Savior, loved our neighbors as ourselves. It is time that shamelessness, injustice, oppression, degradation, prejudice, discrimination, and brutality—both physical and verbal—stop. It must stop and it must stop now, beginning today. It must stop. When the Archbishop of Nigeria declares that homosexual persons are lower than animals, he speaks falsely and his words are not in the service of God. There is no room in God's church for inciting hatred. There is no room among the baptized for anything less than protecting the dignity of every human being. There can be no orthodoxy that sins against love. There is room for difference in our sincere attempts to act in love. But there is no room for anything but love. And so,

to this extent, I do not regret the exigencies of the day that require the light of the Gospel of love be brought to bear.

But on another level, I do regret this debate. I regret it because it turns so much energy inward. It ought not take as long as I have just taken to argue to a room full of Christians that it is imperative that we love each other. (applause) I regret it because it threatens to turn our attention inward, to our own pastoral care, instead of the service of the world. And what is wrong with that is that it is absolutely inconsistent with the Eucharistic principles that form us as a people. God forbid that the Eucharist ever be about us. God forbid that the Eucharist ever make the Body of Christ narcissistic. God forbid that the Christian church ever turn inward except for the sole purpose of turning outward.

Very much unfortunately, in my opinion, we have a tendency to miss half of the theology and spirituality of the Eucharist. Perhaps part of the reason is that we use an arcane Greek word, Eucharist, which means thanksgiving, to describe this most central of Christian activities. Thanksgiving is an interior spiritual attitude. The Roman Catholics have us beaten here. Their common name for the principal Christian ritual is Mass. Now Mass is derived from an arcane Latin word as much as Eucharist is derived from an arcane Greek word, but the derivative meaning of Mass is not thanksgiving, but dismissal. Mass directs the faithful outward to be at work in the world outside themselves.

The question for us as a diocese is how much energy we want to divert from the outward to the inward. Every hour devoted to internal disputes is an hour lost to mission forever. And that I expect is what we may be held accountable for one day. Every sin against love is a direct act of sabotage to mission. The only way I see to keep us focused on mission is not to ignore our internal division but to treat it in a both/and way instead of an either/or way because to do so is in the service of love and what is in the service of love is ultimately in the service of mission. We must stop using sex as our excuse to avoid the gospel.

Just as the bread is broken and the people move to the altar to receive Christ, there is another movement that goes on in the Eucharist. The Body of Christ (capital B) is present in another symbol at the Eucharist, the assembly of the faithful. We gather together as one in all our diversity—black and white, young and old, strong and weak, rich and poor, Republican and Democrat, straight and gay, English speaking and Spanish speaking, those who believe one thing and those who believe another about the Eucharist itself, those who believe one thing and those who believe another about pastoral care—to receive God's gift to us, Jesus Christ. And then we

disperse, through the door, into the world, the Body of Christ broken again in the same diversity for the salvation of the world. In that brokenness, we are drawn together. Together we are the on-going presence of the risen Christ in the world. It draws us together in a ritual sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving and it calls us forth into the world as a living sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.

And there is still one more movement of the Eucharist once we are out the door. It is the one that draws us back in. Among those who need, the poor, the hungry, the thirsty, the vulnerable, the oppressed, we receive Christ again, for Jesus promised his disciples that he would meet them concretely and tangibly not only in the bread and the wine but in caring for the world's needy. And so we are fed again by the tangible presence of Jesus as we give of ourselves to the poor. And as we give of our lives we are drawn again to be fed by Christ himself. As we give of our lives we are drawn into the very Paschal mystery. As we pick up our cross to follow Christ, we are drawn to the cross of Christ, and as we are fed Eucharistically with the body and blood of Christ we are in turn raised with Christ to serve the world as his own body. And the cycle repeats itself, over and over and over again. And always will until Christ's return.

That sacramental movement, the one that occurs out there in the world, is the one we call mission. Our Eucharistic life is in mission because it is in mission that we meet Christ. And in that reality, I have called us together again to consider our mission in education. In all honesty, I had intended for us to move on at this convention to health care. But we have so much more work to do before we are ready to move on.

A. Reading Camp

We have made a lot of progress this year, but there is more to do. Reading Camp doubled the number of children it served last summer, up to nearly 60. But at 60 we have maximized our use of the Cathedral Domain. If we are to expand the service we provide, we have to be more creative, and the Reading Camp team has done exactly that. If the Domain is so full that we cannot bring any more children to Reading Camp, well then, we can bring Reading Camp to them. It is the plan to more than double the number of children we serve again this summer by incorporating three satellite camps, two of which will be day camps in Danville and Hazard and one of which will be an overnight camp in Harlan. The hope is that in the summer of 2005 we will double the number of satellite camps, in Northern Kentucky, another in Eastern Kentucky, and one in Lexington. This program has attracted national attention, as you will see later in this convention. It continues to be an unfolding

miracle. I sat at the Domain one morning this summer watching children and teachers enthralled by reading, our volunteers scurrying around to make sure everything worked right, young people listening with rapt attention to a teacher and basking in the individual attention, young heads held high to think they might no longer be what they call “a dummy,” and love all around. It was no less than watching God at work. It was a Eucharistic moment.

Lest you miss one of the Eucharistic miracles of Reading Camp, let me be very explicit about it. Reading Camp brings together lots of people, lots of people who think different things. And that has not always been easy. It gets at the whole Eucharistic point, though, in that Reading Camp is an exercise in loving and in abiding. I, of course, am the bishop of this diocese. Some, I hear, perceive me to be liberal (although I’ve now been to General Convention, and let me assure you that I am a moderate). When I first proposed Reading Camp three years ago, the priest whose imagination was caught was Martin Gornik. Now Martin (how should I say this?) is not a liberal. When Martin came to me and told me he’d like to help with Reading Camp at my first convention now three years ago, I told him I’d get back to him. I have a confession to make. I let Martin take the lead in this project because I couldn’t think of a good excuse not to, although I tried. I repent of this now. I confess that it was a moment that I gave in to my fear. Now I have no doubt, no doubt at all, that the idea of Reading Camp and Martin’s catching of the vision was the working out of God’s providence. After Martin, Ginger Sauls got on board. Ginger is one of the ways I know I’m a moderate. Then Lucy Cox. Lucy’s not a liberal either. The team grew. People from Christ Church, Harlan caught the vision and have been an integral part of the team. And there was probably no one in this entire diocese who wanted to distance themselves more from General Convention than the people of Christ Church, Harlan. Let me tell you, there have been some bumps. There have been some bumps, to tell you the truth, that I thought might well do us in. But they have not. They have not because Reading Camp is a living demonstration of what draws us together in Christ, which is the love of Christ and the mission of Christ. Reading Camp, as mission should always be, is a Eucharistic event. It is socially important because we’re helping some children who need help learning to read for all kinds of reasons. But here is the Eucharistic point. It is spiritually important because it draws us ever deeper into the mystery of being incorporated into the Body of Christ. That is what mission is all about. Is it not what family is all about?

B. Diocesan School

It is my very sincere hope that this year will begin a journey that will lead us to the establishment of a school, a school which will in turn become the first of other

diocesan schools. The Education Commission began this work last year and was unfortunately a casualty of other concerns that rose up during the year, both with respect to the disciplinary procedure for a priest accused of embezzling funds and General Convention. Most unfortunately, these matters took energy, used up resources, and, for a time, distracted me.

C. Higher Education

Our work in higher education in the coming year and in the years to come has a lot to do with our work with the University of Kentucky and St. Augustine's Chapel. The chapel has undergone a painful but necessary transition this year. The necessity for that transition has been apparent to many for a long time, but the timing of it was not as good as it could have been because of the resignation of the former chaplain. The change at St. Augustine's is to shift its focus from being a congregation of non-students existing on funds intended to provide ministry with students to a ministry that is now entirely directed to students. We are doing this in cooperation with the Lutheran Church in which the expenses of the ministry are shared between us. The joint Lutheran/Episcopal student ministry is a perfect example of the good stewardship of our resources to serve a wider mission using a both/and approach. By manifesting Jesus' desire that his disciples be one, we have been able to do student ministry at the University of Kentucky better than we have ever done it before. We have shifted our focus to students, those who need, who are in turn reaching out beyond themselves. It is the mission imperative and it is certainly what college chaplaincy is intended to be.

Our work in higher education has also advanced at Transylvania where we have this year placed a part-time chaplain. It is my hope to have lay chaplains, possibly each one covering several colleges, to expand college ministry to all the colleges in our diocese. Sadly, and most regrettably, this is a mission opportunity that will have to be postponed because of our budget realities, to which I shall return in a moment. This is no time to be postponing ministry with young people.

Finally, higher education through the University of Haiti presents our best opportunity at the moment for reaching out internationally. We now have a significant investment as a diocese in Haiti. Our communal sacrifice will enable a significant flow of money to go to our companion diocese over the coming year. It is very much my hope that our financial investment will be followed by our personal investment, our people helping the people of Haiti to put those funds to work to serve real and present need.

D. Youth

Not all ministry with young people is being postponed in our diocese. We hosted the Hispanic Youth Event at Berea College last summer. This summer we will host the summer gathering of Episcopal Ministries in Higher Education and the Provincial Youth Event for Province IV. Next summer we will host the national Episcopal Youth Event bringing in young people from all the dioceses of our church.

The Provincial Youth Event deserves special mention. Youth from the 20 dioceses in the southeastern states will be here from July 18-25 to be our partners in mission. Together with the help of these young people, it is our hope to revitalize our mission at Barnes Mountain by doing repairs, rebuilding the church, and building a shelter for homeless rural youth, which is a big and mostly ignored problem. It is also the plan to build a dormitory that can be a permanent site for future youth work camps among the people of Appalachia, which as you have heard me say many times, I believe to be God's gift to us and our greatest treasure.

E. Early Childhood

We have got more important work to do in education of which we must not lose sight. I am happy to report two very significant advances this past year in the opening of a childcare center at St. James in Prestonsburg and a head start center at Advent in Cynthiana, the former ministering especially to parents attending Prestonsburg Community College and the latter ministering primarily among Hispanic farm workers and their families. We must not lose sight of these needs and we must not let these accomplishments be our last. Especially among Hispanic immigrants, we must not let these accomplishments be our last.

F. Long Range Planning

The Long Range Planning Committee has also begun its work. They will be reporting to you later at this meeting as well as over the next several years at convention as they go about their work. This may be one of the most significant steps we have yet taken for freeing ourselves from the us against them thinking, which is an either/or mindset, that is such a typical factor of diocesan life. Their

intention is to visit and conduct conversations in every congregation and among every significant diocesan ministry group about what our vision of diocesan life is. You will be hearing more about this shortly.

VI. The Budget as a Eucharistic and Missional Document

There is another aspect of our common life that is very much related to us against them thinking, both/and as opposed to either/or mindsets, and the missional imperatives of the Eucharist. The budget is both a Eucharistic and a missional document. It is Eucharistic because it has a direct impact on sharing ourselves with the world as the Body of Christ. It is missional because it determines how we are able to do the work God dismisses us from the Eucharist to do.

We have already talked about the multiplicity of feelings we share in this room, from great joy to great grief. Some have responded financially in a spirit both of joy and commitment. Both the Church of the Advent and St. Andrew's, Lexington, have pledged 19% more than their fair share and Trinity, Covington, has pledged 30% more. I suspect there are some of whom I do not know but who plan to do likewise. Others have been caught in a significant bind by grief and anger, which are at root the same thing. It is important for Eucharistic reasons that we as a community share that grief. When one member of the body feels joy, we all feel it. When one member of the body feels sadness, we all share that, too. The complicated nature of the present moment is that we are sharing all of those conflicting feelings at the same time.

It seemed important to me that we as a diocese show grace in implementing the fair share giving plan because grace is the example set for us by our Savior. It is my hope that grace will engender grace, even though I realize full well that is not always how our humanity works. Accordingly, I announced that I would support appeals to be relieved of some part of a congregation's diocesan assessment made on the basis of conscience because of disagreement with the actions of General Convention. The condition of the support is that the assessment had to be paid in full either to the diocese or to one of several mission opportunities on which we could all agree, or in part to both. The Executive Council subsequently granted \$108,000 in conscience appeals, every dollar of which was redirected to mission.

The Diocese of Haiti, the largest and poorest diocese of the Episcopal

Church, received the single largest share of redirected assessments, \$43,500, 40% of the total. Other beneficiaries were the Cathedral Domain, Reading Camp, St. Agnes House, the St. Paul's Child Care Center, the St. James Child Care Center, the Compass Rose Society, and the Ashland Community Kitchen.

Several important things were accomplished. For one thing, what could have been a mission disaster was turned into a mission positive. None of the money that should have been paid to the diocese stayed for parish use. It all went outwards, a Eucharistic movement. Another equally important thing is that all of us in the diocese, through this tangible sign, shared in the pain of some. Nothing could have been more important than that. Finally, it is my hope that we as a whole in the diocese communicated to those who were unhappy with General Convention that they are heard and their dissent registered and acknowledged.

One more thing was accomplished, perhaps the most important of all. By the whole sharing in the pain of a part, we have demonstrated to ourselves that when it comes to the congregations and the diocese, there is no such thing as us against them. When parishes wanted to withhold funds from the diocese, who suffered? We all did. It was our joint ministry that did not get done. It is our camp and conference center that might not be funded as well as we had hoped. It is our college work that had to be postponed. It is our youth coordinator vacancy that is not going to be filled. Neither the program of the national church center nor the Diocese of New Hampshire will suffer one bit. The question for us in this diocese now is how much pain do we wish to enjoy at the expense of our own ministry in mission? There is no such thing in this diocese as "them." The ministry we share is ours. There is no way to distinguish between the parish and the diocese. There is no way to give to the parish without giving to the diocese because the parish is just an expression of the ministry of the diocese. If we try to hurt the parish we do nothing but hurt ourselves because we are the diocese. If we try to hurt the diocese, we do nothing but hurt ourselves. If we try to hurt the Episcopal church, we are doing nothing but hurting ourselves. When we try to hurt the community, we can do nothing but hurt ourselves, because we are the Episcopal Church, because we are one body with need for all the parts and what hurts one is in turn felt by all. It is what my father used to call "cutting off your nose to spite your face." And so we will spend this year noseless. It is perhaps somewhat silly. But it says loudly and clearly that we are in this together. The pain of one is the pain of all. And the sacrifice of one is the sacrifice of all. And one thing we have learned is that no amount of withholding or redirecting is going to change one thing that we don't like. Only our engagement in mission will change anything.

Ultimately, the budget situation may be an opportunity, an expression of God's providence, because it calls us again not to take our budgetary priorities for granted. The fact that the 2004 budget contains almost no expense for diocesan program calls us to look carefully at our realities and the opportunities they might allow us to take advantage of. If the conscience appeal program is not continued, and with the second year of the Mission Funding plan becoming effective next year, our budget should contain \$236,000 next year that it does not contain this year. So, how best might we employ this for mission? It presents the possibility of starting new parishes. We could easily fund two church start ups with this. It presents the possibility of making dreams of a diocesan school a reality. It presents the possibility of vastly expanding our work among college students. It presents the possibility of expanding Reading Camp. It presents the possibility of opening the long desired environmental education project at the Domain. It presents the possibility of increasing our work at Barnes Mountain, both as a center for rural youth and as a site for youth mission trips for young people from around the country to invest of themselves in ministry in Appalachia. It presents the possibility of a very significant role at the University of Haiti. It presents the possibility of whatever God might inspire us to do. So, what are our priorities? That will be a big question this year as we plan for the next. This will be one of the things we learned by discovering really how little we can live on. What might we do constructively and creatively with what we do not need—it turns out--to survive? What might we do to live Eucharistically?

VII. Conclusion

So we gather together during this 108th diocesan convention as family. There is some element of celebrating that reality, that we are all family. There is some element of abiding that we are family. There is some element of enduring that we are family. There is, as with all families, some element of putting up with that we are family. But family we are. And we do what families do when they gather. We come to the table and we eat. We did that last night at the Eastern Kentucky Science Center and we will do it tonight here at Jenny Wiley State Park. We will do that together again and again because we will always get hungry again. But we also did it last night at St. James and this morning at a healing service and will do it again tomorrow morning when we gather to break the bread and share the cup and receive the food and drink that will last us for eternity. That is what the family of God does. And it is that family that we keep nurturing and growing. This is a family we have all been received into with these words: "We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified. Proclaim his resurrection. And share with us in his eternal priesthood." And so we are. And so we will. Because, by God, we are family. Thank you.

The Rt. Rev. Stacy F. Sauls

Bishop of Lexington

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