Like

The Episcopal Diocese of New York

November 10, 2016

My Brothers and Sisters,

For many Americans, of both political parties, the results of the presidential election on Tuesday were a surprise. It was not what was expected, or at least not what we were led to expect. We discover now the depth and the breadth of the rift that divides and separates Americans one from another in ways that have not been revealed by other elections. These differences, this divide, cannot and must not be simply smoothed over in false hope of an easy reconciliation. Rather, the much harder task now lies before the American people in our country, but also in our diocese, to really listen to one another, to hear one another's pain and fear, to understand one another, and by God's grace to find together the deeper hopes and dreams which all human beings share, which might bind us more closely to one another, but which have in fact driven us so far apart. This task may be our most urgent work now as a church.

Despair or gloating are unfaithful responses to this election for Christians. So is the hatred of those who differ from us. But on the day after the election it must not be forgotten that a substantial amount of Mr. Trump's rhetoric during the campaign was racist and misogynist, brutal and violent, anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant and sexually offensive. Too much of his public comment directly contravened the central principles of the Christian ethic and the accepted, shared values and virtues of the Episcopal Church. That rhetoric has occasioned extraordinary alarm. We pray that the heated language of the campaign will not follow him into his presidency or inform his governance, but we also insist: it may not.

Last Saturday, at our diocesan convention, I suggested some basic principles of the Christian faith, derived from the commandment to love God and love our neighbor, which are not debatable for Christians, and which can and must guide the speech and actions of people of faith in public life. They are not partisan; they favor no particular candidate or political party. They are of the very fabric of the Christian faith, and I repeat them here:

> The equality and dignity of all persons of every race and gender and sexual orientation, for we are every one of us made in the image of God and redeemed by the One who took our flesh upon himself and dwelt among us. Who said, "I came that all may be one, as the Father and I are one."
>
> The welcome of the stranger at the gate, remembering that once you were strangers in Egypt. And more recently, immigrants on the American shore. Christians claim

solidarity with the oppressed, the vulnerable, the refugee and the outcast who stand at the gate and knock.

Compassion and relief for the poor, and economic justice for those who are shut out of the human possibility of the abundant life, all in the name of the One who said, "When you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed. Because they cannot repay you."

A commitment to non-violence, and to peace, and to the sacrifice of self-interest for the sake of that peace. Render to no one evil for evil. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

And the gracious stewardship of creation and all that God has given into our hands.

Our call as Christians is always to hold ourselves to the standard of these principles, and as Christian citizens to hold our elected officials to the same standard. Mr. Trump will now be our president, and we pray that God grace him with the wisdom and courage to rise to the high calling of his office, as we will also pray that he be imbued with compassion for and understanding of every single person in America, for whom he has now being given the responsibility of leadership and care. Our president, our elected officials, one another, and we ourselves will be held accountable for this. On this too much depends.



The Right Reverend Andrew M.L. Dietsche
Bishop of New York



The Right Reverend Allen K. Shin
Bishop Suffragan



The Right Reverend Mary D. Glasspool
Bishop Assistant