

Bishop Jeffrey Lee, GC Video Message 2

July 12, 2009

Anaheim, California

Hi again from Anaheim. I want to reflect with you today a little bit on the Lord's day, this Sunday, on what has been happening at General Convention. The UTO ingathering and the principle Eucharist for this Sunday of this gathering was this morning. Representatives from the United Thank Offering in every diocese of the Episcopal Church presented their gifts for the work of the church, for the mission of the church, to make God's care for all people a reality. It was, as always, a moving ingathering of gifts from every corner of this church. And it got me thinking about this word mission.

We have many guests from other parts of the Anglican Communion here. Bishops, primates. I hosted the primate of the Church of Korea last night at a reception, sat today with the primate of Mexico and the Most Rev. Philip Aspinall, who is the primate of the Church in Australia. Many of our guests have come to witness firsthand how the Episcopal Church in its General Convention operates. We are a huge legislative assembly; the voices of lay persons and clergy as well as of bishops are represented here in abundance. That is something to learn about. Particularly in regards to some of the hard decisions the Episcopal Church has made, continues to make and will make in the future. It is different perhaps in other parts of the Anglican world.

What our guest talk about though—at least what I have heard them talk about most—is how grateful they are and how remarkable it is to witness our commitment to mission. Whether we agree or disagree across the boundaries of our church in different parts of the world, we are as the Episcopal Church, remarkably, steadfastly, committed to making a difference in the lives of people, to making a difference in their lives for the sake of Christ who loves us and invites us all to the banquet of God's abundant life.

I am grateful to be part of the Episcopal Church; to take a share in leading our church in our engagement with mission in the various ways we touch the lives of so many people on this planet. We need to continue to do that no matter what decisions, legislation, resolutions are set before us. I believe we will remain committed to doing just that.

Episcopal Relief and Development is planting the seeds for a malaria preventive initiative fund that we reckon will have the capacity to save 18 million lives. Eighteen million lives across the globe, from a perfectly preventable disease, malaria.

That is representative of the best work of our church. We reach out to those who have no other helper because God is their helper. And God has us to help make that love, that care, a reality.

I ask your prayers to continue, to watch closely as this General Convention unfolds, and I remain forever grateful for our commitment in the Diocese of Chicago to the mission and ministry of the church.