



## *The Episcopal Diocese of Western North Carolina*

October 19, 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Celebrated pastor and theologian Frederick Buechner once said, “Turn around and believe that the good news that we are loved is better than we ever dared hope, and that to believe in that good news, to live out of it and toward it, to be in love with that good news, is of all glad things in this world the gladdest thing of all.”

Our vocation as followers of Jesus is both a tremendous responsibility and an awesome blessing. We are called to be stewards of God’s Good News by living from a place of gratitude and investing ourselves in the holy work of embodying this love to all people everywhere.

As your bishop, I remain diligent with the funds you have entrusted me and diocesan leadership to steward. We continue to reduce administrative expenses and refine other areas in our budget all of which create additional resources to directly support missional areas identified by diocesan leadership as priorities for 2019. These missional areas include increased support for: our college and young adult ministries; Latino ministries Iona School for Ministry, an educational program for bi-vocational priests and deacons; and our Curacy initiative to bring our recent seminary graduates back to the Diocese. Each of these areas, as well as many others, all contribute to the vitality of the whole diocese.

I believe that the journey of faith with Jesus is an adventure into God’s bold, wildly imaginative, joyful, and merciful mission of redemption and reconciliation. In the year ahead, we will continue participate in courageous ministry that is both a reflection of God’s mission and Christ’s love for neighbor and stranger alike. I invite you to thoughtfully and prayerfully consider your giving to the Diocese in 2019.

Thank you and your congregation for all you do to serve Christ. I celebrate our shared ministry and look forward to what we will do together to building up the Kingdom of God.

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. José A. McLoughlin, Bishop