

In the Name of God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost. Amen

We, David, by Divine permission, Lord Bishop of the Church and See of the Pacific & Southwest, send greetings to all the Clergy and Faithful of the Diocese. Tomorrow We shall be retired and you shall have a new Lord Bishop, Our well beloved brother the Right Reverend Henry Joseph King, and a Coadjutor, our equally beloved brother the Right Reverend Anthony F. Rasch. Looking back over the fifteen and a half years We have been your Bishop, Father Charles Wesley's great spiritual song And are we yet alive, which has been sung by the Clergy of the Diocese to open every Clericus for many years comes to mind. The second and third stanzas are appropriate. "What troubles have we seen, What mighty conflicts past, Fightings without, and fears within, Since we assembled last ! Yet out of all the Lord Hath brought us by His love; And still He doth His help afford, And hides our life above." Truly a picture of our experience together.

Many of the fightings and fears of the past are over and gone. The threat of the four lawsuits to take control of the Diocese or some of our Parishes or assets is over, the statute of limitations on the New Jersey lawsuit having run, seven of the opposing Bishops being dead, and the eighth in a nursing home outside the country, it appears that our Churches and property are safe from this threat. Nevertheless, Satan never sleeps. There are and will always be other, more subtle and deadly, as well as well as more comprehensive dangers to be faced.

The present economic and financial disaster engulfing our nation and the world is almost certain to continue and become much, much worse. This will provide a tremendous challenge to the faith and love of all Christians. Will we hold together as brothers and sisters of one another, sharing whatever resources we have with other members of our congregations as they have need, and reaching out to others with aid as we are able? We should also be preparing for this by establishing Parish food pantries and stocks against the day of need. Regular "pot luck" and parish common meals should be established, for fellowship as well as practical reasons.

The political climate is not much, if at all, better than the economic and financial one. It seems likely that we may see the election of a President and Congress which are fanatically devoted to an anti life agenda. The continued slaughter of innocent babies through abortion, the increase of "assisted suicide" and "euthanasia" legislation, and the preference for animal and even plant life over human life as well as the continued destruction of marriage and the family, are very real and grave possibilities if this happens.

In spite of all this the Lord still "doth His help afford," and we can be confident that whatever life brings we can be "more than conquerors" through Christ our Savior and Lord. So, as We lay down the burden and privilege of being your Bishop We bless you in the Name of the Lord and pray his guidance and protection for you and your new Bishops now and to the ages of ages. Amen.

Given under Our hand and seal Episcopal, this nineteenth day of September in the year of our Lord Two Thousand Eight, and of Our Consecration the sixteenth.

Faithfully,

+David
Pacific & Southwest