

Episcopal News

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SERVING THE SIX-COUNTY DIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES



Antonio Gallardo



Monica Mainwaring



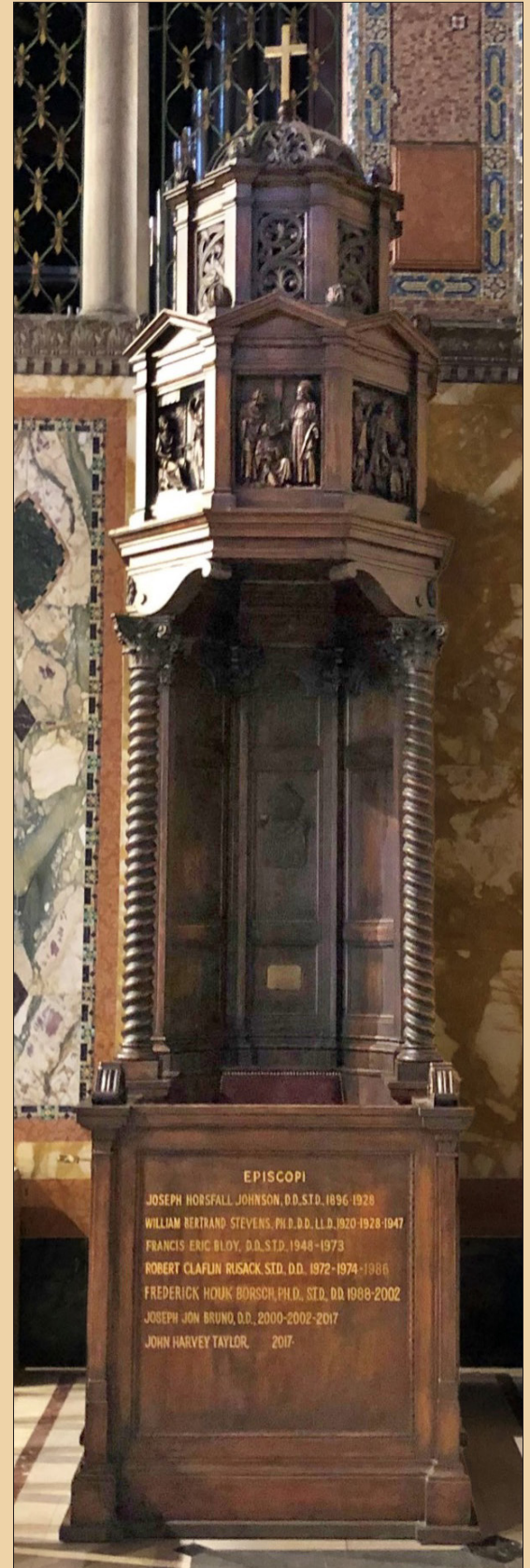
Melissa McCarthy

Meet the candidates

Election of the eighth bishop
of the Diocese of Los Angeles

*Almighty God, giver of every good gift:
Look graciously on your Church,
and so guide the minds of those
who shall choose a bishop for this diocese,
and those who offer themselves as candidates,
that we may receive a faithful pastor
who will care for your people
and equip us for our ministries;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

**Diocesan Convention
November 7 - 8, 2025**



Who chose the candidates?

A look at the process of nomination

During his address at the November 2023 meeting of Diocesan Convention, Bishop John Harvey Taylor called for the election of a bishop to lead the Diocese of Los Angeles after his October 2026 retirement.

Taylor's announcement began a process that will be completed at the 2025 meeting of convention Nov. 7 - 8, when one of three nominees will be elected to become Los Angeles' eighth bishop diocesan.

The slate includes: the Rev. Antonio José Gallardo Lucena, D.Min., rector of St. Luke's Church/Iglesia de San Lucas, Long Beach; the Rev. Monica Burns Mainwaring, rector of St. Martin in the Fields Church, Atlanta, Georgia; and the Rev. Canon Melissa McCarthy, canon to the ordinary in the Diocese of Los Angeles.

The process

The process began with the appointment by the diocese's Standing Committee of a search committee. Clergy and lay committee members (listed on page 3) reflect the six-country diocese. They come from different geographical areas, are of various ages and ethnicities, and are involved in many ministries of the diocese, its congregations and its institutions. Thomas Diaz, lay leader at All Saints Church, Pasadena, and the Rev. KC Robertson, associate rector of St. Matthew's, Pacific Palisades, were named as co-chairs.

The committee engaged Judy Stark, a lay leader in the Diocese of Southwest Florida

and a former newspaper editor and reporter, as search consultant. Stark has provided such services in many bishop searches.

The committee began its work by doing a thorough study of the diocese and its work, starting in March 2024 with a series of in-person and online "listening sessions," at which members of the diocesan community were invited to share their vision of the diocese's future. Two additional sessions were held for clergy, diocesan staff, and special ministry groups, and an online survey provided input from additional voices.

Using the information collected through these means, the committee wrote a profile of the diocese, which was made available to the entire diocese and the wider church (bit.ly/EDLA_Profile_2025).

Once the profile was published early in June 2025, the committee opened nominations. Any lay or clergy member of the Diocese of Los Angeles was invited to nominate a candidate before the June 27 deadline. The committee began a series of interviews, extensive background checks, medical evaluations, leadership and psychological assessments of the candidates.

During the summer months, the committee conducted interviews with each semi-final candidate, then invited the finalists to a late-August retreat. The committee assigned one of its members to each candidate as a chaplain, to hold him or her specifically in prayer and answer questions during the process.

On Sept. 12, the search committee announced its slate, consisting of Gallardo, Mainwaring (pronounced *Manner*ing), and McCarthy.

The committee also established a protocol by which additional candidates might petition

to be included in the slate, in keeping with best practices used throughout the wider Episcopal Church. The petition process follows a plan created by the Joint Nominating Committee for the Election of the Presiding Bishop in 2015. The petition protocol has replaced "nominations from the floor" to allow for complete background checks and interviews similar to those carried out for the original candidates.

As a result of this petition process, the Rev. Canon Lorenzo Lebrija was added to the slate by consent of the Standing Committee. However, Lebrija notified the diocese after a few days that he was unable to continue as a candidate because his husband, Troy Elder, must undergo open-heart surgery, and Lebrija chose to concentrate on helping him heal.

Getting to know the nominees

The committee asked each candidate to write a letter of greeting to the diocese, and to answer a list of questions about his or her vision for the diocese. The letters and answers are in this issue of The Episcopal News beginning on page 4, and online at diocesela.org/bishop-search.

The next step will be a series of regional forums Oct. 21 - 24, at which members of the diocesan community will be invited to meet and question the candidates. A full schedule is on page 3.

The election of the bishop will be held during the Nov. 7 - 8 meeting of Diocesan Convention. The new bishop will be consecrated by Presiding Bishop Sean Rowe, Bishop Taylor and other bishops on July 11, 2026 at All Saints Church, Pasadena. Information about the consecration service will be announced by the arrangements committee and included in future issues of The Episcopal News Update. ■

This issue of The Episcopal News is available in Spanish.

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About the nominees for bishop

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On the cover: The cathedra, the chair of the bishop of Los Angeles, resides in St. John's Cathedral, Los Angeles. File photo



The Bishop Search Committee

Co-Chairs

THOMAS DIAZ

Director of Connection and Care,
All Saints Church, Pasadena (Deanery 5)

THE REV. KC ROBERTSON

Associate rector, St. Matthew's Church,
Pacific Palisades (Deanery 3)

Members (listed alphabetically)

KATHY EISEL

Parishioner, St. Luke's Church, Monrovia
(Deanery 5)

Canon MARTHA K. ESTES

Parishioner, St. Richard's Church, Lake
Arrowhead (Deanery 7)

The Rev. Canon GARY HALL, Ph.D

Retired dean, Washington National
Cathedral; retired dean and president,
Bloy House (Deanery 2)

The Rev. Canon MARK HALLAHAN

Retired rector, St. Paul's Church, Pomona
(Deanery 6)

The Rev. Canon GREGORY LARKIN

Retired rector, St. Columba's Church,
Camarillo (Deanery 1)

CHERRYLIN LONGID

Parishioner, Holy Trinity & St. Benedict
Church, Alhambra (Deanery 5)

LAURA MAHANEY

Member, Third Order of the Society of St.
Francis (Deanery 3)

The Rev. ELIZABETH MOLITORS

Rector, Trinity Church, Santa Barbara
(Deanery 1)

KATHRYN NISHIBAYASHI

Parishioner, St. Mary's Church (Mariposa),
Los Angeles (Deanery 3)

The Rev. RACHEL NYBACK, D.Min

Rector, St. Cross Church, Hermosa Beach
(Deanery 8)

The Rev. JOSEPH OLIOMOOJA

Priest-in-charge, Holy Faith Church,
Inglewood (Deanery 3)

CRAIG REIMER

Parishioner, All Saints' Church, Riverside
(Deanery 7)

The Rev. CARLOS RUVALCABA

Assisting, St. Stephen's Church,
Hollywood, and St. Barnabas' Church,
Eagle Rock (Deanery 4)

HEYDEN ELY MORALES SANTIAGO

Parishioner, St. John's Cathedral, Los
Angeles (Deanery 4)

The Rev. SHANE SCOTT-HAMBLIN, Ph.D

Rector, St. Michael and All Angels Church,
Corona del Mar (Deanery 10)

The Rev. Canon ED SNIEMIENSKI

Deacon, Church of the Ascension, Sierra
Madre (Deanery 5)

The Rev. JEFFERY THORNBURG

Rector, Church of Our Saviour, San Gabriel
(Deanery 5) ■

All are invited to Oct. 21–24 regional forums with candidates

Six regional meet-and-greet forums with the candidates for eighth bishop of the Diocese of Los Angeles have been scheduled by the search committee to provide opportunities to meet and confer with the nominees.

All in the diocese are welcome to attend the sessions, and to view the Saturday-morning plenary via webcast. Clergy and convention delegates are especially encouraged to attend; two of the sessions are designated for clergy only.

Sessions will be held in person, and most also will be offered via Zoom. Registrations for in-person and online participation are requested, and may be made at bit.ly/BishopCandidateForums. Zoom links will be emailed to registered participants.

The schedule is as follows:

Tuesday, October 21, 7 p.m.

All are welcome. St. Columba's Parish,
1251 Las Posas Road, Camarillo 93010

Wednesday, October 22

Session 1: 1 p.m. *For clergy only.*

St. Paul's Commons, 840 Echo Park Avenue,
Los Angeles 90026. (No Zoom link will
be available.)

Session 2: 7 p.m.

All are welcome. Christ the Good Shepherd Parish 3303 W. Vernon Avenue,
Los Angeles 90008. Spanish-language
translation will be available.

Thursday, Oct. 23, 7 p.m.

All are welcome. All Saints' Parish, 3847
Terracina Drive, Riverside 92506

Friday, Oct. 24

Session 1: 1 p.m. *For clergy only.*

Church of the Messiah Parish, 614 N.
Bush Street, Santa Ana 92701 (No Zoom
link will be available.)

Session 2: 7 p.m. All are welcome.

St. Thomas' Church, 15694 Tetley Street,
Hacienda Heights 91745. Spanish-lan-
guage translation will be available. ■



The Rev. Antonio José Gallardo Lucena, D.Min. Rector at St. Luke's/San Lucas, Long Beach, since 2022

Past Positions: Vicar at St. Luke's of the Mountains in La Crescenta, 2019-2022; Pastor for Latino Ministries at All Saints Church in Pasadena, 2015-2019

Education: Diploma in Theology, Bloy House, 2019; Master of Divinity, Claremont School of Theology, 2018; Ph.D. in Business and Economics, Lehigh University, 2004; Master of Science in Manufacturing Systems Engineering, Lehigh University, 1995; Certificate, Information Systems Management, Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan, 1993; Master of Science studies in Industrial Engineering, Universidad Experimental Politécnica (UNEXPO), Venezuela, 1993; Bachelor in Informatic Engineering, Universidad Centro Occidental Lisandro Alvarado (UCLA), Venezuela, 1990

Age & Family:

Age: 58. Born June 1967 and raised in Barquisimeto Venezuela, the youngest of seven children. Currently blessed with an extended family that continues to grow over time, and which includes parents, siblings, nieces and nephews.

Hobbies & Interests:

International travel, seeing the beauty of God's creation in people, architecture, nature, food, music, culture, and art; reading, movies, a meal with friends, walks with the puppies, listening to music, concerts, art exhibits, and quiet time at home.

Greetings, dear followers of Christ in the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles.

I have humbly accepted the nomination to the slate of candidates for the eighth bishop of our beloved diocese.

My deep desire is to serve God and God's people, and my spiritual journey has led me to this place of discerning, with you, to this call as bishop, having been persuaded by the Spirit.

I am a person of faith, a pastor, a steward of resources, a teacher, a deliverer of results, and someone who inspires people to work together, building upon their own strengths and abilities. Above all, I am a follower of Jesus Christ who strives to live every day – by the grace of the Holy Spirit – with a genuine desire to respond faithfully to God's radical call.

In reflecting on the expressed needs of the Diocese of Los Angeles, considering the bishop search committee's survey, the listening sessions, and my own experience as an active member in the diocese, I share the collective desire to develop a diocesan vision that unites us in our diversity, invites all in our diocese to become active participants in making that vision a reality, and supports our congregations in becoming more vital and effective.

My experience in both ministry and executive leadership has uniquely prepared me with the skills needed for this moment in the life of our diocese. I am an effective strategist with a demonstrated capacity to bring diverse people to the table to develop a shared sense of purpose, building upon our strengths while maintaining engagement and motivation.

I share the desire stated by those in our diocese for clear, consistent communication and transparency. I, like you, want to feel proud that our diocese is in tune with the realities of the world and is actively promoting mutual healing and transformation, being a loud voice for peace and justice.

I am confident in my administrative skills, having successfully managed operations larger than our diocese, and delivering results efficiently with

the highest level of transparency and integrity, while balancing the needs of different constituents and maintaining their engagement and keeping them informed. Having worked in various sectors of the economy across multiple countries and in organizations of different sizes, I have learned to successfully transfer the skills I have developed and adapt them to the specific needs of each call.

As a faithful pastor, I have guided people from all walks of life to lean more fully into discipleship, sharing with them God's love and compassion, meeting them where they are, and nourishing them in using their gifts to make God's vision for us a reality. I look forward to being a pastor who listens, guides, and strengthens the diocesan staff and clergy, so that, in turn, they may thrive in their ministry and serve their communities well.

As an active member of our diocese for the past 16 years, I am familiar with local ministry needs and have a solid foundation, allowing for a relatively smooth transition. I have served in three congregations that reflect the diversity of our ministries, as a pastor at All Saints in Pasadena, a vicar at St. Luke's of the Mountains in La Crescenta, and currently as the rector of St. Luke's in Long Beach. I also have experience serving on each of the diocesan governing bodies and have been appointed to many working groups and commissions in the diocese and in the wider Episcopal Church.

I love and respect our Episcopal tradition, and I bring a broad perspective to my faithful leadership, drawing on my lived experiences as an immigrant, as a working professional in the corporate and philanthropic sectors, and in my upbringing in a different Christian tradition.

I am aware of the challenges that we face as a diocese, and I am even more excited about the possibilities that the Spirit of God has in store for us. I am excited to get to know more of the amazing lay people of this diocese, learn what inspires them, and hear about their God-given talents. I am also looking forward to listening to all *(continued next page)*

the clergy of the diocese, especially those leading congregations, to learn about the desires that God has placed in their hearts and to work together to decide what the diocese can do to support them in their ministries.

Given the state of our nation and world, I am eager to explore with others, including Presiding Bishop Rowe, the role of the Episcopal Church in the life of our country, as some of the most vulnerable in our communities face cruelty and fear.

I see beauty and possibility arising from the reimagining of the role of bishop that is currently happening in our Church: an increased focus on humility, vulnerability, and pastoral care; the exploration of new possibilities to evangelize; the insistence on supporting local communities, where the actual work with the people happens; and the nimbleness to respond to the growing needs of the world.

I am ready to meet you all, to expand my understanding of the local realities through the meet-and-greets, and to be a source of support for all congregants, clergy, and diocesan staff, guiding and uniting a diocese as diverse as ours.

I look forward to continuing in this process of mutual discernment, in which we will continue to learn from one another, and jointly pray that we remain open to what the Spirit of God has in store for our beloved Diocese of Los Angeles.

What is your vision for the Diocese of Los Angeles?

My vision is to cultivate a diocese where Christ is at the center, where we strive to love and live like Jesus, where lay and clergy leaders are equipped and empowered to serve in their unique contexts, where everyone embraces the compassionate and unlimited love of God, and where the diocese is a valuable resource for all people and congregations.

I consider that our joint vision needs to be anchored in proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ through authentic discipleship; forming disciples of all ages and walks of life; supporting clergy wellness and developments; continuing to be enriched through diverse, inclusive, and multilingual/multicultural communities; standing with the vulnerable and marginalized to transform systems of in-

justice; strengthening financial sustainability; working with other Episcopalians, ecumenical and interfaith partners, and advocacy groups; becoming instruments of mutual healing and transformation in the world, and building upon the good work that has been done by Bishop Taylor and his team.

In accomplishing our vision, we should agree upon some guardrails to frame our work, and the scriptures are a great foundation to start drafting values like the following:

- ◆ *Joyful living* – We are joyful disciples, we embrace every day as a gift from God, and we rejoice in it (Psalm 118:24).
- ◆ *Fair acting* – We act with integrity, equity, and transparency, ensuring that every decision honors people and promotes trust (Matthew 7:1).
- ◆ *Creative healing* – Like the friends who brought the paralyzed man through the roof to be healed, we are creative in doing our holy work (Luke 5:18-19).
- ◆ *Compassionate connections* – We lead with empathy and respect, fostering relationships built on care, kindness, and mutual dignity (Zechariah 7:9).
- ◆ *Trustful resourcing* – Like the crowd who brought all they had, five loaves and two fish, we also bring our best for God to provide all we need, and much more (John 6:1-15).
- ◆ *Humble collaborations* – We embrace collaboration over ego, listen before we speak, and serve with a posture that values the good of the whole (Matthew 23:12).

This is a vision I offer in broad strokes, because I know that any lasting vision for our diocese must be discerned in prayer and in partnership with the people. I will prioritize to listen, to wonder, to question, and to be creative in the development of our joint vision.

What are your primary spiritual resources, and in what ways do they support your ministry?

I feel at my best to embrace every day when I start praying the Rosary, when I meditate, when I intentionally count my blessings, and when I read the scriptures.

These practices help me to stay centered on my mission, grow in my knowledge of God, and reflect upon how I am living, so that I can model a life of faith for the people with whom I share my ministry. In community, worship, Bible study, and opportunities for fellowship are my favorite times with the people at the congregation. These times strengthen my hope for the future and help me to grow in my embracing of God's presence in everyone. I also feel blessed with the guidance, accountability, and encouragement that my spiritual director provides.

What do you understand to be the primary thrust of the Gospel?

To me the primary thrust of the Gospel is Good News: God, out of love and faithfulness decided to live among us in the person of Jesus Christ, to show us unconditional love, to remind us of God's grace, to give us an example of how to live our best life, and to invite us to be participants in God's reign. The message of the Gospel is about forgiveness, transformation and hope for the renewal of all things. The true Gospel invites us to co-create a better world and make faith relevant by embodying Jesus' way of selfless love, care for others, and a deep connection to our Creator and humanity.

What primary principles are central to your leadership style?

My leadership style is consultative and delegative. I seek input and involvement from the people I am working with, inspiring them to set a shared vision and to develop a framework to make decisions based on agreed upon values. To foster ownership and creativity I set a clear direction, giving people the space to use their God-given gifts. I also believe in the value of equipping people with the skills needed to excel at what they do. As a leader, I prioritize serving others, emphasizing empathy, listening and community building. This leadership style has allowed us at St. Luke's Long Beach to empower lay leaders, to align more than 45 ministries, groups and activities with a common vision, and to make challenging decisions guided by our community values.

As chief pastor of the diocese, how would you call upon and (continued on page 10)



The Rev. Monica Burns Mainwaring

Rector, St. Martin in the Fields Church, Atlanta, Georgia, since 2019

Past Positions: Vicar, Church of the Common Ground, Atlanta, GA; Assistant Rector, Christ Church, Coronado, CA; Parish Pastoral Assistant & Deacon, Good Samaritan Church, San Diego, CA

Education: M.Div. Harvard Divinity School (2006); B.A. University of California, Davis (2000)

Age & Family:

47. Married, mother of three teenage children (one in college, two in high school); extended family in the Los Angeles area and throughout California. (Last name is pronounced *Manner*ing.)

Hobbies & Interests:

Swimming, biking, hiking, camping, traveling, meeting people from different parts of the world, playing guitar (badly). Simple pleasures include family meals at hidden gems, clothing-swaps with friends, and plunges in the ocean whenever I can.

Greetings, Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles.

I am grateful to be on this journey of discernment with you as together we seek God's will for the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles. You have been in my prayers for a long time. Thank you for choosing me to be on this slate.

My mother recounts that she barely made it to Verdugo Hills Hospital in Glendale, I was so eager to come into the world. My ministry, over the last twenty-five years vocationally, and the last ten years ordained as a priest in the Episcopal Church, has likewise had a similar sense of urgency for the Church and her future.

I see ourselves in a liminal moment, that is, a time in between what was and what is yet to be revealed. Our familiar structures and patterns have led us to decline, and we wonder about viability and sustainability. Though I perceive that there is in the Church a great deal of loss and grief and fear, I also perceive a great amount of curiosity, hope, and earnest expectation in EDLA about what God might do among us.

I imagine that in the years to come, should we remain open, and faithful, God might call us out just as God called Abraham, and so many of the great cloud of witnesses, asking us to go to a land God will show us. The Holy Spirit will chart for us a course yet unknown to us. As I state in my response to your question about my vision for the diocese, I have an inkling that this pathway will take us beyond our churches, requiring us to be nimble and adaptive, as we seek to connect with the people and issues outside of the Church. Our purpose is to shine Gospel light upon a world in need of hope.

In your diocesan profile and in the conversations I have enjoyed with your Bishop Search Committee, you have articulated well the path you have trod since your first Bishop Joseph Johnson arrived in Los Angeles in 1896 exhorting you to "fear not." Every time Jesus and God's messengers arrive with that imperative – "do not fear" – they ask something courageous and important for the sake of God's kingdom come. We would be wise to trust, as they did, that we do not have to know where we are going to remain faithful to the One who calls.

My father, who was born and raised in Siler City,

North Carolina, made his way to Los Angeles via the Navy, which took him first to Japan, then to California, and there he remained. My mother, a Lithuanian immigrant, born in a displaced person's camp in Germany, made her way to UCLA as a college student after adolescence in Northern California. My father never knew a stranger, and my mother never put her feet up, as there was always work to be done or adventure to be had. By choosing Los Angeles as home, they gifted me the regional context where God met me, and I met God. I am grateful for the playground of R.D. White Elementary where I had my first amateur mystical experience, and for Manhattan Beach, where I learned to pray while swimming, and I practiced this gift in Lake Mojave and Lake Havasu, the frigid waters of Lake Arrowhead, while attempting surfing in San Clemente, and lots of public pools. I was formed in this place I love and call home.

You should know that I was formed also by the Church, though my family meandered denominationally – first Catholic, then Methodist, then Presbyterian. Ecumenism remains a part of me. Becoming an Episcopalian was a choice later in my twenties when I encountered the good liturgy and "broad tent" of the Anglican tradition first as a graduate student, at Harvard Divinity School, after having served in full-time youth ministry at a large interdenominational church immediately upon graduation from UC Davis. Fast forward through to ministries, lay and ordained, in the Episcopal Church's churches, schools, camps, and hospital ministry. This while enjoying a very happy marriage to Simon, an Englishman who is also an Episcopal priest, and three delightful children – now teenagers, the eldest a freshman in college. We have moved across the country, serving in dioceses on both coasts. That experience of the breadth of the Episcopal Church domestically and extended visits to various parts of the Anglican Communion overseas have expanded my imagination for what is possible in Christ's Church.

I work very hard serving the church, currently in the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta, initially as vicar of Church of the Common Ground, an outdoor church with people who live outside, and now as rector of St. Martin in the Fields, a parish in the city with a school through eighth grade and a (continued next page)

large outreach center. I work hard but I also play hard, exercise regularly, and rest well by getting outdoors or spending time in with family. My prayer life is important to me and sustains me for ministry. In the parish I currently serve, together we have birthed several opportunities for laity to play central roles in ministry and have established a new worshipping community that has brought vitality and young people to the church. We have navigated the complexity of the church-school relationship, bringing health, clarity, and transparency. We are wrapping up a capital campaign, and the parish has achieved financial sustainability.

As happy as I am in my current role, I have experienced the Holy Spirit beckoning, setting me on the path to this moment. I offer myself, alongside the other candidates, and am deeply glad for this season of mutual discernment. I look forward to being with you in October and am holding you in my prayers, just as I request yours for me and for my family.

What is your vision for the Diocese of Los Angeles?

My vision, if called to serve as your bishop, “chief pastor” – or “chief missionary,” as the diocese’s first bishop, Joseph Johnson, characterized the role – would be to lead the movement of the diocese out into the world. Followers of Jesus are people in motion. We are called to carry the Gospel to the outer reaches, to meet those who dwell on the edges. By “edges” I am not here referring to the churches in Santa Maria and Needles, though I see you, and I also recognize all 36 mission congregations who may feel themselves to be living “on the edge.” My vision is to point the 40,000 Episcopalians in the Diocese of Los Angeles to the people beyond the walls of the churches we so love and delight to serve.

My vision of course includes working collaboratively and diligently to support the 133 worshipping communities of the diocese, along with the 39 schools and five social-service institutions, but if asked, “to what end?” I see clearly that our common life, our common feast – taking in, as we do, the Body of Christ, the bread of heaven, the Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation – is meant to fuel us for our work in the world. We are called to be a people con-

cerned with those who live “on the edge.” As I understand it, in the diocese this includes so many people uncertain of their safety, and, for example, whether they will enjoy shelter, citizenship, mental health, employment, respect, or even daily bread. There are more people still whose “life on the edge” has a lot to do with not knowing the goodness of God, and for whom that location, seemingly outside or disconnected from Christ’s mercy, is a painful and lonely place to be.

In this liminal time in which the Church is between the known past and an unknown future, we have an opportunity to ask “what are we doing?” and “what do we want?” We know that we have not liked the increase of secularization and the decrease of our church membership, but the project before us is not to preserve what was, rather, to imagine what could be. Where we have lost our confidence, our determination to share good news, or our willingness to try anything for the sake of the Gospel, I would invite us to hold fast to our faith, and open ourselves to the vision God sets for us. The Holy Spirit will help us to see the world as it is and long for what might be if our prayers are answered: “thy kingdom come, thy will be done.”

What are your primary spiritual resources, and in what ways do they support your ministry?

As an unsophisticated mystic, I have always yearned for the felt presence of Christ. I practice centering prayer and carve out time to listen in silence. I love the depth and beauty of the prayer book. Reading Scripture and a range of books, journaling, singing as I strum my guitar, and praying as I swim are all helpful instruments for my spiritual life, alongside community, connection, and exercise. For me, spiritual, relational, and physical health are foundational to my ministerial health. Spiritual direction, therapy, and sabbath rest also keep me properly oriented, and the ocean, all of nature, grounds me.

What do you understand to be the primary thrust of the Gospel?

The good news, as I understand it, is that God delights to be with us and relentlessly pursues us with tender mercy. And, by us, I mean all of us – everybody. There’s no gatekeeping of Christ’s love – which

is why the Church’s obligation is to open wide the gates. This is our message: God is here, God is right here with us. God is faithful, even when we are faithless. God’s mercy is new every morning. I am in awe of God’s deep, foolish, constant, and extravagant love and I am convinced that this love knows no bounds.

What primary principles are central to your leadership style?

I endeavor to be truthful at all times and faithful to God and to the communities I serve. Prayer, humility, and a healthy orientation to the Church are fundamental for my leadership. Through the years, I have learned how effective collaborative leadership is, and my natural propensity for drawing people in, hearing and valuing others’ contributions, supports inclusive and participatory processes. I seek to be an emotionally intelligent leader, balancing the urgency of the Gospel while pacing change at a pastoral speed. I prefer to work directly through conflict and have witnessed God’s grace in leading communities to health.

As chief pastor of the diocese, how would you call upon and strengthen laypersons to engage their gifts for ministry?

The ministry of all the baptized remains the great untapped potential of the Church. Prayerfully inviting people to prioritize bringing their talents to the church in ministry and governance has been a central part of my leadership. The future of the church calls us to further invest in lay leaders. I have seen the power of invitation and effective education, coupled with regular feedback and accountability, in equipping laity for ministerial leadership. We must become a learning community, picking up the pace of adaptation, and experimenting bravely, failing frequently, learning quickly, and trying again for the sake of the Gospel.

Similarly, how would you describe the relationship you would hope to have with the clergy of the diocese?

I would be among the clergy, learning by listening, seeking to understand, and lifting up their ministries and gifts. I know that pastoral authority is earned over time building relationships through faithfulness and trust. I (continued on page 11)



The Rev. Canon Melissa McCarthy

Canon to the Ordinary, Diocese of Los Angeles, since 2017

Past Positions: Priest-in-Charge, Church of the Epiphany, Oak Park, CA 2008-2009; Associate Priest, Church of the Epiphany, Oak Park, CA 2006-2008; Assisting clergy St. Mark's Church, Berkeley, CA 2005-2006

Education: Bachelor of Arts in Religious Studies, University of California, Riverside 1998; Master of Divinity, Church Divinity School of the Pacific, 2005

Age & Family:

53. I have a partner, siblings, friends, and chosen family who make up my support system.

Hobbies & Interests:

Include hiking, camping, weight training, dog sports, playing guitar, learning new things, and spending time with loved ones.

Greetings, Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles!

I am honored to be one of your candidates for the eighth bishop of Los Angeles. I have so much hope for this diocese, for the work that lies ahead, and for all the ways God is calling us into new and vital lives of faith in this unique geography at this unique time.

I have been a priest for 20 years serving first in the Diocese of California at St. Mark's in Berkeley where I worked for and learned from a priest who was among the first generation of women ordained to the priesthood. I returned to Los Angeles and served as the Church of the Epiphany in Oak Park. The ministry I shared with the good people of Epiphany was focused on mission with strong underpinnings of spiritual formation and community building.

During my years of ordained ministry, I also have taken my part in the councils of the church, having served on Diocesan Council, Commission on Ministry, the Disciplinary Board, two years as Standing Committee president as well as serving as dean of Deanery 1 for seven years. I was trained as a Fresh-Start facilitator (a church-wide program supporting clergy through transitions in call) and mentored a generation of new clergy as they grew into their identities as ordained leaders in the church. On the churchwide level I have served as a deputy to General Convention and as a Presiding Bishop's delegate to the United Nation's Conference of the Parties 26.

In November 2017, I began my service as canon to the ordinary. In addition to my ongoing responsibilities as chief of staff, overseeing the ordination process, guiding clergy transitions, and working with congregations in crisis, my early years were marked by leading a diocesan-wide reconciliation process. I directed this 18-month initiative, which invited broad participation across the diocese and culminated in a set of actionable recommendations that we successfully implemented. Shortly thereafter, I helped the diocese navigate the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic – supporting lay and clergy leaders through rapidly changing conditions while also managing a fully remote staff.

At the same time, new legal and canonical com-

plexities emerged as both the Episcopal Church and the State of California lifted statutes of limitations on historic sexual abuse cases. I took a central role in addressing these sensitive matters, guiding responses through both the Church's Title IV disciplinary process and in civil court, including mediation. My work on the diocesan level has been bookended by fires: the Thomas fire and subsequent mudslide, the Woolsey fire, and the Eaton and Palisades fires of 2025. I have managed and overseen the diocesan response to these disasters.

Beyond crisis leadership, I have also sought to advance long-term vision and mission. It has been a particular joy to establish and chair the Bishop's Commission on Climate Change, which leads diocesan efforts in education, legislative advocacy, and disaster resiliency – building key partnerships, including with the Dr. Lucy Jones Center for Science and Society. In addition, I have represented the diocese in various ways, including serving on the board and as board co-chair of Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE).

In recent years, I have had the great privilege of focusing on what I believe will be the most transformational work for our diocese: creating and implementing programs that foster congregational vitality. One significant initiative is "Requiem or Renaissance," a program first developed in the Diocese of Missouri and now launched here with our first diocesan cohort. Under my leadership, this program equips congregations to discern their next steps in ministry, strengthen Christ-centered mission, and cultivate skills that empower their communities to move toward a more vital future.

I also helped secure a \$1.24 million grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc. to establish "Immersed in Worship." This initiative supports congregations in educating, exploring, and experimenting with innovative practices that deeply engage children and youth in the worshipping life of the Church. Together, these programs represent the beginning of a broader, long-term commitment to congregational renewal and vitality – work I am eager to continue strengthening across the diocese.

When I am not working, *(continued next page)*

my partner, Andrea, and I enjoy adventuring in the Sierras or at the coast. I take particular joy in my two working border collies, Tule and Jovi, who love to learn, do agility, and herd sheep. I cheer on all sports teams located in our diocese and love to take advantage of the diversity and excellence of live theater in Los Angeles.

I am deeply committed to cultivating relationships and inviting people into the shared work of our diocese. I believe leadership is most transformational when it is collaborative – empowering individuals to offer their God-given gifts for the flourishing of the whole community. I hold firmly that we, as a diocese, are greater than the sum of our parts, sustained and inspired by the presence of the Holy Spirit among us. Guided by that Spirit, I believe that in strong, faithful relationship with one another, we can discern and accomplish the bold and faithful work to which God is calling us.

The Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, with its 5.5-county reach, is the most diverse diocese in the Episcopal Church. From deserts to coastlines, rural farmland to bustling urban centers, our region reflects extraordinary diversity – socioeconomic, political, cultural, racial, and ethnic. I see this diversity as a great gift, a living expression of the richness of God's creation. Having served in this diocese for many years, I have witnessed firsthand the creativity, resilience, and deep faith that flow through our congregations, institutions, and ministries. As our communities continue to grow and change, we are called to respond with courage and hope, offering the just, loving, and gracious presence of Christ. If I am called to serve as bishop of Los Angeles, it would be my joy and honor to walk alongside you in this beautiful and dynamic place we are blessed to call home.

What is your vision for the Diocese of Los Angeles?

Articulating a vision for the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles (EDLA) is something I approach with enthusiasm and caution. To me, a vision is not the possession of one individual – certainly not the bishop alone – but the shared work of the whole diocese. Our diocese is too wonderfully diverse in geography, socio-economic

realities, language, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political perspective, and even baseball allegiances to be defined by a single point of view. This breadth of diversity is both our greatest strength and, at times, a source of tension – where some may feel unseen, marginalized, or even endangered.

For that reason, I hesitate to speak of *my* vision. Instead, I want to share how I imagine us moving together into a healthier, more grace-filled future – one rooted in the vision God already has for us.

It begins with returning to the heart of our faith. The consistent thread through the Hebrew Bible and the Gospel is the call to love God with our whole heart, mind, and soul, and to love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:36-40). In John's Gospel, Jesus deepens this commandment when he tells the disciples to love one another as he has loved them. (John 13:34) This is not part-time work or a sentimental ideal. It is a demanding, transformative way of life – one that calls us to lay down our lives for one another.

If EDLA is to thrive, we must recommit ourselves to this kind of love – within our congregations, among our congregations, across our deaneries, within the bishop's staff, and throughout the clergy community. Above all else, we must decide together that our first priority is to love each other as Jesus loves us.

The most pressing need in our diocese – and one I experienced as a parish priest – is strengthening congregations with both financial support and vitality. Recent steps toward direct engagement are encouraging, but we must build a clear, sustainable strategy. Vitality is more than budgets; it is about curiosity in God's call to us, discipleship, and impactful ministry. By investing intentionally in leadership development, innovation, and collaborative models of ministry, we can position our congregations to thrive. With God's help, EDLA can pursue the mission of the Church as we “pray, proclaim the gospel, and promote justice, peace, and love” (The Book of Common Prayer, p. 855).

What are your primary spiritual resources, and in what ways do they support your ministry?

My lifelong relationship with God is essential to my being. I nurture this relation-

ship through prayer practices such as centering prayer, *lectio divina*, daily walks, and nightly reflection, giving thanks for God's grace throughout my day. These practices ground me in God's presence and reveal holiness where life might otherwise feel mundane. In times of challenge, when faced with problems that seem unsolvable, these practices remind me to trust God's power and possibility. I have a sense of God being with me in all that I do which sustains my spirit and gives me joy.

What do you understand to be the primary thrust of the Gospel?

Out of God's infinite love for us, God became incarnate in Jesus in order to show us the way to life in God. In his life, Jesus showed us the way to God through compassion for the powerless, healing the sick, and proclaiming God's justice and mercy. In his death, he showed trust, courage, and deep compassion. In his resurrection, he revealed the promise of eternal life in God. The Gospel is not simply an idea, but a way of living shaped by love, justice, and hope. At its heart, it is the invitation to follow Jesus on the Way.

What primary principles are central to your leadership style?

My leadership is grounded in unyielding faith in Christ's presence in each of us, placing us on equal footing and affirms that all perspectives and ideas matter. I problem solve by prioritizing the needs of all parties, because I believe that is what God wants – and it usually works. I have seen that strong relationships with God and one another make anything possible. I believe in collaborative leadership, where shared ministry and vision flow naturally from our common faith. From this foundation, we can move forward with joy into the many ways the Holy Spirit is at work among us.

As chief pastor of the diocese, how would you call upon and strengthen laypersons to engage their gifts for ministry?

Lay people are engaged in ministry every day. Calling upon and strengthening their gifts begins with creating opportunities for their own spiritual care, for their growth in discipleship as a core identity, and for education and

(continued on page 12)

strengthen laypersons to engage their gifts for ministry?

My ministry has been possible only with the support and commitment of lay leaders. Together we have created more spaces at the table for other laypersons to become involved, while implementing best practices to avoid volunteer burnout. I intend to continue the efforts of the diocese that have resulted in increased levels of representation at the various governing bodies. I foresee more opportunities arising from a new diocesan plan, and I look forward to inviting the talented laypersons in our diocese to join and contribute, while offering them opportunities to explore and develop new skills and abilities. I believe that all people have gifts and talents to serve as Jesus' hands and feet in our diocese, and I hope that more people will support our efforts to fulfill the vision that we develop together.

Similarly, how would you describe the relationship you would hope to have with the clergy of the diocese?

I will strive to be the clergy's pastor. I would love to get to know each clergy member deeply, always listening to how their lives are growing in serving Christ in all people. I believe that by providing clergy with excellent pastoral care, development opportunities, and easy access to resources would allow them to lead their congregations more effectively. Although I would love to have an individual impact on all members of the diocese, it is unrealistic that I could do it effectively given the fact that I won't interact with them on a regular basis as the clergy do. I will strive for the diocese to be a resource that the clergy can reliably count on, so they can be compassionate pastors and nimble administrators.

How would you seek to involve young people in the life of the church?

To involve young people in the life of the church we must be willing to challenge ourselves to be a church that is relevant to them and be willing to intentionally include them in making the decisions that affect their lives. The first step would be to invite youth, youth leaders, lay, clergy, and parents to develop a joint vision and a plan for diocesan young people. This plan could include youth and youth leaders' formation and networking, youth leadership de-

velopment, a diocesan youth retreat, partnerships with youth organizations, and a library of resources for the entire diocese, among other things. I am looking forward to meeting the youth of the diocese, listening to them, and working together in making of our diocese a place where they can grow spiritually and personally, and where they feel valued and appreciated.

In what key ways would you serve and engage the multicultural and socioeconomic diversity of Southern California in raising up lay and ordained leaders across this spectrum?

All my work as clergy person has been in diverse congregations. In working with them, I have engaged and served the people with humility and practices that reflect both the love of Christ and a genuine commitment to community. I have endeavored to offer opportunities for discernment, participation and formation that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, and of equal quality for all the people. My approach has been to create safe and accessible spaces for people to learn from one another and together build upon their God-given gifts to create beloved community, all while remaining open to challenge the current ways of doing things. This approach would be the foundation upon which I would build the work diocesan-wide. I am looking forward to working with the richly diverse people of the diocese, exploring ways in which their diversity can enrich the fabric of our Episcopal tradition.

What opportunities do you see for evangelism and bringing seekers into the life of The Episcopal Church?

I believe that there are opportunities for the Episcopal Church to offer a path to deeper faith through sacramental life, through our commitment to justice and peace, and by offering a global community of faith united in Christ. We can intentionally reach out to the religiously unaffiliated, immigrant communities, younger generations, urban centers, digital and online spaces, and marginalized and overlooked populations such as incarcerated people, unhoused populations, refugees, LGBTQ+ communities, and those in recovery. I believe we can engage these individuals by forming disciples called to create com-

munity with them, by being an active presence in their communities, and by inviting them to participate in the life of our diocese. Even more importantly, we can show through our actions that we aspire to be the loving presence of God in the lives of everyone, especially those most in need.

In what ways would you advise congregations and the diocese to strengthen resources for financial vitality and sustainability, both at present and long-term?

For me, financial vitality is a process of discernment on how to align our resources with God's mission. At both the congregational and diocesan level, we are called to cultivate practices that are sustainable, transparent, rooted in discipleship, and consider the context of each congregation. In the present, this means strengthening stewardship formation, offering financial literacy for leaders, and the sharing of resources and collaboration among congregations. Looking toward the future, I hope we continue exploring creative use of our facilities, encourage legacy and planned giving, support entrepreneurial ministries, and honestly evaluate if ministries have run their course. Long-term sustainability will require building a culture where stewardship is a joyful response to God's abundance. I hope that through generosity, accountability, and creativity, we show that God's Church is alive, resilient, and oriented toward the flourishing of all God's people.

Around what central global and local issues would you seek to provide a prophetic voice as bishop in the public square?

We are currently experiencing in our country economic inequality and a threat to the dignity of women, seniors, immigrants of color and LGBTQI+ persons. On these, and any upcoming issues threatening the dignity of any human, the bishop should be a voice for those without voice, making of the church both of a source of hope, and an engine of resistance. Globally, climate change continues to be a threat for us, and for future generations. Joining on the work of the wider church, I envision our diocese to continue to be witness to the church's values and to advocate for bold climate action, acting as a counter-current to isolationism. *(continued on the next page)*

GALLARDO (continued from page 10)

Moreover, as part of a global communion, and whenever possible, we should work alongside others for justice and peace, finding courage in our shared identity.

How would you interpret and apply the following observation from the late Brazilian Archbishop Dom Helder Camara: “The bishop belongs to all.”

To me the words of Archbishop Camara mean that a bishop must be a servant to everyone. I am grateful to a clergy colleague who told me: “Remember that, although you are Latino, you are being ordained to serve every person.” I have been blessed to serve in multicultural, bilingual congregations where I have experienced that my heart loves them all equally, following the way of Christ, who said, “Whoever wishes to be great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you must be your slave.” (Matt. 20:26b-27). By the grace of the Holy Spirit, I aspire to overcome the power and privilege attributed to my position as clergy to look carefully into the eyes of the poor, the oppressed and the lowly, because in their grace-filled eyes I will be able to see the truth that Jesus spoke about. ■

MAINWARING (continued from page 7)

recognize that clergy have carried a tremendous burden through the pandemic, deportations, and fires, among many other issues, alongside the reality of a shrinking church, yet I am confident that the future of the Church that we are ordained in belongs to God. I would pray for the clergy regularly and earnestly, and invite us to partner and inspire one another as we seek to follow Jesus in this time and place.

How would you seek to involve young people in the life of the Church?

I have been passionate about the mission of the Church in the lives of young people since beginning ministry with youth over 25 years ago. Four years ago, we launched “Wonder Church,” a growing child-centric, neurodivergent-friendly worshipping expression. I appreciate how eager young people are to know God, and how effective it is to recognize their agency. Acknowledging that some of our traditional forms

and practices do not always resonate with young people’s longings and concerns, I would encourage us to make space in the life of the Church for their expressions and needs by resourcing ministries by and for young people, encouraging cross-congregational partnerships, and fostering a culture of experimentation.

In what key ways would you serve and engage the multicultural and socioeconomic diversity of Southern California in raising up lay and ordained leaders across this spectrum?

I love LA precisely because of its beautiful, broad diversity. I would prioritize raising up leaders from among EDLA’s churches and partnerships, where leadership potential is immense. I would seek to understand which obstacles have prevented us from developing diverse leaders previously in order to measure the amount of course-correction, intentional and invitational effort, resourcing, and persistence that will be needed to cultivate a leadership body that reflects the diversity of the communities served. In my experience of raising up ministers across multicultural and socioeconomic diversity, the talent is already present. The region is brimming with gifted people whose origin stories span the globe. The Church needs to welcome them in with joy.

What opportunities do you see for evangelism and bringing seekers into the life of the Episcopal Church?

The network of relationships maintained by each of the 40,000 Episcopalians in the diocese is the primary context for evangelism, because evangelism is always relational. I would wish to equip us to speak of our Christian hope. EDLA has also built, through churches, schools, agencies, and partnerships, avenues that can open new doors to spiritual seekers. Every conversation can be an opportunity to share God’s grace. From chance encounters with strangers to tender and attentive dialogue with loved ones, I never cease to be amazed by the power of the Holy Spirit to make her presence known.

Around what central global and local issues would you seek to provide a prophetic voice as bishop in the public square?

Whatever we say in the public square must be grounded within the witness and hope of the Gospel. Over the years, I have taken that witness to the steps of the state Capitol, shared that hope out on the streets, and proclaimed the Gospel from the pulpit, addressing a range of matters from homelessness and poverty, to racial justice, and global conflict. Place matters. I would want to learn from you the issues that matter most to EDLA and to the 5 ½ counties it serves in order to understand the complexities and nuances of the struggles you see and exercise prophetic ministry cognizant of your hopes for the kingdom of God.

How would you interpret and apply the following observation from the late Brazilian Archbishop Dom Helder Camara: “The bishop belongs to all.”

The bishop is called to draw all people to God’s reconciliatory love. She must navigate the complexities of an increasingly polarized and siloed society, leading confidently within the “broad tent” of our Anglican heritage which refuses to choose rich or poor, red or blue, the global south or global north. Serving in contexts as varied as a downtown street ministry to a well-resourced parish in the suburbs, I have grounded myself in the belief that to be a minister of the Gospel is to serve indiscriminately. As bishop, I would be committed to building relationships across difference, sharing a ministry that really does belong to all. ■

MCCARTHY (continued from page 9)

resources enabling them to be the hands and feet of Christ in the world. The bishop’s primary role is working in collaboration with lay and clergy leaders to create opportunities for discernment in the variety and diversity of our contexts as well listening, encouraging, and empowering the good work the Holy Spirit is already doing in all the baptized.

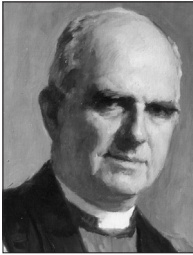
Similarly, how would you describe the relationship you would hope to have with the clergy of the diocese?

My relationship with clergy colleagues has been marked by mutual love, respect, and support. (continued on page 12)

Bishops of the Diocese of Los Angeles



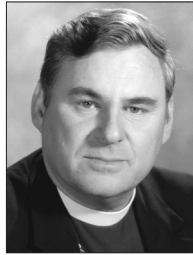
**Joseph Horsfall
Johnson**
1896 – 1928



**William Bertrand
Stevens**
1928 – 1947



**Francis Eric
Bloy**
1948 – 1973



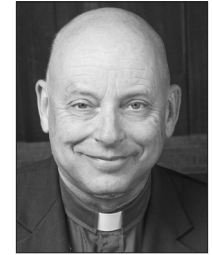
**Robert Claflin
Rusack**
1974 – 1986



**Frederick Houk
Borsch**
1988 – 2002



**Joseph Jon
Bruno**
2002 – 2017



**John Harvey
Taylor**
2017 – present

MCCARTHY (continued from page 11)

Together we have prayed and celebrated, trusted and held one another accountable, served as sounding boards and spoken truth in love. As bishop, I would hope for this bond to deepen and expand. I am profoundly grateful for the gift of this clergy community, and it would be a privilege to minister with and among them, offering the same love, generosity, and faithfulness they have so consistently shown me.

How would you seek to involve young people in the life of the Church?

I would involve young people by building on my record of prioritizing their voices and leadership. As a parish priest, I engaged them fully in worship, including preaching, and empowered their role in congregational life. Nearly 20 summers as chaplain at Camp Stevens deepened my commitment to their spiritual growth. As canon to the ordinary, I helped secure a \$1.24 million Lilly Endowment grant to strengthen formation. As bishop, I would expand these efforts, using diocesan resources to foster worship, leadership, and formation so young people know they are integral to the Church's life now and in the future.

In what key ways would you serve and engage the multicultural and socioeconomic diversity of Southern California in raising up lay and ordained leaders across this spectrum?

Among the great blessings of the Diocese of Los Angeles are institutions like the Instituto de Liderazgo and the Florence Li Tim Oi Center, which discern with, form, and raise up lay and clergy leaders, bringing vibrant, diverse leadership into our common life. In the next episcopate, it is vital to celebrate and strengthen this work by ensuring ongoing spiritual, practical,

and financial support. Equally important is supporting and resourcing our congregations, with particular attention to leaders of color, so that every call to ministry is recognized, nurtured, and empowered to flourish within our diocesan community.

What opportunities do you see for evangelism and bringing seekers into the life of the Episcopal Church?

There are so many opportunities, if we're willing to see them. People are hungry for connection, meaning, and belonging – things the Episcopal Church offers in abundance through our worship, community, and deep spiritual tradition. We don't need to change who we are; we just need to stop being afraid to share it. Intentional, authentic evangelism isn't about pressure – it's about presence. It's about showing up, listening well, and creating space for seekers to encounter God among us. Every conversation, every act of kindness, every invitation is a chance to welcome someone into a life rooted in love, grace, and hope.

In what ways would you advise congregations and the diocese to strengthen resources for financial vitality, both at present and long-term?

For the diocese, I would counsel continuing to build the endowment while focusing financial resources on the essential work that sustains our shared mission. For congregations, the challenge is more complex, as each community faces unique realities shaped by location, demographics, history, and liabilities. Financial sustainability and vitality are critical, yet these urgent needs can stymie a congregation's ability to solve problems creatively. I encourage congregations to shift focus from what feels broken financially to an adjacent issue that is con-

crete and solvable. Often, this approach sparks creativity and generates unexpected solutions that, in turn, help resolve the deeper financial challenges.

Around what central global and local issues would you seek to provide a prophetic voice as bishop in the public square?

The central value that informs my understanding of the bishop's prophetic voice is respecting the dignity of every human being. Through that lens, I would continue to speak out on dismantling systemic racism, challenging the illegal arrests and detention of immigrants, advocating for women's health, and for safety for the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally, the growing number of extreme weather events, drought, and climate migration exacerbates these divisive issues and needs its own prophetic witness. My ministry has prepared me to balance prophetic witness while holding close to my heart the complexity of our diocese as its pastor.

How would you interpret and apply the following observation from the late Brazilian Archbishop Dom Helder Camara: "The bishop belongs to all."

I understand this as both invitation and mandate: to love and care for all people equally, ensuring each person is seen, heard, and valued. This call is especially vital for those most marginalized within our diocese and within the communities we serve. This means holding the tension of our diverse perspectives with humility and respect, while honoring the gifts each brings. I would strive to see every member of our diocese through the loving eyes of God, fostering unity without erasing difference and embodying the inclusive love of Christ. ■