

**Diocesan Convention 2019**  
**Allen Shin**

Beloved Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

It is an honor to join you in the 243<sup>rd</sup> Convention of this great Diocese and present my sixth address as your Bishop Suffragan. What a joy and a privilege it has been to serve this Diocese and with the best episcopal team of The Episcopal Church at that! My own ministry has been enriched by the collegiality and the support of Bishops Dietsche and Glasspool. I also would like to extend my personal welcome to Bishop Cathy Roskam, my predecessor and a long-time good friend, and Bishop Enrique Treviño Cruz his wife, Maru. Welcome back, Bishop Roskam. Bienvenidos Obispo Enrique y Maru. Gracias por sus palabras en la Eucaristía de ayer. Espero con ansias visitar Cuernavaca en enero.

When Canon Altagracia Perez-Bullard announced her departure last year, I must confess I found myself in a bit of panic and anxiety. Hers were big shoes to fill. But, God has sent us another able servant, the Rev. Canon Victor Conrado, who brings different and much needed gifts and passion for congregational development. He and the new members of the staff have hit the ground running and brought new energy to the Bishop's Staff. Our ministry as Bishops would not be possible without the capable Staff. I would like to recognize their extraordinary dedication and hard work and express my gratitude to everyone on the Bishop's staff. Thank you.

At the recent House of Bishops gathering in Minneapolis, the members of the House of Deputies Committee on the State of the Church joined us to give an update on the committee's work and facilitate a conversation with the bishops. One of the questions they asked the bishops was "What is the most joyful part of your ministry as bishop?" Every bishop at my table replied the parish visitations. Indeed, breaking open the Word of God and breaking bread with the people every Sunday has been the most joyful part of my ministry. It is truly an honor and a privilege to serve the 197 very diverse congregations of this Diocese. I would like to thank all the priests and the deacons, and the lay leaders as well as the lay delegates here present. Thank you for your hard work and commitment to God's mission in your local communities and on the Diocesan level.

Since his election, Presiding Bishop Michael Curry has been preaching the Jesus Movement and Evangelism. I would like to highlight some new missional efforts of evangelism in this Diocese. It began with a small group of young clergy and lay people who attended a church planting conference in New York City. This led to forming a church planting study group of our own and then subsequently to some exciting new missional efforts. I invite you now to direct your attention to a brief video presentation of the new missional developments in our own Diocese.

\*\*\* Video Presentation \*\*\*\*

Aside from the three models featured in the video presentation, Holy Trinity Inwood has been engaged in the redevelopment of the church property. And in the process, they have seen a new start with a whole new congregation. I conducted a service of secularization of the nave last June

and they are at the final stage of signing the contract to begin the redevelopment. Grace Church Millbrook recently received a grant from the Church Planting Office of The Episcopal Church to start a new fresh expressions mission in a café in Millerton, a small town in the northeast corner of Dutchess County. This Café Church will reach out to the growing number of Latino population and young adults in the town.

The missional DNA has been part of the church since Pentecost and also part of the Episcopal Church from its beginning. It is time we reawaken our Episcopal missional DNA and find new ways to recreate and redevelop our churches. Church is not a program, but a way of life and a movement of the Holy Spirit. Church is a people on the move for God's mission, fueled and sustained by the self-giving love of Jesus. Church is the Jesus Movement as Presiding Bishop Michael Curry is fond of saying. We must make the paradigm shift from maintenance to mission. I believe we can do this. We must do this.

Another theme the Presiding Bishop has been preaching is the Beloved Community. Our Young Adult Network has taken up the theme during this past year. At last year's St. Nicholas Feast at St. Thomas Fifth Avenue, over one hundred young adults showed up. Thirty some young adults gathered for a day of reflection and conversation on the Beloved Community at St. George's Gramercy Park for Lenten Quiet Day. In August, twenty some young adult leaders gathered for a retreat at Trinity Retreat Center to discuss further expanding the Young Adult Network around the Diocese beyond the City. I look forward to working with the Rev. Megan Sanders who brings new energy and vision to this ministry. New York Service and Justice Collaborative and Grace Year Fellows ministries began their new academic year with new fellows, seven and five fellows respectively. These ministries offer opportunities for recent college graduates to gain valuable life experience and spiritual growth in an intentional community. Two young adults from the program have begun seminary this fall. We have a group of young adults here present with us. Would you please recognize and welcome them?

Aside from the annual Summer Youth Conference, the youth ministry has seen some new energy and momentum this year. There is an effort to organize our participation in Episcopal Youth Event in Washington, DC in July, 2020. This is something I have been praying for some years, and I am very happy about this new development. I also would like to introduce a new children's curriculum, developed by a member of our own Diocese, Melina Smith, at Calvary-St. George's. It is called Story Makers. She developed this curriculum with small churches with limited resource in mind. Some of our churches have been using it with good results. It is being translated into Korean by the Anglican Church in Korea, and soon into Japanese by the Anglican Church in Japan. It is also being translated into Spanish. I urge you to visit the Christian Formation table in the exhibition room.

Two conventions ago we embarked on a three-year journey of reparations that began with the year of lamentation, followed by the year of Repentance. It has been rich in content with poignant stories and the disturbing history of slavery and racism in our own diocese, in our city and our nation. Now we are about to begin the year of apology with the theme, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil" from Ephesians 5:16. But, how can we redeem the time? We cannot go back in time to ransom or buy back the time. We only have the fleeting moments of the present and the future to get it right. Perhaps that is why RSV and NRSV translate it as

“making the most of the time.” Redeeming the time in the context of this letter is generally understood to mean “making the wise or sacred use of the time.” So, this theme invites us to think about how we should use the time we have and will have together in redemptive and meaningful ways as to make wise use of it and make it sacred.

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel once said that sabbath is the holy of holies in time. This means that time, every moment of it, is holy, and that is because time is embodied, every second of it embodied, by people’s lives with all their pain and suffering as well as joys and great achievements. In a moment we will see a play, called Red Altar, which is based on a true story about six teenagers who crossed the ocean from China, crashed in the Carmel Bay of California, and began the fishing industry in the Monterey Bay area in 1850. In the face of anti-Chinese legislation, media propaganda with racist caricatures, and outright violence, they persevered with courage and ingenuity in an effort to lay down roots in their hostile new home. Seven generations later, their story is finally being told.

Asian-American experiences in the United States contain stories of grief and hope, of death and resurrection. Their stories and experiences witness to their resilient spirit of life and the redemptive grace of God in Jesus Christ who did not forsake them in the trenches of racist policies and acts. In the Episcopal Church, the first Chinese mission was established in Carlson City, Nevada in 1874, led by a lay convert missionary. The mission grew to two hundred in just four years. But, after the Chinese Exclusionary Act of 1880, there is no further record of this mission or the lay missionary. In the early twentieth century, there were at least six or eight Japanese Episcopal churches along the west coast. After the Japanese Internment Act of 1942, they were down to three small congregations of returnees from the internment camps. No new Asian mission were attempted in the Episcopal Church between 1920 and 1965.

The history of the Asian mission in the Episcopal Church is marked by the Church’s apathy and silence in the face of the anti-Asian policies and the anti-Asian social atmosphere. I call upon the Church now to listen to the stories of grief and sorrow of the Asian-American experience, not as a burden of guilt but as a light illuminating our common walk toward the Beloved Community to which all God’s children are called. Church is the Jesus Movement, a people on the move toward the mountain top of the Communion with God and the fellowship of humanity in the mystical body of Christ. And would we but do justice, love mercy and walk humbly before God every step of our walk toward that mountain top. So, brothers and sisters in Christ, may we never again fail to redeem the time in the days of evil, so help us God!