



The
Episcopal Diocese
of New York

**244th Convention
November 7, 2020
At the Cathedral Church of Saint John the Divine and Online Via Zoom**

**Address of the
Right Reverend Allen K. Shin, Bishop Suffragan**

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ!

I am Allen Shin, Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of New York. It is my honor and privilege to address the 244th Convention of this great Diocese.

This pandemic crisis has thrust us into new and unprecedented challenges, not the least of which has been how to conduct the convention this year. I would like to add my thanks to the convention planning team, headed by Bishop Mary Glasspool for organizing the wonderful online convention this year from all the rollouts to the finish today. It has been impressive. Wonderful work!

Despite the stress and the uncertainty, many of our parishes have adapted well to the new circumstances with faithfulness and creativity, continuing the worship services and formation programs with new technology and continuing to serve those who are facing insurmountable economic hardship. So, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the ordained leaders and the people of our Diocese for their faithfulness, patience and courage during these stressful times.

Ordained ministry at times can be a lonely vocation. And I imagine that many of our priests and deacons have experienced the loneliness of their vocation more acutely than ever during the pandemic. So I express my special gratitude to all the ordained leaders of the Diocese for their work during this pandemic.

I would be remiss if I did not express my gratitude to Bishops Andrew Dietsche and Mary Glasspool for their collegiality, support and friendship which I have come to value. I feel fortunate and humbled to serve this Diocese alongside these two wonderful colleagues.

Crisis is an opportunity for renewal and transformation, and with God nothing is impossible, if we dare to hope and trust in God's grace. In the following

video, I would like to share with you one exciting new missional opportunity for the Diocese of New York.

VIDEO PRESENTATION ON EPISCOPAL FUTURES

“Behold, I am making all things new.” In this prophetic vision, John the Divine envisions a new life for his people. God will make his home among his people and will himself wipe away tears from their eyes. Death will be no more and mourning and crying and pain will be no more. This is a hopeful new vision of life for a people who have lived through some deep troubles and pains. Today many people are experiencing unspeakable troubles and pains from the multifaceted pandemics of COVID-19, economic hardship and injustice, racial violence and brutality and terrible environmental disasters on top of it all.

One deep pain in this nation is the historical racism against African Americans. With the killing of George Floyd and many more black and brown bodies since, this deep wound has been broken wide open. There is no more denying or hiding the painful reality of racism in this nation. The problem with racism is that the experience of pain is all one sided. We must recognize the horrific cost and pain African Americans and other people of color have had to bear under the racist policies and structures of white supremacy. I pray for the day when the racist brutality and killing of black lives will be no more and for the day when mourning and crying and pain will be no more in the African American communities.

Today the ideological and political divisions in our nation are deeper than ever, and there is a lot of trouble and pain. We must begin the work of repairing the damages done to our common humanity and healing the broken lives and bodies brutalized by racist hatred in our midst. We must come together across our differences to engage with the issues that divide us, find common ground and rebuild our civic life. It will not be an easy ride. It will be a painful and difficult journey. In his book, *How to be an Anti-racist*, the author, Ibram Kendi says, “Pain is essential to healing. When it comes to healing America of racism, we want to heal American without pain, but without pain there is no progress.” We cannot avoid pain if we are to heal the brokenness of our common life and build a just society.

The church’s mission is to point the way toward hope and the redemption of the fallen humanity especially in times of crisis and turmoil such as this, and to build a beloved community where love is the way of life and the dignity of every human being is truly respected. This is our baptismal calling. Christians are a people of baptism, born again through death and resurrection. Thus, we should not be afraid of dying and rising again in God’s new reality. Are we not at the threshold of death and resurrection in this moment of crisis?

The walls that keep us divided must be dismantled. The policies that allow the murders of innocent black lives must die. The systems designed to pipeline black children to prison and to dehumanize the refugees at the border must die. The structures that perpetuate injustice and oppression of the poor, the underprivileged, LGBTQ people and women must die. Then shall we rise again as new humanity, transformed and transfigured by the Cross of Jesus Christ.

God *is* making all things new; God is making all of us new; and God is making this beloved church of ours new. Don't let anyone else tell you otherwise. So, let us not squander the opportunities for renewal and rebirth, but have the courage of faith to take our steps toward a new life to which God is calling us both individually and collectively.

And finally Brothers and Sisters in Christ,
In the face of pain and suffering, may we be instruments of healing;
In the face of fear and anger, may we embrace peace and harmony;
In the face of hatred and violence, may we practice grace and compassion;
In the face of division and untruth, may we speak truth.
In the face of injustice and oppression, may we stand up for justice and mercy.
In the face of dehumanization and brutality, may we respect the dignity of every human being.
What does the Lord require of us, friends, but to do justice, love mercy and walk humbly before our God?

May God bless you with his unfailing grace and fill you with hope for a new life in these troubled times!