Bishop's Address
Saturday, November 14, 2026
The Rt. Rev. Dr. Antonio J. Gallardo L.

In my first address as your bishop, I want to share the good work happening across our beloved diocese, the priorities we have identified, and our plans for the months ahead.

Immediately after my consecration, Canon Feuss and I focused on two priorities: reorganizing diocesan staff and strengthening communications.

We created two new leadership positions: Canon for Administration and Finance, and Canon for Christian Mission and Leadership. We are grateful that Canons Susan Stanton and John Watson accepted these roles, bringing expertise and a deep commitment to serving the diocese. Staff have also affirmed the value of working as one team.

We also welcomed a new communications team to provide more timely information and live content in the diocese's two principal languages. We launched a new website and a weekly newsletter sharing news from the Bishop's Office.

Following the advice of those who have served as bishop before me, I decided to dedicate my first year to building new relationships and strengthening existing ones.

I began meeting people throughout the diocese at our ten deanery gatherings. These meetings reminded me that, regardless of congregation size or challenges, God is at work among us.

I also heard that congregations at the geographic edges of the diocese can feel especially isolated. Gathering together reminded us of the strength of our connection and the need to meet more often. We want every congregation to feel supported and connected.

I thank all our area deans for making these gatherings possible. Area deans, please stand so we can recognize you.

I have begun congregational visitations, which I see as opportunities to deepen our unity. Thanks to Bishops Brookhart and Little, we can visit half of our congregations each year. We

want people to have timely opportunities for confirmation, reception, and reaffirmation, and we want every congregation to know that we are listening to its dreams, challenges, and faithful work.

Our clergy are often the pastors with whom congregants have the closest contact. I therefore have offered one hundred meetings with clergy through the end of this year. These conversations have revealed their deep commitment and the importance of supporting them through transitions, encouraging their development, and helping them sustain physical, spiritual, and emotional health. We want to be a diocese where clergy throughout the Episcopal Church and Anglican Communion want to serve.

I have also begun learning more about our Episcopal schools. Our diocese includes much more than congregations. Approximately 8,000 students and 1,200 educators call our schools home, carrying our Episcopal values into the world.

We want to embrace congregations, schools, and institutions as parts of one body, sharing our values and the good news of Jesus Christ.

Important work also happens through our institutions, committees, program groups, and commissions.

Our seven diocesan institutions are Episcopal Communities and Services, The Gooden Center, Hillsides, Holy Family Adoptions & Foster Care, Neighborhood Youth Association, Stillpoint, and, beginning in January, Seeds of Hope. Thank you to the Bishop's liaisons who represent us in these places of valuable ministry.

We have twelve active program groups: Asiamerica Ministries, Black Ministries, Hispanic Ministries, Indigenous Ministries, Communications and Public Affairs, Compensation and Benefits, Ecumenical and Interfaith Life, Global Partnership, Mission Congregations, Youth and Young Adult Ministries, IRIS, and Sacred Resistance.

If you serve in one of these groups, please stand. Let us thank you with a round of applause.

We also have four active commissions: Liturgy and Church Music, Commission on Ministry, Climate Change, and LGBTQ+ Ministry. Let me highlight some of their work this year.

The Commission on Ministry celebrated the ordination of one priest and five transitional deacons, conducted candidacy, postulancy, and DDY interviews, and advanced nine people to postulancy. It welcomed four new members, offered discernment committee training across the diocese, and explored more inclusive formation pathways for Spanish- and Korean-speaking discerners and clergy transferring from other denominations.

Looking ahead, the commission will examine evolving vocational pathways and expand lay licensing to equip more people for ministry and mission. Commission members, please stand so we can thank you.

The Bishop's Commission on Climate Change advanced disaster resilience, climate advocacy, education, and creation care. Highlights included Climate Evensong, Climate Kitchen educational conversations, advocacy for climate-responsive legislation, and the successful effort to shut down the Murphy Oil drill site.

A February retreat established priorities including diocesan climate summits, disaster preparedness, education, sustainability, advocacy, and coalition building.

Congregations, green teams, building and grounds committees, and parishioners interested in carbon neutrality are invited to participate in the new **Our Call to Carbon Neutrality** program, beginning in January 2027. Commission members, please stand. Thank you for your leadership.

Since the 2025 Convention, the Bishop's Commission on LGBTQ+ Ministry has strengthened visibility, advocacy, and support across the diocese. At LA Pride, Episcopalians celebrated Eucharist and joined the parade, affirming that LGBTQ+ people belong in the Episcopal Church. The commission also introduced its 2026 Pride T-shirt.

Building on its transgender liberation and joy initiative, the commission is exploring spiritual care, education, advocacy, and mutual aid in partnership with transgender people. It has supported congregations seeking to begin or expand LGBTQ+ ministries and hopes to connect ministries so they can learn from one another. Looking ahead, it will continue to listen to congregations and LGBTQ+ people.

Commission members, please stand so we can thank you.

If I have missed a group, please contact me and tell me about your work. I apologize for not mentioning you today; I have used the most recent list available to me.

I have continued building relationships with networks that share our commitments to faith, community, and the dignity of every human being. These include the Los Angeles County Council of Religious Leaders, the Episcopal Church's House of Bishops, fellow bishops in Province VIII and in my 2025 class, Immaculate Heart and Nefesh, and the Southwest California Synod of the Lutheran Church, among others.

Now let's talk about what is ahead.

In late summer 2027, we plan to begin a diocesan process of prayerful discernment: listening for God's call, identifying our priorities, and clarifying the values that will guide our work. I hope every congregation, institution, and individual will be able to articulate how they contribute to our shared purpose. This process will belong to all of us.

I am pleased to announce that our diocese has been selected as one of four in the Episcopal Church to join the next cohort of the Diocesan Vitality Initiative this December. Consultants and experts will help us identify adaptive challenges and develop processes for renewal, redevelopment, and revitalization.

There is one urgent reality we cannot postpone addressing. More than forty smaller congregations in our diocese currently lack permanent clergy leadership. Many rely on supply clergy, short-term interim arrangements, or lay leadership.
These communities demonstrate faithfulness and commitment. At the same time, their circumstances raise serious questions about the sustainability of our current patterns of congregational ministry. We must address our spiritual and legal responsibilities and find sustainable ways to support these communities.

To help us do this, I am proposing the creation of the **Bishop's Commission on Congregational Mission and Sustainability**. Its task will be to examine and recommend sustainable models of congregational life, clergy deployment, and shared ministry throughout the Diocese of Los Angeles.

The Reverend Mary Tororey and the Reverend Canon John Watson will co-chair the commission. Over three years, they will work with twelve members, including diocesan staff, regional deans, lay and clergy representatives from smaller congregations, and people with expertise in finance, property, congregational development, and mission.

Rev. Mary and Canon John, please come forward to share your initial thoughts and explain how people can apply to serve.

I am excited about the work of this new commission and our participation in the Diocesan Vitality Initiative. Together, these efforts will help us address important priorities as we prepare for our broader diocesan planning process next year.

As we begin this work, we must also find more ways to pray together, gather across our geographic distances, and share in the Eucharist as one diocese. These spiritual practices, offered with humble hearts, will draw us closer to Jesus and to one another.

I invite you to begin vestry and Bishop's Committee meetings, congregational gatherings, and Bible studies with the passages from Ephesians that Dr. Galloway prepared for us today and that you can find on your tables. We will share them on our website and through our newsletters.

It is a privilege to serve as your bishop. I look forward to listening, discerning, and growing together in Christ. Amen.

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