



THE EPISCOPAL
DIOCESE OF
WISCONSIN

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Welcoming All, Challenging Ourselves

All are welcome.
All will be encouraged.
All will be challenged.
All will be transformed by the Holy Spirit.

The Diocese of Wisconsin is a wonderfully diverse body of people bound to one another in common worship and the common pursuit of becoming more and more Christlike. That does not mean we always see eye to eye on everything. But becoming like Christ does mean engaging one another and our neighbors with the generosity and mercy that Jesus embodied.

I am concerned with the demeaning, belittling, and sometimes dishonest language about others in much of our political rhetoric. People of all political persuasions are tempted to do this. But it is not the way of Jesus. In particular, I am concerned about how we talk about and act toward the vulnerable and marginalized in our society.

For example, there is a discussion or debate to be had about border policy, immigration policy, welcoming refugees, etc. People of goodwill can disagree about just what the best, most humane policies might be. In a democracy, that means we gather the best information we can, there is debate, and, usually, some compromise is required – like the bill proposed last summer but killed for political expediency. But, as Christians, we must reject and resist rhetoric that misrepresents and dehumanizes others – the vast majority of whom are simply desirous of security and opportunity for themselves and their families. We must never forget that we are talking about and acting toward actual human beings created in the image of God.

There is also misrepresentation and dehumanizing rhetoric aimed at folk who find themselves to be transgender and nonbinary. Given recent developments, I want to assure our transgender and nonbinary members that they are beloved of God and welcome and cherished members of this diocese. We will continue to include them in our ministries and advocate for their safety.

I expect I will have more to say about these and other issues in days to come. And I recognize that not every member of the Diocese of Wisconsin will agree with my take on these and other issues. That is fine. I welcome conversation. I have lots to learn. Let us together commit ourselves to following Jesus who both encouraged and challenged everyone with the mercy of God And let us each avail ourselves to the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

Under the Mercy,

Bishop Matthew Gunter, Episcopal Diocese of Wisconsin