



The Episcopal Church

March 27, 2011 – Third Sunday in Lent

A Lenten Message from the Presiding Bishop

The Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, offers an invitation to deepen our Christian practices during Lent this year in the following transcript of a videotaped message filmed earlier this month in the Chapel of Christ the Lord at the Episcopal Church Center in New York City.

“The Episcopal Church observes Lent in solidarity with Christians throughout the ages. Lent has anciently been understood as a time of solidarity with those who are to be baptized at the Easter Vigil. It’s a time to focus on prayer and study and fasting, and in some traditions, almsgiving. Each of those, when done in solidarity with those preparing to be baptized, is an invitation for us to deepen our own Christian spiritual practice.

“I would encourage you this year to expand the realm of that practice; to think about your solidarity with those who walk the way of Christ, with those who walk the way of Jesus, in particular concern for those beyond your local community.

“We have a remarkable calling in this era to think about our relationships not only with other Christians, but with other human beings across this planet, and indeed, with the rest of creation. Perhaps you might focus your Lenten discipline this year in attention to how you live on this earth.

“Do you live like the Son of Man, who travels continuously with never a place to lay his head? Who doesn’t carry two bags or an extra lunch or an extra pair of sandals? That is what he encouraged his disciples to do, to travel light.

“Are you traveling light on this earth?”

“Consider as you live through each day, how you use water, how you use fuel, how you use electricity, and how you use the food that is a gift.

“If each of us is able to thoughtfully enter into a more compassionate concern for the blessings of creation, it will change the way in which human beings as a species impact this earth.

“I heard at the Primates Meeting recently from the Primate of Polynesia a very agonized conversation about the plight of his people on low-lying islands in the South Pacific, which are rapidly disappearing

beneath the rising sea level. That rising sea level is the result of the way in which wealthier parts of this human population use energy.

“We hear about the concerns of people in Africa who find corn too expensive to buy for food because we are using it here to produce ethanol so we can drive our cars.



The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori

“The way in which we use our resources is a spiritual matter. The way in which we live on this earth is a matter of faithfulness. Can we act in solidarity with those who are preparing to enter this community and do so more thoughtfully and in a more compassionate way that considers all of God’s creation?”

“I invite you to a blessed and holy Lent, to a Lent of prayer and study and compassion through almsgiving and fasting.”



To view the videotaped message, scan the QR code on the left or visit www.episcopalchurch.org.