

# Diocese of San Joaquin

23 February 2012



As we continue our study of the Duties of the Laity as laid out in the Constitution and Canons of the Anglican Church in North America, we arrive at number six which is on Forgiveness... how appropriate for the first Thursday of Lent...

## ***#6. To practice forgiveness daily according to our Lord's teaching;***

Forgiveness is the uniquely Christian ethic! Now I know that is a bold statement but if you think about it you will agree. Jesus calls upon His disciples to forgive – not in order to earn better Karma or in order to gain influence – we are to forgive because Jesus has forgiven us and He calls us to forgive others. Indeed, Jesus unites our forgiving others with our own forgiveness. Listen to the words of the Lord's Prayer "***and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.***" (Matthew 6:12 ESV) Forgiveness requires compassion, empathy and an active participation in a relationship. It may be here most of all that we see the truth of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's statement, "Our community with one another [in Christ] consists solely in what Christ has done to both of us. Christian brotherhood is a spiritual and not a human reality. In this it differs from all other communities." (Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (New York: Harper, 1954), 23, 25–26.)

Dr. Timothy Keller once wrote a powerful article on Forgiveness where he argued that in its most basic and simple form, this teaching is that *Christians in community are to never give up on one another, never give up on a relationship, and never write off another believer.* We must never tire of forgiving (and repenting!) and seeking to repair our relationships. Matthew 5:23–26 tells us we should go to someone if we know they have something against us. Matthew 18:15–20 says we should approach someone if we have something against *them*. In short, if any relationship has cooled off or has weakened in any way, *it is always your move.* It doesn't matter "who started it:"God always holds you responsible to reach out to repair a tattered relationship. A Christian is responsible to begin the process of reconciliation, regardless of how the distance or the alienation began.

As we begin the season of Lent, I want to encourage all members of the Diocese of San Joaquin to examine their lives and their relationships and where the need be both to repent and actively to seek forgiveness and reconciliation. It is our duty as Christians to take an active role in reconciling ourselves to one another and to Jesus!

Bishop Eric

### **Diocesan Calendar**

**February 25th** - Diocesan Altar Guild Board

@St. James Cathedral, 10 a.m.

**February 26th** - Bishop @Jesus the Good Shepherd, Henderson

**March 3rd** - Commission on Ministry

**March 10th** - Standing Committee

**March 11th** - Bishop @ San Pedro y Pablo, Arvin

**March 13th** - Rural Deans

**March 17th** - Diocesan Council and Ordination of

Jonathan Canary @St. Columba, Fresno, 2 p.m.

**March 18th** - Bishop @ St. Clement's, Woodlake

**March 25th** - Bishop @ St. James, Sonora

**March 29th** - Mass of Chrism, 11am

**March 31st** - Confirmations @ Epiphany, Corcoran

**April 1st** - Palm Sunday - Bishop at the Cathedral

**April 8th** - Easter Sunday - Bishop at the Cathedral

**April 28th** - Daughters of the Holy Cross Spring Gathering

**April 30th - May 2nd** - Clergy Conference @ ECCO

**August 9-10** - Provincial Hispanic Ministry Conference. at the Cathedral, "Caminemos Juntos"

**November 2-3** - Diocesan Convention @ St. James Cathedral