

# Diocese of San Joaquin

5 January 2012

The weekly Bishop's Note is designed chiefly as a teaching tool in addition to a vehicle to disseminate information about the life and ministry of the diocese of San Joaquin to the people of the diocese. Over the next ten weeks I would like to speak to an important and often overlooked ministry in the church that of the Laity.



We know from the Scriptures and the Early Church that there are three primary orders in the church – Laity, Deacons, Priests and Bishops in that order of rank and importance. However, if I were to ask any of the laymen or for that matter many of the clergy, what the church teaches are the primary duties of the laity I suspect I would get a lot of blank stares. To that end over the next ten weeks I would like to look at the duties of the laity as laid out in the **Constitutions and Canons of the Anglican Church in North America** – Title 1 Section Two: *Concerning the Duties of the Laity*

It shall be the duty of every member of the church:

1. To worship God, the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit, every Lord's Day in a Church unless reasonably prevented;
2. To engage regularly in the reading and study of Holy Scripture and the Doctrine of the Church as found in Article I of the Constitution of this Church;
3. To observe their baptismal vows, to lead an upright and sober life, and not give scandal to the Church;
4. To present their children and those they have led to the Lord for baptism and confirmation;
5. To give regular financial support to the Church, with the biblical tithes as the minimum standard of giving;
6. To practice forgiveness daily according to our Lord's teaching;
7. To receive worthily the Sacrament of Holy Communion as often as reasonable;
8. To observe the feasts and fasts of the Church set forth in the Anglican formularies;
9. To continue his or her instruction in the Faith so as to remain an

effective minister for the Lord Jesus Christ;

10. To devote themselves to the ministry of Christ among those who do not know Him, utilizing the gifts that the Holy Spirit gives them, for the effective extension of Christ's Kingdom.

Bishop Eric

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