



The Feast of All Saints' 2017

Dear Friends,

For the past fourteen years it has been a great privilege to serve as the bishop of this diocese. Now, after considerable prayer and conversation with family, friends, and close colleagues, I am writing to inform you of my decision to retire and to call for the election of a new diocesan bishop.

As you may know, the process for the search and election of a new bishop requires some time and the involvement of many from across a diocese. While it is the Standing Committee's responsibility to determine that timeline, it is my hope that we will hold an episcopal election at next October's Annual Convention, and that the bishop-elect will begin work in early Spring of 2019.

The Standing Committee will meet next in two weeks with me and a representative from the Presiding Bishop's Office for Pastoral Development—at which time we will take time to prayerfully talk through the issues and timing of this transition. You should expect to receive more information about the next steps and the timing for the search process soon thereafter.

I cannot begin to describe what a gift and a deep joy it has been for me to serve The Episcopal Church in Colorado. Having been ordained as a priest in this diocese in 1982, I have been blessed by a long history here and the many friendships that I have made over those years. To travel across this amazing state and to see first-hand the commitment and gifts of so many individuals, both lay and ordained, has been nothing short of inspiring. I treasure the ways I have been invited into some of the most holy moments in people's lives—praying on retreat with postulants and candidates preparing for ordination, laying hands on those being confirmed, sharing conversation about the grace-filled and miraculous ways that the Holy Spirit is moving among us, just telling stories and laughing with folks, or negotiating the inevitable difficulties and interpersonal challenges of this extended community that we call a diocese. All of it has been transformational, healing, and life-giving beyond measure for me, and I am grateful to all of you beyond words. I pray that I have been able to return the favor in some small way over the years. You are a gift and a blessing. Thank you.

Now it is time for me to begin the process of relinquishing the responsibilities of this office and entrusting them into the hands of a new bishop. Even so, I am mindful that there is plenty of work to do in the days ahead, and I want to assure you of my full commitment to serving our common life and ministry until a new bishop takes office.

As I have said many times to many people, I believe that my primary ministry as a bishop is a ministry of prayer. It is just a fact—the heart of all ministry is prayer. Now, as we enter into this season of transition, I invite you to join with me in renewed prayer for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon our collective life. Who knows what new and divine possibilities God is already bringing to life among us if we will but open hearts and listen? It's just the way the kingdom works. I am confident that we simply cannot and will not be disappointed.

Please know of my heartfelt thanks and great affection for all of you. Deep peace and every blessing be with you.

Faithfully,

The Right Reverend Robert O'Neill
Bishop of Colorado