

Dearly beloved in the Diocese of Florida:

I began each session at the recent meet-and-greets with two words: thank you. As we heard more about your ministries, Patty and I were deeply moved. In that warm spirit, I thank those who welcomed us—the Search Committee, co-chaired by the Rev. Carolyn Jones and Mr. Gregory Orloff; the Transition Committee, co-chaired by the Rev. Teri Calinao and Ms. Carolyn Gosselin; and so many of you. Everywhere we went in the Diocese, without exception, I felt welcomed as a brother in Christ. On behalf of Patty and me, thank you for your hospitality and for sharing your journeys. Truly, we felt the presence of the Spirit among you. We were certainly well fed, too!

As I reflect on our time together, it strikes me that you are dedicated to shared ministry—the ministry of all the baptized, leading through unique roles with respect and transparency. You have experienced hurt and betrayal, yet you steadfastly look ahead to Resurrection and to where God is calling you. You lead vital ministries across urban, suburban, and rural areas, including in schools, on college campuses, in prisons, and at Camp Weed. In addition, you are engaged in transformational outreach across the Diocese. You are also blessed with skilled, entrepreneurial priests—both active and retired—and passionate deacons, as well as deeply committed lay leaders. Most notably, your focus remains squarely on Jesus. I find all of this deeply encouraging and inspiring, and it calls to my heart.

So, what do you need to know about me? I truly and unreservedly believe what we say in the Creed. I rely on the unmerited grace and forgiveness of Jesus Christ, and I believe we are called to practice abundance here and now and in light of our hope of heaven. I was raised in a small town, and a small church, in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia, and I have been stretched by over three decades of ordained ministry marked by long, stable tenures in New York, Baltimore, London, and the Washington, DC, area. I have also been honored to serve the Church widely at the diocesan, national, and international levels. I am incredibly blessed to share life with my sweetheart, the Rev. Patty Alexander, and our three sons (and two dogs).

Throughout this journey, I have cared for conservatives, progressives, and moderates alike. I have been enriched by the faithful ministries of evangelicals, Anglo-Catholics, charismatics, LGBTQ+ Christians, and people of color, as well as by the very wealthy, the disenfranchised, and those somewhere in the middle, intentionally seeking the face of Christ in each and all. Many have said I have a gift for relating to just about everybody, even amidst conflict.

You need to know that, were I your bishop, everything we would do together would be grounded in Scripture and theology, including the command to love God with all that we are and to love our neighbors as ourselves. Building on that foundation, we would engage together in the work of reconciliation and the deepening of trust. I come from just far enough up the coast to bring fresh eyes, unaligned with any previous faction. I know trust must be earned. It would be imperative for me to learn your stories and seek your wisdom as we shore up existing systems, strategically build sustainable new ones, and pursue strict canonical fidelity, transparency, accountability, and fiscal discipline.

All of this work would **anchor a robust, outward-facing mission grounded in the Great Commission**. Our calling is unity in Christ, not uniformity in all matters, and we must approach one another with an assumption of goodwill. I truly believe this—the Diocese of Florida is not a problem to be solved but a family of God to be loved. You have a Savior, and any fallible nominee you might elect need only to point, along with you, resolutely towards Jesus. It would be my honor and great joy to be bishop and pastor to you all, learning and walking alongside you.

May God bless you. —The Rev. J. Randolph (Randy) Alexander, Jr.