

The Episcopal Charge to the 58th Annual Synod of the Diocese of the Eastern United States, the 6th Annual Synod of the Diocese of the Central and Western States, and the 12th Provincial Synod of the Anglican Province of America

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who by thy Holy Spirit didst preside in the Council of the blessed Apostles, and hast promised, through thy Son Jesus Christ, to be with thy Church to the end of the world; We beseech thee to be with the Council of thy Church here assembled in thy Name and Presence. Save us from all error, ignorance, pride, and prejudice; and of thy great mercy vouchsafe, we beseech thee, so to direct, sanctify, and govern us in our work, by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, that the comfortable Gospel of Christ may be truly preached, truly received, and truly followed, in all places, to the breaking down the kingdom of sin, Satan, and death; till at length the whole of thy dispersed sheep, being gathered into one fold, shall become partakers of everlasting life; through the merits and death of Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Our Synods This Year

Praised be Jesus Christ! It remains the greatest privilege of my life to stand before you on this day for these Provincial and Diocesan Synods, the fifth of my ministry amongst you and for you as Presiding and Diocesan Bishop. I love you all – and I go to the Altar of God with all of you on my heart. It is our imperative perennially to renew the life and work of the Church by the Holy Ghost. The historic indigenous Catholic Church of this country, our unique expression of the Mystical Body of Christ, Traditional Anglicanism, is alive and advancing. We are in our DNA the Catholic and Orthodox Church of the Seven Ecumenical Councils and the Seven Holy Sacraments. The Traditional English Mass and Sacraments and solid, authentic, faithful preaching, catechesis, and teaching abound in our midst.

And most especially, above all, ‘The love of Christ compels us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God’ (II Corinthians 5.14-20).

Together we meet here simply as the Church – we are nothing less than the Church of the Apostles, the Fathers, and the Saints. Here gathers the fullness of the Church as instituted by and founded on Our Lord and established in the Apostles and their successors. Our branch of the Catholic Church is growing. The Province grew 2.3% over the past year and the Eastern Diocese grew 5.6%. We celebrated 187 Holy Confirmations, a new record!

We encourage everyone to take a serious interest in the meetings and events of these Synods. Most critically, we invite everyone to enter into the spirit, significance, and purpose of Synod by prayer. Thank you all so very much for your loving support and encouragement during this special time in our corporate life together.

The Most Reverend Walter Howard Grundorf, DD

Before we proceed any farther in this address and charge, let us remember before God the life and witness of Bishop Walter Grundorf. After a courageous and valiant fight against cancer, Bishop Grundorf entered life eternal on 15th February 2026.

Words fail to express what Bishop Grundorf, our Most Reverend Father in God, our Apostle, and the chief priest and pastor of this Province for decades, meant to all of us. We can only thank Our Lord and Saviour for the gift to us of Bishop Grundorf, and for all that he was to and for us, and for all that he has done for the Kingdom of God.

It was appropriate that Bishop Grundorf should go to our heavenly Father on Quinquagesima this year, wherein we remember the theological virtue of love given from the God of love, charity, the love of God for His own sake and the love of others for the sake of God. For Bishop Grundorf loved us all so very, very much, each and every one, and in his life embodied that love which is at the heart of Our Lord and of our holy Faith.

Born on 20th January 1943 in Saint Louis, Missouri, Bishop Grundorf graduated from Bob Jones University in South Carolina and entered masters' degree level graduate work in the mid-1960s. He became a Traditional Anglican while in graduate school and was ordained deacon and priest in 1966. He was elected and consecrated Bishop Suffragan of the Diocese of the Eastern United States in 1976. He served as Rector of Saint Michael's Church in Knoxville, Tennessee, from 1967 to 1976, then as Rector of Saint Paul's Church in Jackson, Mississippi, where he served from 1976 to 1979. In 1979, he relocated to Orlando, Florida, as a missionary bishop and established the mission Church of Saint Alban's. Saint Alban's is now one of the largest parishes in the Continuing Church and serves still as our honorary Cathedral Church.

Bishop Grundorf was elected Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese of the Eastern United States in 1995 and Presiding Bishop of the Anglican Province of America in 1998. In 2017, he became one of four Primates to form the Communion of the Anglican Joint Synods. Bishop Grundorf retired as Presiding Bishop of the APA and Diocesan Bishop of the Eastern United States at the 2021 Synod. In 2024, Bishop Grundorf was declared Presiding and Diocesan Bishop Emeritus.

Of your Christian charity, continue to pray for the blessed repose of the consecrated soul of Walter Howard Grundorf, Bishop in the Church of God, and for the comfort and peace of his wife Mary, his four wonderful sons and their families, and everyone affected by Bishop Grundorf's passing from this life. *Rest eternal grant unto him, O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon him. May he rest in peace.*

The Reverend Father Donald Edelmann

Of your Christian charity, pray also for the blessed repose of the priestly soul of the Reverend Father Donald Edelmann, who entered eternal life on 7th January 2026 at a hospice care centre in Flemington, New Jersey. Father Don was a greatly loved and admired priest of our Diocese and Province. May he also rest in peace.

Recapitulation in Christ: The Mission and Vocation of the Anglican Province of America in the 2020s

Our theme for the APA Synods this year is ‘recapitulation.’ As one will see, this term is used as a double entendre in our gathering, both a description of how Our Blessed Saviour gathers, unites, fulfils, redeems, and calls us into His Kingdom, and a summary of the major proposals and challenges presented to these Synods over the past five years. We shall discuss the past, present, and future – and what the Lord Jesus is calling us to be and do, right now and moving forward.

Recapitulation means ‘summing up’ or ‘summary.’ In Greek, *Ana-kephal-aioi-asthai* – try saying that twice! ‘That in the dispensation of the fulness of times God might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him’ (Ephesians 1.10). God declares that He sums up all things in Our Lord Jesus Christ.

Used extensively by the Holy Fathers of the Church, recapitulation is especially at the core of the teaching of Saint Justin Martyr and Saint Irenaeus of Lyons, who remind us that in Jesus Christ we have the restoration of fallen humanity to communion with God through the obedience of Christ. The Eternal Son and Word is the summing-up of all the previous revelations of God in past ages through His Incarnation.

‘Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, God hath put all things under Christ’s feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the Church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all’ (Ephesians 1.21-23).

‘For by Christ were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the Church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell’ (Colossians 1.16-19).

As Saint Justin Martyr declares, ‘I would not have believed the Lord Himself, if He had announced any other than He who is our framer, maker, and nourisher. But because the only-begotten Son came to us from the one God, who both made this world and formed us, and contains and administers all things, summing up His own handiwork in Himself, my faith towards Him is steadfast, and my love to the Father immovable, God bestowing both upon us.’

So professes Saint Irenaeus of Lyons, ‘Christ was in these last days, according to the time appointed by the Father, united to His own workmanship, inasmuch as He became a man liable to suffering. He summed up in Himself the long line of human beings, and furnished us, in a brief, comprehensive manner, with salvation; so that what we had lost in Adam—namely, to be according to the image and likeness of God—that we might recover in Christ Jesus.’

‘He has therefore, in His work of recapitulation, summed up all things, both waging war against our enemy, and crushing him who had at the beginning led us away captives in Adam. The enemy would not have been fairly vanquished, unless it had been a man born of woman who conquered him. And therefore does the Lord profess Himself to be the Son of Man, comprising in Himself that original

man out of whom the woman was fashioned, in order that, as our species went down to death through a vanquished man, so we may ascend to life again through a victorious one; and as through a man, death received the palm of victory against us, so again by a man, we may receive the palm against death' (Saint Irenaeus of Lyons).

Jesus is New Adam, the New Man and the New Creation, who prevails where the first Adam failed. Christ reverses the sin that Adam committed and, because of His union with mankind, leads man to eternal life and moral perfection. The teleological purpose of Christ's union with mankind is to make the human race divine.

Of Our Lord, Saint Irenaeus again says, Christ 'became what we are, that He might bring us to be even what He is Himself.' Or put more succinctly, 'God became man so that man may become God' (Saint Athanasius of Alexandria).

Saint John Chrysostom also instructs us that the Lord Jesus is the Head of men and angels alike, and in Him the human and angelic worlds are reunited under our common Head. All things are brought together and fulfilled and made one in the Saviour of the cosmos. Jesus fulfils all things and in Himself sums up the whole of reality.

'For in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power' (Colossians 2.9-10).

All this to say, Christ sums us up and everything up in Himself. So let us now sum up what we have been discussing in these Synods since 2022!

1. Digital Media

Since March 2022, Matthew (Stu) Stuart has produced a huge service on our behalf, upgrading Provincial, Diocesan, and parish websites, creating the new APA telephone application which includes the Daily Office, and launching new social media accounts on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. That brilliant work has now expanded into a whole new range of internet ministry, including podcasting and vlogging. 'Mining the Mysteries' is well worth our time. A new video is supplied each month as part of the Comprovincial newsletter. Please remember to visit anglicanprovince.shop and purchase your APA gear. Stu has become quite irreplaceable in the mission of our Dioceses and Province. Multiple parishes and missions now rely on him for websites and social media accounts. It is extraordinary. Let us all thank Stu for everything he is doing for us. Our online ministry is absolutely key, crucial to our evangelism. In the coming years, we will only continue to build on the phenomenal work that has already been accomplished. Thanks to Stu, the APA is on the cutting edge of digital technology, presence, and outreach for the entire Anglo-Catholic world. Please remember to contact Stu if you should require any assistance in one's cyberspace efforts.

2. Vocations to Holy Orders

Our prayers are being answered, but we are still facing a priest shortage in the Continuing Church, especially as we seek to expand our jurisdiction and create new mission Churches. Two years ago, I challenged us to pray and work for an increase of vocations to the Sacred Ministry of the Church. Our

Lord is responding favourably to our prayers, as we now have over 24 persons enrolled in various stages of the formation programme. Since Synod 2025, we have ordained four priests and two deacons. Let us continue to thank Archdeacon Mark Menees and the Board of Examining Chaplains for the superlative work they conduct on behalf of our Church and Dioceses. And let us please never relent in our daily prayers for a continual increase of vocations to the Sacrament of Holy Orders. Let's keep on keeping the BEC as busy as possible.

Are you praying for an increase of vocations in your parish or mission? If not, please start now. Are you praying for vocations yourself? Now is the time. And how often do we enquire of men if they might have considered a vocation to the Holy Priesthood or Holy Diaconate? Sometimes, only the question itself is enough to spark discernment. There are many more men called to the ordained ministry than those who respond and accept in faith. Only a fraction of those men called to be priests and deacons by God actually heed the call.

We need men filled with the fire of the Holy Spirit and inebriated by the Blood of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. We need more priests. We urgently need more priests. Without more priests, we cannot staff our current Churches and we will be unable to create new mission Churches. But there is no lack of enthusiasm in responding to the call of ministry when men are assured that the Church is sound and holds the Catholic and Apostolic Faith. The fact is that we are facing a demographic priest shortage. The shortage is here. Some might say that that could be a good problem to have, given our general growth, but the bottom line is that we need more priests and deacons, good and holy priests and deacons. Soon we will definitely have more parishes and missions than priests or deacons to serve them. The only way by which the Lord Jesus will give us more clergy is if we pray, speak, instruct, work, and prompt for an increase of vocations, deliberately and intentionally.

If we pray with our hearts and souls, God will answer our prayer. God gives us what we truly want. Please pray.

3. Mission Churches

We now enjoy two new mission Churches, Christ the King Church, Staunton, Virginia, Canon Glenn Spencer, Vicar, and the Church of the Holy Communion, Pensacola, Florida, which is searching for a full-time Vicar.

The challenge from last year presents itself again this year: let us resolve that every Deanery of the Diocese of the Eastern United States will establish a new mission within every Deanery within the next two years. Mid-Atlantic States and Florida have already met the challenge. So we can all do it! If every Deanery is willing to pool and allocate personal and financial resources from the parishes and missions within each Deanery, we shall surely be able to achieve this lofty goal. We are using the Deanery system as the best and most efficient way for planting mission Churches. Each local Dean is asked to oversee the process of a Church plant in his own region.

We have witnessed groups of faithful Anglicans independently organising themselves into mission Churches for the Continuing Church without initial assistance. Such is the desire in our wider community to see orthodox Anglicanism re-established and made accessible. Plans persevere for the anticipated creation eventually of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament in Palm Coast, Florida.

We are all invited now to join the trend and erect new mission Churches in each Diocesan Deanery. I shall continue to work closely with each Dean in our mutual effort, as we prolong this essential plan. Financial support will, of course, be made available from the Diocesan Mission Fund, but we hope and trust that parishes and missions within our Deaneries will rally round the cause and contribute as much as possible in each location. For example, each parish and mission in Florida has pledged 1% of its annual income to mission work in the Deanery. Thank you so much for collaborating with us in this holy undertaking. At this time, let us please acknowledge the Deans of the Diocese: the Very Reverend J. Gordon Anderson, the Mid-Atlantic States; the Very Reverend Paul A. Rivard, Appalachia; the Venerable Mark W. Menees, Central and Eastern Carolina; the Very Reverend Matthew E. Harlow, the Deep South; and the Very Reverend Brian W. Oldfield, Florida.

Speaking of mission Churches, the 2026 Lenten Appeal for Saint Luke's Church, Port Orange, Florida is still underway! It's never too late to contribute! This year's appeal will, first and foremost, secure full-time priestly ministry. The Lenten Appeal funds will allow Saint Luke's to engage in the blessing of presence, to open its doors to the community. Daily Morning and Evening Prayer, a mid-week Eucharist, Bible Study, Catechesis, and fellowship time will ensue. The Appeal will also allow for new dedicated ministry activities, for doing necessary work to revitalise worship, for new ways in which the Church can participate in community events, and for greater supervision of the building and property. Father Daniel Squires has already arrived at Saint Luke's as its new full-time Vicar. Please continue to be generous. As of this Synod, we have raised 50% of what we need. Please prayerfully consider a 'final push' to help us meet our goal of \$100,000 before October 2026.

We shall hear a great deal more very soon about our Global Partnerships and our international communion. Bishop David Haines, our Missionary Bishop, will regale us with excellent information and stories about his quintessentially vital ministry and work. As we consider mission Churches, we note that the Anglican Province of America is the Mother Church to an entire network of international Anglo-Catholic Churches – now in Indonesia, the Philippines, India, Ecuador, and Haiti.

4. Anglican Schools

We now have five schools in our Province: Saint Dunstan's Academy in Roseland, Virginia, Lindisfarne Hall at Holy Trinity Church in Fernandina Beach, Florida, the Ecclesial School Initiative at Saint Alban's Cathedral in Oviedo, Florida, Saint Paul's Church and Classical School in Melbourne, Florida, and our brand new school, the Glebe School at Saint James On-the-Glebe Church in Gloucester, Virginia. Father Raymond Davison has been called to serve as the Headmaster of the Glebe School and assistant at Saint James Church.

Since the Church herself is the School of Sanctity and the Ark of the New Covenant, and in her we learn to be faithful disciples of Christ and to eschew and reject all that is not of God, Who has brought us to the New Life of Christ, it is incumbent upon us to apply that educational, catechetical, and instructional aspect of the Church's witness and vocation to the creation of new and vibrant Christian classical schools. Such schools engender the formation of the Christian life, the illumination of the Christian mind, intellect, will, memory, and soul, and the cultivation of supernatural faith and grace in their students. There can be no higher calling for us than the holistic education and formation of

our children. Let us endeavour to add to the number of APA schools already up and running. May we soon behold a sixth school in this hall of fame!

It always bears repeating how thankful we are to God for all of our schools. We are truly thankful to God for all of our esteemed centres of education and learning. Please pray for the burgeoning efforts of all of our schools.

The reorganisation of the Diocese of the West of the Anglican Province of America

Finally, I wish to share with you a recap of the disciplinary measures that had to be taken against Robert Giffin, formerly Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese of the Central and Western States, during August 2025. The actions were precipitated following Mr. Giffin's public declaration of intent to commit schism and separate from the APA and the fellowship of the Anglican Joint Synods in order to establish a sect styled the 'Anglican Missionary Church.' Such a declaration was determined, under Canon 31, Sections 2 and 3, to constitute Abandonment of Communion. Notice of Inhibition and Declaration of Abandonment was given on 1st August and formal Deposition from the Sacred Episcopate and Ministry of the Church occurred on 30th August. The Letter of Deposition further declares that the office of Bishop Ordinary of the Diocese of the Central and Western States (DCWS) is now vacant, and that episcopal oversight for the clergy and faithful of the canonical Diocese is now supplied by the House of Bishops of the APA.

These actions have ensured the continued canonical integrity and episcopal oversight of our Western Diocese. Because members of the former DCWS Standing Committee became schismatic, the structure of the Western Diocese will be revived at this Provincial Synod. By God's grace, three churches and ten clergy have remained faithful and loyal to the APA in our Western Diocese. I shall make my first episcopal visitation as Presiding Bishop to Saint Andrew's Church, Jacksonville, Oregon, next month. Let us renew our prayer and redouble our efforts to see the APA thrive and grow in the Western half of the nation.

At this Provincial Synod, we shall redraw the boundaries of the Western Diocese to bring balance to our national jurisdiction, and we shall restore the original designation of the Diocese as 'Diocese of the West.' The Diocese of the West will be placed under the government and care of the APA Provincial Council, which will serve in effect as the Standing Committee for the DOW. The Eastern United States Board of Examining Chaplains will serve the Diocese of the West as well. Onwards and upwards!

Concluding remarks

It would be an impossible task adequately to thank everyone who has offered so much to Our Blessed Lord to extend His Kingdom in this holy Church and Diocese. If I begin to thank everyone personally, we would still be here next month! So a litany of thanks will not be attempted, to your great relief. I shall make exceptions here and thank Lisa Ulrich, our Provincial and Diocesan Executive Administrator, without whom I would be totally flummoxed by administrative and logistical expectations. Thank you so very much, Lisa. I also wish to thank our Treasurer, Dan Wilder, and his staff, especially Debbie Harman, for generously providing tireless hours in handling the Provincial

and Diocesan book of business, as well as Charles Miller, our trusted Chancellor - both of whom provide their professional services complimentary to us. To all of you - please know how very much I love and appreciate each one of you, and how much I gratefully acknowledge your service and labour in the Lord. Please remember that my whole life vocation is to support you, to guide you, and to serve you – so please never hesitate to contact me at any time with any joy, request, or concern. I am here for you. Please pray for me as I always pray for you.

Almighty God, give us priests! Almighty God, give us schools! Almighty God, give us mission Churches! Almighty God, give us converts!

Commemorating our most holy, immaculate, blessed, and glorious Lady, the Mother of God and Ever-Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Walsingham, with all the saints, let us commend ourselves and one another and our whole life to Christ our God.

God bless you all.

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

+Chandler Holder Jones, SSC

APA and DEUS Membership and Ecumenical Statistics shared afterward with Synod attendees.