



A pastoral message from the Bishops of California

January 15, 2021

traducción al español abajo

We, the Episcopal Bishops of California, have watched the events of January 6th and following days with deep concern. As Christians we follow Jesus, who is the Way of Love.

This weekend, when we remember the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., we call upon the leaders of our cities, states and country to stand firmly in the place of non-violence, truth-telling and mutual respect.

To lead from the place of non-violence is not passive acceptance of wrongdoing; it is an active call to summon the *“better angels of our nature (Abraham Lincoln, 1861).”* We know of the difficulty Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. faced, even among his own followers, as they resisted hatred and physical violence with prayer, song and marches for justice. **We call on all people to embrace words and actions that are non-violent.**

To lead from the place of truth calls us to resist misinformation and convenient half-truths, and embrace what is real. Jesus said, *“You will know the truth and the truth will make you free (John 8:32).”* To do otherwise is to incite, to inflame and to spread lies. We honor the many thousands of election workers and officials of both parties who worked tirelessly, honestly, and at times in peril, to shepherd our nation through the election process. **We call on all people to search for truth.**

To lead from the place of mutual respect is to stand against racism in any form. We cannot, any of us, ignore the role that our nation’s sad history with race has played with events in our country. As Christians, we remember that each person is someone’s child, someone’s beloved, God’s creation. When we fail to remember that, we dehumanize our brothers and sisters. In our Baptismal Covenant, we vow to *“respect the dignity of every human being.”* **We call on all people to practice mutual respect.**

As we approach Inauguration Day, we ask our leaders to dig deeply into their consciences and to act with integrity to preserve, protect and defend our fragile democracy. We call on all people to pause and pray for the peace of our country, a peace rooted in the Way of Love.

“The end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the Beloved Community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opponents into friends.” Martin Luther King Jr.

In hope and prayer for peace and grace,

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Marc Andrus
Bishop of California

The Rt. Rev. Lucinda Ashby
Bishop of El Camino Real

The Rt. Rev. Diane Jardine Bruce
Bishop Suffragan of Los Angeles

The Rt. Rev. David Rice
Bishop of San Joaquin

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Susan Brown Snook
Bishop of San Diego

The Rt. Rev. John Harvey Taylor
Bishop Diocesan of Los Angeles

The Rt. Rev. Megan Traquair
Bishop of Northern California