



Episcopal Diocese

— OF CENTRAL FLORIDA —

July 15, 2024

Dear Diocesan Family,

I write to you today reflecting on Saturday's assassination attempt targeting former President Donald Trump during his campaign rally in Pennsylvania. I grieve for those who were injured and personally affected by the violence; for the family of Corey Comperatore, who died protecting his wife and two daughters during the attack; and for all of us who watched these deeply disturbing events unfold in the media.

Any act of violence undermines our sense of safety, well-being and dignity. An assassination attempt on a former president and current presidential candidate amplifies that trauma and threatens to deepen the divisions in our country. This type of violence is particularly unnerving both individually and collectively.

In light of this, as the body of Christ, we pray: "For deliverance from all danger, violence, oppression, and degradation, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mercy." I recommend the prayer "For our Country" on page 820 of the Book of Common Prayer, and this prayer "For the Human Family" on page 815:

O God, you made us in your own image and redeemed us through Jesus your Son: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish your purposes on earth; that, in your good time, all nations and races may serve you in harmony around your heavenly throne; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Let us come together as the body of Christ, regardless of political views, united in prayer and steadfast in our faith, trusting that God's grace is sufficient even in dark moments. May we be instruments of His peace, advocating for a world where justice and mercy prevail, and where political differences are addressed through love and understanding, not violence.

Finally, as you join me in prayer and reflection on this weekend's violence, please reach out for help as you need it. We have faithful clergy throughout the diocese who are available to pray with you and offer gospel hope and healing. Also, if you're a member of the clergy in need of support during these distressing days, please reach out to me or Assisting Bishop Dabney Smith.

I urge you to come together as brothers and sisters in Christ in unity by the power of the Holy Spirit. As you pray together, remember our heavenly Father's sovereign love and faithfulness. Do not forget the words of Jesus in John 16:33: "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

Grace and peace,

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin S. Holcomb
Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Central Florida