

Bishop's Message for October 2007

Peace and patience in the parishes, please. Let's grant that we are living through a time of turmoil in our Church. The turmoil expresses itself in each face of the Church – nationally, synodically, congregationally, and individually. Sometimes it gets expressed in words and behaviors not befitting members of the Body of Christ. Someone commented to me recently (possibly with tongue in cheek) that some of the behaviors we see in church would never be tolerated on the job, in the community league, on the playground, or anywhere else. Additionally, we face the dilemmas of many pastoral vacancies and a dearth of pastors to fill those vacancies, which increases the sense of uncertainty. By the grace of God, and with the Synod's gratitude, many of our retired pastors have stepped forward to fill the breach through interim service. Always – but especially in times of turmoil and uncertainty – we need to practice the presence of Jesus with each other. We need to practice gentleness and reverence. Let us heed the counsel of St. Paul to the Romans: "Let us then pursue what makes for peace and mutual upbuilding" (14.19), and, "if it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all" (12.18). Peace and patience in the parishes, please.

+Ronald B. Mayan, Bishop
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