

Response to Questions

Describe your relationship with Jesus Christ and tell us where you find abiding joy in the Gospel, as well as the basis for your passion for its proclamation.

My relationship with Jesus is ever-growing, ever-changing, and life-long, deeply rooted in the sacramental reality of God's love, grace, mercy, nourishment, reconciliation, and forgiveness. It comes through academic and scholarly study of scripture and theology, and personal and intimate experience in creation and relationships with others. Jesus is my daily companion, an ever-present reality in my life, through whom I receive the strength, courage, endurance, and clarity to serve The Church. My ongoing and abiding joy is found in the regularity of holy interruptions in a life of ministry, those daily unexpected Holy Spirit moments that are invitations to share the truth of Jesus. My hope is, and I strive to be, always open and have the awareness to proclaim Jesus' love in every one of those moments. This is my call, our call, The Church's mission, to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ. That is the foundation upon which my passion to make the reconciling love of Jesus known to every single one of God's very good creation resides... Jew and gentile, slave and free, you and me.

Describe your approach to ministry in a divided nation and world? How do you go about respecting the dignity of every human being when the understanding of our humanity can be deeply different?

One of the most challenging aspects of living in Christ-centered community is not allowing the changes and chances of this broken world to distract from the mission of The Church. External realities are out of our control. We can't avoid them. We can't ignore them. We can't let them dictate The Church's mission. We must be in the world, but not of the world. We must relearn what it means to be a fellowship that doesn't always agree with one another. This is easy to say, and even easy to understand, yet incredibly hard to accomplish. It also can't be perfected this side of heaven. One of the ways The Church strays from her mission is when modern-day political ideologies become the central focus of her work, creating an environment of right verse wrong theology, a community of winners and losers. This is antithetical to the true mission of The Church which is to restore all people. The world teaches that rightness comes through victory in the defeat or conquering of others. The Church must dispel this lie, teaching righteousness comes only through the redemptive love of Jesus, and all are made worthy of this love through the power of the Holy Spirit. This cannot be overstated. Worthiness and dignity begins in The Church by every member of The Church seeing every other member of The Church as a beloved child of our creator. If that foundation can be embraced and solidified by The Church, then there is great hope that a divided nation and world can know this same reality.

Response to Questions

Why this diocese? Explain what excites you about the Diocese of East Carolina.

Heart! This was the first word that came to mind when reading the diocesan profile. I kept saying to myself, “this diocese has heart!” We know that the heart and mind are interconnected in their scripture meaning. It’s clear in the articulation of your mission and ministry that East Carolina has an unwavering foundation of heart and mind for Jesus! This is exciting!

No mission, congregation, or diocese is without challenges. East Carolina is not exempt from this reality. What is refreshing is that not only are those challenges continuing to be discerned and identified, but creative and faithful solutions are being explored and implemented, both with the clergy and laity. This speaks to the strength of leadership in the diocese. This is exciting!

As a vocational youth minister of 16 years prior to being called to the priesthood, East Carolina’s dedication of resources and human power to youth and young people is inspiring to read! Youth and young people are not only the future of The Church. They are the here and now. The youth of the diocese clearly know this when they “expressed a desire for support from and relationship with a new bishop.” Indeed! They hunger for connection. Through ministries like the thriving Trinity Center and growing campus ministries, East Carolina is well on its way to raising up the next generation of lay and ordained leadership in The Church. This is exciting!

Finally, what you seek in your next bishop spoke to me and my gifts personally. You seek a collaborative, relational bishop ready to discern and cast vision in partnership with the entire diocese, one who champions youth and young adults, and one who sees Jesus in all people. This is exciting!