



*Diocese of the*

**MID-ATLANTIC**

Anglican Church in North America

November 19, 2015

“What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’ ‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did what his father wanted? (Matthew 21:28-31)

We are blessed to be a part of a Church which is clear in its convictions about the Gospel and taking it to all people. But our actions often fail to match our beliefs. It is all too easy for us to be like the second son in Jesus’ parable, the one who readily said that he would go into his father’s vineyard but then did not go. We are a Church that loves the idea of mission and outreach, but all too often lags behind in the actual doing of it.

At our recent annual Synod of our Diocese, I urged each church to join in two major opportunities to learn and grow in mission and discipleship: the “Mobilizing the Church for Life Summit” and March for Life in January, and the New Wineskins Missions Conference in April. I pass on many invitations to our churches, but I’ve hardly ever made such a specific request of all of our churches. So please hear my heart in this and understand the importance I put on this in asking.

1. Please send a team from your church to our first-ever “Mobilizing the Church for Life” Summit, to be held at The Falls Church Anglican on January 21, 2016, the day before the March for Life. Bishops and teams from dioceses all across the Anglican Church in North America will be there. The Summit will equip your church for more effective pastoral ministries. We’ll spend the morning on beginning of life concerns and the afternoon on end of life ones. Your team will come away loaded with ideas and resources for ways your church can engage in loving pastoral care of your people and outreach to your community.

Please talk with your church’s leadership about your congregation’s participation. And [click here](#) for details and to register.

For all of us: Please join in the annual March for Life in Washington. It’s not just for teams from our churches, it’s for us all. It will be held the next day, January 22, 2016. For the first time in

many years, we'll have a morning Anglican worship service, with Archbishop Foley Beach as our preacher. The service will be held at Columbia Baptist Church in Falls Church, and then we'll go together in chartered buses to and from the National Mall. The Rally and March is a joyful, uplifting experience—600,000 people, 75% of them under age 25! It's a youth rally and such an encouraging event. [Click here to buy a ticket on the bus](#) (no need to register for the worship service or the Rally/March).

2. I ask your church to take advantage of the once-every-three-years opportunity of the New Wineskins Missions Conference (April 7-10, 2016, Ridgecrest, NC). Speakers from around the world and Anglican missionaries from many agencies are coming to inspire and equip clergy, lay leaders, youth ministers, mission mobilizers, potential missionaries, and entire congregations to fulfill our Lord's Great Commission to make disciples of all nations. [Click here for details and registration.](#)

Fifty workshops, described here, will cover everything from mobilizing parishes for hands-on mission here at home to preparing for opportunities across the globe. Missionaries and exhibitors from Anglican agencies and overseas dioceses will be available to talk with you about your situation and help you strategize for your church. It's best to bring a team from your church to be able to take advantage of the extraordinary breadth of resources at this encouraging, eye-opening, and life-changing conference!

As we hear Jesus' parable about the two sons, let's honor his invitation to us—even to those of us who may have said "no" to his invitations in the past—to turn and say "yes" to his call to go in mission into his harvest field.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a small cross symbol followed by the name "John" in a cursive script.

The Rt. Rev. John A. M. Guernsey