

13 September 2023

Hear what our Lord Jesus Christ saith:  
Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with  
all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great  
commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt  
love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments  
hang all the Law and the Prophets.

To My Sisters and Brothers in the House of Bishops:

You are all aware of the recent letter by the President of the House of Deputies. You may also be aware that my attorney and I have been restricted from making any statements or comments regarding the Title IV matter. At the end of last week, I received the following message from Presiding Bishop-Designate Dena Harrison:


Confidentiality measures in Title IV matters are generally aimed at protecting the Complainant, the Respondent, other involved parties, and the process itself. Such were the motivations that underlay restrictions on Bishop Konieczny's making public statements in the matter involving President Ayala Harris's complaint against him. Now, the combination of the Complainant raising the matter publicly and the media's identification of the Respondent – including the secular media -- presents a situation in which continuing to require the Respondent to remain silent about the matter is fundamentally unfair and does not serve the original purposes of the restrictions as fully. As a result, for the time being I am lifting the requirement in the Pastoral Direction in Lieu of Disciplinary Action that requires Bishop Konieczny to "refrain from making any statements orally or in writing regarding the incident of July 9, 2022, and subsequent related procedural matters, incidents, and conduct."

As mentioned in the email above, and articulated in The Living Church article, the Canons of the Episcopal Church provide that Title IV matters are to be confidential. Publicizing matters of this type in the media does nothing to live into the intent of Title IV which is, to "resolve conflicts by promoting healing, repentance, forgiveness, restitution, justice, amendment of life and reconciliation among all involved or affected." It only creates division and more harm to the institution and the parties involved. As such, out of respect for the intent of the Canons, and the parties involved, I will not make specific comments about this matter, only to say that it underwent an extensive 13-month Title IV process as prescribed in the Canons of the Episcopal Church and the Church Attorney determined that the matter should be referred back to the Presiding Bishop-Designate in this matter for a pastoral response in lieu of discipline.

I must however respond directly to President Ayala Harris' statement in The Living Church that the misconduct was sexual: Let me be clear, there was absolutely no sexual misconduct or inappropriate verbal comments in this matter.

The Presiding Bishop, Members of the House of Bishops, and the President of the House of Deputies have called for an examination of the Episcopal Church's Title IV Canons. If invited and permitted to speak, I will make myself available to the House of Bishops for their conversation at the next House Meeting; and any committee of the General Convention charged with the work of looking at Title IV.

Faithfully,



The Rt. Rev. Dr. Edward J. Konieczny  
Bishop of Oklahoma - Resigned