

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

The Most Reverend Katharine Jefferts Schori
Presiding Bishop and Primate

May 29, 2009

Ms. Ruth Annette Mills
4413 Mark Avenue
Las Vegas, Nevada 89108

Dear Ruth,

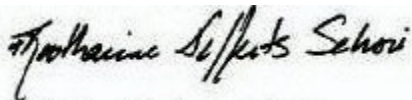
Thank you for your heartfelt letter about the Daughters of the King and your belief that the Order is at some hazard for ceasing to be an Episcopal Order. I would encourage you and other Daughters who are concerned about this to share your concerns with others, by whatever means you find most suitable. All should be aware of the move to change membership categories and requirements, and all should be familiar with the appropriate parliamentary ways in which such changes may be adopted. The choice should be presented as clearly as possible: "do you wish the Daughters of the King to remain an Episcopal Order, or to sever formal ties to The Episcopal Church and become an ecumenical Order?"

I applaud the expressed intention of some to present these changes as an avenue of reconciliation. I applaud the intention, but find it short-sighted. The members of the Daughters of the King may do wonderful work at personal reconciliation, but they are incapable of resolving the issues that have caused some to depart The Episcopal Church. The proposed membership changes have the effect of forcing the Order, and its Episcopal members, to leave their historic affiliation with The Episcopal Church. It would, in my view, be far more appropriate to be clear about the historic character of the Daughters, and highlight the members' ability to welcome others as members of associate chapters. There is nothing wrong with claiming your relationships as faithful members of different strands of the Body of Christ, in support of a common vision, but the origin of that vision and the desire of the members to connect it to The Episcopal Church, or not, needs to be eminently clear. The Order is hampered in fulfilling its mission while it remains mired in these internal controversies.

I would caution the members about the proposal to remove the requirement that the Chaplain to the Order be appointed by the Presiding Bishop, in favor of appointment by the President of the Board. The Chaplain has historically had a guiding role, of the nature of an episcopal visitor to a religious community (an order of nuns or monks). The Chaplain's appointment is a potential check on overly enthusiastic, narrow, or novel directions espoused by the Board. It is a way in which to keep the Order *catholic* in the true sense of that word.

You will all continue in my prayers — for faithfulness, clarity, and charity. May your ministry be a blessing to the larger world. I remain

Your servant in Christ,



Katharine Jefferts Schori