



# The Episcopal Diocese of Olympia

The Episcopal Church in Western Washington

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September 29, 2011

To the Good People of the Diocese of Olympia,

I am writing today with difficult news. I ask that you pay special attention to the entirety of this letter. I write to inform you that the Rt. Rev. Vincent W. Warner, the VII Bishop of Olympia, has had his ministry as a bishop and priest restricted by Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, and is currently under investigation by the presiding bishop's office following a credible allegation of recurrent marital infidelity.

I received allegations regarding Bishop Warner several weeks ago, and promptly reported them to the presiding bishop's office. The Rt. Rev. F. Clayton Matthews, in his capacity as the Episcopal Church's intake officer for allegations regarding bishops of the church, reviewed the complaints with the presiding bishop, and found that according to Title IV (Section 6.7), the evidence presented, if true, constitutes an offense. On Monday, I received a copy of a letter from the presiding bishop to Bishop Warner, informing him that she had issued a "restriction of ministry." The restriction will remain in place until the matter is resolved following procedures outlined in Title IV of the canons of the Episcopal Church. In these proceedings, the Diocese of Olympia's role is limited to providing information requested by an investigator who is chosen by and works on behalf of the presiding bishop's office.

I will keep you apprised of Bishop Warner's status, but will not disclose details that were shared with me in confidence. I want to assure you, however, that the current allegations involve neither minors nor individuals who were in the bishop's pastoral care.

This news grieves me, and may be difficult for some of you. I urge clergy and lay leaders to reach out to those whom they believe might need support during this time. I also urge you to say your prayers for all involved, for this diocese, and especially for Bishop Warner and his family.

Faithfully,

The Rt. Rev. Gregory Rickel  
Bishop of Olympia