

June 10, 2003

A Statement from the Bishops of the Episcopal Diocese of West Texas regarding the election of the Rev. Canon Gene Robinson as Bishop Coadjutor-Elect of the Diocese of New Hampshire

We have learned, as we are sure many of you have learned, of the election of the Rev. Canon Gene Robinson as Bishop Coadjutor-Elect of the Diocese of New Hampshire on June 7.

Canon Robinson has candidly described his life as a member of the Disciples of Christ, his becoming an Episcopalian in college, his marriage and family of two children, and the dissolution of that marriage upon his declaration that he was a gay man. He is currently living in a committed relationship with a man.

For this election to go forward it must receive a majority of consents from the Bishops of the Church and a majority of the dioceses of the Church. Coming as it does within close proximity to General Convention, the diocesan consents will be obtained from the deputations of the several dioceses rather than from their standing committees.

The effect of this election at this time will serve to ensure that the focus of General Convention will be diverted and will in large measure be directed now to the sexuality issue and force a vote in both houses of Convention on the propriety of ordaining non-celibate homosexual persons.

In addition to the serious moral, Scriptural, and canonical issues which have regularly been avoided by the many prior attempts to politicize this issue, your bishops are profoundly aware of the consequences that such an ordination and consecration would have not only on unity of the Episcopal Church in the United States, and upon each diocese and congregation, but also upon the unity of the entire Anglican Communion.

For these reasons, and with profound dismay that elements within our church continue to force the issue politically, despite widely held and substantial opinion that questions of this magnitude are not resolved by vote taking, your bishops will not consent to the election of Canon Robinson.

The Rt. Rev. James E. Folts, D.D.
Bishop

The Rt. Rev. Robert B. Hibbs, D.D.
Bishop Suffragan