



Rev. Jackie Bernacchi

All Saints Episcopal Church
301 South Main
Minot, ND 58701

www.minot.com/~allsaint

The Smile of Bishop Michael

Many of us, including yours truly, are getting pretty excited about the Bishop's visit in November. It looks like we will be keeping him busy with receptions, and even a confirmation on Sunday Nov 7.

Now, many of you have followed my gradual narrative story — given in dribbles of sometimes weeks, or even months apart — of how I first met Mike and Lisa, and the favorable impression they both made on me and Deloris Walters... way back when... and there has been much, much more since.

Now, nearly a year later, and one Bishop's election behind us, I can only report more praise for our New Bishop. His leadership is clear and directed, and he is as warm and downright funny as I remember him a year ago.

Recently, Bishop Michael presided over our North Dakota Convention in Bismarck. He revealed his poise and sense of vision in his opening address to and about our Diocese. His plans, active even now, for education and the stimulation of lay and ordained vocations, are bold steps toward renewed vigor in our Diocese.

Yet, with all the dignity and direction of his leadership, there was this wonderful gentle humor. He is a person possessed of a keen wit, he openly jokes and laughs and invites us with a smile, to get caught up in the reconciling blessing of laughter. It's hard to be critical when busy holding your stomach in spasms of laughter. It's difficult to be aloof when you're holding on to your neighbor's arm, trying to get a breath in-between those spasms.

Laughter disarms almost everyone. It has the power to heal a weary spirit and open hearts. It has often been the sweetest vehicle of grace. And it is a true gift, alive and thriving in our Bishop.

So, Thank you Bishop Michael, we pray for God's blessing on you, and the strong and pleasant work you have begun with us. See you in November. ja+

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