



Every once in a while, it's helpful to know what is going on with our other siblings in Christ around the world, some of whom are part of what is called the Worldwide Anglican Communion, comprising of over 80 million members spread across 165 countries, including what we know as the Episcopal Church here in the

United States. And although each of its regional church bodies tend to operate on their own, they claim a shared history dating back to the Church of England, which did their own Lutheran-esque breaking away from the Roman Catholic Church nearly half a millennia ago. Ever since, the spiritual leader of the Church of England, instead of the Pope, being the Bishop of Rome, the Anglicans have been led by the Archbishop of Canterbury. And, much like those who have served as Pope for the Roman Catholic Church, the Archbishop of Canterbury for nearly 1500 years has always been male. And then, this past week, for a church that just might be even more stubborn than the Lutherans and not always the quickest to embrace any change-ups to how they operate, the Worldwide Anglican Communion installed their first woman as the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the spiritual leader and guide of over 80 million members around the world.

And as if that event wouldn't be magnificent in of itself, the newly called Archbishop in Sarah Mulally decided to do something else extraordinary in setting the stage for her installation. In the week leading up to it, she decided to take on her own spiritual pilgrimage from her home church at St. Paul's Cathedral in London to the Canterbury Cathedral nearly 90 miles away. And so I thought it was only fitting to share with you a portion of what she preached this past Wednesday not just to those in attendance, which included Prince William and Princess Kate, but to those as part of the Worldwide Anglican Communion, many of whom are also wondering about their church's future, too. Archbishop Sarah Mullally said this:

*Over the last week, I have walked the ancient pilgrim path from St. Paul's Cathedral in London to Canterbury Cathedral. Each day my heart and spirits were lifted immeasurably by the people young and old we encountered, even though my aching feet and limbs tell a different story.*

*As I walked, I have been made aware that I make this journey both on a personal level, as my ministry moves from being the bishop of London to the archbishop of Canterbury, but more significantly, I make this journey with others and in the footsteps of the past.*

*Today, I think of the many thousand unknown Christians who have trodden these same paths since, and not just on this ancient land, but all across the world. People walk the pilgrim paths of faith each and every day.*

*Of course, even if you're following a path, the way can be unknown. Where it leads isn't always clear, but we can trust in God's hand guiding us, and in God's promises. In the prayer that was written for my pilgrimage by student chaplains at the archbishop school here in Canterbury, they prayed that God might strengthen us in faith, grant us a heart like Christ, gentle, humble and devoted to the truth, so that we may share the Gospel with joy.*

*Pretty good, isn't it? And it reminds us that we can all learn from the faith of our young people...*

*As a church, we are a pilgrim people, [and] even when we see so much in the world that makes hope seem impossible...there is hope, because we make this journey with God. We do not bear the weight of this calling in our own strength, but only in the grace and power of God. We walk with God, trusting that God walks with us, trusting that in all that we face. In the sorrow and the challenges as much as in the joy and the delight, we do not walk alone. There is hope, because we are invited to trust that God will do a new thing.*

*We [have seen] God becoming one of us, and this gives me such hope for the church. In the ordinary and the extraordinary life of the church, we see God's hand at work, the church rolling up its sleeves and getting stuck in where God is already at work, in the local and the global. The church through the ordinary lives of its people continues to do so many extraordinary acts of love. God's people, offering a listening ear, a word of encouragement or a prayer of healing, offering food, shelter, sanctuary and welcome in a world that so often seeks to divide us, tables to sit at, conversations to be shared, and being a simple loving presence, like the salt of the Earth, a light on the hill, the treasure of the kingdom, a church...for the world, which looks for ways of joining in with people of all faiths and of none in acts of service which will transform, a church which extends around the world with our sisters churches in the Anglican Communion, as part of the one holy, catholic and apostolic church to embody Christ's love.*

*God is at work in the good news of the Gospel and in the hearts and lives of ordinary people who...have the audacity to believe that with God we can do extraordinary things.*

*For me, this trust and hope in God began as I committed my life to Jesus. And God has been with me, each at every step of my pilgrim path, and I trust he walks with me [and all of you] now. Amen.*

Sometimes, it's helpful to know what is going on with our other siblings in Christ. Sometimes, it's helpful to remember that this week and always, we do not struggle and celebrate alone. Sometimes, it's essential to recognize that no matter what lies ahead for the church around the world, other children of God with their own worries and fears, will keep on moving forward with us. Sometimes, it's rather reassuring to hear that the Gospel is still alive and well all over the world, as if our collective Gospel Procession not just this Palm Sunday, but for all our days, has absolutely no end in sight. So, for that Greatest News for all of us, we most certainly give thanks to God, indeed! Amen!