Dear Companions in Christ:

It is with deep sadness that we share with you the news that the Rt. Rev. Barbara C. Harris, Suffragan Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, died on March 13, 2020 at the age of 89 after an extended hospitalization. Bishop Harris’s life and ministry has had a profound effect on the Church and the world. Her witness to the Gospel called all of us to deep prayer and action. What a blessing it was for the Episcopal Church in Connecticut that she was the preacher at our last diocesan Annual Convention in October 2019. Her call to us to be leaders in God’s Mission continues to resonate in our hearts and inform our ministries.

Bishop Harris began her sermon to us at our 2019 Convention drawing on the prayerful words of St. Augustine of Hippo, “O God, the light of the minds that know you, the joy of the hearts that love you, and the strength of the wills that serve you: grant us so to know you that we may truly love you, so to love you that we may truly serve you, whose service is perfect freedom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.” This call characterizes Bishop Barbara’s faithful life and ministry and stands as her charge to us. Today she is at rest in the arms of God who she loved and served so faithfully. Our grief is real, as is our joy...our joy in having shared in ministry with Bishop Barbara and our confidence that she is embraced in the resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Our prayers are with Barbara’s family, our friends and colleagues in the Episcopal; Diocese of Massachusetts, especially Bishops Alan and Gayle, as well as all with all who mourn the loss of our sister. Her life and ministry touched so many and she will be missed.

We will update you as to details of her funeral as they emerge. Arrangements are pending for a public funeral service at the Washington Cathedral and a private graveside service in Philadelphia. These will be followed by a memorial service at St. Paul’s Cathedral in Boston, MA. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, these services will be delayed to another time.

Faithfully,

Bishop Diocesan                Bishop Suffragan