



The Diocese of New Jersey

THE RIGHT REVEREND GEORGE EDWARD COUNCELL, D.D.

August 9, 2011

Dear Friends in Christ,

"Wow!"

"Wow!" was my first reaction when I learned that the Vestry of St. John on the Mountain had elected the Rev. Susan Ironside to become your next Rector. Days later, as I write to send you my congratulations and assure you of my prayers, I'm still saying, "Wow!"

I am tempted to say that Susan needs no introduction. After all, she and her family are well known to your parish. You helped in the discernment of her call to ordination. You nurtured her and supported her as she undertook her seminary education and formation as a priest and pastoral leader. You rejoiced with her on her ordination and upheld her in prayer as she began her ordained ministry at St. Paul's in Westfield.

Still, an introduction of Susan as your new Rector is in order. While you have some shared history with her, this will be a new ministry for Susan and for all of you. She is not the same person that she was at the beginning of her journey toward ordination. Neither is SJOTM the same parish. She is not coming to turn the clock back to a more comfortable time (as if that were possible). She is, rather, the leader your leaders have chosen to shepherd you through the changes and challenges of being the Church today as we love and follow Jesus together.

It is unusual for a former parishioner to become the Rector of her sponsoring parish. I believe, however, that God is unusually gracious and that your leaders are unusually wise and that Susan is unusually discerning. I am more than confident that our Lord is the true author of this call. By His grace, the parish will flourish under the leadership of Mother Ironside.

I look forward to seeing you at the celebration of this new ministry and the institution of Susan Ironside as your Rector. May God's grace continue to work among you so that we may continue to behold His hand at work in SJOTM and say, "Wow!"

Faithfully yours in Christ,

The Rt. Rev. George E. Council, D.D.
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