

# The Bishop's E-lumination



A Message from Bishop Robert T. Hoshibata

March 22, 2007

## “Grief and Sorrow in Virginia”

Dear Members and Friends of the Oregon-Idaho Annual Conference,  
Grace to you and peace in the name of Jesus Christ!

Grief and sorrow are very much a part of our world in the days since the killings on the campus of Virginia Tech. News of the tragic events spread quickly, stunning us with the savage brutality of the acts that have senselessly taken so many lives. I join with many who have been praying for comfort for the Virginia Tech community and for those who lost family and loved ones. And since we have all been affected by these tragic events, I am praying for the whole human family.

Confronted and confounded by evil of such magnitude as this, we cry with the psalmist: *“I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted within my breast; my mouth is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my jaws; you lay me in the dust of death.”* (Ps. 22: 14-15)

This is more than a time of sorrow. The events at Virginia Tech are only the most recent and newsworthy signs of a world where violence has become a daily occurrence. We are assailed by so many media reports of crime, loss of life and property, and hatred. Violent acts at the hands of terrorists and callous attitudes toward human life and the created world threaten to become the rule rather than the exception.

Surrounded as we are with evil, assailed by violent language and actions, we must not be complacent. We can and must address the evils of violence and the inhumane treatment of others. Hatred and discrimination of others must cease. We who profess faith in Jesus Christ must be at the forefront of the movement to stem the tide of cruelty in our communities and the world. Let us:

- Offer our prayers for the victims and the perpetrator and their families.
- Live daily cherishing each moment of life.
- Appreciate our families and friends.
- Reach out in love to the marginalized and the sojourner among us.
- Advocate and act for the end of the evils of violence.
- Trust in God's love and care over us even in moments of sorrow, pain, fear.

Just as the psalmist lamented the presence of evil in the world, so also did the psalmist proclaim:

*“The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside still water; he restores my soul. He leads me in right paths for his name's sake. Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me. . . .”*

In Christ's shalom,  
Robert T. Hoshibata

*God our creator, our hearts would sink in despair at the state of our world except for your love. We would be defeated by sorrow and the horrors of the human loss without the strength of your assurance of your care over us in all times. When our minds attempt to comprehend the evil around us, we are confounded. We are lost in our human inability to make sense of these tragic events. Still, in our moments of fear you visit us with your compassionate love. You remind us that in you, goodness triumphs over evil and through the Resurrection you offer hope when there is despair and pain and sorrow. Deliver us from our distress; offer us your hand of hope and assurance, and fill us with a desire to change the evil of the world to the goodness we know in Jesus Christ, Amen!*