



The Reverend
Edward R. Benoway
Bishop

March 12, 2007

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

“I am the resurrection and the life” says the Lord; “Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live!” [John 11:25].

With great sadness and sense of personal loss, I write to you sharing the news that The Reverend Margarita Martinez, Bishop of the Caribbean Synod, ELCA, died on Sunday afternoon, March 11, 2007. Margarita and I were both called to serve as bishops in 2001 and she became a wonderful friend and colleague. She is survived by her son, Javier, her mother, Margo, and brother, Raphael.

Margarita has been fighting a battle with cancer over the period of the past eight months. She received excellent medical care from doctors in both Chicago and in Puerto Rico, and most importantly she found great strength and support in the hundreds of prayers for healing offered from friends and loved ones throughout the Caribbean Synod and ELCA. Her spirit remained high and faithful throughout this time and she continued to praise God even when there was little hope left for her physical recovery.

Over these past years, Margarita endeared herself to this church. She was a much sought after speaker and worship leader because of her enthusiasm and love for our Lord. She served as worship leader at the Lutheran Youth Gathering in San Antonio just weeks before the discovery of her cancer. Her ability to move easily between the Spanish and English languages made her a wonderful bridge to both cultures and the people whom she served in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Linda and I will be attending the funeral service in Puerto Rico on Tuesday evening, March 13, representing her many colleagues in the Conference of Bishops and her friends in the ELCA. I ask for your prayers for Margarita’s family, the people of God in the Caribbean Synod who mourn their bishop’s death, and for all who grieve the loss of this incredible woman of God.

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In Christ and His Love,

Edward R. Benoway, Bishop
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