

The Ecclesiastical Province of Canada Diocesan Report

Diocese : Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Year: 2006 Synod

Description of the Diocese

The Anglican Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island encompasses, as the name implies, the two geographic provinces named. Established in 1787 (as the Diocese of Nova Scotia) and situated on Canada's east coast, ours is the oldest of seven dioceses forming the Ecclesiastical Province of Canada. The Rt. Rev'd Fred J. Hiltz is the fourteenth Diocesan Bishop of this Diocese. Our Suffragan Bishop is the Rt. Rev'd. Sue Moxley.

The Diocese has two cathedrals: The Cathedral Church of All Saints, Halifax, Nova Scotia to which the Synod Offices are adjacent, and St. Peter's Cathedral, Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

We are comprised of 101 pastoral units (parishes), within 14 regions and 10 archdeaconries.

The total population of the Diocese based on our 2005 statistical returns is:

Total facilities: 9,820

Total members: 19,019

Baptized communicants on parish rolls: 13,846

Identifiable givers: 6,161

Total Non-retired clergy: 151 (includes 23 on leave)

Total retired clergy: 97 (11 non-canonically registered)

Aside from those exercising full-time stipendiary parish ministry our diocesan clergy include 4 military chaplains, 2 health care chaplains, 3 clergy working at the Atlantic School of Theology, 21 Non-Stipendiary priests and 5 Vocational Deacons.

Good News Stories/ Highlights/ Initiatives

Through our Leap for Faith Capital Campaign, the Diocese has been able, through the generosity of our people in giving a total to date of \$2.75 million (83% of our \$3.3 million goal), to take action on the initiatives which are encompassed in our Diocesan Vision.

We have been able to honour our commitment to the Settlement Fund, and, when the rebate comes through the Anglican Amending Agreement, we will direct a good portion of it back to programs for healing, reconciliation and new life. As well, we honour our commitment to support the capital campaign of the Atlantic School of Theology, of which our portion is \$250,000, for the support of curriculum development including courses in congregational development and stewardship.

The Diocese now has a consultant in congregational development, who is working together with several parishes on visioning for the future. This work is happening in both rural and urban areas, some neighbouring parishes, and an entire region which is surrounded by huge growth in population.

Parishes engaged in such visioning work with our consultant can apply to the Diocese for up to 50% of the cost of contract work with our consultant, Janet Marshall, Senior Consultant for Potentials East. Also, we continue to build up our Growth for Ministry Fund, which provides seed monies for church- and community-based projects which meet a variety of needs in local communities.

The Fresh Start program continues to be offered in the Diocese, with 6 clergy trained as Fresh Start facilitators. We have plans for the training of lay persons for this ministry as well.

We now have a full-time Youth Ministry Co-Coordinator, Michael Janz, who came to us in med-May, partaking in our Teens Encounter Christ weekend. Michael will be networking with youth and leaders in youth ministry all over the Diocese, including being part of parish, regional and diocesan events.

A diocesan-wide communication strategy is in the process of being developed, with the hope of forming a coordinated approach to the challenges facing us in communicating information throughout the Diocese. Through it, a strategic plan which will include making the best use of the information technology available to us in the twenty-first century, will be formed.

The Diocese has been chosen as a pilot project in stewardship under the Letting Down the Nets strategic plan of the General Synod. We have begun work with Geoff Jackson and Rob Waller, Letting Down the Nets Consultants. In the Spring they met with our bishops, task force, and many different individuals throughout the Diocese, and a report with recommendations for a possible stewardship initiative for the Diocese has been completed. The report and its recommendations have been given to members of our Diocesan Council, which will discuss the report in September.

We continue our preparations for our celebration of the diocesan celebrations for the year 2010, which will mark the 300th anniversary of continuing worship in the Anglican tradition in Nova Scotia, the Centenary of the opening of the Cathedral Church of All Saints, and the 50th Anniversary of the opening of the Diocesan Centre. The theme for the year-long celebration is "A Journey Just Begun". The Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, will be the preacher at a diocesan-wide celebration on October 3rd, 2010. As well, we continue to plan to host General Synod in that year.

Challenges/ Issues

- the number of clergy on stress and sick leave;
- allotment arrears which have climbed to 1.9 million dollars since all debt was forgiven in the Jubilee year;
- dealing with the inevitable conflicts that are facing us in the life of the Church as we proclaim the Gospel in a chaotic and conflicted world;
- pursuing positive changes for effective ministry is challenging and rewarding us.

In response to the challenges above, we continue to develop resources for congregational development, including our diocesan membership in The Episcopal Network for Stewardship and our participation as a pilot project for Letting Down the Nets. We have embraced a ministry of reconciliation through the use of members of the Diocese trained on conflict resolution, who are named Reconciliation Advocates. Our Bishop's Commission on Clergy Wellness continues to work

on resources for clergy and parishes, to build healthier congregational life. A new Episcopal Guideline on Healthy Parish Life has been completed and is now in place in the parishes.

Opportunities/ Suggestions for sharing with other Dioceses

We suggest a forum between Dioceses in close geographic proximity on the socio-economic issues facing us as the environment continues to decline under the present stresses and strains that we place upon it through industrial development, poor management of waste, and polluting farming and marine practices. Major concerns to be collectively addressed, with pressure brought to bear on our governments include rapid deforestation, the melting of the polar ice caps, the loss of jobs in the fishing industry and possibilities and challenges in aquaculture development, and the increased costs faced by our farmers who have so little support from the government and so many challenges with the increased cost of gas and oil and changes in the environment as they attempt to grow crops in an increasingly volatile climate.

Some ways our Diocese can contribute to the Provincial Structure and how the Ecclesiastical Province can support our Diocese:

We suggest the addition of a page on the provincial website which would provide resources and links for clergy, lay and congregational wellness. Also, a chat line for the sharing of ideas and information, and discussion on the various issues facing us would be a wonderful way to strengthen the ties between us at the level of the Ecclesiastical Province.

Contributions that we can offer:

- a discernment process for those discerning a vocation in stipendiary and non-stipendiary priesthood and vocational diaconal ministry;
- resources on clergy health and wellness and the development of cooperating congregations;
- the development of covenants in ministry and parish profiles;
- emergency measures planning;
- Logos facilitator training workshops;
- a model of shared Episcopal ministry between our bishops and Archdeacons and Regional Deans;
- model for a ministry of reconciliation through the use of mediation and reconciliation advocates trained in conflict resolution;
- a model for diocesan-wide youth ministry through conferences, camp and the employment of a youth ministry coordinator;
- a process for beginning Fresh Start in the Diocese.