

The Ecclesiastical Province of Canada  
Diocesan Report

Diocese: Central Newfoundland

Year: 2007

**Description of the Diocese:**

The Diocese of Central Newfoundland covers 27,000 square miles including the Bonavista Peninsula, the Burin Peninsula, the Connaigre Peninsula, Twillingate Island and west along the Trans Canada highway to Buchans.

There are 32 parishes served by 34 parish clergy. There are three single point parishes and one parish with eight congregations. The average parish has four congregations.

Gander is the home of St. Martin's Cathedral as well as the Synod Office. Some distances from the Synod office are: Bonavista - 260 kilometers, Grand Bank - 385 kilometers, Harbour Breton - 280 kilometers.

The Diocese serves three regional hospitals with part time chaplains, and several cottage hospitals and seniors homes are served by local clergy.

The three dioceses of Newfoundland and Labrador share in the cost of Queen's College Theological Seminary, Chaplaincy at Memorial University, and the publishing of the Anglican Life monthly newspaper. These are overseen by a Joint Committee of the three dioceses, as well as other matters of mutual concern.

**Good News Stories/highlights/Initiatives**

We began a Strategic Planning process at our Synod in May 2006 and concluded the process at the Synod in April, 2007. That Synod received a 130 page report prepared by the Facilitator, Mr. Wayne Penney. It is now expected that the new Executive Committee will be a working committee and begin to implement the recommendations in the report. Our May meeting was held in a retreat setting at the Mint Brook Diocesan Camp and Conference Centre. Several Committees are planned to do the work of determining how the recommendations are to be implemented. They are also charged with the task of putting the long report of the facilitator into a manageable size and make it easily available to everyone in the diocese. An eight page booklet, 8 ½ inches by 5 ½ inches is envisioned.

As we begin to implement our Strategic Plan, we will keep in mind our Mission Statement: "The Anglican Diocese of Central Newfoundland in response to the Love of God is called to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ by worship and sacrament, by word and action, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Following Jesus, we are led to be a Servant Community which ministers and witnesses in the world to the transforming power of God's love."

There will be a review of ministry in each Deanery. Bonavista Deanery is the largest deanery, with eight parishes, thirty congregations, two hospitals and several seniors' homes. We will be

looking at innovative ways to serve this diverse region. Other deaneries have their own unique challenges.

### **Challenges/Issues**

Even though our diocese has been effected by out migration since the cod moratorium in 1992, there has still been growth in most parishes. In the meantime, demographics have changed. More young people are moving out of the province, leaving the average age of those remaining much higher. One challenge is how to serve all ages of people in our communities. School populations have diminished considerably over the past fifteen years, but we still have a large number of young families.

A comment made in last year's report is still valid: "The biggest challenge will be to avoid thinking of doing more with less and rather to move out in faith and with certainty that God is calling us to build new ministries, challenging ministries, innovative ministries, requiring greater commitment and greater levels of resources, not less!"

Wayne Penney said in the closing summary of his report that it is not the end of the Strategic Planning process, but just the beginning. He titled his report, "Let Our Spirits Soar!" He wrote, "It appears that we can take hope AND 'Let Our Spirits Soar!' because a critical mass of people are moving from just tradition to participation and enjoyment. A new respect seems to be emerging. The situation may be ripe for new models of doing ministry, with shared services required in this Church community. The major consideration may very well be visible means to ease the transition for those who will be affected."

### **Opportunities/Suggestions for sharing with other Dioceses**

In the past few years we have sent a number of people out to learn from others. They have attended various evangelism training schools, some sponsored by the Anglican Church of Canada. We have brought in various resource people to speak to our clergy and others. As we begin to implement our strategic plan, we are developing people with expertise. Many of them will be ready to share their expertise within our diocese and beyond.

Since our inception in 1976, the three dioceses of Newfoundland have shared in a Joint Committee which oversees the things we have in common. This committee also needs to be reviewed. We have had thirty one years of working together. What we have learned from this could be shared with others.