

# The Ecclesiastical Province of Canada

## Diocesan Report: Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador



### Description of the Diocese

With its Cathedral and Diocesan Synod Office located in the provincial capital of St. John's, the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador has nearly 50,000 members on the Avalon Peninsula of Newfoundland (31 parishes) and covering most of Labrador (6 parishes).

### Good News Stories /Highlights /Initiatives



Diocesan Synod in 2007 had as its theme Remembering the Past, Celebrating the Present, Embracing the Future and was an opportunity for the diocese to reflect upon its heritage as it considered its future. A renewal of past ties with the Diocese of Bermuda took place as Bishop Ewen Ratteray of that diocese came as a guest to synod. Bishop Ratteray was invited by Bishop Pitman to come to St. John's for our Synod to renew our ties with the Diocese of Bermuda and take part in our "Bishop Edward Feild Commemoration" because of

Bishop Feild's links with Bermuda. Our last Bishop to have Episcopal oversight in Bermuda was Bishop Llewellyn Jones who continued in that capacity until 1917.



**Our diocese continues to develop its existing programs with an emphasis upon congregational development, youth ministry and stewardship. Some recent initiatives include:**



**The Parish of St Michael & All Angels** in St. John's is pleased to announce a new venture in ministry as Father Sam Rose joins them this fall to oversee the planting of a new congregation to worship on Saturday evenings. Entitled saturday@st.michael's this very creative venture will focus entirely upon reaching new people and incorporating them into the life of the Church. The Saturday Evening Liturgy will seek to nurture and

develop the faith of those who may feel unable to integrate themselves into the traditional model of Sunday morning worship for whatever reason. This will be "contemporary worship" that is faithful to the Anglo-Catholic tradition of St. Michael's, and utilizes the best of new and innovative liturgical and musical resources, so that they are accessible and meaningful to people with little or no background in Christian worship. There will be a strong focus upon the specific needs and concerns of the community, such as: financial debt; broken families; unemployment; child hunger, etc., and other needs and concerns that will shape and form the outreach ministry of the community. A feature of this new ministry will be "Messy Church" for families who might want to meet Jesus, belong to a local church and bring up their children as Christians but find it difficult to attend the traditional Sunday morning church services. It's a once-a-month time of creativity, worship and eating together with the first such gathering to be held on Saturday, September 29.

**Youth Ministry** continues to be a focus of our diocesan life. Attached is a picture of Youth Delegates with Bishops Pitman and Ratteray at our recent synod. Our Youth Blog may be seen at <http://www.emmausyouth.org>



**Clergy Sabbaticals:** A growing edge for our diocese is in the area of clergy sabbaticals. In 2007 a half a dozen of our clergy took sabbaticals of varying lengths to engage in studies at home and overseas ranging from genealogical surveys to doctoral research to travels around the Holy Land. In all cases where clergy were in parish ministry they received the support of their parishes both financially and morally. We are encouraged by this trend and hope to see regular sabbaticals become a feature of clergy life in the Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador.

**The Battle Harbour Mission Project** is an exciting new proposal to place a second Priest in the Parish of Battle Harbour for the next two years to enhance ministry in that very challenging parish. The Rev. Mark Nichols developed the plan over the past year and has already received a pledge of considerable assistance from the Rev. Roger Whalen and the Parish of Labrador West. The Parish of St. Mark's in St. John's is the latest parish to offer support to the Battle Harbour Mission Project and other parishes are invited to consider assisting with this new ministry. In September, the Rev. Wayne Parsons will join the Parish of Battle Harbour as part of this new ministry.

**The Parish of the Resurrection in South River** continues the process of restructuring itself. Formerly composed of four churches, the parish has now come together in one modern structure where it explores new ways of being a church. A key feature of the parish is an all-day coffee room known as the Emmaus Room that is staffed by parishioners every day and offers a place to members of the community to come and socialize.

## **Challenges/Issues**

The Diocese is currently working on a plan to deal with the impact of shifting demographics as more and more of the Newfoundland population resides on the Avalon Peninsula. A declining birthrate and very significant out-migration to other parts of Canada also present challenges to parishes (particularly in the rural areas) as they seek ways to provide effective ministry in the future.

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

The Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador shares with the Diocese of Central Newfoundland and the Diocese of Western Newfoundland the responsibility for the operation of Queen's College. All three also share in the administration of health and financial matters through the Joint Committee that meets twice yearly. Anglican Joint Investments (AJI) also oversees shared investments for the three dioceses. The three Newfoundland and Labrador Bishops are also in conversation today about sharing a single Postulants Committee.

## **Some ways your Diocese can contribute to the Provincial Structure and how the Ecclesiastical Province can support your Diocese**

Through existing structures and mechanisms for communication. We are open to a serious conversation around the area of governance as identified at General Synod this year.