

Province of Canada Diocesan Report

Diocese of Western Newfoundland **Year** 2008

Description of the Diocese *(statistical data from Anglican Yearbook, demographics, uniqueness, etc.):*

The Diocese of Western Newfoundland encompasses 32 parishes geographically situated from the South Coast of Labrador through Western Newfoundland as far east as Springdale and south to Francois with an Anglican population of approximately 24,000. Most of these parishes are multi-point most of which are under the direction of one full time clergy while others are awaiting appointments. The Diocesan Centre is located in Corner Brook and provides office space for the Bishop, Archdeacon, Coordinator, Treasurer and Secretary, and a small Bookroom. At present there are 24 full time parish clergy, 1 full time hospital chaplain, 2 half time parish clergy, and 6 parishes awaiting appointment. There are a number of retired clergy, including two retired bishops, living within the Diocese. The Diocese has in excess of 300 licenced lay ministers, eucharistic assistants and pastoral visitors. We live in a Diocese where the number of burials are on par with the number of baptisms yet many baptisms are for those who come home from away.

Good News Stories/Highlights/Initiatives *(brief descriptions of three-five):*

The Congregational Development/Stewardship Education Initiative, Taking Care of God's Business, was birthed on April 1, 2008 with the hiring of The Rev. Canon Roberta Woodman as Coordinator for this ministry. The Task Group includes Chair, Co-Chair, one lay and one cleric from each of four deaneries, Bishop, Archdeacon and Coordinator and has had the support and presence of the Regional Deans through its inception. The Task Group, in consultation with Canon Geoff Jackson and Rev. Rob Waller, was appointed by the Bishop to oversee the implementation of the Congregational Development/Stewardship Education plan and organization as outlined in the Planning Study Report as presented to the Diocese in October 2007. The Task Group would continue the work of the former Diocesan Stewardship Committee.

To date, such ministries as Covenant in Ministry, Strategic Planning, Pastoral Visitor Training Sessions and Welcoming Newcomers workshops are being organized. Youth Ministry planning, lay ministry training and building communication networks are encompassed in the Congregational Development and Stewardship Education Initiative. The 2008 Clergy Conferences involve preparation and planning as we move forward in the Initiative.

As a Sponsorship Agreement Holder, the Diocese has provided support to the Parish of Pasadena/Cormack who sponsored two families from Colombia arriving here in December 2007.

Challenges/Issues *(brief commentary on the greatest challenges/issues in your diocese):*

The vast geography of the Diocese poses challenges in drawing the Church together for various events as travel in some areas is by boat or plane. It is important when organizing events to consider various factors including weather conditions and geographical distances. In recognition of this challenge, the Congregational Development/Stewardship Education Initiative is structured on, for the most part, a deanery/regional basis.

Not unlike many dioceses, we experience a scarcity of ordained leadership. This is as a result of parish viabilities and fewer ordinands, yet this Diocese has at present six students at various stages of training.

Opportunities/Suggestions for Sharing with other Dioceses (possible resources, policy development, etc.):

In 1999, the Diocese developed policies and guidelines around Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage and Christian Burial. Following a full review of all policies, the complete policy handbook will be placed on the website in the new year.

In 2004, the Diocese developed a Strategic Plan which is to be reviewed and renewed in 2009. In light of the Congregational Development/Stewardship Education Initiative, all parishes are expected to be involved in the development and implementation of parish strategic plans which will have input and complement the revised Diocesan Strategic Plan. Our current Strategic Plan is on the website.

Other resources, such as The Constitution and Canons, can be accessed through our website.

Some Ways your Diocese can Contribute to the Provincial Structure and how the Ecclesiastical Province can Support your Diocese.

Our Diocese can provide assistance to the Provincial Structure by maintaining an updated website as a means of resource and information sharing.