

Province of Canada Diocesan Report

Diocese of Western Newfoundland **Year** 2009

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 26 full time parish clergy, 1 full time hospital chaplain, 4 half time parish clergy, and 1 parish 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 continues its work and ministry within the Diocese. The Task Group meets four to five times per year and oversees the mandates as outlined in the Planning Study. Under the leadership of The Rev. Canon Roberta Woodman, Coordinator, there are several areas of ministry highlighted in the Diocese: Covenant in Ministry, Strategic Planning, Pastoral Visitor Workshops, Church Growth Workshops. The Evangelism Committee, the Mission Committee and the Diocesan Youth Committee are revisiting their mandates in preparation for a revised and renewed Diocesan Strategic Plan, as well as planning ministry in their perspective areas. As a follow-up from Covenant in Ministry, two parishes have had music workshops and healing missions.

This Diocese contributes extensively in outreach projects through the Mission Committee and local initiatives.

In April, The Venerable Edward King, Archdeacon and Assistant to the Bishop, and The Canon Roberta Woodman attended a facilitator's training program for 'Fresh Start' with the intention of initiating this program in our Diocese in the Fall of 2009. The purpose of 'Fresh Start' is to assist clergy and parishes transition when a new appointment is made. Clergy participation will involve those who have moved into new parishes within the past year. It will also foster the building of relationships amongst colleagues in the Diocese.

This has been a busy time for the Diocesan Planning Committee and those tasked to envision future ministry for the Diocese. Because of some real concerns for the northern Peninsula and the need to address the provision of effective ministry to that area, a small committee was formed to gather information and prepare proposals for Cluster ministry for that region. This is envisioned as a group of parishes in a particular area, while retaining their identity, would share ministry

resources and personnel to offer more effective ministry. The committee is now in the process of presenting proposals to the parishes involved and preparing to move forward with implementation of those proposals, or a version of them that is seen as appropriate for the area.

The same idea for Cluster Ministry has already been implemented in the Southern reaches of the Diocese with the recent appointment of an individual to share ministry with the parish of Burgeo and the Parish of Ramea in a newly created Pastoral District or Region. The appointment is the first step in a process of providing more consistent and effective ministry for the whole region as personnel and finances become available.

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.

This Diocese has at present four students at various stages of training. There is only one parish without ordained leadership and one parish is preparing to hire a second priest.

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, located on the website, is being revisited, reviewed, and renewed.

The Diocesan Confirmation program is being reviewed throughout the summer in hopes of having additional resources available to enhance the program.

Other resources, such as The Constitution and Canons, can be accessed through our website. As well the Congregational Development/Stewardship Education Initiative has a web page linked to our website. The Youth Committee has developed a new web site.

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.