

## REPORT TO PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

### DIOCESE OF MONTREAL

SEPTEMBER 13, 2010

In the past year, the people of the Diocese of Montreal have continued to discern how to bring about God's mission in our midst.

The Myrlene Boken report was completed in December 2009 and presented throughout the diocese in January 2010.

After a long search two ministry positions were filled. A Stewardship officer, Adrienne Clements was hired on a half time basis. A congregational development officer, Janet Marshall was hired on a contract basis to December 31, 2011 to help us discern how to prepare congregations to discover the mission to which they are called in today's reality. The congregational development officer, Janet Marshall is also meeting with congregations and deaneries throughout the diocese to help them work through the recommendations found in the Boken report. These recommendations include amalgamations of parishes, redistribution of resources, redistribution of human resources, new approaches to French ministry and youth ministry.

As we prepare for our synod on October 15-16, we prepare to celebrate the successes and achievements of the 2005-2010 strategic plan and prepare to ask synod to support moving forward with the new "Ministry Action Plan". The Ministry Action Plan (MAP) expresses the diocese's call to be a ministry faithful to God's action in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit: true to the Gospel; spiritually alive in prayer, worship and service; and engaged attractively and meaningfully with our neighbours. This plan follows on from our previous Strategic Plan 2005-2010. It builds upon the accomplishments of this work, and on what we have learned from the *Planning "Boken" Study*, the *National Church's Stewardship Planning Study*, and the *Communication Report and Recommendations* (Hirst Communications).

Parishes and faith communities are founded in God's radical hope for a better world. This hope is realized by participating in God's mission for the world. Now is the time we need to rediscover the deep roots of real hope in congregational life, in our diocesan relationships, and in our community-based ministries. Real hope, rather than wishful thinking, will give courage for the challenges that lie ahead. The Ministry Action Plan is an invitation to stretch ourselves, reaching further into the world around us with courage and trust, challenging each other to do a new thing inspired by God's promise, joy and abundant hope.

We are currently in a diocesan wide consultation to review the draft MAP prior to a vote at Synod to adopt the plan.

Our relationship with the diocese of Masasi in Tanzania and our relationship with APCI continues as we work through our partnerships and discover each other's many gifts. Bishop Mwachiko will be in Montreal in October. Plans for a delegation to return to Masasi are underway. Penny Noel was able to attend the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Masasi Cathedral in July.

The Canadian House of Bishops and their spouses will be meeting in Montreal in October and we welcome the Bishop of Masasi to participate in this.

In the early summer, the Liturgy for blessing of civil unions was approved and has now been distributed for use throughout the diocese.

Over the past few months, considerable work has taken place regarding a partnership exploration with the Diocese of Quebec. QMPI (Quebec Montreal Partnership Initiative) headed by a team of 6 from each of the two dioceses have begun meeting to consider areas such as administration, real estate, canons and constitution, mission and ministry. Presentations will take place at both of our Synods in October.

Alan Roxburgh will be the presenter at our clergy conference September 26-28. Alan is the author of “the missional leader: equipping your church to reach a changing world” and “the sky is falling: leaders lost in transition”.

A major Stewardship workshop is planned for the diocese on October 2 as we continue to work to strengthening parish understanding of the Biblically based concept of Stewardship.

A recent workshop on rural ministry was held in August and was attended by clergy and laity from both the Diocese of Montreal and the Diocese of Quebec.

Our partnership with the Diocese of Masasi, Tanzania continues. We were pleased that a member of our diocese was able to be present for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their cathedral.

October 14, 2010 is the 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Bishop Barry Clarke’s consecration.

In November, there will be a diocesan pilgrimage in the Footsteps of St. Paul through Greece and Turkey led by the Bishop. 76 lay and clergy are registered to attend. This follows requests by parishioners for a further pilgrimage after the Bishop led 86 people on a Holy Land tour in 2009. Plans have begun for a diocesan event in Italy for 2011.

Also in November, the Bishop will hold his third annual fundraising dinner. In the past two years, tickets have sold out and 125 people have joined us each year at a dinner at the University Club, Montreal. Funds have been used for important ministry.