



THE DIOCESAN SYNOD OF FREDERICTON

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DRAFT

**MINUTES OF THE
129TH SESSION OF THE
DIOCESAN SYNOD OF FREDERICTON
"Let's Share the Mission"**

07-09 June 2007

The Right Rev'd Dr. Claude W. Miller, Chair

The 129th Session of the Diocesan Synod of Fredericton was convened at Christ Church Cathedral for the opening service of worship on Thursday, June 7, 2007 and the Aitken Centre of the University of New Brunswick for business on Friday and Saturday, June 8-9, 2007.

THURSDAY, 07 JUNE 2007

At the appointed time, when everyone had entered the Cathedral, the Bishop called on the Chancellor to declare a quorum present. The Chancellor pronounced a quorum was indeed present.

The Eucharist was celebrated using the Book of Common Prayer with the Bishop as officiant. He was assisted by the Rev'd Paul Donison (Master of Ceremonies), the Rev'd Canon David Keirstead (Epistle), the Rev'd Fran Bedell (Gospel), the Ven. Richard McConnell (Prayers), and the Ven. Stuart Allen, the Ven. Walter Williams, the Ven. Patricia Drummond, the Ven. John Sharpe, the Ven. Vicars Hodge, the Rev'd Canon Edward Coleman, the Rev'd Canon Neville Cheeseman, the Rev'd Canon Jon Lownds, the Rev'd Canon Albert Snelgrove and the Rev'd Joyce Perry (Eucharistic ministers). Cathedral acolytes, Cathedral Choir and the Cathedral Band also assisted.

During this service of celebration, the Bishop delivered his charge to Synod which is appended (Appendix 1) to these minutes.

The opening celebration also included Award of Merit Presentations. Two recipients were honoured for their hard work within the Diocese and the community: the Rev'd Canon Lloyd Lake, retired priest and community evangelist, and Ms. Twila Buttimer, Archivist.

The time of worship also included the installation of five new canons. The Rev'd Howard Anningson, the Rev'd John Cathcart and the Rev'd Elaine Hamilton were installed Canons of the Christ Church Cathedral, the Rev'd Neville Cheeseman as and Honorary Canon Cathedral, and Mr. Charles Ferris as a Lay Canon of the Cathedral.

The celebration incorporated the Signing of the Companion Diocese Relationship Covenant by the Right Rev'd Claude Miller and the Right Rev'd Matthias Medadues-Badohu joining the Dioceses of Fredericton and Ho (Ghana) in this relationship. Bishop Medadues-Badohu

offered warm greetings from Ho. His comments are appended (Appendix B) to these minutes.

A reception was catered by the Cathedral congregation.

FRIDAY, 08 JUNE 2007

The members of Synod were reconvened at 8:30 am for a time of Scripture Study led by the Rev'd Paul Donison, followed by Morning Prayer led by the Ven, Patricia Drummond, assisted by the Rev'd Canon George Porter and Elaine Good. The music was provided by the group Liturgically Hip (The Rev'd Bonnie LeBlanc, the Rev'd Robert LeBland and the Rev'd Marian Lucas-Jefferies).

At 9:00 a.m., the Bishop called on Mr. Peter Irish to present the Orders of the Day.

Mr. Peter Irish gave an overview of the site and explained the schedule for the day. He invited all delegates to visit the displays. He also introduced Mr. John Kelly, EMT, who would be available for health emergencies throughout the session of Synod.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

129-01 - The Rev'd Canon David Keirstead / The Rev'd Douglas Painter

That this Synod accepts the Orders of the Day as presented.

The motion was carried.

REGISTRATION REPORT

The Bishop received the credentials report and announced that as of 8:52 am, there were 206 of a possible 264 lay delegates registered and 86 of a possible 132 clergy delegates registered.

The Bishop also indicated he had received regrets from the Rev'd Elaine Lucas, the Rev'd David Dean, and the Right Rev'd George Lemmon.

BISHOP'S OPENING REMARKS

In his very brief comments, the Bishop offered a warm welcome to all those present. He also indicated that copies of the Bishop's Charge were available. The Bishop then called for canonical clergy reports to be submitted.

At this time, the Bishop made the announcement that the Rev'd David Barrett from the Parish of Sussex had been appointed Archdeacon of Kingston and Kennebecasis effective immediately.

ORDER AND DECORUM

The Bishop called on the Secretary of Synod to review rules of order and decorum. The Ven. Geoffrey Hall drew the attention of those present to Section A-5 of the Convening Circular and read selections from Canon TWO. He indicated there would be a three minute limit on all speakers in debate with a bell indicating the timing. Members were asked to refrain from applause following the announcement of voting results.

APPOINTMENT OF RECORDING SECRETARIES

129-02 - The Ven. Geoffrey Hall / Canon Fred Scott

That the Rev'd Leo Martin be appointed Recording Secretary and Ms. Maureen Vail be appointed Assistant Recording Secretary for this session of Synod.

The motion was carried.

MINUTES

129-03 - The Ven. Vicars Hodge / The Rev'd Robert Salloum

That the minutes of the 128th Session of the Diocesan Synod of Fredericton be accepted as circulated.

The motion was carried.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

129-04 - The Rev'd William Morton / The Rev'd Canon Howard Anningson

That the report on Business Arising from the minutes (B33) be approved as circulated in the Convening Circular.

This motion was carried.

SYNOD COMMITTEES

The Bishop offered his thanks to all those who served on the numerous Synod Committees under the capable leadership of many people. The Synod Committees were appointed as follows:

Courtesies/Ecumenical Observers/ Hospitality Resolutions	The Rev'd Canon Neville Cheeseman, Chair Canon Charles Ferris and Kelly VanBuskirk, Co-Chairs and the Rev'd Ross Hebb, Canon Ronald Stevenson, Barbara Cooper, Lynn Walsworth (deceased) and the Ven. Geoffrey Hall
Agenda	Mr. Peter Irish, Chair, and the Right Rev'd Claude Miller, Canon Fred Scott, Canon Charles Ferris, and the Ven. Geoffrey Hall
Worship	The Rev'd Paul Donison, Chair, and the Right Rev'd Claude Miller, and the Very Rev'd Keith Joyce
Credentials Registrations Arrangements	James Chandra, Chair, and Jasmine Chandra Mary Robinson, Chair, and Allen Edwards, Maureen Vail, Canon Fred Scott
Convening Circularan Support	The Ven. Geoffrey Hall, Chair, and Canon Fred Scott, Maureen Vail and Phyllis Cathcart
Nominating	Barbara Landry, Chair, Hazel Mackenzie and the Rev'd Roderick Black
Synod Planning (Committee Chairs)	The Ven. Geoffrey Hall, Chair

CLERGY ANNIVERSARIES

The Bishop congratulated the following on significant anniversaries of ordination:

As Deacon

The Reverend Canon Brian Campion	60 years
The Venerable F. Harold Hazen	50 years
The Right Reverend George Lemmon	45 years
The Reverend Canon Robert B. Smith	45 years
The Right Reverend William Hockin	45 years
The Venerable Stuart Allan	35 years
The Reverend Garth Maxwell	35 years
The Very Reverend Keith Joyce	25 years
The Reverend David Dean	25 years
The Reverend Canon Albert Snelgrove	25 years
The Reverend John Tremblay	20 years
The Reverend John Harvey	20 years

As Priest

The Most Rev. Harold L. Nutter	60 years
The Reverend Stephen McCombe	55 years
The Reverend Canon David Genge	50 years
The Venerable Tom Crowther	50 years
The Reverend Canon James Irvine	35 years
The Reverend Ronald Rippin	35 years
The Reverend David Mercer	35 years
The Reverend David Staples	30 years
The Reverend Canon Douglas Patstone	30 years
The Reverend Brenda McKnight	25 years
The Reverend John Cooper	25 years
The Very Reverend Keith Joyce	25 years
The Reverend Gregory Frazer	20 years
The Reverend Ross Hebb	20 years
The Reverend Robert J. Barry	20 years
The Reverend Canon Neville Cheeseman	20 years
The Reverend Gregory McMullin	20 years

Church Army Anniversaries

The Reverend Canon Wally Corey	50 years
Captain Hugh Bateman	35 years
The Reverend Canon Ed Coleman	30 years

Members of Synod showed their gratitude with applause.

INTRODUCTIONS

The Bishop made the following introductions:

New Clergy

The Reverend Terence Chandra
The Reverend Paul Donison
The Reverend Marian Lucas-Jefferies
The Reverend Douglas Painter
The Reverend Deacon Joyce Perry

The Reverend Paul Ranson
The Reverend Kim Salo
The Reverend Deacon Constance Whittaker-Soulikias

Synod Staff

Ms. Maureen Vail

Theological Students

Mr. Dick Black
Ms. Jennifer Bourque
Mr. Michael Caines
Mr. Gethin Edward
Mr. Kevin Frankland
Mrs. Jasmine Chandra

Members of Synod greeted with applause.

GUESTS AND OBSERVERS

The Bishop called on the Rev'd Canon Neville Cheeseman to introduce guests and observers:

Ecumenical Observers:

The Rev'd David Knudson
The Rev'd Robert Friell
The Rev'd Dr Karl Csaszar
The Rev'd Don Uhryniw
The Rev'd Bonnie Wynn

Evangelical Lutheran Church
Diocese of Saint John, Roman Catholic Church
United Baptist Convention
United Church of Canada
Presbyterian Church

Invited Guests:

Fiona Brownlee
Kevin Smith
Arran Thorpe
Jarvis deConde
The Rev'd Dr. David McLachlan
Thomas Nesbitt
Barb Cooper
Lidvald Haugen-Strand
Canon Ronald Stevenson
Kelly VanBuskirk
Paul Kitchen

Council of the North
Planned Giving Officer in Newfoundland
Giving Potentials presenter (NS/PEI)
Diocesan Insurance Advisor
Academic Dean, Atlantic School of Theology
Commission on the Vocational Diaconate
Resolutions Committee
Lutheran Chaplain, Moncton Hospital
Resolutions Committee
Resolutions Committee
Head of School, Rothesay Netherwood School

Members of Synod welcomed these guests with applause.

COURTESIES OF SYNOD

129-05 - The Rev'd Canon Neville Cheeseman / The Rev'd Canon David Keirstead

That this Synod extend its courtesies to our guests and ecumenical observers.

When put to the vote, the motion was carried.

RESOLUTIONS PROCEDURES

The Bishop invited Mr. Kelly VanBuskirk to explain the procedures for placing a motion before Synod. Mr. VanBuskirk used the summary provided in the Convening Circular (C-1) as the basis of his explanation.

DEADLINE FOR NOTICES OF MOTION

129-06 - The Rev'd Paul Donaldson / Mr. Richard Thorne

That this Synod set a deadline for the reception of notices of motion of 7:00 p.m., June 08, 2007.

This motion was carried.

SUSPENSION OF CANON TWO

129-07 - Canon Charles Ferris / The Ven. Geoffrey Hall

Pursuant to Canon TWO, s. 15, this Diocesan Synod suspends the operation of Canon TWO to permit the continuation of the appointments of members of the General and Provincial Synods.

This motion was carried in the house of laity and the house of clergy.

GENERAL AND PROVINCIAL SYNOD DELEGATES/ALTERNATES

129-08 - Canon Charles Ferris / The Ven. Geoffrey Hall

The Ven. Geoffrey Hall introduced the current General and Provincial Synod delegates.

That notwithstanding section 12(1) of Canon TWO, the members and substitute members of the General Synod elected at the 2005 meeting of this Diocesan Synod be the members and substitute members of the General Synod to be held at Winnipeg in June, 2007; and that the members and substitute members of the Provincial Synod elected at the 2005 meeting of this Diocesan Synod be continued until the elections to be conducted at the next regular meeting of this Diocesan Synod.

This motion was carried.

DIOCESAN SIGNING AUTHORITY

129-09 - Canon Charles Ferris / The Ven. Geoffrey Hall.

That Canon FIVE be amended by renumbering sections 3 to 6 to be sections 4 to 7 and by adding a new section 3 as follows:

3(1) The Bishop and the Secretary of the Synod shall sign all documents that are required to be executed under the seal of the Diocesan Synod or which may subject the Diocese or the Synod to financial or other liability.

3(2) Cheques and other money instruments issued by the Diocese or the Synod shall be signed by any two of the Bishop, the Treasurer of the

Synod and the Secretary of the Synod and a member of the Diocesan Staff designated by the Diocesan Council.

Requiring a vote by houses, the motion was carried in both.

DIOCESAN OFFICER REPORTS

129-10 - The Rev'd Canon Elaine Hamilton / The Rev'd Eileen Irish

That this Synod accept the Diocesan Officers Reports (Section D) as circulated in the Convening Circular.

This motion was carried.

DEVELOP NEW MODELS FOR SHARED MINISTRY

FAIR SHARE CONTRIBUTION

Mr. Gerald McConaghy and Mr. Lawrence Carpenter changed the original notice as printed as Notice of Motion 2007-13 and made the following:

129-11 - Gerald McConaghy / Lawrence Carpenter

Be it resolved that in accordance with the principles, definitions and processes described in the Report of the Budget Funding Task Force (Convening Circular Section F, pages 10-15), that the bases for determining individual parish Fair Share Contributions in support of the Diocesan Shared Ministry Budgets for 2008 and 2009 be set as follows: \$52 per identifiable giver, and 12% of parish operating income.

Motion to Amend

129-11a - The Rev'd Christopher VanBuskirk / Mrs. Jacqueline Straight

Be it resolved that in accordance with the principles, definitions and processes described in the Report of the Budget Funding Task Force, that the bases for determining individual parish fair share contributions in support of the Diocesan Shared Ministry Budgets for 2008 and 2009 be set as follows: 13.64% (2008) and 12.27% (2009) of parish operating income, and that the "single" support request be eliminated.

The Bishop called for a break of 20 minutes in order to give members of Synod a chance to review the amendment. Following the break, debate was opened on the amendment.

When the vote was called, the amendment was carried: 163 in favour, 106 opposed. Debate on the amended motion was opened.

Motion to Refer

129-11b - The Rev'd William Morton / The Rev'd Marian Lucas-Jefferies

That this matter of funding as it pertains to Fair Share Contributions be referred to Diocesan Council.

This motion was defeated.

Motion to Table

129-11c - Canon Fred Scott / The Rev'd Canon Howard Anningson

That the amended motion 129-11 be tabled until the Saturday morning.

This motion was carried.

NOON DAY PRAYERS AND LUNCH

Prayers were led by the Rev'd Paul Ranson. The session broke for lunch (12:00 pm).

The Bishop reconvened Synod at 1:00 pm. Mr. Peter Irish gave an update on the orders of the day.

THE (VOCATIONAL) DIACONATE

The Bishop invited Mr. Thomas Nesbitt, the Rev'd Canon Neville Cheeseman and the Rev'd Deacon Fran Bedell to make this presentation. Together, they gave an overview of the role of a vocational (permanent) deacon. Acts 6: 1-6 was quoted as the basis of this role. The Commission of the Diaconate intends to continue to explore the development the process of discernment for this ministry and promote education and consultation within the Diocese into the future.

SHARED MINISTRY MODELS

Three archdeaconeries offered currently functioning shared ministry models:

Parish of Westmorland: The Ven. Richard McConnell introduced the Rev'd Kevin Stockall as the priest-in-charge who then explained how the Parishes of Sackville and Dorchester and the Parish of Westmorland continue to learn how to share ministry, geography, community and now a priest and pastoral assistant.

Parishes of Campbellton, Dalhousie and Restigouche: The Ven. Patricia Drummond introduced representatives of Campbellton (Brenda Jewett), Dalhousie (Joanne Hubert) who shared their experiences in sharing ministry. While there is always a draw back in not having a full-time priest in your area, these parishes join in worship and fellowship.

Parish of the Nerepis and Saint John: The Ven. Vicars Hodge, Mr. John Logan, Mrs. Marie Hamilton and Mrs. Marie Hélène Morrell were able to share how four parishes with eight church buildings were able to share a common goal and step out in faith to face the challenge of creating a new parish.

The Bishop thanked the presenters and invited all members to follow the successes of these parishes and their innovative forms of ministry.

BE ONE: HEAL OUR FRACTURED RELATIONSHIPS

MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

129-12 - The Ven. Vicars Hodge / The Rev'd David Edwards

This Synod of the Diocese of Fredericton resolves:

a. This Synod reaffirms the Diocese of Fredericton's commitment to the Godly care and pastoral support of people of all sexual orientations. This Diocese along with the whole Church is challenged (as the Archbishop of Canterbury stated on March 28, 2007) to ensure that our Churches are "truly (a) safe place(s) for people to be honest and where they may be confident that they will have their human dignity respected, whatever serious disagreements about ethics may remain." In keeping with Lambeth 1998 — Resolution 1.10 we commit ourselves to ongoing listening to the experience of homosexual persons and assure them that "they are loved by God and that all baptised, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ." We encourage the Bishop and Diocese to initiate and engage in a sustained Biblical and theological conversation about human sexuality using the listening process requested in preparation for the 2008 Lambeth conference.

b. In accordance with the teaching of Lambeth Conference 1998 Resolution 1.10, this Synod reaffirms the position taken at our 127th and 128th Synods that:

- 1. Marriage (as understood by the Church) is the lifelong union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others; and**
- 2. that no clergy person may bless any union or marriage of the same sex**

c. In line with the St. Michael Report we regard the blessing of same-sex unions as a matter of doctrine, with implications that are integral to the doctrines of salvation, incarnation, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, theological anthropology, sanctification and holy matrimony. Given that any change in Christian teaching on this doctrinally serious matter has significant implications for the unity of the Church we believe that any change ought to require wide consultation and no less than a two-thirds majority in each house of the General Synod over two successive General Synods in order to be regarded as canonical.

d. This diocese is determined to remain an integral part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, thus we reaffirm the decision of Synod 2005 and make clear to the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada that, should it decide not to follow the doctrine and discipline of the Communion this will cause a tear in the fabric of our relationship with the General Synod.

e. This Synod, recognizing that catholicity is one of the marks of the Anglican Church, and recognizing that each of the Instruments of Unity (the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates Meeting) have affirmed that the worldwide Communion should take no action concerning authorization of the blessing of same sex unions unless a new consensus emerges, we

therefore urge General Synod to do all in its power to preserve the “bonds of affection” within our Communion.

f. We urge the General Synod to take seriously the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury, made in his Presidential Address to the General Synod of the Church of England (Feb 26, 2007) to the effect that the worldwide Anglican Communion should lay aside the currently divisive matters around human sexuality and address the more difficult issue of how the Anglican Communion becomes “a body attempting to live in more than one intellectual and cultural setting and committed to addressing major problems in a global way....”

g. In light of the above, the Synod of the Diocese of Fredericton does not intend to return to this matter unless the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada takes precipitant action concerning the contentious issues around human sexuality. We have made a definitive statement and it is our intention to move ahead with other important matters in the areas of mission and ministry.

The Secretary of Synod is directed to send a copy of this entire motion to the Archbishop of Canterbury and to memorialize the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada 2007 with the same.

Motion to Amend

129-12a - The Rev'd Marain Lucas-Jefferies / The Rev'd William Morton

This Synod of the Diocese of Fredericton resolves:

a. This Synod reaffirms the Diocese of Fredericton's commitment to the Godly care and pastoral support of people of all sexual orientations. This Diocese along with the whole Church is challenged (as the Archbishop of Canterbury stated on March 28, 2007) to ensure that our Churches are “truly (a) safe place(s) for people to be honest and where they may be confident that they will have their human dignity respected, whatever serious disagreements about ethics may remain.” In keeping with Lambeth 1998 – Resolution 1.10 we commit ourselves to ongoing listening to the experience of homosexual persons and assure them that “they are loved by God and that all baptised, believing and faithful persons, regardless of sexual orientation, are full members of the Body of Christ.” We encourage the Bishop and Diocese to initiate and engage in a sustained Biblical and theological conversation about human sexuality using the listening process requested in preparation for the 2008 Lambeth conference.

b. In accordance with the teaching of Lambeth Conference 1998 Resolution 1.10, this Synod reaffirms the position taken at our 127th and 128th Synods that:

1. Marriage (as understood by the Church) is the lifelong union of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others; and
2. that no clergy person may bless any union or marriage of the same sex

c. In line with the St. Michael Report we regard the blessing of same-sex unions as a matter of doctrine, not core doctrine, with implications that are integral to the doctrines of salvation, incarnation, the person and work of the Holy Spirit, theological anthropology, sanctification and holy matrimony. Given that this matter has significant implications for the unity of the Church we believe that any change ought to require wide consultation and no less than a two-thirds majority in each house of the General Synod over two successive General Synods in order to be regarded as canonical.

d. This diocese is determined to remain an integral part of the worldwide Anglican Communion.

e. This Synod, recognizing that catholicity is one of the marks of the Anglican Church, and recognizing that each of the Instruments of Unity (the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates Meeting) have affirmed that the worldwide Communion should take no action concerning authorization of the blessing of same sex unions unless a new consensus emerges, we therefore urge General Synod to do all in its power to preserve the 'bonds of affection' within our Communion and call on those bishops in Africa who threaten our unity to do so also.

f. We urge the General Synod to take seriously the request of the Archbishop of Canterbury, made in his Presidential Address to the General Synod of the Church of England (Feb 26, 2007) to the effect that the worldwide Anglican Communion should lay aside the currently divisive matters around human sexuality and address the more difficult issue of how the Anglican Communion becomes "a body attempting to live in more than one intellectual and cultural setting and committed to addressing major problems in a global way...."

g. In light of the above, the Synod of the Diocese of Fredericton does not intend to return to this matter. We have made a definitive statement and it is our intention to move ahead with other important matters in the areas of mission and ministry.

The Secretary of Synod is directed to send a copy of this entire motion to the Archbishop of Canterbury and to memorialize the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada 2007 with the same.

The amendment was defeated.

The Bishop suspended debate on the motion.

EQUIP OUR LEADERS FOR CHANGING MINISTRY

Members of Synod were transported to Camp Medley for an Open House, a presentation and the evening meal with thanks to the Parish of Gaagetown.

The Chair reconvened the session at 7:00 pm. Members of Synod were invited to share some Camp Medley memories. Rosemary Moorhead, Heather Carr, and the Rev'd Canon Lloyd Lake shared did so.

BUILDING FAITH FOR A LIFETIME

The Bishop called on Mr. Peter Irish, Chair of the Building Faith for a Lifetime Campaign. Mr. Irish indicated Camp Medley opened its doors in 1945 and Camp Brookwood opened in 1967. In that time, over 55,000 children have experienced Christian camping in diocesan facilities. A slide presentation was offered to the members of Synod explaining this very important ministry to our children and as training ground for our youth.

The Camps Capital Campaign is in place to replace and upgrade our camping facilities. So far, \$436,330 has been received in Phase 2 of the Campaign. The funds coming from ACW (13%), Businesses (3%), Clergy (10%), Diocese (13%), Foundations (10%), Individuals (39%), Parishes (10%), and Others (2%). 85% of the success of this venture is entirely in the hands of the Anglican Church Family in the Diocese of Fredericton.

The parishes of Central Kings and St. Martin's and Black River presented the Bishop with Campaign donations.

REPORT OF DIOCESAN COUNCIL

129-13 - The Rev'd Douglas Painter / The Rev'd Ian Wetmore

That this Synod receive the report of Diocesan Council (E1-40) as circulated including reports of PWRDF and RNS circulated as part of the registration materials.

This motion was carried.

COUNCIL OF THE NORTH

Ms. Fiona Brownlee from the Diocese of Keewatin brought greetings from the Council of the North and gave a presentation on the work of the Council. Members of Synod were reminded that 24% of the General Synod Budget is offered to the Council of the North (\$2.4 million) and that the money is used to offer pastoral and sacramental ministry to 85% of the Canadian land mass which includes 15% of the population.

Ms. Brownlee gave an overview of the different aspects of ministry being offered and she mentioned the challenges remain in the areas of travel, cost of living, healthy living and language. While the challenges grow, the funds get reduced. In 1993, the Council of the North received \$3.5 million compared to the 2.4 received today. When adjusted for inflation, this cut actually means a reduction of \$2.1 million.

A vote of thanks was extended to the Diocese of Fredericton for its prompt payment of its share in the Settlement for Residential Schools.

ALPHA CANADA

The Rev'd Eric Phinney spoke about the ALPHA program. He recently returned from an international gathering of 76 nations and 1000 people where evangelisation of the world and the transformation of society was discussed as the heart of the Program. He brought greetings from the Rev'd Jessica Swift, formerly of this diocese. A short video presentation was offered to members of Synod.

ROTHESAY NETHERWOOD SCHOOL

The Head of School, Mr. Paul Kitchen, brought greetings from the School and invited everyone to read the report submitted to Synod. He indicated there were 262 students at the school representing 14 countries and almost every province in Canada. A new girls residence has been opened. South House will be officially reopened on June 16th, and, RNS is now a member of Round Square - an organisation of 60 boarding schools around the world which collaborate on projects and exchanges of students. RNS now offers the International Baccalaureate program.

DIOCESE OF HO, EAST GHANA

Bishop Matthias Medadues-Badohu spoke about Ghana and the Diocese of Ho explaining how similar some of the issues they are facing mirror those of the Council of the North, especially in terms of travel and language.

Bishop Miller offered his thanks and personal appreciation to Bishop Matthias and he sent the greetings of this Synod to Ghana.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The chair of the Committee, Mrs. Barbara Landry, explained the mandate of the Committee and invited people to offer names for nomination, or let their own names stand for the various vacancies within the ministry of the Diocese. Updated current positions and incumbents can be found on the diocesan web site.

ARCHDEACONRY GREATER CHAPTER ELECTIONS

129-14 - The Ven. Richard McConnell / The Rev'd Canon Jon Lownds

That this Synod accept the Archdeaconry Greater Chapter elections of Diocesan Council members.

This motion was carried.

MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY

The debate on Motion 129-12 was re-opened.

Motion to Amend

129-12b - The Rev'd Canon Neville Cheeseman / Mrs. Martha Jo Hoyt

Be it resolved that Notice of Motion 2007-08 be divided in order for its seven components to be dealt with separately and that the rationale be separated from the text of the motion in order to clarify exactly what is meant by it.

The motion to amend was defeated.

Debate continued on the original motion.

Motion 129-12 was carried.

Point of Order

The Rev'd William Morton raised on a point of order asking the Bishop if Notice of Motion 2007-06 (Integrity Fredericton) could be dealt with immediately.

The Bishop responded that due to the hour, it would be the first motion on the morning agenda.

EVENING PRAYER

The Rev'd Douglas Painter, assisted by the Rev'd Canon Jon Lownds and Liturgically Hip led the service of Evening Prayer.

The 129th Session of Synod was suspended for the evening at 9:15 pm.

SATURDAY, 09 JUNE 2007

The 129th Session of the Diocesan Synod of Fredericton reconvened at 8:30 a.m. with the service of Morning Prayer led by the Rev'd Canon Albert Snelgrove, assisted by the Rev'd Peter Gillies, Mrs. Mary Anne Blagrove and Liturgically Hip.

Following worship, the Rev'd Paul Donison led the members of Synod in Scriptural Study.

The Bishop welcomed members of Synod.

PRESENTATION TO THE BISHOP

The Rev'd Patricia Craig, Canon Jon Lownds and the Rev'd Paul Ranson presented the Bishop with the episcopal symbols of a mitre, ring and pastoral staff created from Tinsel the Clown in balloons. The Bishop gracefully accepted and used these symbols for a brief moment.

Bishop's Comments

Prior to beginning our business session, the Bishop drew the attention of all those present to Romans 8:16-17. Quoting Henri Nouwen, the Bishop said:

"We continue to put ourselves down as less than Christ. Thus, we avoid the full honour as well as the full pain of the Christian life. But the Spirit that guided Jesus guides us. Paul says: 'The Spirit himself joins with our spirit to bear witness that we are children of God. And if we are children, then we are heirs, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ' (Rom. 8:16-17)

When we start living according to this truth, our lives will be radically transformed. We will not only come to know the full freedom of the children of God but also the full rejection of the world. It is understandable that we hesitate to claim the honour so as to avoid the pain. But, provided we are willing to share in Christ's suffering, we also will share in his glory. (Rom8:17)."

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Peter Irish brought Synod members up to date on the Orders for the Day.

129-15 - The Rev'd Gordon Thompson/The Rev'd Canon Jon Lownds

That this Synod accepts the Orders of the Day as presented.

This motion was carried.

Point of Order

The Rev'd Canon William MacMullin raised a point of order asking why Notice of Motion 2007-09 was not on the Orders of the Day. The Chair informed Synod members that this notice had been withdrawn.

The Bishop introduced guests Mr. Aaran Thorpe and Mr. Kevin Smith as the next two presenters.

RESOURCE OUR PLAN; STEWARD OUR RESOURCES

GIVING POTENTIALS - LEAP OF FAITH

Mr. Aaron Thorpe, a recent graduate of Atlantic School of Theology and postulant in the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island, presented his work on the subject of giving to the Church and the NS/PEI current capital campaign. He reminded Synod that stewardship is not just about money but about mission and shepherding. He also told Synod that as a Church, we simply to have to get over our fear of asking.

PLANNED GIVING

M. Kevin Smith showed the many ways in which planned giving can be achieved at the parochial level. Through many examples, he reminded Synod members to keep planned giving in front of people all the time. Again, he reiterated the same comments of the previous speaker - that we need to get over our fear of asking.

GREETING FROM CAMP BASE GAGETOWN

Major the Rev'd John Organ brought greetings from Camp Gagetown and the Base Commander. Through a slide show, he provided all members of Synod with an emotional look at the work of the Military Padre in Afghanistan. Major Organ recognized the people from this diocese who work diligently with the Canadian Armed Forces as Chaplains:

The Rev'd Karl McLean
The Rev'd John Fletcher
The Rev'd Canon Malcolm Berry
The Rev'd Gregory McMullin
The Rev'd Ellis Jagoe
The Ven. Walter Williams

At the conclusion of this presentation, the Bishop offered a heartfelt and emotional prayer for the chaplains and the soldiers in Afghanistan.

Synod expressed thanks and appreciation with a standing applause.

OPENING EUCHARIST OFFERING

The Bishop announced the offering received on Thursday evening was in the amount of \$1745 which would be donated to the Diocese of Ho and Bishop Matthias for the Bishop's Diocesan Travel Fund.

The Bishop called for a 15 minute break.

Synod reconvened at 10:50 a.m..

INTEGRITY FREDERICTON

129-16 - The Rev'd Canon Alvin Westgate / Mrs. Mary Anne Chrisjohn

Be it resolved that this one hundred and twenty-ninth Synod of the Diocese of Fredericton:

- recognizes the pastoral ministry of Integrity Fredericton, which has continued for the past two and a half years in our Diocese;
- recognizes that the pastoral ministry of Integrity Fredericton is entirely the work of Anglicans within, and native to, our diocese;
- encourages Integrity Fredericton to continue in this ministry.

This motion was defeated: 124 in favour, 146 opposed, 27 abstentions.

Bishop's Comments

The Bishop spoke on the results of the previous motion. He indicated it shows where the Church is on this issue - divided. He declared his own personal support and reminded all Synod members that the conversation cannot end with this vote. It is the Bishop's prayer that the work conducted by Integrity, Zacchaeus and Essentials will be God-led for the sake of Christ. This is a major pastoral concern. There is a real difficulty in debating a question that has been officially put before the Church on numerous occasions over many years. It cannot be resolved quickly. We have had 30 years of monologues and we have not learned to listen. Hypocrisy is in our conversations since we promise the world we will listen. The Bishop said he would accept the decision of Synod on this matter; however, he put members on notice that "it is time to be brutally honest with one another and live up to motion 129-12, section a." The Bishop will be initiating, very soon, a process of listening around the diocese.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Diocesan Treasurer Canon Fred Scott introduced the two members of the accounting firm Grant Thornton. He offered brief explanations regarding the financial statements. Parish response to the Diocesan budget requests in 2006 was phenomenal and provided for much of the financial success that year.

129-17 - Canon Fred Scott / The Rev'd Canon David Keirstead

That the financial statements be accepted as circulated.

The motion was carried.

NOON DAY PRAYERS

Led by the Rev'd Eileen Irish assisted at the piano by the Rev'd Bonita LeBlanc.

Synod was suspended for lunch. Time 12:05 p.m..

The Bishop called Synod members to order at 12:50 p.m..

ATLANTIC SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

The Bishop welcomed the Rev'd Dr. David McLachlan, Academic Dean of AST. Dr. McLachlan brought greetings from the President of the School. Assisted with a slide presentation, he gave an overview of the School's faculty and educational ministry from degree programs to continuing education offerings and professional training at the post graduate level. A new fund as part of the current endowment fund capital campaign has been established for support of Anglican students from the Diocese of Fredericton.

The Bishop named those who represent the Diocese at AST: The Rev'd William Morton (Anglican Formation Committee), the Rev'd Marian Lucas-Jeffereies (Senate), Mr. Richard Thorne and the Ven. Geoffrey Hall (Board of Governors). The Rev'd Paul Donison replaces Archdeacon Hall in September 2007.

129-18 - The Rev'd Douglas Painter / The Rev'd Canon David Keirsead

That the courtesies of the Synod be extended to Mr. Jarvis de Condé.

The motion was carried.

PROPERTY AND LIABILITY INSURANCE

129-19 - The Rev'd Canon David Kierstead / The Ven. Stuart Allan

That this Synod direct Diocesan Council to continue to develop the Diocesan Group Property and Liability Insurance Program and that specific steps be taken to ensure parishes not in compliance with the established minimum standards (A-19) for coverage be required to comply by participating in the group program.

Motion to Amend

129-19a - Canon Fred Scott / The Rev'd Canon Howard Anningson

That the word 'in' on the second line be deleted and replaced with 'able to,' the word 'compliance' changed to 'comply,' and, after the word coverage add 'by other means.'

This amendment was accepted by both the mover and seconder of the original motion. The motion now reads:

That this Synod direct Diocesan Council to continue to develop the Diocesan Group Property and Liability Insurance Program and that specific steps be taken to ensure parishes not able to comply with the established minimum standards (A-19) for coverage by other means be required to comply by participating in the group program.

This motion was carried.

CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARISH

Canon Fred Scott and Mr. Jarvis de Condé spoke on corporate and legal responsibilities. A parish needs insurance to protect itself, its workers, volunteers and corporation members against potential litigation.

Canon Scott reviewed the meaning of 'charitable status.' There are benefits to being a charitable organization but also responsibilities. He made the suggestion that each parish should pass a motion every year stating that the charitable return be filed. In the event a parish fails to file that return, the government will issue a fine and will revoke the charitable status of the parish.

The Chancellor made the suggestion that Canon 6 should be read by the Rector, Wardens, Treasurer, Vestry Clerk and Vestry members at least once a year and that parish officers should take advantage of training offered by the Diocese. He referred to past training on the issue of privacy and reminded Synod members that Prevention and Response Involving Sexual Misconduct training is a requirement of every one who serves in any parish.

The Bishop called for a 10 minute break.

FAIR SHARE CONTRIBUTION

Motion 129-11 (amended) was lifted from the table.

Be it resolved that in accordance with the principles, definitions and processes described in the Report of the Budget Funding Task Force, that the bases for determining individual parish fair share contributions in support of the Diocesan Shared Ministry Budgets for 2008 and 2009 be set as follows: 13.64% (2008) and 12.27% (2009) of parish operating income, and that the "single" support request be eliminated.

The Bishop spoke with the privilege of the Chair. He told Synod he was impressed with the work of the Task Force and equally impressed with the amendment proposed and accepted. However, he felt sufficiently uncomfortable with both versions to give his blessing. The Bishop indicated he would be open to a motion to refer the matter to Diocesan Council for study or even to the next Synod. He felt that the implications of such a proposal need to be reviewed very carefully as it would have a major impact on Diocesan life.

Motion to Refer

129-11d - Canon Charles Ferris / The Rev'd Paul Donison

That this Synod refer this motion to Diocesan Council for further study and ways of implementation with the proviso that the mover and seconder be invited into the discussion process and that the recommendation arising therefrom coming before the next Synod for vote.

This motion was carried.

SECURING CLEAN DRINKING WATER AS A RIGHT

129-20- Mrs. Betty McNamara/The Rev'd Keith Osborne

Be it resolved that this Synod recognize and affirm that:

- Water is a sacred gift that connects all life.
- Access to clean water is a basic human right.
- The value of Earth's fresh water to the common good takes priority over any possible commercial value.
- Fresh water is a sacred legacy, a public trust, and a collective responsibility.

Amendment:

129- 20a - Mr. Trevor Holder / Mrs. Darlene Ketch

That the following be added to this motion:

Be it further resolved that the Diocese will explore potential options for action in the promotion of clean water projects.

This amendment was accepted by both the mover and seconder of the original motion.

The amended motion read as follows:

Be it resolved that this Synod recognize and affirm that:

- Water is a sacred gift that connects all life.
- Access to clean water is a basic human right.
- The value of Earth's fresh water to the common good takes priority over any possible commercial value.
- Fresh water is a sacred legacy, a public trust, and a collective responsibility.

Be it further resolved that the Diocese will explore potential options for action in the promotion of clean water projects.

When the vote called, Motion 129-20 (amended) was carried.

PROPOSED CODE OF PASTORAL CONDUCT

The Rev'd Kevin Stockall addressed Synod to indicate Notice of Motion 2007-07 was being withdrawn.

COMMUNICATIONS

129-21 - The Ven Geoffrey Hall / Mr. Andrew Cromwell

That the report of the Communications Task Force be received and accepted with thanks to its members.

That the recommendations of the Task Force be accepted and acted upon, including:

- a) **The Bishop should immediately appoint a Communications Committee, reporting to him and accountable to him as publisher of all diocesan communications**
- b) **The publisher and the editor of diocesan publications should have a meaningful role in the appointment of members, since both are stakeholders in the committee's effectiveness**
- c) **The Editor should serve as an ex-officio member; other members should include at least one member of the Administration Team of Diocesan Council, at least one representative of clergy, and other members of clergy and the laity as the bishop and the editor deem necessary**

- d) The Communications Committee should meet at least quarterly and report to executive members of diocesan staff in an open and transparent manner**
- e) The terms of reference of the proposed committee include those recommended in the Report**

This motion was carried.

REGARDING EMBRYONIC STEM CELL RESEARCH

129-22 - The Rev'd Ian Wetmore / The Rev'd Gerald Laskey

Be it resolved that the Anglican Diocese of Fredericton repudiates any scientific research which involves the destruction of unborn human life at any stage of development, and prohibits any parish, congregation or other member organization of the Anglican Diocese of Fredericton from contributing funds to, or supporting in any other way, any organization or group which contributes to or engages in embryonic stem cell research or any other endeavour which involves the destruction of unborn human life.

Motion to Refer

129-22a - The Rev'd William Morton / Falen McNulty

That this motion be referred to Diocesan Council for further study until the Diocesan Synod of 2009.

Motion 129-22a to refer was carried.

RURAL AND STRUGGLING PARISHES

129-23 - The Rev'd Dr. Ranall Ingalls / The Ven. Stuart Allan

Be it resolved that this Diocesan Synod respectfully request the Bishop

- 1) to appoint a committee to deal with the question how best to continue this Synod's historic commitment to rural and struggling parishes;**
- 2) to charge this body to undertake a wide-ranging diocesan consultation with rural and struggling parishes on his behalf, in order to gain the best knowledge possible of their circumstances, hopes, aspirations, and needs;**
- 3) to charge this body to draw up recommendations or proposals about how best to continue this commitment as soon as possible after this consultation, including cost estimates and suggestions as to where the monies might be found to cover costs; and**
- 4) to ensure that this body is charged with no other business, so that its members can devote themselves to this good work.**

It is suggested that another individual or group of archivists or historians might help this committee by drawing up a brief history of the forms this commitment has taken from our eighteenth-century beginnings up to the present.

This motion was carried.

SEPTEMBER 2007 MEETING OF SYNOD

129-24 - Mary Robinson / The Rev'd Canon Bill MacMullin

That this 129th session of the Diocesan Synod of Fredericton petition our Bishop to hold another Synod by September 30th, 2007 to plan to continue as a diocese in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury should General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada meeting in June 2007 decide it will walk apart from the Anglican Communion by

- a) approving the blessing of same-sex unions or**
- b) allowing for local option (each diocese may decide what they will practice) or**
- c) resolving that the blessing of same-sex unions is consistent with core doctrine of the Anglican Church of Canada.**

This motion was defeated.

The Bishop offered his apologies to those who were cut off during the debates or those who were not allowed to speak.

The Bishop expressed his appreciation to Mrs. Elizabeth Harding, Camp Medley Director for her work and the work of her team in receiving the Synod delegates at Camp Medley.

ECUMENICAL OBSERVERS

The Rev'd Canon Neville Cheeseman introduced the Rev'd Don Uhryniw of the United Church of Canada. Mr. Uhryniw offered thanks to all Synod members and to the Rev'd Canon Neville Cheeseman for the welcome and hospitality. In their comments, the ecumenical observers felt that fear was a strong component of the Synod deliberations. Fear can be good but not when it becomes a controlling factor. Called on the Synod to put aside the us vs them attitude, to be open with each other, and to always remember that the ultimate goal is to bear faithful witness. His parting words were to "be strong and of good courage."

COURTESIES REPORT

129-25 - The Rev'd Neville Cheeseman / The Rev'd Patricia Craig

- 1. That this Synod present to Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, through her representative in Canada Her Excellency, the Governor-General, the customary expression of its loyalty and affection.**
- 2. That this Synod sends greetings to our former Diocesan Bishops, the Most Rev'd Harold Nutter, the Rt. Rev'd George Lemmon, the Rt. Rev'd William Hockin and to their spouses, Mrs. Edith Nutter, Mrs. Lois Lemmon, and Mrs. Isabelle Hockin.**
- 3. That this Synod extends greetings to those of our clergy who are celebrating significant anniversaries of their ordination.**
- 4. That this Synod express its gratitude to Bishop Claude Miller for his charge to this Synod and for his capable presiding over these Synod deliberations.**

5. That this Synod give thanks for the Companion Diocese Covenant that was signed by Bishop Claude and Bishop Matthias of the Diocese of Ho and send greetings to our sisters and brothers in the Diocese of Ho.
6. That our thanks be extended to our Primate, the Most Rev'd Andrew Hutchison, for his leadership during the last three years and that we extend our best wishes and ask that he will be blessed in his retirement.
7. That our thanks be extended to our Metropolitan, the Most Rev'd Bruce Stavert, for his leadership and support.
8. That our thanks be expressed to the following persons and groups who made this Synod run smoothly:
 - the Very Rev'd Keith Joyce for the celebration at the Cathedral.
 - the Cathedral congregation who provided the reception after the Cathedral service.
 - the Rev'd Paul Donison for arranging the worship during the session of synod and to all those who led in worship.
 - Bonnie, Bob and Marian and to ReJoyce for providing the music.
 - the Parish of McAdam for providing the canteen.
 - the Parish of Douglas and Nashwaaksis for providing the two lunches.
 - the Parish of Gagetown for providing supper at Camp Medley.
 - the Synod Planning Team under the Chair, the Ven. Geoffrey Hall for their hard work planning this Synod.
 - Mrs. Mary Robinson (Arrangements).
 - The Rev'd Canon Neville Cheeseman (Hospitality / Courtesies).
 - Mr. Kelly VanBuskirk and Canon Charles Ferris (Resolutions) and members of the Committee for their work and help.
 - Mr. James Chandra (Credentials) and the volunteers who looked after the registration and who acted as greeters.
 - the Rev'd Paul Donison (Worship).
 - Mr. Peter Irish (Agenda) and Mr. Allan Edwards for tech support.
 - Mrs. Barbara Landry (Nominating)
 - Ms. Maureen Vail, Mrs. Phyllis Cathcart, Mrs. Carolyn Turney and Canon Fred Scott for Synod staff support.
 - the Rev'd Leo Martin who served as recording secretary and to Ms. Maureen Vail who assisted him.
 - the Staff of the Aitken University Centre and the University of New Brunswick for their assistance.
 - those who provided displays for Synod.
 - our Ecumenical Observers for their presence and input to this session and to the Rev'd Don Uhryniw for his comments on their behalf.
 - invited guests: Mrs. Fiona Brownlee, Mr. Kevin Smith, Mr. Arran Thorpe, the Rev'd Dr. David MacLachlan, Major the Rev'd John Organ, Mr. Jarvis de Condé and Mr. Paul Kitchen for their presence and presentations.

The motion was carried.

The Bishop offered his personal thanks to his wife, Sharon, for her continued support.

CLOSING EUCHARIST

The closing Eucharist was celebrated by Bishop Claude with Bishop Matthias as preacher. The bishops were assisted by readers Mrs. Elizabeth Harding, The Rev'd Chris Hayes, the Rev'd Deacon Fran Bedell and Eucharistic ministers The Rev'd Joyce Perry, the Rev'd Deacon Constance Whittaker-Soulikias, Canon Jon Lownds, the Rev'd Gerald Laskey, the Rev'd Anthony Arza-Kwaw, Canon John Cathcart, and the Rev'd Keith Osborne. Synod delegate Ms. Emily Jacobs fulfilled the role of acolyte while the Rev'd Paul Donison acted as master of ceremonies. The music was provided by ReJoyce.

Bishop Matthias Medadues-Badohu's Sermon

My dear Christian sisters and brothers, in the past two or three days, we in the Government of the Anglican Church in Fredericton, New Brunswick, have been in the business of the Kingdom.

In fellowship and love, we have listened to reports, presentations, and above all, the Bishop's Charge which is of course 'The State of the Diocese to its Parliament - the Synod.' In the same Spirit of love and honesty, discussions were carried out, and finally decisions made.

Indeed, some of these decisions would not be favourable to everyone, however, if we believe that we here represent the Body of Christ which is the Temple of the Lord where the Spirit dwells THEN we must also believe that it's the same Spirit that prompted us in every decision made.

The Theme of Synod is, "LET'S SHARE THE MISSION" - The Mission as the Lord has laid it on our hearts:

To feed the hungry; give water to the thirsty; welcome the stranger to our homes; clothe the naked; visit the sick, and those in prison: - THIS INDEED IS THE CORE BUSINESS OF OUR CALLING.

In many parts of the world today, it is no shame to identify ourselves as Christians BUT whether we hold the same beliefs and moral values as the Early Church handed it down to us is another thing.

Beloved in the Lord, to embark on a successful mission, we need not be afraid of anything. We need to trust the Lord to provide friendship when others desert us; to trust him to provide the needed finances when the coffers are dried.

The Mission of the Lord is a Mission of Adventure into the wild, and not a Mission of Fear and Timidity, and therefore, it behoves on all of us - Bishops, Clergy, and People, to put away whatever fears and mistrusts we may have for the future of our Church after this Synod.

Let us look onto the Lord in whose business we are in, and he will help us to succeed.

In the 11th to 13th verses of the 13th Chapter of the 1st Epistle of Blessed Paul the Apostle, we are reminded that, 'No one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there namely, Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay or straw, the work of each will come to light.'

As I leave this diocese, which to me has become the answer to my long-cherished dreams, it is my prayer that like the 72 disciples who returned to the Lord, rejoicing in that they had accomplished, we will also one day return to the Lord rejoicing in what we have been able to accomplish in His Name.

May His Name be praised in all our works, now and forever more. Amen!

(A copy of the above was provided to the Recording Secretary by Bishop Medadues-Badohu.)

ADJOURNMENT

129-26 - The Rev'd William Morton

That this 129th Session of the Diocesan of Fredericton be adjourned.

Time: 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leo Martin
Recording Secretary

Maureen Vail
Assistant Recording Secretary

Geoffrey Hall
Secretary of Synod

Claude W. Miller
Bishop of Fredericton

26 June 2007

DRAFT

Appendix 1

Diocesan Synod of Fredericton BISHOP'S CHARGE June 7, 2007

He who is greatest among you shall be your servant; whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. (Matt 23.11-12)

And [Jesus] said "Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what thou wilt. (Mark 14.36)

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

Introduction

It is with a deep sense of gratitude I bring this my third charge to the 129th Synod of the Diocese of Fredericton.

In preparation for our short time together, I could not but be overwhelmed by the incredible amount of planning and hands-on tasks that such an event requires. Thomas A Kempis writes, "A wise lover values not so much the gift of the lover as the love of the giver." Ralph Waldo Emerson writes, "The only gift is a portion of thyself." There has been a great deal of self-giving in love as I witnessed the preparation for our time together.

My personal thanks to all for your diligence and spirit of cooperation. Your work ought to be viewed as a gift motivated by God's love to each delegate and the Church. I accept this gift on behalf of each person attending for God's unfailing love, to His honor and glory.

Tonight we gather to celebrate God's love manifest in the gifts we bring to this Synod to strengthen the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic church of our faith. We cannot help but recognize a multitude of challenges which can deflect us from our purpose. We pray for God's grace to hold us accountable to the task that is set before us: the task of being true to the mission of being the Church in the world - the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church we profess as God's people in its place.

In the Mission-Shaped Church, we read: "The Church is one through [our] baptism, which is an integral dimension of mission. Mission creates unity within our diversity of cultures. 'Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.' " Mission-Shaped Church, Church House Publishing p.96.

"The Church is [H]oly because it is set apart for God and for God's missionary purposes in history. 'You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you might proclaim the mighty acts of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.' ... It is a holy Church that is willing to die to its own culture in order to live for God in another." Ibid.

The Church is Catholic. "The word catholic means that which accords to wholeness. Rather than implying a global or national uniformity, catholicity is an invitation to inclusion. Catholicity is only complete when the Church is made up from 'every tribe and language and

people and nation'...Catholicity provides a challenge to the local church or churches for diversity within mission. The agenda of our [parishes] must always be to include rather than exclude...But catholicity also implies that there are limits to diversity...Christ was and is for all people, at all times and in all places. But it is only Christ as revealed in Scriptures who has power to save." Ibid.

"The Church is apostolic when it 'is the true source of the Church's unity and catholicity... it is the mark that continually presses the Church to engage the culture with the gospel. The Church is sent into the world with a message to live and to share...The Church must model the apostolic nature of Christ if it is to be genuinely Christian...[The Church] is apostolic in that it was sent by Jesus: 'so I send you'. The Church is apostolic because Jesus was apostolic first. 'As the Father has sent me...' 'In Christ, God was his own apostle.'" Ibid., p.98.

To be the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in the purest sense will always be a challenge. To engage culture with the Gospel and to bring a message that we must live and share will not always be received with generosity. That challenge is not only found in the culture -unfortunately, we witness it in our Church communities. To a large degree we are a product of our culture and that which we witness outside our walls is present within. To engage the culture with the Gospel we are challenged to cast the light of humility in the darkness of self-centeredness, the humility of the one who died on the Cross.

You may agree that the greatest of the challenges before us is the sin of pride. Pride manifest in a pervasive arrogance prevalent in our culture. An arrogance, I'm sad to say, that has caused deep wounds and divisions in the world, our country, our Anglican Communion, the Anglican Church in Canada and in our diocese. Deep wounds and divisions that continue to threaten the harmonious body to which we are called.

According to Scripture, arrogance is like the evil of idolatry. 1 Samuel 15:23 records: "For rebellion is as of the sin of divination, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry". Arrogance is most often associated with the sin of pride, a pride that oppresses the weak, resulting in self-gratification, deception and boasting.

Joseph Naft, the son of Holocaust survivors in reflecting on the arrogance of the world writes: "Those to whom much has been given sometimes suffer from arrogance; or rather the people around them suffer. Arrogance is doubly a pity, because the talents of the arrogant serve primarily themselves. The arrogant assumes his views and opinions are The Truth.

In arrogance, natural confidence goes sadly awry. Rather than the self-assurance born of knowing his own strengths and limitations, arrogance admits no limits. The arrogant brooks no weakness in himself and may even secretly rejoice to find flaws in others. But imperfections are inherent in being human, so the arrogant, like everyone else, always has feet of clay, however well hidden they may be. Fearing exposure, haughtiness forms a hard shell masking inner emptiness." <http://www.innerfrontier.org>

Naft's reflection ought to remind us that God's way is quite the opposite, and is expressed in the humility of the divine presence of Jesus Christ in the world and his death on the Cross. "Father, all things are possible to thee; remove this cup from me; yet not what I will, but what thou wilt." (Mark 14.36)

Rex Chapman writes: "Humility is not so much an attitude towards oneself as an attitude towards God, a sense of mature dependence coupled with a knowledge of one's unique status before him as a recipient of his love. Derived from this is an attitude towards other people who being created in the image of God are worthy of respect." Chapman, Rex, Dictionary of Christian Spirituality, p.201.

We long for and find this humble presence in the divine nature of God. "God is love and he that abideth in love abideth in God and God in him." (1 John 4.16)

My prayer for our time together is that we might see our role as servants of God's grace, a grace that demonstrates our love for God and for one another which ought to strengthen our relationships in the body.

"He who is greatest among you shall be your servant; whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." (Matt 23.11-12)

I am deeply grateful to the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer Membership for their prayers leading up to our Synod and for the Prayer Vigil that is being held while Synod is in session.

Prayer for Synod (Let us Pray)

Gracious God, we ask for hope for ourselves and for your Church. Do not allow fear, ignorance or pride to limit the actions of your Spirit. Do not allow mere custom to prevent the Divine Creativity within us from bearing fruit. We ask for insight to understand the needs of your people in today's world. We ask for wisdom to respond to those needs through our gifts. Empower all of us to be women and men who are enthusiastic and ready to share your mission, generous in giving, eager to minister, and to be people who serve with hope. This we ask through Jesus Christ, who came as brother and servant to us all. AMEN

The Work of Synod and Bishop

As we prayerfully approach the work of this Synod we all have an important role to play as outlined in the convening circular, Section A, p.4. We are called to see our work as that of missionaries. The role of Bishop as Missionary was explored in some depth at the 1998 Lambeth Conference. To be your Bishop is a humbling privilege and gift. To be a missionary with a focus on the unity of the Body and guardian of the faith places the Bishop in a key strategic and accountable place. It is said that the Church of England, and by extension, the Anglican Church in Canada, is "episcopally led and synodically governed"... 'In council and in synod the Bishop leads the church in its decision making and the Bishop licenses clergy.'" The Mission-Shaped Church, Church House Publishing, p.101.

This is seen as a missionary role of moving the Church out into God's world, encountering the culture with God's good news of salvation. This requires unity in the Body.

"This means that the proper relationship with the Bishop of the diocese becomes crucial. To be in communion with the diocesan bishop and hold the Bishop's license becomes a theological as well as a practical necessity. To be an Anglican is to be in communion with the See of Canterbury, and, at a diocesan level, with one's own Bishop." Breaking New Ground as quoted in The Mission-Shaped Church, p.101.

During our time together, we will be challenged to make our contribution as that which will add to the building up of God's kingdom in this place and beyond our borders. Neither God,

nor the needs of God's people, have gone on hiatus while the Church tries to settle its differences. The world is crying out to witness God's love. The Church as God's agent in an arrogant, self-serving world is called to repentance and humility that seeks reconciliation with God and with each other. It is only in the context of God's love that God's work can prosper and grow to the full stature of Christ.

So our role to lead and to govern will call us to define our missionary expectations, to grant direction and permission to proceed, and to give account of our performance. Ours is an awesome responsibility to the mission and vision we share in the Gospel as God's One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Work of Diocesan Council

So how are we doing as Bishop and Synod? Are we a body that is capable to the task that is set before us? I believe we are, and by God's grace we will attempt to be that to which we are called.

As I said at the beginning, I am humbled at the work that was required to get us to this night. I am equally humbled by the work that has been accomplished since we last met in 2005. I commend the report of Diocesan Council under section "E" of your convening circular.

As reported, during the past two years, your Diocesan Council not only demonstrated effective governance but effectively supported and encouraged the leadership of the Bishop and Clergy and the ministry we share at the parish level. We share a common Mission: "To Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the Making of Disciples" and our collective Vision requires that we be a diocese of "Healthy, Mission Focussed, Welcoming and Growing Parishes." Our mission and vision are not new. They reflect the foundational principles of God's Church from day one. Just as the Early Church was challenged by the culture and had to discern ways of engagement, we too are called to respond with the enthusiasm and zeal of the first disciples. This was and is the most important work in the world, an awesome task.

Very early on, in the life of the Church as recorded in the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, the disciples discovered that they were going to need help if they were to be true to their calling: "It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to wait on tables." This was not an arrogant statement but a realization that if God's work was to be accomplished a wider network of co-workers would be needed. "Therefore, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this duty. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

I am grateful to our General Synod for its willingness to assist us with expertise by partnering with us under the Letting Down the Nets Program. Our diocese as one of six Pilot Project Dioceses across the Canadian Church enabled our Diocesan Council to develop a ministry strategy as expressed in our Shared Ministry Plan. The underlying philosophy of the Letting Down the Nets initiative was that if we vision a stronger National Church it can only happen if we have stronger dioceses and stronger parishes.

The Letting Down The Nets initiative has fortunately (and I say fortunately) become a victim of its own success. Over the past three years the diocesan needs discovered across the Canadian Church by the Pilot Projects were not limited to the six pilot dioceses but by a greater number than first thought. The need for expertise in assisting the majority of

dioceses in visioning and resourcing has led to dismissing the Letting Down The Nets Program in favour of a full-time General Synod Ministry Development Program.

As one of the initial Pilot Dioceses, our agreement with General Synod continues on an as needed basis. I'm grateful to Diocesan Council for their hard work that has resulted in our Shared Ministry Plan made possible by our partnering with our National Church. I am hopeful that our plan will afford every individual and parish to share in our mission and vision to strengthen our Parishes, our Diocesan Church, our National Church, and beyond, all to God's glory.

The directions that are set out in our Shared Ministry Plan, Section F of the Convening Circular, are described as four "Pillars of a house". In summary they represent the work that is set before each Anglican, each Parish, our Synod and Bishop. Over the next few years, with plan in hand, our prayers must be for God's guidance as we navigate the reality of cultural change, economic pressures, governmental regulation, liability issues, demographic change and the reality of our Church's pending fragmentation if we are unwilling to strive for an inclusion that does not compromise the authority of Christ in the Church and in our lives.

The words Reconcile, Form, Resource, and Share summarize the tasks that enable our vision to become a reality. Chris Edmondson writes: "...there are three main reasons that vision is hard to sustain: success, failure, and the pressures of everyday life and ministry." The Vicar's Guide , Church House Publishing, p.67-68.

Success can mean that options multiply. The question is posed, "What would happen if the plan results in large numerical growth?...How might we make room to accommodate new expectations?...What if our best efforts fail?"

Edmondson suggests, that "[f]ailure is drastic surgery God sometimes has to use to cut the stubborn nerve of self-sufficiency in a leader's life." Ibid. Failure notes that we were prepared to try and by grace we are free to fail and try yet again. Just because a particular part of the plan has not worked there is no need to scrap the vision.

Edmondson reminds us that "Vision as we have seen is about the 'big picture,' a 'preferred future' for the church's ministry and mission; life, by contrast, is about this minute, and later on today." Ibid. For instance, "How is the recent nine percent increase in the cost of electricity going to affect the parish?" That is why our plan is a 'compass' rather than a 'road map.' Adjustments and alternative routes will have to be part of our reality.

Reconcile: "Become One: Heal our Fractured Relationships"

Our Synod agenda has been designed with the larger picture in mind, and yet there is provision to consider our present life. Our desire to Reconcile, Form, Resource, and Share our vision is reflected in a number of our motions, while at the same time motions have come forward that reflect our anxiety around the future of the Anglican Communion. The ongoing doctrinal questions with respect to human sexuality and the place of gay and lesbian relationships in the Body of Christ will not be settled by this Synod, our upcoming General Synod or anytime soon.

As a pastoral body we have been granted the gift of opportunity. That opportunity is to reflect that the love of God through Jesus Christ is the work to which we are called each and every moment in our life. Future decisions will affect Church life for everyone, and I caution

you that there will be no decision that will please or satisfy everyone. As St. Paul reminds us, when one part of the body suffers all suffer. I ask this synod to set the example for our diocesan response by supporting motion 2007-08.

At the Diocesan and Parish levels there is a great deal of work that is required to answer the questions raised by the Windsor and St. Michael Reports and the recommendations for intentional dialogue at the diocesan level by Lambeth 1998. This work is ongoing and will be a priority for the weeks and months to come. The fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5.22) in all its manifestations must guide our deliberations. Impatience is not the will of the Spirit. Every member of the Body must be willing to engage one another with the Good News of Christ and to set aside arrogance and selfishness in favour of humility. "Abba, Father, all things are possible to thee ..." (Mark 14.36)

Our Shared Ministry Plan recognizes the need to "heal our fractured relationships". Some would argue that fractures do not exist. Yet many confess hurt resulting from differences of opinion and an unwillingness by some to listen and cooperate for the good of the whole. Many believe that this is our reality at all levels of diocesan life. As directed by Diocesan Council, I have taken this directive seriously and with the help of our Archdeacons have acquired resource persons who are highly qualified to assist us with this need.

In the midst of such concerns there are other concerns that must not go unnoticed. The concern for our military in war torn Afghanistan is ever before us and our prayers are with the women and men and the families and friends of those who serve in the theatre of war. In particular we will hear from Major John Organ who will bring greetings from the Chaplains and a description of their pastoral work in the field.

Formation: "Equip Leaders with Tools, Training and Support"

At our venue tomorrow we will have opportunity to inquire at the many kiosk displays promoting the faith formation programs in our diocese. At Camp Medley we will have an opportunity to view some of the work of faith formation. There are numerous opportunities for spiritual growth and formation at the diocesan and parish levels and all are encouraged to participate and enrich your faith journey. We celebrate the leaders and participants of each and every program and group.

Every parish should take advantage of our Diocesan Resource Centre and Anglican House to assist you individually and corporately with your spiritual program needs.

Part of our formation program is dedicated to Christian Education and Youth Ministry. The reports of these initiatives speak for themselves. We will hear an update on our Capital Campaign for Camps Medley and Brookwood. The entire body of Synod will be bussed to Camp Medley tomorrow afternoon to view the new (almost completed) dining hall, kitchen and washrooms. Six to seven hundred campers are expected to enjoy our camps this Summer. (The season begins in just three weeks so we encourage all campers to get their applications in.) The spiritual formation of our children is critical to our corporate life. All are blessed by your support of these programs and the renewing of our infrastructure.

Our annual Clergy College, Clergy Conference and the opportunity for Clergy Sabbatical will continue as necessary opportunities for clergy support and training.

We welcome the Rev'd Canon Eric Beresford, President of Atlantic School of Theology, who will bring greetings and an update from AST; and Mr. Paul Kitchen, Head of School, Rothesay Netherwood School. Mr. Kitchen will address Synod with an update from the school. These schools offer opportunity for leadership training so vitally needed for our corporate life.

Resource: "Resource our Plan/Steward Our Resources"

As God's people, each one of us has been blessed with spiritual gifts that enable God's work to flourish in our diocese and beyond. We bring our time and talents to every gathering and event in our corporate life together. Our Synod of 2001 identified the need for increased giving at the parish level. The same synod said that if our spiritual life was healthy we would not be lacking.

Effective stewardship initiatives was the desire by all recent Synods. Diocesan Council has endeavoured to provide opportunity for training at the Diocesan, Deanery and Parish levels with varying degrees of success. Council has had a struggle to be pro-active in this regard on all fronts. We have difficulty understanding the place of money in a culture of entitlement. We often forget that all has come from God, not for our pleasure and self-sufficiency, but for God's glory. God will always be glorified by a generous heart. Conversations around money and giving are never easy in the life of the Church, yet Jesus spent a great deal of time preaching on the subject, recognizing that our love of money serves to separate us from God and his will for our personal and corporate lives.

Since we last met, several million dollars have been invested in our diocesan investment fund by generous donors mainly for the ongoing maintenance of our parish properties. Parishes are grateful, but have little or no funding flexibility because designated funds are not able to be used for purposes other than those specified. Our diocese has urgent need for Capital Funds to assist parishes with loans or grants for ongoing ministry leadership and capital improvements and the building of new facilities.

During this Synod Kevin Smith, Planned Giving Officer for the three dioceses in Newfoundland and Labrador, will share with us the benefits of planned giving with the emphasis on the word "planned." Planned giving works to support parishes and diocese when needs are identified to donors as part of the shared ministry vision. In addition Aaron Thorpe, a recent graduate of Atlantic School of Theology, will share with us the work of his thesis titled "Giving and Faith."

Our in-coming Diocesan Council will need to demonstrate a pro-active approach to resourcing our plan with qualified leadership and financial resources for the foreseeable future.

Share: "Develop and Pilot Models for Sharing Ministry"

As a result of our last Synod's concern for those parishes facing numerous challenges to their future, our shared ministry plan has responded by identifying this concern as one of our four primary tasks. The idea of a strategy that, when put into place, would satisfy the needs addressed by every parish and congregation, or a template that would work in all circumstances is not a viable option.

The Bishop agrees with Diocesan Council that these needs and concerns are more effectively addressed by the Archdeaconry Regions at the grass roots where ministry happens.

Conversations in an intentional way amongst Clergy, Parish Wardens, Vestries, Greater Chapters, and the people at the Archdeaconry level will offer opportunity to express needs and concerns. In a spirit of cooperative sharing of leadership and resources, coupled with the will to care for each other, these will, I believe, assist in a more certain future for individual parishes and congregations. Ministry sharing pilot projects may or may not offer long term solutions but they provide the much needed time required to focus and plan a longer term viable vision for ministry, not just at the congregation and parish level but within the diocese and beyond.

We will hear of two such pilot initiatives and an update of the amalgamation in the recently formed Parish of the Nerepis and St. John. There are three other conversations that have just started in three separate Archdeaconries. Prayerful consideration of alternatives requires that our fears be set aside in favour of listening for the voice of God and God's direction in determining his will. Remembering that we are a Church entrusted with God's mission to bring the Good News of the Gospel, not just to the faithful, but to engage the culture in our midst and beyond our traditional borders. The Good News of the Gospel is for all: therefore, the sharing of the Good News means that others' needs and concerns outside our immediate boundaries must be considered.

I ask for your support of motion 2007-03 that continues to remind us of the importance of the struggling individual parishes and congregations and their place in our collective vision.

Conclusion

In the midst of our successes, failures and the immediacies of life's concerns there is much to celebrate.

We will hear of the work of the Council of the North that is touching the lives of Native Anglicans. We welcome Bishop Matthias from the Diocese of Ho in Ghana and tonight we will sign a Companion Diocese Covenant Agreement. He has been travelling around our diocese for nearly two weeks now and we await his greeting from his diocese. We are humbled by his prayers and presence.

We will celebrate the appointment and installation of five new Canons of Christ Church Cathedral: the Rev'd Howard Anningson, the Rev'd John Cathcart, the Rev'd Neville Cheeseman, the Rev'd Elaine Hamilton, and Mr. Charles Ferris, our Diocesan Chancellor.

Tonight we will celebrate the gift of outstanding ministry and service by presenting Awards of Merit to two worthy recipients: the Rev'd. Canon Lloyd Lake, faithful Priest and Community Evangelist; and Ms. Twila Butimer, Archivist, who continually cares for our Diocesan Archival records. I know that you are supportive of this recognition.

Each one of us have journeyed to our Cathedral Church this night with a heart condition. Our hearts are heavy or light or perhaps a little of both in anticipation of our time together. We rejoice in the gift that is ours, the privilege to serve. But I would offer that deep within each heart present there is an ember of God's love that longs to be fanned to warm our soul. Our hearts long to commune with the very heart of God. This desire ought to be central every time we gather to worship our Triune God.

I tender my personal thanks for your prayers for me and Sharon and our family, and the faithful service of our Retired Bishops, Archdeacons, Regional Deans, all Clergy both active and retired, and the countless hours of service by Layreaders, lay leaders and the faithful at

the parish level. We are part of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church attempting to do our best to reflect God's love in challenging times.

Over the next few days we are offered the opportunity to reflect and to graciously share our many gifts and blessings for the furtherance of God's kingdom. It is an opportunity to rejoice with God and demonstrate our love for one another.

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

(Psalm 103.1) AMEN.

Appendix 2

Diocesan Synod of Fredericton BISHOP Matthias Medadues-Bodahu's Comments June 7, 2007

My Lord Bishop, the Clergy, Members of Synod, my dear Christian Brothers and Sisters, all protocols observed, I bring you Greetings from your new Companion Diocese of Ho in the Volta Region of Ghana - Church of the Province of West Africa.

On Pentecost Sunday, the very first morning of my visit here, I looked through the window of my bedroom in the Bishop's Court (sic) and saw a bird pecking a leaf and jumping all over the fields, and that reminded me very much of the dove which returned to the Ark in Noah's days with an olive-leaf in her beak. As I looked on, thoughts of hope flooded me all over as it quite often happens to me from my house in Ho.

Then as I travelled round New Brunswick in the past week looking at the scenery which is similar to many parts of Ghana - the vegetation, the industries, the mines and the coastal areas, I often wonder why the diocese of Ho should be poor. There are many resources to be tapped and developed for the good of our people, hence my joy for this companionship link with Fredericton.

It first began in January, 2005 when some selected Bishops from across the world met in Canterbury to look into their future as Bishops of the Church and the demands of their Office, when Bishop Claude and I vaguely spoke about what we are witnessing today - linking up our two dioceses as Companions in our worldwide Communion. We in the Volta Region of Ghana are very much privileged to be Partners-in-Mission with your Diocese as we wait on God to direct.

The greater part of the Volta Region, which is on the eastern part of Ghana, sharing a border with a country called Togo, until May, 1956 was a German Colony. When the Germans rolled up their sleeves after the Second World War, we then became part of the Gold Coast just before the latter's Independence from Britain on 6th March, 1957 when the name was changed to Ghana. The whole Volta Region which is the Diocese of Ho covers a land space of 20,570 square kilometres and has about 2m people in population. Among the major ethnic groups in the Region, the Ewes are the main tribe with their language as the Ewe.

The Diocese of Ho was created from the Koforidua-Ho Diocese which comprised the Eastern and Volta Regions of Ghana on 22nd March 2003. It has six parishes, three sub-parishes, and ten outstations scattered all over the Region, it is a very basic diocese in terms of personnel, finances and infrastructure. No offices, no secretary, except a part-time treasurer and a typist who assist the bishop to run the diocese. There are ten clergy including the bishop and three people in seminary. There are also two diocesan Catechists and twelve local catechists through whom the Word of God reaches the people.

In every community that we are in, we have a Church School which is the bedrock of our mission and evangelism. Our evangelism to the people we serve is through rendering social services to the poor and the needy and to bring some meaning into the lives of those who have lost hope. Because we do not have any income whatsoever to support us on this mission field, we have friends in England who often come to our aid by raising an average of 60

(British Pounds) a month for a Priest's stipend which is about a third of the least paid civil servant in our country.

BUT we are never discouraged yet, for it is our belief that in every age and time, and in every place God has created what is good in His sight, and so may it be here in New Brunswick, or over in the Volta Region of Ghana there is the goodness of God we can harness to help each other as Partners-in-Mission.

My Christian brothers and sisters, I know that our Communion is in serious crises at the moment and throughout the world, the Anglican Church is becoming a matter of discussion everyday - something not in the positive in the light of the Christian Gospel but in the negative - may I, therefore, plead with Synod that throughout your deliberations, whatever decisions you arrive at must be in the supreme interest of the wider Church as Christ prayed for the Unity of all people in those solemn moments before His departure from earth.

Look up to your Bishop as a focus of unity representing Christ Himself and listen to the cries of his heart at those moments when decisions are to be made to rebuke and condemn the evil in man but not to condemn the man, for Christ did not condemn the sinner but ask her to go and sin no more. We are there to pray for you always, and if there is any help we can also give, we shall not hesitate to do that.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Bishop Claude and Sharon, Heather Miller, Heather Carr, Keith Osborne and all those who have made my visit and travels so successful not forgetting the bishop's staff who made everything possible to bring me safely here and to send me home in one peace, not in pieces.

On behalf of the Bishop, Clergy and People of the Anglican Diocese of Ho, I wish you well in your 129th Synod and pray for God's blessing and presence upon you in your deliberations.

God bless you all.