

**THE THIRD CHARGE TO SYNOD
OF
THE RIGHT REVEREND DONALD F HARVEY
MODERATOR
THE ANGLICAN NETWORK IN CANADA**

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

For the third consecutive year it is my privilege and joy to greet you in this manner as your Bishop and Moderator. It is an honour that I do not take lightly, as I continue to give thanks for this opportunity to continue in His Service on a path begun over 70 years ago at my baptism; 47 years ago at my Ordination and 18 years ago at my Consecration as a Bishop. In retrospect, each stage of this ministry has been a preparation for what was to follow and even when doors were closing, there was (and continues to be) the excitement and anticipation of what lies behind the next one. Throughout this period I never walked alone, and in addition to His guidance and direction, I never was without a group of faithful men and women whose hearts had been touched by God. To Him be the glory!

While we have met at various times and in a variety of circumstances and places, there is something very special (and indeed spiritual) about a Synod of the Church. This year we come together in our Nation's Capital City, hosted by the Parish of St. George, who this year are celebrating 125 years of witness in this place. You will hear much more about this during our time together, but as we celebrate this event we are reminded, as we need to be from time to time, that this counting of years began well over a century ago, and did not change or alter one iota when this well known and respected parish made the decision that in order to remain faithful to the Word of God, they would come under the authority of another Province of the Anglican Communion. They did not form a new church, and thus their chronological numbering remains unchanged. They simply reiterated the faith proclaimed by their ancestors when the foundation was laid, and did whatever they deemed necessary to maintain it unchanged and unadulterated for themselves and for generations yet to come.

As part of their celebrations they are graced by the presence of the Right Reverend Michael Nazir-Ali, some time Bishop of Rochester, and a name well known and highly respected throughout the Anglican Communion and indeed the world. It will be our joy to welcome him on several occasions during this Synod, where I am certain that we will be inspired and encouraged by his Godly wisdom. We in North America have been given much strength by many of his statements over the years.

It also is a joy to welcome our Primate, the Most Reverend Robert Duncan to this Synod. While his time with us will be relatively short as he hastens back to lead his own Diocesan Synod, we always feel stronger after his visits as he, has been with us and our Movement, now Our Church, from the beginning, and perhaps more than anyone has born the brunt of the hostility that has been directed towards us – both at home and abroad. As his Dean, an honour I deeply cherish, I know only too well the demands placed upon this dear man of God

as he strives to hold together this new Province which has devout and sincere followers of Jesus Christ, but coming from such a variety of cultures and traditions. In thanking him, I also thank you in ANiC for giving me the freedom to share some of his load which in reality has to be lightened as it becomes more complex and demanding. He indeed has been called by God 'for such a time'.

In a similar vein, I express deep appreciation to Archbishop Gregory Venables for the love and courage he displayed in taking us under his wing and in so doing, enabling this (and several other) dioceses to become a reality. When I spent time with him a little over two weeks ago, I took much pleasure in presenting him a packet containing photos, post cards and letters for almost every single one of our parishes, as well as from many individuals, who love and respect him and are deeply appreciative for the sacrifices and insults he has willingly taken for us on the international stage. We are unfeignedly thankful.

I also want to acknowledge the presence of the Reverend Dawn MacDonald of the Zacchaeus Fellowship who is maintaining an Information Table which I hope you will visit. I single out this group since they are representative of several others who offer health and healing to persons coming out of a homosexual lifestyle and other forms of sexual brokenness. I feel very strongly that as soon as we get more fully organized, that we must become far more proactive in this area than circumstances have enabled us to do in the past.

Our Diocese here in Canada continues to grow and prosper. From the beginning launch of 2 parishes, 2 Deacons; 2 Priests; and 2 Bishops we now (just three years later) have 41 parishes, 114 clergy, and 6 Bishops – with a number of projects and plants in the offing. This gives us much reason to rejoice as we see the Lord blessing us with signs following.

But with growth, especially rapid growth, there also comes extra challenges.

(a) When we first responded with smaller numbers, it was exceedingly easy to feel like one happy family. We knew one another personally and we knew the struggles each congregation was facing. That no longer is the case and in administering what has been defined as “the largest geographic Anglican Diocese in the world” there have to be areas where the same attention to detail is not given as it was heretofore. Even with the expansion of Bishops and Archdeacons, the personal, one to one, aspect we enjoyed has become a thing of the past. This was inevitable.

(b) With growth has come additional costs and paradoxically, less income to the central office to finance these costs. Money that originally was sent to Head Office before a parish was established, now goes into the local parish and only one-tenth of that comes in as a gift towards national expenses. Later you will be given financial reports that will explain this serious condition.

The other major thing about growth is that the devil does not like it. Consequently, amongst many of our clergy and their families, as well as among many of our staff, we have been

afflicted with an unusual number of serious diseases and ailments. It is not being overdramatic to suggest that at times we are under attack by the evil one and that much prayer and fasting will continue to be needed to provide cover from these assaults.

But with growth many wonderful things also have come. All of our parishes are involved with Bible Studies, Prayer Groups, Fellowship Groups for various interests and age levels, and it continues to be a joy to see parishes alive and vibrant in their sheer love of the Lord. As I travel across the country, I find many signs of encouragement from the smallest parishes to those that are large by any standards.

I feel we must constantly strive to keep alive the excitement we felt when we gained the courage to cast off the burden that was holding us back (that is how so many of our clergy described it) and leaving so much behind, rekindled the joy that comes from being faithful to Him. We found that joy more than compensated for the sacrifices of buildings and lost friends we had to endure, and from the joy came the enthusiastic response to share with others what we are experiencing – especially to others whom we know are quite unsettled about what is happening to Canadian Anglicanism.

It still is not easy to walk past a building that once was ours, and where we often have memories of a lifetime spent in prayer and worship, and then go to a school auditorium and set up a place for worship that still leaves some things to be desired. Still, by far the majority of our members are doing that each week. When we show resentment, and when this becomes a chore and duty rather than the joy it started out as, we have to read again the opening chapters of the Acts of the Apostles to try and recapture that sense of euphoria that comes from being found worthy to suffer for His Sake.

Later in this Synod you will receive a Report on the Anglican 1000 initiative launched by our Primate at the inauguration of the Anglican Church in North America. We have been challenged to plant 1000 new churches in five years, and already great plans are underway to make this vision become a reality. Here in Canada our Committee is headed by the Reverend Ray David Glen whose own enthusiasm has been infectious and whose Committee is poised to do some wonderful new work.

I would be remiss if I did not say how wonderful it is to see one of our Bishops, Bishop Ron Ferris, after serving over twenty years in the House of Bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada, now stepping out to resume where he began over 40 years ago, by planting a church in Langley, BC. Not only is his new parish of the Ascension prospering, but he has been a real godsend in encouraging younger clergy starting out on this venture.

But I must share with you that we are prone to come under severe criticism when we move into effective Church Planting. The criticism comes, not from other denominations, but from conservative minded clergy and people who still are members of the Anglican Church of Canada. They assure us that they are “with us” and they appreciate what we have done (but not necessarily what we are doing) and in fact, if we go anywhere, it should be to liberal,

revisionist dioceses only, so that we will not interfere with the work they are trying to accomplish from within.

Let me be quite clear on this. It already is obvious that we do not regard borders, diocesan or otherwise, as being a factor to us when it comes to imparting the Word and bringing souls to Jesus Christ. That has been our battle cry from the beginning and there is nowhere in North America where we will not go to plant a church, if we are so invited by people who feel their own church has let them down to the degree that they no longer can stay with it. While we will enter into discussions with another ACNA group who may be considering establishing a Plant in an area we intend to go, we have found that for the most part, the numbers of unchurched are such that there is room for any number of church planting initiatives – and then some.

We do have an affinity with our brothers and sisters who laboured side by side with us in the early days of our Movement, but who for one reason or another, decided to stay in the Anglican Church of Canada. That decision was theirs and I am certain that most made it prayerfully and even painfully. Our problem is not with them, but in the fact that the church to whom they still owe allegiance has said officially in a 2007 document signed by the Primate and the four Metropolitans of the day, as follows:

Any ministry exercised in Canada by those received into the Province of the Southern Cone after voluntarily relinquishing the exercise of their ministry in the Anglican Church of Canada is inappropriate, unwelcome, and invalid.

It is not my intention or desire to open old wounds, but I must make it quite clear that until this statement, which was supposed to be read in every Anglican Church in Canada during Advent, 2007, (and was in most) is refuted by Archbishop Fred Hiltz **in the same manner in which it was delivered**, we can only conclude that we still, in their eyes, are quite outside the fold and cannot be extended even the same basic courtesies and hospitality in an Anglican Church of Canada parish, that they so readily extend to virtually all other denominations and even other faiths.

If the Anglican Church of Canada will not or cannot do this, it would be most comforting to us if we were to hear some of our conservative friends to publicly call upon their Primate and Bishops to erase this tragic statement.

Without that happening, and under the condemnation that our ministry is unwelcome and invalid, it is difficult, indeed it is impossible, to enter into any meaningful talks with them.

We began our ministry by providing a life boat for disenchanted Anglicans who felt they no longer could stay in a Church that was not faithful to the commands of its Founder. That phase of our ministry has passed, and we have picked up most of those who could no longer stay. Already we have changed our status to that of a fishing boat that fervently is going to seek souls for Christ, plant churches, and follow all aspects of The Great Commission. And

because we feel salvation is an issue here, we no longer simply will stand by and await invitations.

Our legal struggles over property continue and you will be updated on them during this Synod. Suffice it for me to say that our Legal Team has worked long and hard and difficult as it is, they are striving to make these proceedings an act of evangelism in itself.

Last year I was requested to present an Annual Plan in addition to the Charge. In that Plan I made two recommendations on which I should make brief report.

I requested that Synod become more involved with getting more Youth Representatives to attend. I thought this a reasonable demand since as I am very impressed with the way most of our parishes now are including ministries to children and young people. At the time I am writing this, I have scanned through the lists of delegates and note that while the number is much improved over last year, we still have a distance to go. To date, we have made a decision that our youth are a regular part of our Synod with full speaking and voting rights. I think this is the way it should be but we are willing to enter into discussions on this. In the meantime, I extend a sincere welcome to you as well as a plea that you will not hesitate to make your presence felt on the floor of Synod. We need to hear from you in so many ways.

Another issue I raised is that I feel strongly that every member of ANiC should have opportunity to receive the Blessed Sacrament every Sunday. I understand that parishes are working seriously on this recommendation.

In addition to being involved with our Province with its headquarters on the US side of the border, we also are very pleased to have the Parish of Holy Trinity Anglican Church in Marlborough, MA under our jurisdiction. This came about through my personal involvement and friendship with the Rector which now has developed into a very exciting relationship. This relatively small parish now has no less than five Church Plants and is prospering well. We warmly welcome the clergy, delegates and observers and hope that you feel as much a part of our family while you are here, as you make us feel when we come your way. I hope that some mutual exchanges and visits may occur during the coming year.

I now propose to deal with some announcements and then conclude with a few observations on the agenda before us.

1. We have received notification that our Chancellor has indicated her desire to retire following this Synod after being with us in that position since our inception as a Diocese. Cheryl Chang has been with our Movement from the beginning and has been very involved in all areas of the country where legal proceedings are taking place. She has spent countless hours in conversations with many of you, and has represented us well at the Provincial and International levels. More will be said on Cheryl later in the agenda.

2. We have received and accepted the resignation of Mr. Brian Ellis as our Registrar. He too, is the first holder of this very important role and over the last three years has been most faithful in his duties. His love of liturgy and his meticulousness to detail have been great assets, again of which we will hear more later.
3. We also are saddened to learn of the retirement of Mr. Ron Bales, our main financial administrator. Ron, already retired, assumed this role when we were in dire need and although doing these duties on a strictly volunteer basis, continues to spend most of his days in the office. We are deeply indebted to his contribution.
4. The appointment of the Reverend Tom Carman as our new Registrar already has been announced, but I take much pleasure in welcoming him to this position for which he has many splendid gifts.
5. I want to introduce to the Synod my appointment as Chancellor in the person of Mr. Michael Donison of St. George's Parish, Ottawa. Michael holds a Bachelor of Laws Degree from the University of British Columbia. He is currently a member in good standing of the Law Society of British Columbia and has maintained a non- practising certificate since 2001. He has held many positions in Ottawa including that of Executive Director of the Conservative Party of Canada and has been Senior Policy Advisor on Democratic Reform and Legislative Review. Among the many other gifts he brings to this position is that he a committed Christian and active member of his Parish Church. It will be a joy to work with him and we welcome him to this important position.
6. Finally, for the last two years, the Reverend Archie Hunter has held the position of Episcopal Commissary on Church Planting in the Ottawa area. While still having him continue in this role, I wish to expand his title to that of Episcopal Commissary for the Diocese where he will be responsible in performing assignments given him by the Moderator, and will be responsible for convening the process for replacing the Moderator in the case of an unanticipated demise.

It is with deep regret that we record the death of Rhonda Glen, the wife of the Reverend Ray David and mother of Matthew. We all followed her short illness with intense prayer and hope and realize that even in her death she affected the hearts and lives of many and was a witness until the end, which she, her family, and all of us know, simply was the beginning. May she rest in peace and rise in glory, resting in the Everlasting Arms until we meet her again.

And now to comment on the agenda which I commend to you.

While everything on the agenda is important, there are three items I want you especially to consider.

The first is the Constitution. The draft which you have been considering in your parishes is the third one to come under your consideration. The Constitution Committee has worked

long and hard on this project which we need to put in place as soon as we can do so in good conscience. While we can enter into general debate on this document, there is no way that we can word-smith it clause by clause. Please try and accept this as a foundational constitution on which we can continue to build and expand – and if need be, modify.

The second item is our election of a Council that will operate on our behalf between Synods. Later this morning we will introduce to you the recommendations of the Nominating Committee who diligently have tried to come up with a list of nominees that will cover such things as continuity, new members, geography, and above all, suitability. You will be given a process and deadlines to use if you want to make other nominations – after which an election by secret ballot will take place. Among other things this is an indication that we are coming of age and I know you will take this responsibility quite seriously.

Near the end of the proceedings, you will be asked to request the new Board to set up a process to examine both the desirability and practicality of restructuring our Diocese into two. It will be a vital decision (one way or the other) and it has to be embarked upon prayerfully and carefully.

Each time I work on a Charge like this, I am determined that I will reduce it to half the length. Each time I fail abysmally. And even now there are things that I would have liked to include but simply cannot.

When I was asked to set a theme for this Synod, I already knew much of the agenda that would have to come forward. This year, by its very nature and timing, we have to do a considerable amount of business that not everyone will find exciting or riveting. Yet it must be done and that is why we are gathered here.

Our previous Synods all have had the reputation of being light, Holy Spirit filled, and joyful fellowship. We pray that this one will be the same.

For beneath it all is our desire to see Jesus. And beneath that is our desire to help others see Him as well. We know that in our present culture there are far more who know nothing about Him than those who do. And we also know that once we really see Him, nothing, not even a debate on a Constitution, can keep us from wanting to share Him. May all we say and do in these next days simply increase our enthusiasm to do just that. When that happens, then this Synod will have fulfilled its true purpose.

I now invoke God's Holy Spirit on our deliberations.