



## **The 163rd Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Montreal**

**The Bishop's Charge**

**June 18, 2022**

**We acknowledge with respect that this Diocese of Montreal is on the unceded traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabeg and the Wabanakiak and that our Diocesan offices are in Tiotiake (Montreal), a meeting place for many. We respect the continued connections with the past, present and future in our ongoing relationships with Indigenous and other peoples within the Montreal community. May God our Creator guide us in wisdom, justice and peace.**

Welcome to our Diocesan Synod, meeting in Christ Church Cathedral, with its updated ventilation, heating and cooling system, and its capacity to live stream to the visitor's gallery which is participating through YouTube. Welcome to all delegates and participants meeting here in person and especially to any who are attending Synod for the first time.

This meeting is an opportunity to review the past year and to reflect on our mission together. The Anglican Communion invites us to think about the Five Marks of Mission as a way of orienting and understanding our life and mission as a church. I wonder how many of you are familiar enough with these five marks to be able to name them? At a recent service of Confirmation, I met three very well-prepared young people whose Confirmation classes had revolved around vigorous and fruitful discussions on the Five Marks of Mission.

The mission of the Church is the mission of Christ. As Christ's body, we are called:

1. To proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom
2. To teach, baptize and nurture new believers
3. To respond to human need by loving service
4. To transform unjust structures of society, to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation
5. To strive to safeguard the integrity of creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth.

All of the Marks of Mission are involved in the theme for this year's Synod, chosen by the Synod Planning Committee – but number 4 is foremost: To transform unjust structures of society – (and of our Church), to challenge violence of every kind and pursue peace and reconciliation.

The theme for this triennium, the next three of our Synods will be ***Racism: Listening, Naming, Reconciling***. This year will be the ***Listening*** part. Next year we will focus on ***Naming*** and the Conference Synod in 2024 will address some concrete next steps and ways of ***Reconciling*** and taking action. Listening is an action which opens up and transforms the heart, soul and mind of the believer and enables us to repent and grow as believers. During our Synod, I invite us all to carefully listen for what the Spirit is saying to us as individuals and as the Diocese of Montreal.

I am very pleased and grateful that Archdeacon Jim Bennett has agreed to address us on the topic of ***Racism*** this year. Jim came to our Diocese from Guyana 38 years ago and has served the Church as Rector of St. Paul's, Cote des Neiges, as a Regional Dean for 16 years and, for the last 22 years, a territorial Archdeacon. He will be sharing his personal experiences of the structures enabling racism within the church and especially here in Montreal. Jim has broken through some of those barriers to become a valued and important part of the leadership of our Diocese.

Last fall, the Task force on Anti-Racism organized a conference led by Dr. Myrna Lashley. For those of us who attended or who watched the videos online, there was much to learn. Dr. Lashley challenged us to work toward equity, inclusion and diversity and she reminded us of the need for cultural humility and listening.

In learning to stand against racism, we need to begin by listening carefully and consider how God may be calling each of us to be part of a church which is humble enough to agree to change what we know needs changing. I feel sad and

ashamed to think that our church has not identified and challenged racism built on white privilege, willful blindness and fear of the other.

Our baptismal vows call us to a life that is continually being transformed, that is growing in discipleship and that is propelled into mission for Christ.

- Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
- Will you persevere in resisting evil and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
- Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?
- Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself?
- Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?
- Will you strive to safeguard the integrity of God's creation and respect, sustain, and renew the life of the earth?

We will! With God's help!

This summer the Lambeth Conference will at last be held, with about 1,000 bishops and spouses of the Anglican Communion, gathering from some 165 countries, to spend 12 days together at the University of Kent in Canterbury. We will discuss church and world affairs, and explore what it means to be "God's Church for God's World". We are being challenged "to walk together, listen together and witness together".

It will not be easy! We will be sharing the experiences (and assumptions) of our churches and communities from around the world. And we will have to listen very attentively to others tell us what they are thinking – often across language and education and cultural barriers where racism, colonialism and white privilege are often unseen barriers. You will no doubt hear that some provinces or sections of the Anglican Communion will not attend because they do not approve of what other parts are doing – who they are ordained or marrying and so on. The delay in holding the Lambeth Conference has been used fruitfully by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lambeth Planning Group. We were invited to participate in pre-Lambeth meetings on Zoom and have met and shared with people from vastly different parts of the world. We have had opportunities to make new acquaintances and friends, to study the Bible and to pray together. In registering to attend, we have also had to sign a safe church declaration in which we promise to observe the rules of good behaviour and respect of the other. (Those Baptismal vows never go away, do they!)

The Lambeth Conference is not a Synod or business meeting. It's a gathering where conversations can be held that lead to common commitments to seek to be "God's Church for God's World" in the decade ahead. You may hear about "Lambeth Calls" which will express different declarations and proclamations on behalf of the Anglican Communion on issues impacting the world and to which we will be invited to add our voices.

The major themes which will be discussed at the Lambeth Conference are:

Mission and Evangelism, Anglican Identity, Christian Unity, Inter Faith matters, Discipleship, Safe Church, Reconciliation, Human Identity, Environment and Sustainable Development.

Those are all good things for us to attend to as well! It is hoped that the conversations and involvement will continue afterwards, with a better understanding of the Anglican Communion and its rich diversity. The pandemic has certainly allowed a wider sharing through Zoom and platforms such as Whatsapp which is more widely used in other parts of the world.

The Diocese of Montreal Partnership Committee has worked very hard to sponsor a priest from Masasi to come study at McGill University but, so far, in spite of our support letters and assurance of financial backing, Fr. Linus Buriani has been denied a visa by the Canadian High Commission in Tanzania. We understand that it is not unusual for students from other African countries to also be refused and we are exploring whatever avenues we can, in the hopes of finding a solution. I want to thank all who have dedicated so much time to this project and all who have contributed funds and applied for grants to make it possible. Please pray.

The Montreal Diocesan Theological College and the United Theological College began discussions last year with a view to engaging in a strategic alliance and a deeper relationship which would benefit those training for ministry in this context. After much prayer, discussion and discernment, it was agreed that Dio will become an ecumenical institution with a United Church studies program. This will allow Dio to build on UTC's work with French ministry training and enrich the preparation of our Anglican students for ministry in Quebec.

Another exciting initiative of the Montreal Diocesan Theological College is the Montreal Mission Internship (MMI), which was awarded a \$15,000 grant from *The Anglican Foundation Say Yes! To Kids 2021* campaign. With support of the Anglican Foundation, the Lilly Endowment, and the Diocese of Montreal's Mission Fund, and other organizations, 13 young adults from across Canada are

discerning their vocations and serving in various ministry contexts around Montreal this summer. Through [The Anglican Foundation](#), funds are currently being raised for next year's [MMI](#).

We continue to look at opportunities to do ministry with the resources that we have, and sometimes with a new view to those resources. As we began to emerge from the pandemic lockdowns, we felt it was important to take stock of the Diocese: our churches, parishes and the people who live around them. Who is our neighbour? How can we “seek and serve Christ in all people” if we don't ever meet them and get to know them? How can we love them as we are called to do?

In order to learn more about the people who live around our congregations, we commissioned a series of studies of our geographical diocese from Environics Analytics. The purpose of the maps and reports produced is more than just numbers and statistics. It is about the people who live around our churches and how we can serve them. The information we now have can help us to make better informed decisions about how we deploy the resources we have. But it can also help our parishes more effectively engage in mission and meet and serve our neighbours. We would be very happy to come to your church to talk more about this. Please contact the Rev. Canon Neil Mancor or your territorial archdeacon for more information.

An important initiative has grown up in the Eastern Townships during the pandemic – an opportunity that was unexpected, and yet is laced with signs of the Holy Spirit's leading and blessing. It was made possible largely because of the regular online services on Zoom, where upwards of a hundred people from many different congregations met and worshipped together each Sunday.

I am very grateful for the foundation work on this, that has been done under the leadership of Archdeacon Tim Smart and Associate Priest the Rev. Tyson Rosberg in enabling Grace Church (Sutton), Trinity Church (Cowansville), All Saints (Dunham), St. James the Apostle (Stanbridge East), Bishop Stewart Memorial (Frelighsburg), St. Thomas (Noyan), St. Thomas (Rougemont), St. James (Foster), Church of the Ascension (West Brome), Holy Trinity (Iron Hill) and St. Georges (Clarenceville) to band together in one shared, cooperative team ministry.

This new arrangement will be a one-year trial period of doing rural ministry in a whole new and experimental way.

Each of these eleven churches will contribute generously and faithfully to having

two full time priests living and serving in the area. A dedicated team of deacons, lay readers, and retired clergy will also help in building up ministry in the area.

Many of the churches in the Townships are quite small, and alone they have tenuous futures. Yet, together they are better equipped to face the future, and to serve Christ in their communities.

The Stewardship of the Environment Committee has been repopulated with new and motivated committee members and who are putting their focus directly on practical actions that we as a church can take in the context of the climate emergency. While many Anglicans believe that humans are the root cause of global warming, it is hard to know just what changes might be most effective. The SEC has been working with congregations (fourteen so far) to identify ways in which their church buildings can reduce their production of greenhouse gasses from fossil fuels. For some it could mean becoming net zero in GHG production. For others, it will involve planning what to do when their fossil fuel furnace needs replacing. The committee is working to identify grants to help with this process. A recent initiative between the Diocese of Montreal and the Diocese of Niagara has yielded the Net Zero Project, [www.netzerochurches.ca](http://www.netzerochurches.ca). Not only are they working on church buildings but they will help find or lobby for grants for those of you who own homes to also move towards zero GHG emissions. You are invited to go to the Net Zero churches web site, support this important work and get involved.

The Bishop's Action Appeal has generated lots of support for our Diocesan fundraising projects as well as the *Giving with Grace* campaign of the national church. Last year we raised a significant amount towards the Tanzanian student's support and an even better amount for the Diocesan Missions of Action Réfugiés, Tyndale St. George's, and The Mile End Mission. Thank you so much for your generous response.

The Bishop's Annual Dinner has traditionally been an event to focus uniquely on funding our ministries with the Missions already named. Because of the uncertainty around the return of the viral season in the fall, we are not ready to plan a dinner this fall. We will, of course, be writing to you and inviting your support of our ministry through our Montreal missions.

Two congregations celebrated major anniversaries this year. St. Stephen's with St. James', Chambly had to postpone their 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary for two years and rearrange dates with my office and that of the Primate but we managed to have a wonderful celebration and reception on a sunny May 29<sup>th</sup> afternoon. On June

12<sup>th</sup>, St. Stephen's, Lachine celebrated their 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a beautiful Eucharist and reception. Archbishop Linda was not able to be with us but she had visited St. Stephen's Lachine on May 29<sup>th</sup> while I had Confirmations at St. Thomas', NDG.

Since we last met in May 2021, there have been some retirements:

The Rev. Terry Hiddichuk, the Rev. Karen Egan, the Ven Michael Robson, the Rev. Joyce Sanchez, the Rev. Jean Jacques Goulet and the Ven. Michelle Eason have retired.

The Rev. Sinpoh Han, the Rev. Linda Faith Chalk and Archdeacon Jim Bennett will have their last Sundays in their parishes on June 26<sup>th</sup> before taking their vacation in July and retiring.

We wish them every blessing in retirement and thank them for their ministry and faithful service.

At the end of this month, a well-known and respected colleague, Pastor Eric Dyck will retire from his ministry of 25 years at St. John's Lutheran Church. Ecumenical friends and partners are invited to a gathering in his honour this evening and I hope to drop in after Synod.

The Rev. Geert Jan Boudewijnse, a priest of our diocese, has been appointed to serve St. John's Lutheran Church as an interim pastor, effective July 1<sup>st</sup>. Please pray for Geert Jan and the congregation as they enter this interim time and for Pastor Eric Dyck as he retires.

On the Feast of Pentecost, June 5, 2022, we joyfully ordained the Rev. Ben Stuchbery and the Rev. Fresia Saborio to the priesthood in Christ Church Cathedral in a trilingual service. Ben and Fresia continue to serve their curacies, in Hudson and in Granby. Both had their ministries discerned while members of the Cathedral. I note with thanksgiving that many of the clergy we have ordained have been nurtured and raised up while at the Cathedral.

On September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 2pm, in Grace Church, Sutton, I intend to ordain Randy Gates to the vocational diaconate. Randy has been serving the area as a lay reader and leader of Revive and he worships in Sutton. This celebration will be an opportunity for a Celebration and gathering in the Eastern Townships Regional Ministry.

I am very excited and pleased to announce that the Right Rev. Ogé Beauvoir has

recently retired and is moving from Haiti to Montreal with his wife Serette. Bishop Ogé studied at the Université de Montréal, obtaining a Bachelor in Theology in 1988 and a Master of Arts in 1993. He was ordained deacon in Montreal in 1989 after obtaining a Diploma in Ministry from the Montreal Diocesan Theological College, and he was priested in Montreal in 1990.

Ogé served at the National Office of the Anglican Church of Canada as Mission Coordinator for Africa and the Middle East from 1996-1999 and also as Program Associate for the Global South and Telecommunications at Trinity Church, Wall Street, Diocese of New York from 1999 to 2004.

From 2005 to 2012, Ogé was the Dean of the Theological Seminary of Haiti. In 2012, he was consecrated bishop in the Diocese of Haiti where he served as Bishop-in-charge of the Northern Region until 2015. Since that time until his retirement this spring, he has been the executive director of Food For the Poor, a non-governmental food security agency in Haiti.

I have appointed Ogé as Interim (Priest) in charge at St. Paul's, Cote-des-Neiges, and he has also agreed to take over the duties of Archdeacon of Montreal as well. He and Serette will arrive sometime in mid-July. Please welcome them warmly into our diocese.

This year, I am celebrating 7 years as your bishop. It is a great privilege to serve this Diocese and I am grateful that God called me to do so. It is time for me to take some sabbath rest and to recharge my batteries. I will be on sabbatical from October to the end of December. I look forward to some unstructured time to rest, to pray, to walk by the sea and to visit friends and loved ones whom I have not had the time to visit. Some colleagues in the Maritimes have invited us to visit and rest in their dioceses.

The Diocese will be in the capable hands of the Vicar General and the territorial Archdeacons and I am grateful that Bishop Ogé will also support me as Assistant Bishop (as needed). Please remember to pray for all who are called to leadership in the church – for those in your congregations, and for those God is calling but who have not yet responded. I am expectant for the coming year and for all that God will do working through us.

Let me end by thanking all of you for praying for me so faithfully. It is no small thing to know that I am prayed for every time you gather for worship.

I also want to thank all the staff of the Diocesan offices for their faithful work supporting the work that is done in each congregation.



Thank you especially to my faithful supporter and encourager, my husband Mark for standing by my side in this work and for challenging me to be the best bishop for you that I can be.