



A Word from the Bishop



June 2010

Dear Friends,

Just after I sent my last newsletter five and a half weeks ago, my wife, Meg, and I departed on a week's vacation to the island of Guernsey in the English Channel with our two sons and their wives. It was a glorious trip. Everything went smoothly and not only did God answer your prayers for no volcanic ash to disrupt our flights, but the volcano went back into dormancy! We had such a delightful time with our family—our younger son, Michael and his wife, Tracy, were married just last summer, so this was our first time away with both sons and daughters-in-law. We hiked the cliff walks, wandered about the town, played word games and laughed until we ached, cooked and washed dishes together (we'd rented a cottage), had tea with the local vicar and his wife...the list goes on. It was a very restful and renewing trip.



After our return, we were off to the Church of the Good Shepherd, San Angelo, Texas. We were warmly received by Fr. Stan and Eileen Burdock and enjoyed not one but two magnificent church-wide dinners, a tour of the city, time with the confirmands, two services and an adult Sunday School class and times of fellowship



Then it was off to the Anglican Church in North America's annual meeting of the Provincial Council, plus meetings of the College of Bishops and the Executive Committee. It was so encouraging to hear all that the Lord has been doing, particularly as we plant new churches (we've grown at a rate of more than two new churches per week in the past year) and develop ecumenical partnerships—with the Orthodox Church in America and a number of Lutheran groups (some of whom are interested in linking directly with us). We are also in conversation with groups of congregations of Messianic Jews who want to pursue closer relationships with our Province and have ongoing conversations with the Roman Catholic Church. I was elected to the Province's Executive Committee

and will also serve on the Archbishop's Cabinet. And thank you for your prayers for my sermon at Bishop Bill Murdoch's installation as the first bishop of the Diocese in New England. The Holy Spirit was powerfully present that night and I was carried along on your prayers.

We returned home for my final Sunday as rector of All Saints' Church. After nearly 29 years there, it was a day filled with a jumble of emotions for me—tears as I preached and also laughter at the well-deserved teasing I received. The congregation was most gracious and affirming as I gave up my spiritual authority as their rector, though of course not as their bishop.



The next day we were off again, this time to St. Louis for a brief visit with my brother and sister-in-law. We visited the schools we had attended growing up and the houses we had lived in (or, I should say, the vacant lots where our houses once stood). Then it was on to Southern Illinois for Forward in Faith North America's annual Assembly. FIFNA is the Anglo-Catholic wing of our Province and, well-knowing that I'm not a member, they graciously invited us to attend. It was a privilege to be there and to deepen friendship and partnership in the Gospel.

Then we went on to Albuquerque for a weekend at Christ the King Anglican Church, a congregation that has grown tremendously in its first eight months. Meg and I began our visit with a moving afternoon at the home of the Revs. Roger and Libbie Weber, meeting with the youth confirmands, who shared their testimonies: one teen gave her life to Christ after her rector prayed for a serious and persistent knee infection and she was miraculously healed! We enjoyed an evening open-air concert at the zoo, a teaching day on prayer for the parish, two Sunday services and an adult Sunday School class on Anglican liturgy, a reception, dinner with Vestry and staff and spouses, plus several meals and times of sharing with members of the clergy and their spouses.



Then it was homeward bound. I spent a day consulting with a parish's leadership, and a day at home, meeting with my assistant Heather Adams and doing home chores (laundry!).



Then we were off, driving this time, for four days at Church of the Holy Spirit, Ashburn, Virginia. Even though they are only an hour from our home, we were blessed to stay in the home of the Rev. Clancy and Ginger Nixon. We love having the time to connect and share and pray—we don't want to miss out on that just because a parish is near by! We enjoyed dinner with Vestry and staff and spouses, a very special morning of prayer

and teaching with the youth who were on retreat, a tour of and prayer-walking around what we expect will soon be the church's first 24/7 facility (wonderful space in a fabulous location), a teaching day on spiritual warfare for the parish and others in the region, time with the confirmands, and wonderful Sunday worship, followed by a reception. Holy Spirit is such a prayerful church and it was a joy to be bathed in prayer throughout our time there.

Travel stats for those interested in the numbers: 17,092 air miles, 33 out of 42 days on the road.

Diocesan updates...Hamilton Anglican Fellowship in Chattanooga is transferring into the newly formed Anglican Diocese of the South, based in Atlanta. We bless them as they have found their permanent home in the ACNA...And a new congregation has been added to our Diocese, a lay-led fellowship: Anglican Church of the Trinity in Minneapolis. I'm getting calls nearly every week from those seeking to join our diocese and start new churches.

Thank you for your prayers and for all you do for the Lord and His Kingdom!

In Him,

+John

Prayer requests:

Because of my relationship with the sizeable A.A. community at my former parish, I've been invited to lead a workshop at the huge Alcoholics Anonymous International Convention, Friday morning, July 2 in San Antonio. The topic: "A.A. and the Clergy."

Please pray also for our visits to these congregations in July: Epiphany, Cloudcroft, NM and its church plant in Ruidoso, NM; Emmaus, Castle Rock, CO; St. David's, Durant, IA; and Redeemer, Camden, NC and its church plant, Good Shepherd, Nags Head, NC.