



Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

The Anglican Church of Canada

The Right Reverend Dr. Geoff Peddle, M.Div., Ph.D.
Bishop of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador

ANGLICAN DIOCESAN CENTRE
19 King's Bridge Road
St. John's, NL A1C 3K4
Telephone: (709) 576-6697
Fax: (709) 576-7122
Email: geoffpeddle48@gmail.com

Bishop's Seventh Pastoral Letter, March 2015 **Our Church and the Marks of Mission**

Dear Friends,

This is my seventh such letter to the Diocese this year following our Diocesan Synod in May of 2014. As before, my words in this letter will echo themes identified at Synod. Today I discuss **Our Church and the Marks of Mission**. This will also be my shortest pastoral letter because my intention today is simply to highlight the value of the Marks of Mission for our church and then to direct your attention to some of the vast and varied online resources available for those who want to learn more. At the end of this letter I will include four selected links to information on the **Marks of Mission and Vision 2019**. In many ways, my six previous letters have been leading to this point where the total ministry of our church can be divided into five initiatives. The Marks of Mission as they have come to our church today are:

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

The Marks of Mission are now at the heart of conversations about ministry and mission across the worldwide Anglican Communion. Developed over many years from conversations at the Anglican Consultative Council and other international bodies, they arrived center stage of the Anglican Church of Canada in 2010. That year at General Synod the Marks were adopted as part of Vision 2019 to provide a structure for the ministry of the Anglican Church of Canada in the world.

In preparation for General Synod 2010 the Vision 2019 Task Force affirmed the Marks of Mission and asked General Synod to "Adopt the Marks of Mission of the Anglican Communion as a primary framework for ministry development in service to God's mission, and commend them as a framework to those we serve and support in provinces, dioceses, and local ministries." Our Primate, Archbishop Fred Hiltz, concurred and stated that the marks "draw us together as Anglicans across Canada and the world." In its work leading up to General

Synod 2010 the Task Force recognized that Canadian Anglicans were already living the Marks of Mission in a great many ways without identifying their work and worship with a common language. The adoption of the Marks of Mission allowed Anglicans across the country to use a familiar and shared language to describe their discipleship.

As I reflect upon the Marks of Mission and their relationship to the Anglican Diocese of Eastern Newfoundland and Labrador it is not difficult for me to see that they are already established here in many ways in our parishes and in our diocese. They not only provide us with something we can celebrate together as Newfoundland and Labrador Anglicans, but also link us strongly with the Anglican Church of Canada, the Anglican Communion, and our partners in mission worldwide. They are more than a “common language” for Anglicans to use; they are a common ministry for Anglicans to share.

The Marks of Mission should inspire us to reflect upon our discipleship in the world, drawing us beyond our local and familiar ministries into initiatives that are fresh, life-giving and transformative. Indeed, the Marks provide us with helpful reference points for our work and lend themselves easily to study groups, sermons and ministry plans. I encourage parishes to explore the Marks more fully in their local situations and ask where they are best seen and where they may need to be seen more clearly.

The Marks of Mission are an invitation to all of us to become a missional church, not focused upon maintaining what we have but reaching out creatively and compassionately to the world around us. The Marks are richly biblical. Our God is a God of mission embodied in the person of Jesus who tells us in John’s Gospel, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.” *It is not the church that has a mission; it is God’s mission that has a church.*

In listening to our Primate speak on a number of occasions recently I have been inspired by how easily his words reflect the five Marks and how naturally he quotes them by heart. I challenge this Diocese not only know the Marks of Mission by heart but to live them every day. I conclude with some links for further reading:

The Marks of Mission:

<http://archive.anglican.ca/v2019/mm/mm.htm>

<http://www.anglican.ca/marks/>

Vision 2019:

<http://archive.anglican.ca/v2019/index.htm>

<http://archive.anglican.ca/v2019/mm/>

My next and final such letter to you will be sent around Easter and will be called, **Our Church and the Future.**

With my every blessing,
+Geoff