

## The Nicodemus Project

Synod 2007 requested that Archbishop Miller form two task forces to address a growing list of parish concerns – one on Rural and/or Struggling Parishes and one on Budget Support for the diocese. Both task forces consulted with parish representatives. Simultaneous to the work of the two task forces, at the invitation of Archbishop Miller, a diocesan planning study was done by representatives of the national church. Bishop Edward Salmon, formerly of the Diocese of South Carolina, was also invited to speak to our clergy. His talks were truly inspirational and invigorating.

All of these initiatives underlined the urgent need for us to truly embrace our diocesan mission statement: “To proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the making of disciples” and thereby become a diocese of healthy, mission-focused, welcoming and growing parishes. In order for this to happen Synod 2009 decided that deep and long-lasting transformational change was needed.

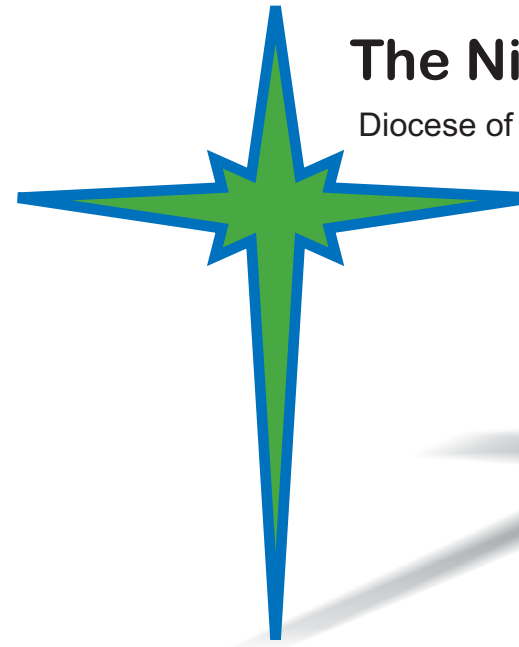
Following Synod, at the direction of Diocesan Council, a small team met over the summer. They looked at the more than 70 recommendations contained in the three reports and recommended that five priorities be established across our whole diocese. Subsequently, Council approved a far-reaching transformational change initiative that is being called “The Nicodemus Project.”

Nicodemus came to Jesus by night with many questions. He was told that spiritual re-birth must occur in order to enter the Kingdom of God. With the Nicodemus Project we are seeking spiritual renewal, like Nicodemus, and trust that Jesus will guide us.

Here are our shared priorities for at least the next two years:

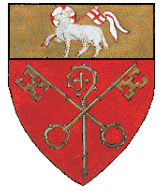
- 1. We will re-learn what it means to be Christian and Anglican.**
- 2. We will prepare our clergy and lay leaders for a different future.**
- 3. We will help our struggling parishes.**
- 4. We will evaluate the effectiveness of our governance, structures and processes.**
- 5. We will make transformational change happen.**

As part of the process, all parishes are being asked to embrace these priorities and begin by conducting a self-assessment by June 2010. Through it YOU are invited to help shape your parish’s future!



## The Nicodemus Project

Diocese of Fredericton



Nicodemus came to Jesus searching for answers (see John 3:1-10). What Jesus told Nicodemus led him to a life-changing decision. Last June 2009 delegates came to diocesan synod with many questions and concerns, and they were searching for a new way forward. Concluding a two-year-long process, delegates approved a series of motions intended to allow God to transform us into the stronger, healthier and growing church that he calls us to become. The transformational change initiative that was called for is now being undertaken across the diocese. Because it will be transformational and lifechanging for our church, it is being called ‘The Nicodemus Project.’

*From the Nicodemus Project Action Plan*  
[http://anglican.nb.ca/synod/council/nicodemus\\_project/](http://anglican.nb.ca/synod/council/nicodemus_project/)

**Proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ for the making of disciples**

January 2010

The following may be used before the Prayers of the People or intercessions or at another appropriate time in the liturgy.

## Nicodemus Project Covenant

The leader begins,

“The Nicodemus Project” is the result of extensive work and planning undertaken by the Synod of the Diocese of Fredericton in partnership with its parishes, archdeaconries, committees and working groups. The Project points directions for us as a diocesan family of faithful and worshipping communities of people of Anglican Faith in the Province of New Brunswick. With significant changes in our situation and context, those of Christian faith need to be especially intentional about the ways in which our faith in Christ Jesus is proclaimed and lived. Success in these efforts will bring about the transformation in us and in our communities always required by the proclamation of Jesus Christ for the making of disciples. To be a diocese of healthy, mission-focused, welcoming and growing parishes means attention to what we consider to be important in this place and at this time.

Let us covenant with our brother and sister Anglicans in our diocesan family to do our part to assure that we become willing and active partners, together living out the Gospel we proclaim and, responding to the specific calling heard through the Church in this diocese.

Will you, in your prayers and in your ministry, be diligent by your cooperation and assistance in our relearning what it means to be an Anglican Christian in your community and your diocese?

**I will with God’s help.**

Will you, in sharing God’s blessing to you, be active in supporting efforts to prepare the leadership of our faith communities and the diocesan family for a different future?

**I will with God’s help.**

Will you be vigilant in identifying the needs of those among us who struggle, in our parishes and beyond, as they strive to proclaim the Gospel and live as faithful disciples in the Church and in the world and will you be intentional in helping with these needs?

**I will with God’s help.**

Will you be open to and, participate in, a truthful examination and review of our current priorities and the structures both spiritual and temporal that further them? Will you be ready and willing to put personal desires aside for the good and betterment of the Body of Christ and its mission and ministry in the world?

**I will with God’s help.**



## The Prayers

*With open hearts and minds, let us pray to God, saying,  
“God of grace, be with us.”*

In these times of enormous blessing, confusion, joy, grief and vulnerability, let us pray to God,

**God of grace, be with us.**

That those who serve you in all countries and all traditions may remember your love, embrace your forgiveness, and hold fast to your hope. Let us pray to God,

**God of grace, be with us.**

That the leaders of this nation, the prime minister, premiers of the provinces and all others in authority, may be guided by your Wisdom, and find strength and courage to know and accomplish your purposes in the midst of the good and the evil of these days. Let us pray to God,

**God of grace, be with us.**

That Claude our Bishop will continue to receive the gifts of your Holy Spirit and be strengthened in the ministry of leadership among us.

Let us pray to God,

**God of grace, be with us.**

That, conscious of the particular needs of these times, the people of the Diocese of Fredericton will live and pray for transformation as envisioned by its Synod and that our minds will conform to that of Christ for the furthering of God’s mission in our midst and elsewhere. Let us pray to God,

**God of grace, be with us.**

For the vision of our diocesan synod and the Nicodemus Project: the learning and relearning of what it is to be Anglican Christians here and in these times; the preparation of our leaders for a different future; to help and support the parishes and worshipping communities among us struggling to continue in ministry; the evaluation of the effectiveness of our current ways, looking for opportunity to better serve the Christ we profess; that in prayer and with God’s grace, a transformation might take place among us. Let us pray to God,

**God of grace, be with us.**

That we take a moment to count the losses of recent days, pray for those who are in particular need and, remember those who have died and are at rest that they may find peace and joy in the Communion of Saints. *[silence]* Let us pray to God,

**God of grace, be with us.**

Gracious God, who always hears the prayers of the faithful; help us to be conscious of your call to us as disciples of Jesus and deeply aware of our need to be intentional about the ways in which we follow your Son in challenging times. Grant us grace to do what you would have us do and to be clear in witness to your love to a world in great need of you. Strengthen the bonds of community among us in the Spirit of your Son, that we might accomplish that to which we have been called. This we ask in the name of the same Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**