

THE GOOD NEWS

St. Francis Church

Lake of the Woods Plaza, Dunlap, IL

DECEMBER, 2008

Celebrate Christmas Dec. 24

Christmas Eve masses will be at 7:00 PM and 10:30 PM on Wednesday, December 24th. As always it will be a festive Eucharist with much special music.

BRING A FRIEND. This is a great opportunity to introduce friends to St. Francis. Don't be bashful. Jesus isn't. He calls all to repentance, and faith!

There is no mass Christmas Day.

Christingle Service Dec. 21

Our annual Christingle service will be this Sunday, Dec. 21, at 5:00 PM. This is also a great worship setting to bring visitors to, and is filled with symbolism. Children, young and old, always enjoy it. Bring another friend.

Annual Meeting Planned

Our Annual Meeting of the mission will be held Sunday, January 25th, at 12:00 noon. Your Bishop's Committee hopes all members will attend. Members who are formally enrolled in the parish register and are 16 or older are eligible to vote.

We will talk about our vision and plans for the coming year, which will include applying for parish status before the fall Synod. We will also nominate new members of the Bishop's Committee (for approval by the Standing Committee of the diocese), elect our synod delegates, and approve our budget for 2009.

Please mark your calendar now and plan to join us.

So What's Next?

—by Fr. John Spencer

As I mentioned in my recent pastoral letter, the Diocesan Synod has formally separated from the Episcopal Church (TEC) and realigned on an interim basis with the Anglican Church of the Southern Cone.

So, what's next?

The "Common Cause Partnership" a body formed by the Anglican Communion Network over the last 3 years, has recently announced the proposed formation of a new Anglican province here in the US and Canada which would uphold traditional Christian teaching and the foundational authority of Holy Scripture. The new body will be called *The Anglican Church in North America* (ACNA).

At present this includes the four dioceses which have separated from TEC, as well as the churches that make up the Anglican Mission in America, the Convocation of Anglican in North America, and the Reformed Episcopal Church. Several groups supporting formation of the new Province include Forward in Faith/North America and the American Anglican Council.

In addition, several "continuing" Anglican groups have expressed interest in becoming part of the new Province. In all, the group so far represents several hundred churches

with an average Sunday attendance of 100,000.

This is the first serious movement in over 40 years to re-unite the many churches which have broken away from the Episcopal Church over doctrine, worship, moral teaching, and church discipline.

Soon after the announcement of the formation of the ACNA, five Anglican Archbishops associated with the GAFCON movement publicly endorsed the new Province, including our Archbishop, Gregory Venables. Those five met with the Archbishop of Canterbury to discuss the initiative. The Living Church magazine reported this week that the Archbishop of Canterbury won't publicly "approve" the new province, since he says he has no personal authority to do that, but neither will he hinder its development.

In order for the new Province to be formally recognized throughout the Communion, the Primates (who meet in late February) must approve its addition, then the Anglican consultative Council would add the province to those recognized by the Communion (they meet in May).

Since the new province is still being defined, it may not be possible for the formal recognitions to be given this year. In any case, the diocese which will make up the new province are committed. The Bishop Robert Duncan of Pittsburgh and other leaders of the Common Cause Partnership will be visiting other Anglican provinces around the world to seek support for the new church here.

The draft constitution released by the Partnership on Dec. 3 is just that, a draft, sent out for comment. Our diocese and others are presently reviewing it and making corrective suggestions. It is hoped that a final form of the Constitutions and Canons can be adopted at a special convention to be held in Bedford Texas in June.

As St. Francis and the Diocese of Quincy move forward as part of the realignment that is taking place throughout the Anglican Communion, it is important that we all continue to pray for God's guidance in these matters, and be open to his voice. As a diocese, we have chosen the path we believe God has called us to walk. It won't always be easy. Some will oppose us. But at the heart of our journey is the conviction that Jesus is Lord, that he will never abandon his faithful people, and that if we submit ourselves to the over-riding authority of Holy Scripture and the historic teaching of the Church, we will arrive at the safe harbor he has prepared for us.

Wishing you all a wonderful Christmas
and a blessed New Year!

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