

Archbishop Hiltz asks for prayer for the Primates' Meeting

January 20, 2011

To: The Bishops, clergy and all the faithful across our beloved Church

Greetings in the name of Christ Jesus whose Epiphany we continue to celebrate.

In a few days I will be travelling to Dublin, Ireland for the forthcoming Meeting of the Primates, January 25-31. The Archbishop of Canterbury, who convenes these gatherings, has described this one as “a different kind of meeting”, with facilitated conversations, focused on the life of the Anglican Communion and the nature of primacy.

In advance of the meeting, each of us was asked to consider the question, “What is the most significant issue or challenge facing the Anglican Communion at this time?” A second question was, “What is the major issue facing your Province at this time?” During the last few days I consulted with the Metropolitans and the Directors of General Synod. Their input was valuable and helpful. I have distilled it in the following way.

For the Anglican Communion:

The Anglican Communion needs to reshape its priorities in the spirit of the Marks of Mission and in right relationships with one another in the spirit of the Gospel.

For the Anglican Church of Canada:

The Anglican Church of Canada needs to become a mission-shaped Church that speaks with greater relevance to an increasingly secularized country.

I shall carry these responses and articulate them as faithfully as I can.

On the subject of primacy, each of us received a number of documents, ancient and modern, Anglican and ecumenical addressing the role, function and authority of this ministry within the Province and within the Communion as a whole. There is a real need for clarity with respect to the place and influence of the Primates' Meetings and the nature of their service as one of the Instruments of Communion.

As challenging as this meeting will be, it does have real potential for respectful conversation and a renewed commitment to partnerships one with another in the service of the Gospel. I hope we will not be so consumed with tensions in the Communion that we fail to address the real global issues that demand our attention as leaders of the Church.

I ask your prayers for all who attend and serve this meeting and most especially for Archbishop Rowan Williams who said of this gathering, “As with every such meeting we must approach it asking what gifts God will give us through our experience together, seeking honesty and clarity and better ways of serving God's will.”

Attached are prayers I encourage you to include in the Prayers of the People on Sundays, January 23rd and 30th.

With gratitude,

I am,

Sincerely in Christ,

+Fred

Fred J. Hiltz
Archbishop and Primate

**Prayer for the Primates' Meeting, from the Most Revd Dr Thabo Makgoba,
Archbishop of Cape Town.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you washed your disciples' feet,
and called them to follow your example.

Bless the leaders of our churches as they gather at the Primates' Meeting.

As they take counsel together, give them grace to grow in prayer and fellowship,
so they may bear one another's burdens and share one another's joys,
and find mutual support in their heavy responsibilities of servant leadership.

Refresh and encourage them as they meet,

and empower them to lead your people

in lives of faithful worship, witness and service,

that bring your redemptive gospel to this broken and needy world.

Amen.

**Prayer for the Primates' Meeting from the Most Revd Phillip Aspinall,
Archbishop of Australia**

Gracious God,

in your Son Jesus Christ

you reveal the fullness of your truth and life

and reconcile us to you and to each other.

Grant that this meeting of the Primates of the Anglican Communion may
follow more closely your way,

know more deeply your truth, and

live more clearly your life.

Give the Primates grace

to speak the truth in love,

to listen to the voice of your Spirit

and to live and proclaim your good news of reconciliation and peace for all the world.

We ask this through the same Jesus Christ our Lord

who lives and reigns with you

in the unity of the Holy spirit,

one God for ever and ever.

Amen