

## In My View

# Companeros en Cristo

BY ARCHBISHOP JOHN E. PRIVETT

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this letter, I will have just returned from a visit to our companion diocese of Northern Mexico for the consecration of the newly elected Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Francisco Moreno. Bishop Moreno will have been consecrated in the Catedral de la Sagrada Familia (Holy Family Cathedral) in Monterrey and I count it a joy and a blessing to have been invited to participate in that service.

Our relationship with the Diocese of Northern Mexico goes back to the year 2000 when Archbishop David Crawley and Bishop Gemian Martinez signed a covenant, which began a companion

relationship between our diocese and the Diocese of Northern Mexico. According to the website of the Anglican Communion the purpose of the companion diocese relationship has been "to strengthen relationships in the Anglican Communion between churches, cultures and traditions as they join in equal partnership in mission. As companion relationships have developed, dioceses have experienced an interdependence of giving and receiving within the worldwide church. These relationships have also stimulated and encouraged mission and prayer and have resulted in a new understanding and appreciation of the 'Rainbow People of God' in our world today." The site continues, "the Lambeth Conference declared in 1998 that 'the time has come for significant new initiatives in

encouraging all dioceses to develop companion relationships across provincial boundaries, as part of the process of developing the cross-cultural nature of the Communion. The bishops resolved that by the next Lambeth Conference every diocese should have made 'a serious effort to identify one or more dioceses as a companion, in formal and informal ways.'"

In our covenant with Northern Mexico we affirm that our purpose for the companion relationship is that we may strengthen each other for the work to which God is calling us and some of the goals include: to pray for one another, to communicate information and resources, to encourage visits between clergy and laity, to develop and share common programs of learning, ministry and mission. Normally a companion rela-

tionship covenant is for 5 years. Since 2000, parishes throughout our diocese have prayed for the people and clergy of the Diocese of Northern Mexico. When our companion first began, delegations from both diocese visited each other. Bishop Martinez's successor, Bishop Marcelino Rivera Delgado attended my consecration as bishop in 2005 and at the Lambeth Conference in 2008 we met again and discussed the future of our companion relationship. Bishop Marcelino was very emphatic that although we have not had an opportunity in recent years for extensive exchanges or sharing of resources, the relationship was very important and he expressed his desire to renew our covenant. Part of my visit to Northern Mexico will be to explore the past history of our diocesan friendship and to see

if there might be an opportunity to renew this companionship between us.

In my view, companion relationships with another part of the church throughout the world help strengthen the bonds of affection within the communion, deepen our understanding of the way other parts of the church engage in mission in their context, and offer us another viewpoint to reflect with us about our faith and how it is expressed in our time and place. They challenge us to grow in our understanding of the breadth of the church and to reach out our hands as Companeros en Cristo (companions in Christ).

Faithfully,  
+John

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## THE HIGHWAY

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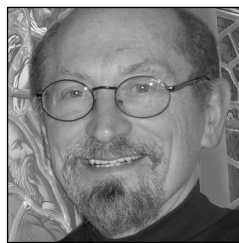
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BY JONN LAVINNDER

When I first started to assemble this month's edition of The Highway, it looked like most articles were coming from West Kootenay. As this is my home region, I worried that this might appear biased on my part. But then I received solace from the fact that the majority of our columnists are from the Okanagan. The problem stemmed from a shortage of articles, and my attempt at balancing the different region's input led me to consider where I might obtain another story. The new Dean at the Cathedral seemed a likely candidate, and in my subsequent research learned that she was a writer and studied journalism. It struck me that our clergy are probably all writers because they are, in effect, all commu-

nicators—they write sermons every week. The gospel is, after all, the Good News.

Last month, the editor of the Anglican Journal, Kristin Jenkins, wrote a pithy article on inviting friends to church. She pointed out surveys that indicated most people were open to going to church if invited by a friend. Stats Canada showed 30% of the BC population were Protestant. Lapsed Anglicans need to know we are still here. It is vital to communicate church events to your community through the local media.

This message is directed to churches in the Diocese of Kootenay who rarely submit articles to The Highway — GET TYPING! Appoint a communications officer and send out press releases whenever your church does something

in the community. Notice that PWRDF and Kairos are quick to support just causes. You can do the same.

Actually, of all the churches in Canada, denominational and otherwise, the Anglican Church received most press coverage last year. Unfortunately, it was not the Good News variety. We have had a lot of bad press and this may account, to some degree, to our dwindling numbers. However, it is time to turn this around. A small start in the right direction might be accomplished through submitting articles to newspapers, even if it only appears in the church page. Then send a copy to The Highway.

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## Editorial