

***The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything,
but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving
let your requests be made known to God.
And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding,
will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
(Philippians 4)***

To our dear brothers and sisters,

We, the Bishops of the ecclesiastical province of Rupert's Land, greet you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As a group we would like to assure you of our prayers and our thanksgivings for the ways in which the church of God is putting faith into action and showing our love for our neighbor.

At this time many of our dioceses have suspended public services of worship and we know that with the COVID 19 pandemic, more will follow. Although we may not be gathering in our usual ways the voice of prayer is certainly not silent. Many places are managing to offer live-streamed worship. Social media channels have allowed us to be in more constant contact offering prayer and messages of hope and support. Digital resources are also available through the national church.

Churches are working with health authorities, food banks, organizations that serve the homeless and seniors, to share our resources with theirs. Our church staff and volunteers are doing an amazing job of reaching out to the most vulnerable in our communities ensuring needs are met and fears are stilled. They are providing a strong ministry of non-anxious presence and we bless them for all they do.

The province is made up of very different dioceses and we know that the provision of health care and resources is not equal among us. We ask your especial prayers for those who live in northern or isolated communities where resources may be scarce and access to testing and medical care may be hours away from people's homes. We are also aware that for many of our people, they have clear memories of both the SARS and H1N1 outbreaks and that they are mourning the loss of friends and relatives anew.

We offer our prayers for families struggling to find child care as schools close, and for those who are in fear for their livelihoods and worried about their jobs. We pray for all those medical personnel and first responders who are selflessly continuing to serve their neighbours. May God protect them and their families.

We pray for you, all of you, daily. We ask God to pour his blessing upon you, your families and those you love.

In Christ

*Faithful God, the shelter of all who hope in you,
may those who seek your face be set free from fear and distress,
and come to see your goodness in the land of the living;
through Jesus Christ, our light and our salvation. Amen.*
(Book of Alternative Services p737)