

The Diocese of Niagara has a rich history of partnering with dioceses from around the world. From the Southern Cone to the Seychelles, from Liverpool to Tabora and Cuba, to name a few. Niagara and its partners have mutually benefited from the partnership experience.

Partnerships are generally diocese to diocese. To that end, Partners in Mission (PIM), a volunteer committee within the Division of Outreach, is charged with developing and coordinating the partnership. Partnerships usually range from three to five years and there is always an opportunity for extension.

While partnerships are started by Bishops, they are carried out through the mission of the parishes. It is time for each of us to consider how we can be a part of the partnership.

Initially, all contact to the partner diocese must first go through the Partners in Mission committee of the Diocese – this is not to discourage partner relationships – but to facilitate the growth of partnerships in a way that is best for both partners.

This brochure is intended to help you and your parish with that process.

Partners In Mission

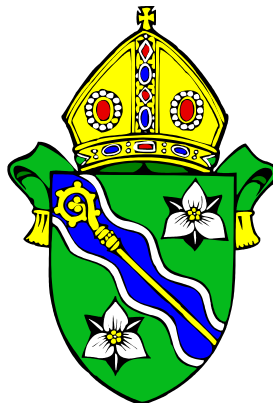
A volunteer committee of the Diocese of Niagara Division of Outreach

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*Partners walk together,
side by side.*

*They share their experiences and
their visions and support each
other in their mission and rejoice
in all that God has created.*

*By the end of their journey, they
are enriched and transformed by
the mutual appreciation of their
gifts.*

*Now, each has more to give and
may continue to receive from
new partners in an ongoing
journey of faith.*

Principals of Partnership

1. Local Initiative

Respect for the authority of the local church

2. Mutuality

Open and joint accountability

3. Responsible Stewardship

Giving and receiving resources in a judicious, selfless and mature manner

4. Interdependence

A relationship lacking absolutes

5. Cross Fertilization

A willingness to learn from each other

6. Integrity

A real and honest commitment that recognizes the equality of partners

7. Transparency

Open and honest dialogue

8. Solidarity

Committed together in Christ

9. Meeting Together

Regular evaluation and self-assessment

10. Acting Ecumenically

To work together in mission with our Christian friends from other traditions

Parishes are able to be twinned with another parish in our partner diocese. As the parish to parish partnerships are formed we will be able to share our faith journeys, joys, and concerns with our partner parishes.

All requests for twinning, contacts, possible visits, and gifts must be done through our diocese. Diocesan staff and Partners in Mission members will, in turn, be in contact with the partner diocese. This is to ensure the most appropriate twinning and an equitable sharing of resources.

Parishes that are twinned are encouraged to share faith stories with their partner parish. Describe traditions, celebrations, ministries and challenges through traditional and creative ways. Partners in Mission will try to help with translation, if necessary, of correspondence whenever possible.

As Christians, we pray for each other. All parishes in the diocese are encouraged to uphold the people and the churches of our partner diocese in their prayers on a regular basis. The Prayer Cycle which appears in each issue of the Niagara Anglican includes the names and parishes of our partner diocese(s) for your benefit.

One way we can be supportive of our friends in our partner diocese is to learn about the social, economic and political issues facing the church there. Our partnership with another diocese would be an ideal focus for a Lenten or Advent education program. You may want to learn more about customs and forms of worship. Partnership Sunday, held each May, is an ideal opportunity to highlight your partnership and explore their customs and forms of worship. Members of Partners in Mission would be able to suggest resource materials for you.

The outpouring of love may motivate people or parishes to want to send special gifts. Such gifts are not encouraged as the aim of the partnership is not a financial one. We in Canada can support the ministry of the church through the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund and the Anglican Appeal.

It is important for all of us to remember that a partnership means giving and receiving. There are many gifts our partners have to offer which are not monetary.

Travel is encouraged to get a real sense of our partnership diocese and hosting members of the partnership diocese is also an option. All travel plans must, however, first go through the Partners in Mission (PIM) committee.

PARISH TWINNING CHECK LIST

- Discuss your intention to twin at a Parish Council or Vestry Meeting
- If your parish doesn't already have a PIM rep, appoint one as a liaison between your church and the diocese.
- Complete a Parish Profile (available from the PIM Chair or the Diocesan office)
- Be patient and proactive during the twinning process, think of the gifts and talents that you can share with your partner parish
- Once you have twinned, open a dialogue between you and your partner and set goals for the relationship