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To: The Clergy and Parishes of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Date: July 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020

### *Setting down the crozier*

*Last Sunday I presided at the Cathedral Church of All Saints. It was my last worship service as Diocesan Bishop. When I became Diocesan Bishop, symbols of my office were presented to me. At the conclusion of Sunday's liturgy I returned the bible to the Executive Secretary of Synod and I placed the crozier in its holder on the Cathedra. There it will await the person to be installed as the 17th Diocesan Bishop.*

*The bishop's crozier belongs to the diocese. It is inscribed: "Presented to Frederick Fifth bishop of Nova Scotia by the Clergy of the Diocese – 1889" it has been carried by every diocesan bishop since then. Each holder of the office is remembered by an engraved ring on the staff (Sort of like the Stanley Cup!). It is in three sections that disassemble for ease of transport and has been repaired numerous times over the years. The crozier is presented during the Ordination of a bishop with these words: "Receive this staff as a sign of your pastoral office; keep watch over the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit has appointed you to shepherd the Church of God. Encourage the faithful, restore the lost, build up the Body of Christ; that when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, you may receive the unfading crown of glory." It is not a sign of power and certainly not a magic wand, it is a constant reminder of what the bishop is called to do and the relationship between the bishop and the people of the diocese.*

*In our diocese and in fact in the whole Canadian Anglican Church, the role of the bishop as chief pastor has been greatly valued, much more than the bishop as "CEO". It is however only one dimension of the role of bishop. The bishop is called to be: a person of prayer, an evangelist, a teacher, to help discern leaders in the body of Christ, to speak to the world about the vision of the kingdom, to lead in the mission of God in the diocese, to be well grounded in the tradition and speak out of that knowledge to guard the faith, to ensure that there are clergy to minister in the parishes of the diocese and to collaborate with other leaders in discerning the way the church should move. I don't think that anybody can do all these things with equal skill and no one can even attempt them without the grace and mercy of God.*

*Somewhere over the past twelve years I realised that although I need to attend to all these areas of ministry, I was first called to be a pastor and it is there where I feel most comfortable. It is not easy to be in a pastoral relationship with so many people. This challenge was underlined for me when I became metropolitan and was told that I was in a pastoral relationship with all Anglicans in seven dioceses! (About 150,000 church members). I have tried to bring that pastoral dimension into all of those other areas of episcopal ministry. I am only too well aware that I have not always been successful. The crozier has sometimes seemed like a rebuke to me.*

*I have now set the crozier down in order that another may pick it up and enter into that relationship with you. It was hard to set it down, because despite the frequent trials of this ministry, it has been an enormous privilege.*

*One for which I thank you.*

*I am not going to stop being a pastor but in another two days the challenge to balance all of these commitments will be removed. I hope that we will still be in relationship. Even without "the hat and stick". Blessings,*

*+Ron*

Archbishop of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

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I have been asked if there is a particular fund or charity that people may make contributions to as a gift recognizing my ministry as Diocesan Bishop. Gifts may be made to the "Lay Leadership Legacy Fund." And sent care of the Synod Office;

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**Use of masks during worship:**

Notice for Parishes in Nova Scotia: From the Nova Scotia Government Website: "Wearing a non-medical mask is required in most indoor public places. Children under 2 are exempt, as well as children 2 to 4 when their caregiver can't get them to wear a mask. People with a valid medical reason for not wearing a mask are also exempt. Schools, day cares and day camps continue to follow their sector-specific plans." This regulation also applies to places of worship and takes effect as of July 31. I participated in an online briefing for businesses, academic and faith leaders yesterday where Dr. Srang elaborated on this new requirement. As of 11am. today the Public Health order has been clarified so that exemptions from wearing a mask include:

"5.18 Notwithstanding section 5.17, a person is exempt from the requirement to wear a mask in a public place if the person:

(h) is a performer or officiant in the course of performing activities requiring vocalization, such as talking or singing, at an event or activity as described in section 5.4."

This includes a priest/pastor/minister/rabbi etc. as well as someone else who is singing/chanting as part of a faith service/gathering

Masks may be temporarily removed in order to receive communion and a couple being married do not have to wear a mask during the exchange of vows or while photographs are being taken.

For parishes in Prince Edward Island, masks are recommended to be worn during indoor gatherings, however they are not mandatory.

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**Re-Opening of Synod Office.** Many of our staff members have begun working from the office again at least several days per week, however we are not fully staffed and are not officially open. We are continuing to work on our re-opening plan and expect an announcement within the next two weeks. We do not anticipate that the Synod Office will be open for meetings anytime soon.

The Most Reverend Ron Cutler  
Archbishop of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island