



Clergy officially receive licences

If I counted correctly, 29 clergy and four deacons received their official Anglican Network in Canada clergy licences today in a moving 2+ hour service. After Archbishop Greg commissioned Bishop Don and Bishop Malcolm, the clergy, in an impressive procession, received their licences amid much applause and many hugs. Also, the 15 ANiC parishes, lay leadership, and national staff were commissioned.

Archbishop Venables, in his commissioning sermon, did not sugar-coat the difficulties ahead. Rather, he said that when we reach the end of our resources, Jesus' can transform the difficulty into opportunity. Drawing from the Gospel's account of Jesus commanding the disciples to feed the vast multitude with their meager resources (a few loaves and fishes) – "YOU give them something to eat" – our Primate reintroduced us to Biblical math. Overwhelming need + meager resources + a handful of inadequate disciples + JESUS = miraculous solution + great opportunity for Kingdom-building.

He also added that we must allow God to love us; we must love others, whether or not they are lovable; and we must ACT to meet others' needs. His final challenge to us was to: "GET ON WITH IT".

See Dr Chris Sugden's account of the service on [Anglican Mainstream](#).

Broad-based support

During the celebration service, the stage was filled with robed clergy, including (by my count) 17 bishops and archbishops, mostly leaders from our Common Cause Partners. Also in the audience were ministers and members of other denominations who kindly supported us today with their presence and have been faithfully supporting us with their prayers. Among these was Pastor Ed Skutshek, from Kelowna, BC, and president of Sold Ground Canada – the Lutheran equivalent of Anglican Essentials Canada.

The Rev David Short's Bible study

The morning opened fittingly with Rev Short "unpacking" 1 Corinthians 15 – the passage from which the conference theme, "Compelled by Christ's love", is drawn. He said our culture holds three myths as true – pluralism (all religions offer some truth), tolerance (you must accept my position or you aren't accepting me) and human rights (the supremacy of individual rights). Only the Gospel of Jesus has the power to dethrone these myths. From 1 Corinthians 15, we see the Gospel is Christ-centred (Christological), Scripturally-based (from Genesis to Revelation the focus is the Gospel), theological (the heart-breaking grace of God), cosmic (universal and eternal), and personal. Also, the Gospel is non-negotiable; it encompasses judgement and salvation. Everything we do that is firmly rooted in the gospel will last for eternity. (And sooo much more...)

Evangelism in Western post-modern society

Saying, ANiC's witness challenges secularized society, the Rev Dr Canon Chris Sugden explained the secular worldview and how we who live under the authority of the plainly revealed Word of God can evangelize in our utterly secular culture. Jesus dealt with individuals by identifying the first thing that would need to change if the Kingdom of God entered their life. Similarly, Dr Sugden said our task was to find those points where people are challenged or affirmed in the Gospel, the place where the Kingdom confronts the assumptions of society.

See the full address posted on [VirtueOnLine](#).

In responding, the panel brought out key themes of the conference: the need for effective catechism (Bible knowledge) among the laity and the necessity of unabashedly proclaiming the Gospel as Paul did in Acts 17 when he proclaimed what the Greeks worshipped as the "unknown God".

Ordering DVDs?

The above highlights are utterly inadequate and incomplete reflections of the conference sessions. To receive the full benefit, you will need to view the video when it is posted to our website or order the DVDs. In the next few days we will decide how many DVD sets of the conference to produce and what content to include on the DVDs. (ie Should it be a 2 DVD set of conference highlights or a multi-DVD set containing most of the conference sessions.) This decision will be based on the response we receive and the orders placed. If you would like to order a DVD set, please help us by ordering quickly. Order form is available [here](#).

Acknowledging the volunteers

Once again our conference was supported by a large willing, joyful team of volunteers with servant hearts. And like in Burlington last November, our volunteers were marvelous, much appreciated and likely inadequately thanked. So, if you know someone who served as a volunteer, be sure to show your gratitude for their sacrifice of service.

Conference photos

A few photos of the conference are [posted here](#). If you attended and have some good shots, please send me a couple of your best we'll post them to the web.