



**Pastoral Letter from Bishop Michael Ingham  
to be read in all churches of the Diocese of New Westminster  
on Trinity Sunday, 2011**

Dear Friends in Christ:

By now you may have heard that the Supreme Court of Canada has dismissed Leave to Appeal by those who launched law suits against the Diocese in an effort to oppose the blessing of same-sex unions.

This means that the litigation is now ended. The money, time, and energy taken up by this long and unnecessary conflict can now be directed back to the real work of the Church. For this we should all be deeply thankful.

For many of us, the debate about same-sex relationships has faded into distant memory. We have moved on from those questions into the challenge of implementing the 10 mission priorities of our Diocese, such as addressing homelessness and poverty, developing youth initiatives, renewing parish worship, and deepening Anglican identity.

Litigation was not our choice or wish. At stake, however, was more than simply ownership of church properties. The courts have affirmed that the Church has the right to examine its beliefs and practices in accordance with its own traditions and structures.

We are, and continue to be, respectful of genuine differences of conviction among faithful members of our Church.

I want to take this opportunity to repeat that no one is being asked to leave the church buildings in which they worship, except those clergy who have resigned their ministries in the Anglican Church of Canada. My hope is to work with each of these congregations to appoint mutually agreeable clergy who will be loyal to the Church in which they serve.

Let us all pray that in time these sad divisions may be healed. And let us get on with the mission of our Lord Jesus Christ revealed through the mystery of the Holy Trinity, whom we celebrate today.

Kindest regards,

The Right Reverend Michael Ingham  
Bishop of New Westminster