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Greetings All:

Please allow me to introduce myself. It is my privilege to be our Diocese's Representative for the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer. I am a married laywoman and member of the congregation of St. Cyprian's Church, East Dalhousie, NS. I am a full time paralegal and live in Windermere, NS with my husband who is also an active member of the church.

As you may know, the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer is a worldwide prayer organization for both men and women. It is completely volunteer and is dedicated to increasing and strengthening prayer throughout the world. Our ministries include: teaching people how to pray, providing aids to help parishes develop effective prayer groups, providing information and resources for prayer as well as promoting prayer as a priority in the Church. The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (Canada) is a part of the International Anglican Fellowship of Prayer (AFP). AFP (Canada) exists to encourage and enable the ministry of prayer in Canada. It is inclusive of all forms of expressions of Christian church life, whether they be lay or clerical, catholic or evangelical, monastic or secular, formal or informal. AFP (Canada) seeks to be a teaching resource to assist both individuals and congregations to grow in a life of prayer.

Membership in AFP (Canada) is open to all praying people who are drawn to the organization, and who desire to be part of a larger body to call and support people of prayer. Membership entitles the person to receive the quarterly Partners in Prayer Newsletter from the International AFP organization, the Canadian Newsletter twice a year, and the Canadian Prayer Prompter twice a year. A tax deductible donation of \$35 or more per year entitles a person or organization such as a parish or prayer group, or an ACW to be a member of AFP Canada.

As the Diocesan Representative (DR), I am joined in this ministry by members of our recently formed Diocesan AFP Committee. Their names and contact information is included in this material. Together we hope to work toward making the AFP better known within the Diocese so as to make available the many resources which AFP has to offer parishes. I am hopeful that we will be able to find a youth member to join the Committee.

The Anglican Fellowship of Prayer has many inexpensive pamphlets, booklets, tapes, videos and dvds on a wide range of topics which would be useful in most, if not all parishes through the Christian year. There are resources for quiet days, prayer chains, personal prayer and prayer in parishes. There are Lenten resources, pamphlets which may be helpful to Sunday School teachers or for use by families at home as well as helpful materials for sacramental preparation and materials for prayer workshops, resources for readers and pastoral care teams, just to name a few. There's even an excellent resource for your AFP Parish Rep and congregation on how to support you in your ministry.

An excellent programme which I would like to particularly call to your attention is the Alongsiders. Through Alongsiders, members of a parish family who are shut-ins may participate in a valuable ministry of their own: that of prayer. This is a way for people who have been active members of a parish to continue to have a ministry, even if their physical health or life situation prevents them from getting out to the Sunday services or weekday programmes offered in your parish. It is not a prayer chain. The focus of the prayers of Alongsiders is not on the urgent needs of individuals, but rather the needs, hopes and dreams of the parish and community. For example, you might request the prayers of Alongsiders if your parish is planning a new type of ministry or is discerning around an important decision. This is a great programme - ministry by shut-ins, rather than to them.

I am enclosing some materials which I hope will introduce you to or help you become better acquainted with AFP. If you are not already a member of the Anglican Fellowship of Prayer, I would ask that you consider becoming a member.

One of our goals in this Diocese is to build a network of people who will be AFP Parish Representatives. The primary role of a Parish Rep is to be a prayer support for you, the Parish's Rector, and to help you encourage and enable prayer in the life of your parish. I would request that you give prayerful consideration to appointing an AFP Parish Representative in your parish. Depending upon your situation, it may be appropriate to appoint co-reps to help promote and support prayer in your various congregations within a parish.

There are many free materials and you and your Parish Rep may wish to order a supply for your parish as well as some of the other materials. You may order directly or through me. Please note, shipping costs are extra. For those of you with internet access, the website is: www.anglicanprayer.org. There are several free resources on the website which can be downloaded. You will find some resources for children on the website of the Diocese of Keewatin - they have a virtual Sunday School. AFP's Bernadette Njegovan of Brandon Diocese contributes to it.

As Advent planning is no doubt on your present agenda, may I offer a simple idea which you might want to use on the first Sunday of Advent (it can also be used at other times, such as Lent). Have pens and small slips of paper on a table as people enter the Church on the first Sunday of Advent and ask each person to clearly print his or her name on a piece of paper, which is then put in a basket on the table. During the service, explain that as each person leaves that day, each is to draw out and take with him/her one name from the basket. All members of the congregation present that day are asked to pray each day during Advent for the person whose name they draw from the basket, knowing that another member of the Church family will be praying daily for them. In addition to the obvious benefits of having members of a congregation praying daily for one another, in congregations where this practice has become a routine, it has had the unexpected benefit of helping people make an extra effort to come to Church on those special days so that their name will be in the basket.

I know many things cross your desk but please find a Parish AFP Rep and hand this material on to that person(s). Kindly request that your Parish Rep provide me with his/her name and contact information. Thank you and may God continue to bless you in your ministries.

Blessings,

Diocese of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island
AFP Committee

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