

Executive Summary

Background

- Bishop John Chapman first called on the Diocese of Ottawa to become more involved in the fight against regional child poverty in his 2009 charge to Diocesan Synod.
- \$300,000 of the proceeds of the diocesan capital campaign has been allocated for the development of *The Bishop's Child Poverty Initiative*. The *Initiative* will be our diocese's overarching response to child poverty in our territory.

Analysis

- The scope of a pilot phase for *The Bishop's Child Poverty Initiative* must be intentionally narrow in order to maximize the impact of our diocesan advocacy, build momentum for the *Initiative*, and ensure the sound management of our financial resources.
- Creative partnerships with other community groups will be essential to the long-term success of the *Initiative* given the diocese's limited access to children and relative inexperience in directly addressing child poverty.
- An initial focus on the improvement of food security and childhood nutrition among economically disadvantaged populations in our territory is consistent with our Church's Eucharistic tradition and the rural demography of our diocese.
- Wherever possible, the *Initiative's* pilot activities should seek to address both immediate community needs and the unjust social structures that perpetuate cycles of child poverty.
- A community project that ran from March to June 2011 at Greater Gatineau Elementary School provides a useful conceptual model for a pilot activity. The *Greater Gatineau Elementary Health and Wellness Project* taught all children at the school how to shop for low-cost nutritious foods and how to make their own healthy school lunches. The project was a great success but has since lost its funding due to provincial budget cutbacks.
- The Western Quebec School Board and public health authorities in the Outaouais have entered into dialogue with the Episcopal Office and are prepared to partner with the diocese to ensure the Greater Gatineau project can continue operating until the end of the 2011-2012 academic year. These potential community partners are also prepared to work with the diocese to initiate similar grocery shopping courses and school lunch workshop programs in other elementary schools and community centres in our territory should an initial partnership between the diocese and Greater Gatineau School prove successful.

Major Recommendations

- It is the recommendation of the Child Poverty CDA that the diocese allocate \$10,000 by mid-September 2011 for a pilot child poverty alleviation partnership with Greater Gatineau School. The funding would allow the school's unique project to operate from October 2011 to June 2012. The partnership would be known publicly as *The Daily Bread Project: Anglican Diocese of Ottawa*, and would serve as the first official pilot project for *The Bishop's Child Poverty Initiative*.
- It is further recommended that the Episcopal Office assign 7 hours of staff time (1 day) per week beginning in September 2011 to support the expansion of *The Bishop's Child Poverty Initiative*.