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**Diocese of Toronto**  
Anglican Church of Canada

## Social Justice and Advocacy Update April 2020

### NEWS FOR APRIL 2020

**Dear supporters of Social Justice & Advocacy at the Diocese of Toronto,**

COVID-19 has changed our situation in many ways. We are unable to meet together in church services or at other events. Many of our outreach services have had to be adapted to the current circumstances, or even closed where it is impossible to provide existing services with adequate precautions for volunteers. Our advocacy is now more than ever focused on immediate relief for the most vulnerable in our communities, whether that be through income support, food security, or housing units for those experiencing homelessness.

Many of our parish outreach services, FaithWorks ministries, and local shelters and food banks are trying to meet greater than usual needs with fewer than usual resources. If your circumstances permit, please consider supporting them with your financial contributions.

- 1. Diocesan Resources and Updates**
- 2. Advocacy in a time of COVID-19**
- 3. Resources for Online Learning**
- 4. Earth Day Eco-Challenge**
- 5. Outreach and Advocacy Prayer Cycle**

**1. Diocesan Resources and Updates:** The [Social Justice & Advocacy page](#) on the Diocesan website includes the following resources, which may be of interest. (Please note that both resources are subject to change with ongoing developments)

- Outreach Program Policy and Best Practices
- Outreach Services Ongoing in the Diocese of Toronto

If you have information to update the list of Outreach Services, please contact me at [egoulden@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:egoulden@toronto.anglican.ca). A compilation of resources related to COVID-19 can be found on the [Diocesan webpage](#).

**2. Advocacy in a time of COVID-19:** If anything, COVID-19 has made the need for housing and income security more urgent than ever. The good news is that we can continue to do advocacy without leaving our homes! Why not take the time to send an e-mail or a letter to your municipal councillor, provincial MPP or federal MP? Check our [webpage](#) for ongoing updates on our current advocacy campaigns. Our [Advocacy Resources](#) page

In addition, the Ontario government has extended the deadline for submissions to its consultation on the provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy to April 30, 2020. Visit our [webpage](#) for the Diocesan submission and how you can add your input.

**3. Resources for Online Learning:** Due to the ongoing state of emergency, all in-person events planned for this spring are cancelled until further notice. However, the possibilities for online learning are almost limitless! Sign up for a webinar, convene a Facebook watch party to watch a documentary, or set up a Zoom study group. Here are some possibilities to get you started:

- [Push and other documentaries on the housing crisis on TVO](#)
- [Videos and Webinars from Faith and the Common Good](#)
- [Doctrine of Discovery: Stolen Land, Strong Hearts](#) (a study guide is also available for download)

Other suggestions will be posted on our [Facebook page](#) and [web page](#) throughout the month. Suggestions gratefully received!

**4. Earth Day Eco-Challenge:** This on-line challenge runs through the month of April. The challenge invites participants to take action as they are able, with points for activities undertaken under different headings. Many of these activities can be done from home and without gathering in groups. The parish of St. Mary Magdalene, Toronto, has signed up as a "team". Perhaps your own parish or you as an individual or family can sign up! [Visit the site here.](#)

**5. Outreach and Advocacy Prayer Cycle:** Please remember in your prayers all those who are affected by the current situation, especially: those who were already vulnerable and are now more so, including those who are homeless, living in poverty, Indigenous communities, and refugees; those who are sick or at risk; those who are lonely and isolated; those who are anxious; those who have lost income; healthcare providers; and all who provide essential services and reach out to those in need. Some of the outreach ministries mentioned below may be closed or altered due to current circumstances. Please pray for those served by these ministries, as well as for the health and safety of staff and volunteers of any ministries that are ongoing.

**April 5, Palm / Passion Sunday** - *Pray for* St. Bartholomew, its breakfast and after school programs, food bank, and refugee sponsorship;  
*for* St. Bede, its support of the Bluffs food bank, Christmas outreach programs, and education and advocacy initiatives;  
*for* St. Bride, Clarkson, its involvement in the Caring and Sharing network, Compass community centre and food bank, and Community Church Volunteers, and its support of Hands Across the Nation outreach in developing countries;  
*and for* St. Chad, and its monthly community supper.

**April 12, Easter Sunday** - *Pray for* St. Christopher, and its community environmental stewardship programs;  
*for* St. Clement, Eglinton, its weekly community lunch program, scholarship

programs in Haiti, refugee sponsorship, its partnership with Habitat for Humanity, and support of the Flemingdon Park community centre and food bank; *and for* St. Cuthbert, Leaside, its community garden, spring neighbourhood cleanup, support of Flemingdon Park Ministry, LOFT and Moorelands Community services, clothing collections for New Circles Community Services, Sistering, and All Saints Community Centre, support for women leaving shelters, and participation in refugee sponsorship.

**April 19, Easter 2** - *Pray for* St. Cyprian, its support of NeighbourLink community services, the Mission to Seafarers, Flemingdon Park ministry, community garden, and other local and global outreach;  
*for* St. David Anglican-Lutheran Church, Orillia, its community breakfast program, community garden, Harmony Centre, Route 66 weekly Kids' Club, and its support of Jubilee House and the Pikangikum Water Project;  
*and for* St. David, Donlands, its Open Door weekly parent and caregiver drop-in, art classes for youth, community performing arts events, food garden, support of St. Monica's Food Bank and Eastview Community Centre's food access programs, and refugee sponsorship.

**April 26, Easter 3** - *Pray for* St. Dunstan of Canterbury, its donations of knitted goods to Scarborough Centenary Hospital, its twinning relationship with a First Nations community in northern Saskatchewan, and fundraising program to support local and global outreach;  
*for* St. Francis of Assisi, its Christmas hampers, support of local food security programs and the Pikangikum water project;  
*and for* St. George Memorial, Oshawa, its monthly community lunch offering toiletries and gently-used clothing, participation in the Mary Street school breakfast program and St. Vincent soup kitchen, prayer shawl ministry to the community and St. Michael's Hospital, refugee sponsorship, crafts for overseas and weekly Fill in the Gap drop-in.

For more information about social justice activities across the diocese, to be added to the distribution list for this newsletter, or to share information, please contact me at the email address or phone numbers listed below. If you would like to receive more frequent updates on our activities, consider liking our [Facebook page](#).

Praying for you all in these days of uncertainty,

In faithful witness,

Elin Goulden

Social Justice and Advocacy Consultant

[egoulden@toronto.anglican.ca](mailto:egoulden@toronto.anglican.ca)

Tele: 416-363-6021 x240

Toll-free: 1-800-668-8932 x240

Social Justice and Advocacy Website: [www.toronto.anglican.ca/sjac](http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/sjac)

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