

Bishop Tom Corston



“Signed with the cross and marked as Christ’s own forever,” Tom will always be remembered as a life long follower of Jesus and a life long learner, always eager to gather with others to reflect on the Gospel of the day and to gain fresh insights for faithful living. In his ministry as a deacon and priest, Tom was simply ‘modest, humble and constant in his labours.’” (p.47, *The Book of Common Prayer*) He had a big heart for Moosonee and for Algoma too, having served parishes in both dioceses with great joy.

When he was called, consecrated, and installed as the ninth Bishop of Moosonee on July 6, 2010, Tom embraced his care of the diocese with much enthusiasm: travelling from community to community, preaching and teaching, confirming hundreds of young people, offering counsel to the clergy, participating in the gatherings of the Great Chapters and enjoying the feasts that accompanied every event! With modesty, Tom often described his ministry as bishop as ‘transitional’ - helping the people to discern a way forward in times marked by the inter generational trauma of the Residential Schools, a decline in vocations to ordained ministry, the closure of a number of parishes, and



Bishop Tom Corston posed with the first graduates from the Moosonee School of Ministry in 2018 at Holy Trinity Church in Cochrane.

significant financial challenges. When the Diocese of Moosonee became an Area Mission of the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario in 2011, with the Metropolitan serving as the diocesan bishop, Tom was quite content, even in retirement, to serve as Assistant Bishop with Archbishop Colin Johnson. In more recent years, he has served as an elder bishop whose vast knowledge of Moosonee has been a great blessing to our current Archbishop, Anne Germond.

No recognition of Tom’s ministry would be complete without an acknowledgment of Ruth’s abiding love and encouragement. He often spoke how blessed he was by her support. Family life was important

to Tom as indeed it is to us all.

As the people of Moosonee, we are especially grateful that in retirement, Tom wrote memoirs of ministry. Not surprisingly, they are full of wonderful stories, all of which will be of enormous value for the Archives of Moosonee, the Council of the North and the General Synod. We are grateful too for the School of Ministry Tom established and is now being re-vitalized. His vision for such a school is an important part of his legacy as our bishop.

I have often thought that Tom’s entire ministry has been a true reflection of faithfulness to one of the most important vows made at ordination: “Will

you in all things seek not your own glory but the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ?” (p.656, *The Book of Alternative Services*). Tom made good on that promise. It was never ‘all about Tom’. It was as he would often say - sometimes with laughter, sometimes with tears - “All for Jesus, this our song shall always be.”

So friends, we commend Tom to the Lord he loved and served to faithfully, praying with confidence:

“Receive, O Lord, your servant for he is returning to you; May your angels surround and your saints welcome him in peace; - May he gaze upon you and enjoy the blessedness of perfect rest.

Amen.

Archbishop Fred Hiltz.

Bishop Tom was a storyteller! And the stories told a lot about the man who told them; they were generous, funny, self-deprecating, and full of warmth. They revealed his love for the church and most especially for the people he served. They preserved an oral history of the communities he was part of. In the tradition of our Lord, Bishop Tom told stories to remind us who



Bishop Tom Corston at the Moosonee School of Ministry.

we are, and more importantly, whose we are - beloved children of God, sisters and brothers of Jesus. He had

a heart of a pastor and the wellbeing of the people, 'committed to his charge' was always foremost in his

thoughts. Perhaps his most enduring legacy will be the Moosonee School of Ministry he established in the Diocese of Moosonee and those who trained there. Some of those people later were ordained to serve as teachers, and pastors in their own communities.

Reflections on the life and work of Bishop Tom Corston by Archbishop Colin Johnson.

The Moosonee School of Ministry

