



The Rev. Christopher Ashmore

Host Rector's Welcome Letter

The 130th Diocesan Synod
Trinity Church, Jacksonville, Illinois
October 26, 2007

"Being a Christian, Being the Church"

Dear Synod Delegates and Guests,

The Wardens, Vestry, and members of Trinity Church, Jacksonville, join me in welcoming you to the 130th Synod of the Episcopal Diocese of Springfield. It is our privilege to host this Synod as we celebrate our 175th year. We hope that our planning and preparations will provide you with a congenial atmosphere in which to engage in the worship and ministry of the Lord.

The theme for this year's Synod – **Being a Christian, Being the Church** – captures the two poles or foci of our gathering. Each delegate is a Christian who, by the grace of God, has been brought into the Body of Christ by baptism, and by that same grace has been spiritually nourished in the sacramental Body and Blood of the Risen Lord. In affirming this, we recognize that each Delegate plays an important part in this Synod. To the extent that each one is faithful to Christ, so he or she brings to this Synod that which Christ has given in His call motivation, and power to serve.

And yet, our contribution is meager if it is only given and received as an individual. For we are the Body of Christ, the Church, called to be one in the *koinonia* of the Holy Spirit. Our true authenticity and power is manifested only as it coalesces in the mind of Christ in His Church. It is only as we are united in the Body that we truly represent Christ to the world, which is our missionary calling and vocation.

There is a Collect that we used to pray when we gathered for a meeting of the Church. It reads in part: *"Save us from all error, ignorance, pride and prejudice; and of thy great mercy vouchsafe, we beseech thee, so to direct, sanctify, and govern us in our work, by the mighty power of the Holy Ghost, that the comfortable Gospel of Christ may be truly preached, truly received, and truly followed, in all places, to the breaking down the kingdom of sin, Satan, and death..."* May God answer this prayer for us and in us as we gather to serve in this 130th Synod of the Diocese of Springfield.

In nomine Christi,

The Rev. Christopher L. Ashmore
Rector, Trinity Church, Jacksonville