

## **Fresh Start**

### **How does it work in Niagara?**

In the Diocese of Niagara, we believe that transition is happening even before a new priest is welcomed into your parish. With that in mind, FRESH START sees itself as a resource to parishes, parochial committees and clergy once news of a move is announced.

Frequently, members of the FRESH START team will visit a parish even before the new incumbent arrives, to introduce the program and to conduct an Entrance and Exit module. This helps to prepare the community for a new beginning.

After the new incumbent arrives, clergy will receive an invitation to join a clergy FRESH START group, which meets on a monthly basis for two years. In Niagara, commitment to this program is a condition of employment. The clergy group offers a place for questioning and affirmation, through what can sometimes be a difficult time. Remember, for many clergy this is a personal as well as a professional transition.

Throughout that two year period, lay leaders from your congregation will be expected to participate in dedicated lay leadership days and joint lay/clergy days. There are usually six days of programming throughout the two year period. These events are designed for both learning and intentional conversation around issues of transition.