



The Honourable Edna Elias  
Commissioner of Nunavut  
St Jude's Cathedral  
13 September 2012  
Speaking notes

Good afternoon Your Royal Highnesses, Bishop Atagotaaluk, honourable guests, families and friends

Today is an exceptional and appropriate occasion to be able to celebrate some achievements during the visit of Their Royal Highnesses, and of the 60<sup>th</sup> year of Queen Elizabeth II's reign.

To mark the Diamond Jubilee, special initiatives are planned throughout 2012 to honour The Queen's reign, her service and her dedication to this country, and serve as an example to us all.

This occasion is a time for Nunavummiut, and indeed all Canadians, to celebrate the contributions of our head of state and to reflect on our territory and nation's growth during her reign. Throughout the Diamond Jubilee year, those Canadians who, like Her Majesty, have dedicated their life to the service of others will be honoured with a Diamond Jubilee Medal for their contributions. These recipients are the people who make a difference in your community and continue to make Canada one of the best countries in the world to live in.

Today, in the presence of very special guests, I am honoured to speak about the Cathedral Local Fund Raising Committee which was formed after a fire destroyed the original Cathedral of St. Jude in November of 2005.

The members organized many fundraising events and have been involved in several matters pertaining to the construction of the new cathedral. Their energy, commitment, dedication and their success is being recognized today. I am honoured to present Diamond Jubilee medals to eight of the members on this memorable day in our new Church.

I ask Mme Hanson to call each recipient to come forward and receive their medal. She will offer a few words about each recipient.

To all recipients, please stand so I may read the letter sent by the Governor General of Canada the right Honourable David Johnston.

**Mary Ellen Thomas**

Mary Ellen Thomas is a community catalyst and an outstanding educator and volunteer. With over 35 years of raising a family and working in the North. She is a constant supporter of various community interest and help support groups.

**Frank Pearce**

Frank Pearce provides yeoman service to various organizations and groups in Iqaluit. As a resident of Nunavut for over thirty years, Mr. Pearce has led a distinguished life in academics as well as in Education and Municipal development in the North. He is Vice Chair of the Fundraising Committee of St. Jude's Anglican Cathedral.

### **Susan Gardner**

Susan was born and raised in the North. She speaks fluent Inuktitut and has raised her family North of 60. She is a diligent volunteer and has served as a member of St. Jude's fundraising committee from its inception. She is the communications director for the committee.

### **Capt. Cyrus Blanchet**

Capt Blanchet is a commissioned officer in the Anglican Church and has lived in the North for the past several years. He was first posted by the Anglican Church Army to Cambridge Bay, Nunavut. He organizes and runs the local soup kitchen, holds regular services at the Cathedral, visits shut ins and hospital, the correctional center and volunteers with the Fundraising committee of St. Jude's.

### **Meeka Kilabuk**

Meeka was born and raised in Nunavut. She is originally from the community of Pangnirtung and has served in various capacities elected and non-elected over the past several years. She is a community volunteer and has been active on St. Jude's rebuilding committee since 2006.

### **Milissa Elliott**

In her spare time Milissa has spent countless hours as the Treasurer of the St. Jude's Fundraising Committee and has done yeoman service in the financials as well as the logistical and administrative needs of the committee.

### **Edward Walter Picco**

Edward's leadership and inspiration as chairperson of the local fund raising committee has been a major factor in the reconstruction of the iconic cathedral for the Diocese of the Arctic. He has been the Chairman and inaugural member of the Local Fundraising Committee for the past 7 years, he is a previous

recipient of the Queens Golden Jubilee medal in 2002 for outstanding contributions to the Community and a recipient of the Duke Of Edinburgh Challenge Award Appreciation presented by His Highness Prince Phillip.

**Rebekah Williams**

Rebekah is a leader in Nunavut. She is originally from Arctic Bay and has spent considerable time volunteering with different women's organizations and the Cathedral Fundraising Committee.