



DIOCESE OF BATHURST

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Message from Bishop Jodoin
On this 25th day of March, 2020

Feast of the Annunciation of the Lord

On this feast of the Annunciation of the Lord, what a joy to be together. I hope you and your loved ones are well. I am sure all of us miss our fellowship with each other even after just a few days.

At today's mass, we remembered these very first words of the Angel of the Lord heard by Mary, this young girl from Nazareth: "Greetings to you, filled with grace, the Lord is with you!" These comforting words addressed to Mary over 2000 years ago are also meant for each of us today.

Indeed, thanks to Mary's acceptance of God's plan in her life, the Son of God became flesh among us. And the Lord is now with us in all that we live, our joys as well as our sorrows. He is this good shepherd who accompanies us every day of our lives so that nothing can be missed... "(Ps 22)

In these difficult times Christ, this good Shepherd, makes himself even more present with us. He is present and acts through his Church that we are, the members of his Body. He's counting on us. St Paul reminded us of this in his letter to the Corinthians:

"The members (of the body of Christ) all care for one another. If only one member suffers, all members share his suffering; if one member is in the spotlight, everyone shares their joy. Now, you are the body of Christ and, each for your part, you are members of this body. "(I cor 12, 25-27)

The Church is a family, and like a father and a mother, the Church will always be there for her children regardless of the circumstances. Even more when her children need her the most. The Church has always been an essential service. She has always been at the service of God and her neighbor. It is even more so than ever today for

each of you, but especially for the poorest, the sick, the disadvantaged, the mourners, the lonely and all those who are thirsty for God in their lives. We don't want to forget anyone. The Church also takes care to pursue its mission to nourish your faith and your spiritual life, to proclaim the values of the Gospel, to present Christ to you and to put you in communion with God, not only for this life on earth but also for eternal life with Him.

You can therefore count on your priests and all the lay staff of the parishes, on the staff of the bishopric and on myself to meet your needs. Do not hesitate to call on us. We are there for you in the name of Christ. Rest assured that the Church does not abandon you. Together, with dedication and creativity, we will continue to be close to you and faithfully carry out the mission that Christ has entrusted to us, of course, by following the government's preventive health measures to the letter.

These days, I often think back to the strength, courage and admirable apostolic zeal that the Religious Hospitallers of Saint Joseph had more than 150 years ago. Even though they were well aware of the dangers inherent in this terrible disease of leprosy, they had not hesitated in the name of their faith to voluntarily abandon their convent in Montreal to come here to Acadia to treat our lepers in sometimes miserable conditions. These are witnesses to the faith that should still inspire us today.

Certain passages of the Gospels also resonate in us with more intensity than before, including these:

"I give you a new command: to love one another. As I have loved you, you also love one another. By this, everyone will recognize that you are my disciples: if you have love for one another. "(Jn 13 34-35)

"When did we come to you?" And the King will answer them: "Amen, I say to you: each time you have done it to one of these smallest of my brothers, it is me that you did it. " (Mt 25, 39-40)

"My command is this: Love one another as I have loved you. There is no greater love than giving your life for those you love. You are my friends if you do what I command you. "(Jn 15: 12-14)

Drawing inspiration from these women and a multitude of Saints, with the help of Mary, our Mother, let us put all our trust in God and continue the mission that He has entrusted to us.

For my part, I will continue to celebrate mass on the radio from the Caraquet Church in CKLE peninsula 94.1 FM at 10 a.m. on Sunday morning. As for the celebrations of Holy Week, I will give you directives on this subject very soon, but you can imagine that we will live it differently this year. I continue to pray for you, and may the Lord bless you and keep you. Let us unite today with Pope Francis and all our brothers and sisters around the world by reciting with him the Our Father.

+ Bishop Daniel Jodoin

Bishop of Bathurst

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