

Becoming Stronger Together - Letter January 2020



Archdiocese of | Archidiocèse d'
Halifax-Yarmouth

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To the Faithful of the Archdiocese

Dear Friends,

Today, we inaugurate a major change in the organization of our Archdiocese with the decreed new parishes; their new names and pastoral leaders. We have been preparing for this transformation for months and even years, as the many facets of this change have been discussed, considered and are now being implemented, as best we can. There will be a necessary period of adjustments for all of us, and the year 2020 will be greatly marked by our collective effort to live through the major shifts involved in New Parishes: Stronger Together. I thank all parishioners who have patiently expended themselves on this reorganization and I count on your continued support. The most important thing we can do going forward, is combine our efforts with the grace of God, as we move forward into a new era for our Archdiocese.

With this letter, I wish to remind all our faithful that the work which has been done so far, as well as all that remains to be done, is for only one purpose - the mission to propose Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Saviour. The challenge before us is the challenge of the New Evangelization – which starts with the transformative grace of a personal encounter of Jesus Christ, joined to the formative process of becoming disciples of the Lord, and followed by the commitment to become apostles on the mission to proclaim the way, the truth and the life, made available to us by Christ's teaching and confirmed by his death and resurrection.

The vision of a renewed Catholic Church, re-founded on Jesus Christ, is one that can capture our imaginations. It can direct our energies towards a spiritual revival of our faithful by filling the hearts of many, who have become disenchanted with many aspects of our Church with renewed hope. Furthermore, if we can effectively demonstrate the joy of the gospel in our lives, that joy can and will touch the many who have no experience of God's love or Christ's mercy.

The year 2020 is a new beginning for our local Church and for this new beginning to become a long-term experience it requires the goodwill of all who care to follow Christ. I have encountered many who do care to follow Christ and who have the missionary zeal to walk the path of the Lord. I wish to encourage all to carry on with the enterprise and who want a renewed experience of our Church. Let us be hopeful and above all, let us be loving disciples in the coming months of our faith filled journey.

In our new parishes, we have all the talents and gifts we require and we require all the gifts and talents we have, to become centres of spiritual and pastoral care; to become worshipping and prayerful communities of communities with dedicated disciples ready to be effective witnesses of the truth that Jesus Christ is the hope and light of the world.

In fact, the task ahead of us will depend on all the baptized to do their part and particularly on the quality of our shared and co-responsible leadership. At the center of all our reorganization and parochial transformation, there is a great leadership challenge which has to be faced, to the best of our abilities, by calling upon all those whom the Holy Spirit has equipped for ministry. The gifts needed to accomplish the mission Christ entrusted to us, are the essential gifts enumerated in Ephesians 4: “...*that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry*” and they remain the primary gifts for a renewed experience of leadership in our present Church.

In the not so distant past, the Church largely counted on the commitment of many ordained priests; the major contribution of many women and men religious, to animate the life of the Church. That is no longer the situation. Now the baptized the consecrated and the ordained must all share more directly in the overall responsibility for the mission of the Church. In this way of co-responsibility, let us work collaboratively at becoming stronger together.

I take this opportunity of a new year to thank all our priests, deacons, consecrated and laity who have, and who continue to give themselves to the service of Christ’s cause. May your on-going leadership be blessed.

Sometime, in the coming year, my own responsibility as Archbishop will be passed on to Archbishop Brian Dunn. This change in episcopal leadership is also part of the transition which our local Church is experiencing and to which we will adjust with the goodwill of all and the effective grace of God.

During the past months, since his appointment as Coadjutor, Archbishop Dunn has already become very engaged in the life of our Archdiocese and greatly contributed his many gifts and talents; met with clergy and laity and participated in the multi-faceted reality of overseeing the Archdiocese. I wish to thank Archbishop Dunn for having accepted the mandate entrusted to him. May this coming year be a smooth and successful transition and may the Lord bless Archbishop Dunn’s leadership.

The traditional greeting of Happy New Year takes on particular and special significance this year, as we anticipate all that needs to be done and pray that it all gets done well. Indeed, to one and all Happy New Year, and may the peace which only the Lord can give, be with everyone. On this day, which also honours Mary, the Mother of God, we entrust ourselves to her care as the Star of the New Evangelization.

Sincerely in Christ,

†Anthony Mancini
Archbishop of Halifax-Yarmouth