
75TH ANNIVERSARY - HOMILY
OUR LADY OF MERCY CATHOLIC CHURCH



Aroostook
November 3, 2001

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Peace be with you!

Dear brothers and sisters,
Dear friends,

It is a great privilege for me to celebrate with you and for you this Sunday mass and to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of your parish. It is a marvellous occasion to thank God for all the wonders that he has made and that he continues still again today. I am sure that your glorious patron, Our Lady of Mercy is with us to share our thanks to God.

At the beginning of this mass, let us welcome the tenderness of our God, let us welcome his mercy and his love.

Lord Jesus, you raise us to new life, Lord, have mercy
Jord Jesus, you forgive us our sins, Christ, have mercy.
Lord Jesus, you feed us with your body and blood, Lord, have mercy.
May Almighty God, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.
Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth....

Homily

Dear brothers and sisters
I invite you to welcome deeply in your heart all the words that we have heard.
What wonderful words we have received today.
In the first reading, let us recall these words:
But you are merciful to all for you can do all things and you overlook people's sins, so that they may repent.

In the psalm, let us recall the same words:
The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
The Lord is good to all and his compassion is over all that he has made.
All your works shall give thanks to you, O Lord and all your faithful shall bless you.
They shall speak of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your power.
The Lord is faithful in all his words and gracious in all his deeds.

For seventy-five years, the people of Aroostook have been singing the mercy of God.
In the second reading, let us recall these words of Saint Paul:
« We always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfill by his power every good

resolve and work of faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. »

For seventy-five years, the name of our God has been glorified in you, people of Aroostook, by your prayers, by your love, by your daily testimony.

In the Holy Gospel, let us recall the desire of Jesus to come in our life, in our home: « Hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today... Today salvation has come to this house, for the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost. »

For seventy-five years, Jesus has come to stay with you, to reveal his Father, to bring his good news, to manifest his eternal love.

For seventy-five years, Jesus has wanted to be one with you, to send his Holy Spirit, to pray with you.

Your Church is a sign of his presence, and each of you is a sign of his presence.

The church is « God's dwelling among His people. »

Built at the heart of the community, it is a visible sign of the greatest mysteries of our faith, a sign of God's continued presence among us.

The desire of our fathers and mothers was to give the Christian people a sign of the Emmanuel, of God-with-us, of God-among-us. The cross which marks each of our places of worship recalls the great mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

I pay tribute to all those who worked at creating this network of churches and chapels in our diocese, in our country: so much care was given to build and maintain them, very often at the cost of countless sacrifices. Let us continue to be proud of this precious heritage.

However beautiful is a cathedral, a church or a chapel, it is never as beautiful as its christian community, it is never as important as each member of the community.

Every baptised person is a living stone in the structure of the Church, each baptised person is a living temple of the living God. Let us take the time to look at the brother and sister who are in church with us; they have an infinite price superior to that of any cathedral or church building.

Each church is a promised land, a place of celebration, a house of peace. It is a temple open to every man, woman and child who worship, who are witnesses of God. Let us recall that each baptised person is the temple of God: « Hurry and come down for I must stay at your house today. Today salvation has come to this house. » Amen.

+ François Thibodeau

+ François Thibodeau, C.J.M.
Bishop of Edmundston