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## GRATITUDE TO THE MEDIA

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As we come to Communications Sunday (February 5), I want to express my gratitude to all who work on our behalf in our region's and the country's mass media. I am reminded especially of those who work in our local radio stations like our Jubilee Station CJEM-CKMV and Radio des Montagnes, and those who regularly send us complimentary copies of their newspapers, among others the *Journal Le Madawaska*, *L'Action Régionale*, *L'Acadie Nouvelle*, without forgetting *The Telegraph Journal* and the *Bangor Daily News*. My greetings also to all who work in television stations like CIMT-CKRT, the CBC/Radio Canada, Fundy Cable, and VideoKlip.

Thanks to all these people, there will be more communication among us, life will travel. Thanks to the people, today and tomorrow there will be even more contact, more communion. On Saturday, February 4, at 4:00 PM, I shall celebrate the Eucharist for the intentions of all in the diocese, but especially for all who work in mass media communications. And in this our jubilee year, special homage goes to those who have worked and those who are now working at CJEM-CKMV radio station.

May this Communications Sunday - while calling on us to thanksgiving for these great tools of communion - make us ever more sensitive to those who work there, may it increase our solidarity with them, more and more critical regarding their broadcasts or regular editions, so that we may together contribute to a new civilisation of communion. This day will remind us of the importance of the mass media in the cultural, political, and religious life of today. We must promote, through the media existing in our milieu, a kind of society where human dignity has precedence over market value. Once again, my thanks to all who work in mass media communications. Have a *good Communications Sunday!*

### **AN IMPORTANT PASTORAL MINISTRY SESSION**

Yesterday and today [January 31-February 1], the priests have been attending an intensive study session. Together with the [full-time] pastoral agents, they are seeking means to help re-value the Day of the Lord, in our region, so that our Sunday remain as significant for us baptised as it was in days gone by for our ancestors: a celebration, a day of communion, a day of rest, a family day. In the next few weeks I shall be writing to you about this great event that marked the first Day.

The words of a song by Robert Lebel, titled *De semaine en semaine* ['From Week to Week'] can serve as an introduction to our reflection: "In the course of a meal among friends, on that day, Jesus took bread, broke it, gave it to them. He said to them: 'Take and eat, this is my Body which will be given up for you my friends.' From Sunday to Sunday, with its white table cloth, may the sense celebration come back to us, may the table be set for a meal to be shared, for the good bread of life, the good bread of love. Towards the end of the meal he took the cup in his hands and said: 'You I love so much, take and drink: this is my Blood to be shed for you my friends.' More than a remembrance and much more than a retelling, he wants to be our daily bread and his greatest wish is that we in turn share with all his friends the bread of love."

During this study session, there will also be question of the formation of a parish pastoral council in each parish, as well as of the vital marriage preparation. Next week, on the occasion of Valentine Day, I will share with you a letter I wrote to lovers. The study session will end with an exchange with the members of the Study

Committee on the Pastoral and Financial Situation of the Diocese. Note that this committee's mandate is prolonged until Easter so as to have an in-depth study of the most pertinent recommendations.

### JUVENILE DELINQUENTS

The Council of Churches on Justice and Criminology (507 Bank St., Ottawa, ON, K2P 1Z5) remind us once again that the juvenile delinquents are OUR children, and not extra-terrestrials. They are OUR communities' responsibility. The Council asks us to distinguish between fact and fiction: "Let us remember that two in every ten cases tried before juvenile courts are violent crimes. Homicides committed by youth are rare (about one per million Canadians). Murders committed by youth have not increased since 1961, according to federal statistics for 1992-1993. 'Punishment,' 'discipline,' the effective measures of past generations are much less so today when too many children are victims of negligence and abuse. 'Spare the rod and spoil the child,' but the love dimension is lacking. Many youths are alcohol and drug dependent and are involved in criminal activities in order to get the money they need to support their dependency. Imprisonment is a waste of their time and of our money. Still, the greatest expense in the correctional system is in detention and not in treatment."

### NEARLY A YEAR

February 28 will be the first anniversary of the death of Bishop Fernand Lacroix, the third bishop of Edmundston, and on the 25th I shall preside an anniversary Mass at the cathedral; you are all cordially invited. More than ever, Bishop Lacroix is present in our midst. Like him, let us cultivate great love for the Word of God, let us continue to develop our love for Jesus and the Church, and let us continue our commitment to the poor and the destitute.

At his episcopal ordination, Bishop Lacroix stated: "Christ, all in everyone and in all things; beauty of beautiful things, purity of pure beings, and holiness of saints. Everything partakes of him. We need not fear to place him at the heart of our lives: he will draw us closer to God his Father, while helping us to fulfil as best we can our vocation of human beings, making us more human, that is, closer to others. What person was more human in this sense than Christ himself: He bent over every affliction he encountered, he passed by doing good." The same can be said of Bishop Lacroix: he passed by doing good...

Have a good week!

*+ François Thibodeau ym*

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