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## TO MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF SOUTHERN VICTORIA DEANERY

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### PEACE AND JOY IN THE LORD!

For over 130 weeks now you have been getting these *Bishop's Journal* offerings thanks to the translation work of Father Leo Grégoire whose work in this I greatly appreciate.

On Thursday, August 29 I attended the monthly meeting of the pastors and pastoral agents of the Southern Victoria Deanery. We praised the Lord together for all that He accomplishes in His Church. In reading over the minutes of our last meeting we were led to praise God for the ordination of Father Curtis Sappier on May 25, for the celebration of Confirmation the following day, for the beautiful witness that is Sister Cécile Renault's legacy, for the generous efforts of the people in supporting the *Group of One Thousand*, for the work accomplished by the pastoral agents, for the forthcoming Diocesan Eucharistic Congress, and for the opening of our diocesan seminary. To this list I add further praise to the Lord for Father Leo's twenty-five years' service to our diocese and this deanery. The 1996-1997 pastoral year promises to be as rich in choice graces.

### CHANGES IN THE SOUTHERN VICTORIA DEANERY

First of all, I want to thank the four pastoral agents who have just retired from active ministry in the deanery: Hubert and Lillian Doucette, Mrs. Margaret McCarthy, and William Roach. I extend my gratitude to them on behalf of the diocesan Church for the ministry fulfilled, their prayerful lives and unstinting dedication. I am very happy that Fr. Curtis Sappier has accepted to pastor the parishes of St. Patrick at Limestone Siding and St. Joseph, Tilley, and to cooperate with the Southern Victoria Deanery as a whole. I rejoice at Father Louis Daigle's return to health as well as for the seminarian Ghislain Rémillard who is interning at Assumption parish, Grand Falls and who will help in organising the 1997 Eucharistic Congress in your deanery. In my own name and in the name of the entire diocese, I want to thank Father Alfred Irving, I.V.D. who for more than fifteen years devoted himself in our diocese, especially in Southern Victoria Deanery. At his request and on the consent of his superiors I have appointed him pastor of Sacré-Coeur Parish in Rivière-Verte [Green River]. We studied together the hypothesis of Father Fred working in two deaneries, but it would have been an impossible task for one person. In the weeks to come, I hope that he will take the time needed to rest and to recuperate his health before undertaking his new ministry. The letters of support I received all stressed the qualities of this pastor after the heart of Jesus.

### NEW RESPONSIBILITIES

It isn't easy in this new situation to find solutions so that our Christian communities as a whole continue to grow in faith, hope, and charity. I want to thank the members of the parish pastoral councils involved and those in charge of the Southern Victoria Deanery for the wonderful support they have given me. After having ensured that eucharistic celebrations in Plaster Rock will be presided by Father Leo Grégoire, I.V.D., or Father Curtis Sappier, and that Blue Bell and Anderson Road will receive the ministry of Father Frédéric Poitras, I have appointed to each parish a pastoral agent as pastoral administrator; each is to be seconded by the

parish pastoral council chairperson. I thank Harold Short-Evans for accepting the position of pastoral administrator for the Plaster Rock Parish; he will be seconded by Mrs. Jan Porter, chair of the parish pastoral council. I also thank Mrs. Ann Campbell for accepting the charge of the Anderson Road Parish; she will be assisted by Mrs. Connie Mazerolle, chair of the parish pastoral council. Thank you also to Mrs. Georgine Rioux for accepting the Blue Bell pastoral charge; she will be seconded by Donnie Dubee, chairman of the parish pastoral council. It shall be the task of all of these to see to the good functioning of the parish in close collaboration with Fr. Leo Grégoire, president of the deanery, and Sister Claudette Ruest, S.M., diocesan coordinator of pastoral ministry. In the next few days Sister Claudette will be meeting each parish pastoral council concerned. Together let us take up the challenge to pursue the goal of hope and unity that had been pursued by Father Fred: it would be the best way for us to show him our appreciation. I thank Mrs. Teresa Madore for accepting the double portfolio of deanery coordinator of youth pastoral activities and deanery religious education coordinator. Thank you to Bob Inman for ensuring the proper catechetical preparation of adults who wish to join the Church.

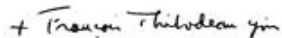
### **1997 PASTORAL VISITATION**

Lent 1997 will be a grace-filled time for you and me. I shall be visiting each of the deanery parishes. I shall meet with the different parish groups and celebrate Confirmation in those parishes requesting it. Unless otherwise prevented, my visitation schedule is as follows: Maliseet on February 15 and 16, Anderson Road on February 22, Plaster Rock on February 23, Tilley on March 1, Blue Bell on March 2, St. Patrick on March 8, Aroostook on March 9, and Perth-Andover where I shall be presiding the Chrism Mass, on March 23 and 24.

### **1997 EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS**

A second Diocesan Eucharistic Congress is in the offing to prepare us for the Jubilee Year 2000; it is to take place in the Southern Victoria Deanery. The main celebration will take place May 30, 31, and June 1 at Maliseet, but it is a Congress which concerns the entire deanery. Besides the pastoral agent, each parish shall appoint a representative to the advisory committee. Fathers Leo and Curtis and Mr. Ghislain Rémillard are the executive, and they may appoint those people they need. The preparatory period to the Eucharistic Congress is a special period given to us for evangelisation, to remind us of the Gospel of Jesus, of his central message and of his attitudes, as well as to deepen our feeling of marvel for what he has left us, especially his Church and his sacraments. Let us proceed confidently toward the year 2000.

I assure you of my love and prayers for all of you. I count on and thank you for your prayers.



+ François Thibodeau, C.J.M.

Bishop of Edmundston

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