
DREAMING TOGETHER THE CHURCH OF 2015...



On the occasion of the official launching of the diocesan financial campaign on October 4, I asked the people attending to imagine what our Church will look like, in ten or fifteen years... Thanks to your persevering prayer and your great generosity, our Church will be even more beautiful, radiant, and alive than ever! Following are excerpts from this address.

ALONG THE PATH OF SAINT FRANCIS

Saint Francis of Assisi, whose feast we celebrated that day, would be more than surprised by the fact that we are speaking about millions and millions dollars to get, in the six next months: he wanted to be free and to be the disciple of Lady Poverty. But he wanted also to be a channel of peace: he would accept that we get enough money to be channels of peace, light, truth, goodness and justice. And he received an important mission for the restoration of the Church of God, the San Damiano Church: he can help us to work for the restoration of our Church.

RESTORING THE CHURCH...

At the beginning of the 13th century, the Church of God was in need of great restoration. At the beginning of this new millennium, our diocesan Church needs a great evangelization. Four pastoral priorities were pointed out by the Synod of Edmundston and for all the diocesan councils: religious education for children, youth and adults, family and youth ministry, selection and formation of new parish leaders, and a diocesan fundraising campaign. That's the reason I ask everyone in the diocese, in a spirit of communion, solidarity and hope, to participate actively for this renewal of our church, by their prayers and generous gifts.

IN ACTION AND IN TRUTH

In his first letter, Saint John wrote these wonderful words: "Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. And by this we will know that we are from the truth and will reassure our hearts before him. Whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts and he knows every thing." (3:18-20) God knows every thing and he knows what we hold in our hearts, our projects, all we are hoping for our beloved Church. God giving us his only Son, gave us all his richness and showed us the extent of our new gifts. We have to love in truth and in action.

GESTURES OF LOVE

I consider all donations we receive from the diocesan family, from religious communities, from people and from community organisations, as loving actions, as loving gestures, real and true, revealing the love they have for our beloved Church.

GRATITUDE

In the name of the Diocese of Edmundston and in my own name, I thank all the members of the Campaign Board of direction, all the members of the Committee of Honour, all those in charge of the Campaign, at the diocesan, deanery and parishes levels. All together, let us continue to build our beloved Church! All together, let us continue, by our generous gifts, the new evangelization!

A WONDERFUL DREAM

My dear friends, I invite you to take a moment for a dream: How will our Church be in ten or fifteen years? Through your actions in the next six months, our beloved Church will be radiant, beautiful and wonderful. Through the religious education and family and youth ministry, new links will be created in each family. Through the choice and the formation of new leaders, our Christian communities will be directed toward fresh waters and fields! Through new models, new parishes structures, better conditions of all parishes, and especially of our Cathedral, our diocesan Church will continue, with courage and enthusiasm. My dear friends, you are like our pioneers of 1534, 1604, 1651, 1789 and the beginning of 1900 and 2000, you are the new pioneers of the Church. Thanks for all you are, thanks for all you do. All together, let us go on to build our beloved Church!

A HUMBLE PRAYER

Immaculate Mother, since the Diocese of Edmundston is dedicated to you in a very special way, we come to you today, trusting that you will intercede with your Son, Jesus, so that according to our means we may be true Gospel workers. As the Lord continues to give us His gifts, we ask you to be present and to sustain us in the months to come, so that our diocesan and parish pastoral projects may be realized according to His will, for the greater glory of God the Father. Amen.

+ François Thibodeau

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Bishop of Edmundston

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