

**OFFICE OF THE BISHOP  
Christian Riesbeck, CC**

**2023-2024 Pastoral Year Letter – “Know! Grow! Go! Towards a Renewed and Revitalized  
Diocesan Church”**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As I reflect on this past Thanksgiving weekend, I am filled with gratitude that the Holy Spirit is clearly present and on the move in our diocese. We are called, from our baptism, to lead others into a personal encounter with Jesus Christ, the risen Lord. Led by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel and the Eucharist, we are called to raise up disciples who are joyfully living out the mission, proclaiming the Good News of Jesus Christ and making disciples of others. In world plagued by hurt and confusion, the need for the experience of the mercy, love, peace, and joy of Jesus is so needed. Jesus relies on his missionary disciples to be messengers and channels of his grace.

Jesus invites us to *know* him personally. He calls us into a dynamic and life-changing relationship with him, where we find the strength to face daily challenges with peace and joy. I have been deeply moved to witness people across our diocese being transformed through the reception of the Holy Eucharist, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Eucharistic Adoration, and other moments of prayer. Jesus never ceases to make himself available to us through the sacraments, bestowing his grace and drawing us into deeper communion with him. When we are tempted to doubt his presence, let us pray “Jesus if you’re real, show me.”

Jesus wants us to *grow* in that personal relationship with him and with one another as his disciples. We see this at work in our diocese through various evangelization initiatives, including Alpha, Symbolon (formed.org), RCIA, and CCO Faith Studies. We are also seeing the flourishing of apostolates, including rosary and prayer groups at the parish level. A recent survey of recently ordained priests in Canada and the U.S. indicated that the most common devotional and prayer practices prior to entering the seminary were Confession, Eucharistic Adoration, and the recitation of the rosary. The Lord moves powerfully when we provide opportunities for people to receive his love for them in the sacraments, devotions, and other faith formation opportunities. If ever we doubt Jesus’ love for us, let us pray “Jesus if you love me, show me.” 2

I have found great joy in investing more deeply in our priests through regular Days of Reflection as well as the *Called For More* program through the Catholic Leadership Institute (CLI). This program supports and builds up priests, assisting with critical ministry transitions and providing a resource to parishes that can help them understand their unique role and opportunities as a faith community. Through a generous grant to CLI, this program is being offered to the diocese at no charge and will support the previous work undertaken by CLI several years ago, with a particular thrust towards revitalizing our parishes and encouraging and strengthening our priests. Please keep our priests in your prayers and be attentive to ways that you can support them, including participating in a refreshed *Disciple Maker Index (DMI)* survey, which was conducted as part of the 2016-17 process and is being repeated to provide more current data. More information on this will be forthcoming in the months ahead.

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Jim Anderson as Director of Missionary Discipleship Formation for the Diocese of Saint John. Jim will be working to help empower and equip lay leaders for their role as missionary disciples. He will be curating future retreats and other formation offerings to help form people more deeply in their relationship with Jesus in the Church, including the upcoming Catechists Retreat at the Villa Madonna Retreat House in January 2024.

We are also working to strengthen the relationship between diocesan and parish staff by offering a Parish Administrative Staff Workshop at the Villa Madonna in October. Through prayer, support, and fellowship we hope to empower and equip our parish staff for the important work they do serving the faithful on the front lines of our parishes.

Filled with the Holy Spirit, we are called to *go* forth into the world, embracing our baptismal mandate to make disciples of all nations. I have been encouraged to see many outreach initiatives growing and thriving at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, where the need is so great. Diocesan faithful have risen to the task and responded, offering support in prayer, providing meals, and growing in relationship with the poor and the marginalized living in the Cathedral neighborhood. There have also been several missionary outreach events in our parishes and at the diocesan level, including a youth rally in August at the Villa Madonna, which attracted more than

60 youth and leaders from the Saint John and Fredericton regions. A second youth rally is planned for the Miramichi region on October 15. I am also eagerly anticipating the last of three “Know! Grow! Go!” regional missions to be hosted in the Saint John region at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on November 27-29, 2023. If ever we doubt Jesus’ call to us as his missionary disciples, let us pray “Jesus, if you’re calling me, show me.”

As we embark on this new pastoral year, I encourage each one of you to know, grow, and go. Engage more fully in the sacraments, cultivate a rich personal prayer life, participate in evangelization and catechetical programs. Go and share the joy of knowing Jesus with others. Get involved in parish outreach efforts and invite others to encounter Jesus within your parish community.

If we are faithful to Jesus and his call to each of us, we will see continued growth in our diocese as more people fall in love with Jesus; as faithful families become more rooted in Christ and bring others into relationship with him; as priests become more fulfilled and alive in their priestly ministry supported by dedicated leaders with hearts for the mission of the Church; and as more and more young people open their lives to Jesus in the priesthood, religious life and faithful Christian marriage. Be encouraged in the good work you are doing (I am!), and seek opportunities to multiply disciples, leading more people into a transformative encounter with Jesus, who never disappoints or abandons us. 3

In light of the Synod on Synodality deliberations that have commenced in Rome this past week, I invite us to renew our commitment to build a synodal Church and together to entrust the work of the Synod to the Holy Spirit.

May we look to our Blessed Mother as our model, embracing our mission and proclaiming with confidence, "the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is His name!" (Luke 1:49) With expectant faith, let us fix our gaze on Jesus, giving God permission to transform, renew and revitalize our diocese!

Faithfully yours in Jesus with Mary,

✠ Christian Riesbeck, CC  
Bishop of Saint John  
October 10, 2023

**Daily Prayer This Week**

From Sunday to Sunday there is so much here for us about authenticity. Jesus invites us to simplicity - to let go of the things that bind us and “come, follow me.” He wants to take us beyond obedience to the law or acts of piety. These are not bad in themselves, but they can hold a particular vulnerability to in-authenticity or hypocrisy, unless they are rooted in deep reliance upon God and faith in Jesus as our Savior. Mere cleanliness on the outside or placing burdens on people’s shoulders leaves us still far away from an experience of God’s love that overflows into love and mercy for others.

This week, let’s wake up each day and ask God for the grace to be more authentic. While putting on our slippers, standing next to the bed for just 30 seconds, let’s give this special focus to our day. While washing up or getting dressed, on the way to work, while doing laundry or walking down the hall to a meeting, saying a brief grace before even a quick meal, we can remind ourselves of this desire in our hearts. Choosing humility is simply choosing honesty in very small ways. Throughout our days, each of us can find words to express to God our desire to be more honest and transparent with ourselves and with others. “Lord, let me be just who I am today. I know that in your eyes I’m a loved sinner. In grateful humility, don’t let me be harsh or judgmental with my family, with friends or co-workers. Let me give up bragging, shading the truth, any kind of falsehood. I want to abstain today from even thoughts that take me down a road of cheating on my relationships, my commitments and my relationship with you.”

This is all about focus and choosing to place our attention on our relationship with Jesus in the most ordinary moments of our day. As we end each day, we can give thanks that our desire was given to us - that whenever we open our hearts, our God is always there, ready to bless our desires.

[Creighton U Online Ministries](#)

**MASS SCHEDULE 2023**

Oct 17, 2023	Tue	St. Matthews Worship Site	7pm	NO MASS
Oct 19 , 2023	Thur	St. Rose Worship Site	12:10pm	Leo Wallace
Oct 21, 2023	Sat	St. Rose Worship Site	4pm	Carey Ryan Hal Arbeau
Oct 22, 2023	Sun	St. Rose Worship Site	9am	Shirley Black
Oct 22, 2023	Sun	St. Matthews Worship Site	11am	Marjorie Gatien

**PLEASE NOTE: THE OFFICE IS MANNED TUE, WED & THURS. ANY EMAILS SENT TO OUR OFFICE EMAIL WILL NOT BE SEEN UNTIL THE FOLLOWING TUESDAY**

**CRIBBAGE AT ST. MATTHEWS HALL WEDNESDAY EVENINGS AT 7PM**

**The Prayer Shawl Group**

We are in need of knitters & crocheters! Every year in December the Women's Society donates handmade mittens to local school children in need. We could really use some help in knitting the mittens. We also are low on prayer shawls. If you like to knit or crochet, we'd love to hear from you. Yarn, needles, & patterns will be supplied, you can create from the comfort of your own home or join us Wednesday mornings from 10-12. Call Jill (639-0007) or Angie (639-6582) if you're interested.

NEW PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS WELCOMED

**The Blessing of Animals... It's time to bless your pet!**

Join us as we gather on the front steps of both worship sites on October 21, 2023 – 1pm at St. Matthew's Worship Site and St. Rose Worship Site at 2 PM.

Pets are not things, but are living creatures who belong to God and who grace our lives with their presence. The prophet Danial calls on "All you beasts, wild and tame, bless the Lord!" (DAN 3:81). In their own way, animals honour the creator and it is fitting that we give God thanks for them.

**COLLECTIONS - THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!!!**

Oct 08, 2023 – Regular - \$2,280.00    Loose Collection - \$400.15  
 Food Bank - \$60.00    eTransfers - \$20.00    Needs of Cda Church - \$30.00  
 PAD Weekly Average - \$1,713.00    PAD BLDG - \$148.00

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!**

**St. Augustine's Memorial Garden - How to make a donation: if you would like to financially support the garden, simply put your donation in a clearly marked envelope with your name & envelope number (if you have one), & drop it in the collection basket any time. Or contact the office for other options such as e-transfer.**

Cheques to be made out to St. Augustine's Cemetery

**OFFICE HOURS 9 am to 4 pm**  
 SMWS – Tues & Thur – 506-738-2320    SRWS - Wed -506- 653-6850  
 Mon & Fri: BOTH OFFICES CLOSED  
 Mailing Address: 279 Nerepis Rd, Grand Bay-Westfield, NB E5K 2Z9

St. Matthew Worship Site (SMWS) (506)738-2320  
 Civic Address: 45 Dollard Drive  
 St. Rose of Lima Worship Site (SRWS) (506)653-6850  
 Civic Address: 541 Milford Road  
 WEBSITE: [www.holyspiritparish.ca](http://www.holyspiritparish.ca) Email: [holyspiritparish@nb.aibn.com](mailto:holyspiritparish@nb.aibn.com)  
 Pastor – Rev. David J. Martin

**HOLY SPIRIT PARISH**

**ST. MATTHEWS & ST. ROSE WORSHIP SITES**

*"Where we WELCOME everyone, WORSHIP together and WITNESS to Jesus Christ"*

**28<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time – October 15, 2023**

**Sunday Exposition/Adoration: Oct 15, 2023 at St. Rose Worship Site from 1-2pm**

**THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION AT ST. ROSE WORSHIP SITE BEGINNING AT 3:15PM  
 PRIOR TO THE 4PM SAT MASS**

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CONTACT INFORMATION**

Holy Spirit Parish –Please contact Linda Spinney at 506-636-0677 or email her at [holyspiriteducationsj@gmail.com](mailto:holyspiriteducationsj@gmail.com)

**Gentle Path – Counselling Services – Pathways to Hope**

Gentle Path Counselling Services provides counselling at the 199 Chesley Drive, Saint John Office and is now scheduling appointments at Horizon's Market Place Wellness Centre in the Lower West Side

**We offer counselling for:**

Anxiety	Addictions	Grief & Loss	Domestic Violence
Couples Counselling	Sexual Assault Trauma	Self Esteem & Body Image	Sexual Identity & Orientation
PTSD	Parenting	Depression	First Nations
Kids & Teens	Blended Families	Anger Management	Work Related Issues

(Subsidies are available)  
 Gentle Path Counselling Services, Ltd.  
 Phone (506)652-7284    Toll Free 1-888-394-4022  
[www.gentlepathsj.com](http://www.gentlepathsj.com)

Facebook: Gentle Path Counselling Services  
<https://www.facebook.com/gentlepathcounselling-services/>  
 Charitable # - 85377 7175 R0001