



9 May 2016

The Most Rev. Paul Terrio
Bishop of St. Paul
4410 – 51st Avenue
Saint-Paul, AB
T0A 3A2

Dear Bishop Terrio,

On behalf of all our brother Bishops in Canada, I wish to assure you and the faithful of the Diocese of St. Paul of our prayers and deep concern as so many of your people face the destruction of the fires around Fort McMurray and in surrounding areas.

As terrible as the wildfires and the damage they cause can be, each of us is equally moved by the overwhelming response of so many Canadians in helping those affected by this natural disaster – sending donations, giving shelter, offering food and comfort, fighting the fires, ensuring safety and security even at the risk of their own personal welfare. Their generosity and service are truly a blessing and an example for the rest of us!

Similarly, I have noted with profound admiration the number of Bishops who are inviting their parishes to remember in prayer and donations the many people in your region who have lost homes and livelihood, the tens of thousands forced to seek refuge elsewhere, and especially those who have died or been hurt. In turn, I am encouraging all dioceses to issue similar invitations to their people: to send individual donations to the Canadian Red Cross, or to take up collections which they can send directly to your diocese. Such contributions will assist the Catholic parishes and parishioners in Fort McMurray, as well as the Fort McMurray Ministerial Association, in their work and ministry for those struggling with the losses and damage of the wildfires.

Together with Pope Francis, confident that the Lord gives meaning to human sufferings, let us ask the Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds that we may find the right words capable of bringing comfort to others, and to open our hearts to the certainty that God is always present and never abandons us in times of trouble (Prayer vigil “To Dry the Tears”, Saint Peter’s Basilica, 5 May 2016).

Fraternally in Our Lord,

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, OMI
Bishop of Hamilton
President of the Canadian Conference
of Catholic Bishops