



BISHOP OF HAMILTON

May 10, 2018

Dear Friends,

Over the last few years, discussions of the Episcopal Board, Presbyteral Council, and Finance Council have begun to shape and clarify a shared vision for the future of the diocese. After thoughtful consideration by these groups and input from clergy, staff, and lay leaders, we believe a capital campaign could help us fully realize this vision. In order to accomplish this, I would like your help in forming the key priorities that will make up this effort.

My ministry as Bishop allows me a privileged place from which to witness the beauty of parish life across our diocese. The parish is, for the majority of the faithful, the central place of encounter with the Gospel and the person of Jesus Christ. In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis tells the Church that, “if the parish proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity, it continues to be ‘the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters’”. (EV 28) For this reason, the life and needs of our parishes will constitute the central priority of this campaign effort.

Pope Francis also calls for the Church to “go forth,” moving with love toward those on the margins, those the world has left behind, and those who experience the various wounds that are too common today. Pope Francis writes that, “the Church which ‘goes forth’ is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice.” (EV 24) In order that we may continue to become a community which “goes forth,” to serve the people of God, this campaign will help us build and strengthen our ministry to groups outside our parishes: those in prisons and in hospitals; students on university and college campuses; and those migrant workers who spend parts of the year in our diocese. Finally, this effort will help us provide for those who shepherd the people of God, supporting seminary education and the care and ongoing formation of priests across the diocese.

My hope is that over the coming months and years, we will undertake a diocese-wide campaign to raise the funds necessary to accomplish these priorities. Before we move forward, however, I want to hear from priests, deacons, religious, lay leaders, parish staff and parishioners to make certain we are on the right path. In the coming weeks, there will be more detailed information about the goals we are considering and opportunities for you to share your thoughts about our plans.

Thank you in advance for your support and participation in our planning for the future. The assistance and involvement of those who work and minister in the diocese is indispensable to me and essential in our planning for the future.

Sincerely in Christ and Mary Immaculate,

† Douglas Crosby, OMI

(Most Rev.) Douglas Crosby, O.M.I.
Bishop of Hamilton

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