



DIOCESE OF SAINT JOHN

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Office of the Bishop

May 15, 2023

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The risen Jesus is alive and on the move at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception! Over the past year we have seen the growth of outreach ministries, including our St. Vincent de Paul which provides food, clothing, and health assistance to those in need. We are seeing an outpouring of grace through the sacraments which are being offered daily, as well as opportunities for prayer, including Eucharistic Adoration. This Easter, eight adult catechumens were welcomed into the Church at the Cathedral. On May 12, two men were ordained to the priesthood. We will host a Pentecost Prayer Vigil on May 27 calling on the Holy Spirit to be unleashed in our diocese for the purposes of renewal and revitalization.

Our diocesan planning study was completed. The results are still being reviewed and a path forward discerned, hopefully by the summer. I want to thank you for your generous support of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception over the past year, especially through the 2022 Corpus Christi Collection. Proceeds from this collection as well as other donations made around this time contributed more than \$90,000 towards our restoration efforts. In addition to this, two large gifts totaling \$1 million helped to fund the ceiling restoration work that was recently completed. The gifts of kind benefactors enabled the insulation of the ceiling and the restoration of the Virgin's Chapel and the front doors. I am truly humbled by your generosity and sacrifice to help preserve our mother church.

With gratitude, we now turn our focus towards restoring the bell tower – a prominent symbol of faith and heritage on the Saint John skyline. The tower is in critical need of repair with a projected cost of approximately \$3 million, but I have faith that through your prayers and generosity, we will once again hear the bells ring throughout the city!

The second annual collection for the Cathedral Restoration will be taken up in the parishes on the weekend of the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ (Corpus Christi), this year on June 10-11, 2023. You may use the envelopes in your box sets or loose envelopes provided for this purpose in the pews or go to our website <https://dioceseofsaintjohn.org/donations> to donate. Gifts of either a one-time donation, securities, bequests, or other planned gifts are a tremendous blessing and will aid significantly to the success of this restoration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our finance department at khudson@dioceseofsaintjohn.org or 506 653-6814.

I am counting on your fervent prayer for our restoration efforts through the intercession of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, as we give God permission to move powerfully in our diocese.

United in prayer and mission,

✠ Christian Riesbeck, CC
Bishop of Saint John