



DIOCESE OF SAINT JOHN

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Office of the Bishop

May 14, 2024

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The ongoing work of renewal and revitalization continues at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception! Outreach is happening daily at our St. Vincent de Paul Centre which provides non-perishable food items, clothing, nursing care and other necessities to the needy in our neighborhood. Physical improvements are being made to make it a more welcoming community space. Over the past year, our religious education program has expanded to include formation for all grade levels. More multi-cultural families are filling our pews, including a vibrant Spanish community. The celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation has transformed the parish into a temple of mercy, with opportunities for Confession before every Mass. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is offered following daily Mass, and on occasion even overnight, including at our upcoming Pentecost Vigil, May 18-19.

Some restoration work on the bell tower has begun with crucial stabilization under the direction of Heritage Standing Inc. (HSI), a structural engineering firm specializing in heritage buildings. This work is being supported by researchers from the University of Toronto and McGill University who are looking at long term repair approaches such as structural health monitoring to track changes, identify root causes, and inform best practices. This has the potential to not only benefit this project, but many other future projects on similar buildings, allowing us to give back to the greater community. Proceeds from the sale of the former Saint Vincent's High School as well as last year's Corpus Christi Collection have already contributed towards this important work. While the need remains great, I have faith that through your prayers and generosity, we will once again hear the bells ring throughout the city!

The third 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 1-2, 2024. 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> for information on how to donate by cheque, email money transfer, or credit card (one-time or recurring donation). 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