



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

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“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”
But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed?
And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard?
And how can they hear without someone to preach?
And how can people preach unless they are sent?

Rom. 10 13-15

February 2, 2019

Dear Friends in Christ,

Greetings! This is a promising year for the Diocese of Crookston. Not only are we celebrating the 40th successful year of the Diocesan Annual Appeal; we are entering a season of true grassroots evangelization! For 40 years this appeal has been an instrument of unity of purpose for our diocese. The prayers and support of your families have never been more important than they are right now.

The Convocation of Parish Leaders was held along with the Diocese of Fargo in November of 2018. This brought two dioceses and 775 of the faithful together to be equipped and sent forth as missionary disciples to evangelize in our parishes and communities. The parish delegates to the Convocation pledged to be disciples who reach out to others, enlivening their parishes to Mission. To support this ministry, we have received an incredible five-year Centennial gift from the Sisters of Mount Saint Benedict Foundation so that the energy of the Convocation gathering will not wane. This gift will be offered in the form of micro-grants to creative evangelizing parishioner/delegates rather than to diocesan administration.

We expect an exciting and fruitful future and we will succeed in bringing back to the Church, many who seem lost. Some attempts will fail. But we will learn much about what it takes to reintroduce Catholics to friendship with Jesus and what has led them to fall away. Our imaginations for bringing friends together in Christ are the only limit to what we can accomplish.

Often our times of greatest spiritual growth occurs amidst trials. The Church has faced serious challenges in recent times. Reports of misconduct in trusted Church leaders disturb all of us, but we must hold firm to our belief that Jesus never abandons his bride, the Church, and he will lead us to holiness. I want to offer each of you my sincere gratitude for your faith in our Church. I thank you for your commitment to your families and their faith lives. I thank you for your commitment to building up the Body of Christ in our parishes and Diocese.

The Convocation called each of us, lay and ordained to a renewed responsibility to evangelize. It's an exciting time! I thank you in advance for your continued support of the 40th Diocesan Annual Appeal. God bless you and you loved ones always.

Sincerely, in the name of the Lord Jesus,

Most Reverend Michael J. Hoepfner
Bishop of Crookston