THE BISHOP’S CHARITIES 2022-2023

A WORD FROM BISHOP NOËL SIMARD

MISSIONARY DISCIPLE

TO SPREAD HAPPINESS, I HAVE HANDS THAT BUILD THE KINGDOM!

Dear diocesan men and women,

This year, in order to create happiness, I have hands that build the Kingdom of God, a kingdom of justice and peace. That is why the two Beatitudes of reference are those of the "hungry and thirsty for justice" (Mt 5:6) and the "peacemakers" (Mt 5:9).

The person who wants to be a disciple of Jesus must be a hungry and thirsty person for justice and also a peacemaker. To desire justice is to seek God and to behave in accordance with His will. And to do His will is to work so that He is first in my life, but it is also to make Him alive and visible through concrete gestures and tangible actions of sharing, forgiveness, fighting for justice and denouncing the injustices that hurt humanity. To be a peacemaker means to live in peace with God in order to be able to make peace within oneself, with others and with nature. It means committing oneself to repairing the injustices done to the poor and oppressed, restoring peace in favour of people who are victims of social disorder, being "mendicants" within conflict situations. It is to build with one's hands and heart, relationships of friendship, solidarity and mutual respect.

The health crisis is not over and its harmful economic effects are redoubled by the wars in the world, especially in Ukraine, and also by inflation which is particularly disastrous for the poor. As for the state of our parishes and our diocese, the situation is difficult, even critical. Like last year, the diocese has dipped into its mutual aid fund to help parishes "in the red"; this fund needs to be replenished. In order to continue to offer our pastoral services such as the formation of young people in Christian life, our ministry for vocations, support for families, assistance to missions and our aboriginal people, solidarity with the homeless and the needy of our society, we are once again launching a fundraising campaign which is vital. This is particularly true since we had to discontinue other forms of fundraising during the pandemic and also due to a lack of volunteers and staff.

These are difficult times and we are still counting on your financial contribution and a surge of generosity on your part. Every donation is important and makes a difference! Let's all pitch in together. This year, to create happiness, I have hands that build the Kingdom.

With my gratitude and my blessing,

+ Noël, Bishop