MISSIONARY DISCIPLE...

TO SPREAD HAPPINESS, I HAVE A GIVING HEART!

Dear diocesan men and women,

Always keeping our eyes on the Church stepping out and on our responsibility as missionary disciples, our pastoral theme for the year 2021-2022 is centred on the giving heart, in connection with the beatitudes of pure hearts and mercy.

The beatitude of purity of heart reminds us that the Lord asks for a gift of self that comes from the heart and is driven by right intention. Jesus lived this purity of heart throughout his life by showing mercy to those who were wounded in life and sick in body and heart. The beatitude of mercy has two aspects: giving and forgiving. To understand mercy as gift, Jesus left us a key parable, that of the Good Samaritan.

Following Jesus, we are invited to be Good Samaritans for those who cry out for help, who lack love, who seek shelter, who are rejected as strangers, who are voiceless, powerless, and have no possessions.

Like many homes and families, our diocese and parishes continue to be affected financially by the pandemic. Incomes are falling and expenses are rising. Many parishes are facing a budget imbalance and some are in a precarious situation. To assist them, the diocese has dipped into its mutual aid fund, which needs to be replenished. In order to continue our pastoral services such as the formation of young people in the Christian life, vocations, support for families, help for missions, solidarity with the homeless and the needy of our society, we are once again launching a fundraising campaign which takes on a special meaning in this time of pandemic and in the context of our pastoral theme.

In addition, at the request of Pope Francis who has called for a Synod, we will conduct a broad consultation with our diocesan members to evaluate the vitality of our communities and to encourage a mobilization that is essential to meet together, the challenges of our mission in the Church.

We are counting heavily on your financial contribution and a surge of generosity. More than ever, let us be good Samaritans, moved by the misery of others and seeking to remedy it. Together, let us spread happiness by having a giving heart.

With all my gratitude and blessing.

+ Noël Simard,

Bishop of Valleyfield