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The First Sunday of Advent, November 29, 2020

Dear brother priests, religious and lay faithful, my brothers and sisters of the Diocese of Hearst-Moosonee,

As you know, on April 25, 2016 I received episcopal ordination in Hearst's Assumption Cathedral and I began my episcopal ministry among you, which on December 3, 2018 was extended also to Moosonee, with the creation of the new diocese of Hearst-Moosonee.

In these more than four years of living with you, asking Jesus the Good Shepherd to help me every day in my ministry, I have tried to be among you as a good shepherd who loves and gives his life for those entrusted to his care.

I have tried my best to be a Good Shepherd to the faithful with all my heart. It is and was out of fatherly love that I tried my best to address the many different challenges that were present when I arrived. This has not been an easy task.

It has been challenging to bring communion, healing, to gather the Flock and accompany them as a father would his loved ones. To proclaim that all are precious in the sight of God. There have been some successes and, for that, I thank God. There have also been limitations and difficulties. For these I am sorry for my inability to resolve these problems.

Subsequent to the Pastoral visit by Bishop Poitras on behalf of the Congregation of Bishops, in obedience to and in communion with the Holy Father, but more importantly for the good of the Church, on November 16, 2020 I presented my resignation from the pastoral care of the diocese of Hearst Moosonee.

The Holy Father Francis has accepted my request, which will be made public tomorrow, November 30, 2020, together with the appointment of an Apostolic Administrator, in the person of His Excellency, Most Reverend Terrence Prendergast, S.J., the Archbishop of Ottawa-Cornwall. That archdiocese will soon welcome his successor, permitting the Holy Father to entrust to him the pastoral

care of the Church which is in Hearst-Moosonee. I feel certain that you will welcome Bishop Prendergast as a new gift that the Lord sends to you.

I thank the Holy Father for his leadership, example and his witness to the truth. I will miss you, dearest Diocese of Hearst-Moosonee but, as you can imagine, I will carry in my heart an indelible impression of you as the “local Church” to which the Lord has bound me, and for which every day I shall pray.

I entrust myself to your prayer, asking the Lord to help always be a pastor who loves the Church more than himself.

With affection, I bless you all,



+ Robert O Bourgon
Évêque of Hearst-Moosonee

