

Ottawa, Ontario  
Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle  
November 30, 2020

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

On this day of mixed emotions upon the resignation of Bishop Robert Bourgon and of my nomination to serve you as Apostolic Administrator until a new Bishop can be provided to lead your local church of Hearst-Moosonee, I wish you peace and consolation from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Metropolitan Archbishop, it was a privilege for me to ordain Bishop Robert and to hear regularly from him of his pride in the Dioceses of Hearst and Moosonee and, when they were united two years ago as Hearst-Moosonee, of his enthusiasm for your advancement and flourishing. His achievements are considerable. He cherishes you deeply in his heart.

In a few days I will celebrate in Ottawa a Mass of Thanksgiving for my Silver Jubilee of ordination as a Bishop (delayed from April several times by Covid-19), which will also mark the completion of my service as Archbishop of Ottawa-Cornwall. Shortly after, I will focus my attention on visiting you as administrator-bishop and getting to know the extent of this massive diocese in northeastern Ontario with its diversity of indigenous, francophone and anglophone faith communities.

My aim as a Bishop has been to listen to those entrusted to my care: first of all to the priests, who are a kind of senate to the Bishop in governing this portion of the People of God; then, to the religious men and women appointed to serve the parishes and missions; and, above all, to the lay faithful—women, men and children—who seek daily to live out their baptismal commitment.

May each of you be willing to be open to me in expressing your hopes and fears, your worries and aspirations as we face the future together seeking reconciliation and renewal. That is a great theme for the new liturgical year we have just begun. Advent encourages us to examine our lives, to reflect on our need for God to enter our lives, to ask for forgiveness and to eagerly await the coming of Christ. Advent is not simply a waiting for someone who has not yet come. Instead, it is a period for enjoyment of the gift of Jesus who has come to save us; and who will come again to reward us. That is my wish for you.

I ask your ongoing prayers for Bishop Robert as he discerns the Lord's will now for his generous heart and his abiding desire to serve the Church. Pray also for me that in my limited time serving you I may be able to radiate Christ on my face and in my words and actions. Finally, join me in begging the Holy Spirit to prepare already the heart of the one whom God has chosen to minister in the future as the Bishop of Hearst-Moosonee.

Fraternally in Christ,

✠ Terrence Prendergast, S.J.  
Apostolic Administrator  
Diocese of Hearst-Moosonee