



Communities and Evangelization

Dear Sister,

Dear Brother,

The evangelization mission in our diocesan Church is shared by all. After having prayed and shared about it with many people throughout the diocese, at the Bishop's Council, at the Presbyteral Council, at the deans' meetings, during pastoral visits, during the presbyteral day and during many meetings that I had with laity and members of consecrated life, I invite you to try and respond together to Jesus Christ's invitations transmitted by our Pope Francis in the *Joy of the Gospel*.

We are all witnesses to the culture of encounter that our pastor wants to put forward, in both words and deeds. He calls on us to persevere in hope and to renew our participation in the work of Jesus Christ who is the first evangelizer. He invites us to convert ceaselessly and to live off the joy of the Gospel in order to testify fervently about it.

I take this opportunity to create, for the francophone parishes, the position of episcopal vicar for deaneries and evangelization. I thus reiterate my very high regard for my presbyterate, the pastoral teams and the entire People of God in the parish. By connecting deaneries and evangelization, I would like the latter to be the place for renewed evangelizing fervour and for cooperation between the teams and the parishes.

The Christian communities are called upon to become more and more attractive and meaningful, open and committed, announcing the Good News of Jesus Christ who not only sends us on a mission but is always with us. The challenge is huge, the obstacles are plentiful, but the Holy Spirit acts in us in order for us to be rooted in Christ and He prepares the ground within human hearts that all have their joys and their pains, their suffering and their thirsts.

My visits to the diocese allowed me to marvel at the Lord's current actions in and through our communities, francophone, anglophone and cultural, and, at the same time, to observe the need to gather all of them so that they do not forget they are not alone in sharing the faith. Pope Francis expresses his conviction of the significance and timeliness of the parish that is bound to become more and more a sanctuary whose doors are open, a community of communities and a missionary centre.

It is in that spirit that I appoint Msgr. Roger Dufresne as episcopal vicar for deaneries and for evangelization for the francophone parishes. I intend to gradually release him from his current responsibilities for him to devote all his energies and his expertise to this new appointment. Bishop Thomas Dowd, auxiliary bishop in the diocese, is also the episcopal vicar for the

anglophone parishes, and Father Pierangelo Paternieri, c.s., is responsible for the cultural missions and parishes.

The Archdiocese of Montreal is a Community of communities. Together we can learn to be disciples-missionaries, to make the most of the experiences already available and to try and recognize God's action and will in His Church and in the world that He created and wants to save. God has never ceased to be at work and He has already started the new evangelization.

In communion with the universal Church and in solidarity with our world,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+Christian Lépine". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

+Christian Lépine
Archbishop of Montréal

January 9, 2015