



Roman Catholic Diocese of Peterborough

May 28, 2023
Solemnity of Pentecost

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Diocese of Peterborough,

The great feast of Pentecost celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, empowering them to carry out the mission that Jesus had given them. For this reason, it is often called the birthday of the Church since, under the Spirit's influence, the followers of Jesus began to carry the message of his Gospel to the world.

In St. Luke's description of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit's presence was evident in the sound of a mighty wind and the tongues of flame. In the Old Testament, God often revealed his presence in fire and wind – and the Hebrew word for wind can also be equated to breath. These are beautiful images that speak of how the Holy Spirit animates the Church: breathing his very life into us and igniting the flame of faith so that the Church in every age may do God's work and reveal His love to the world.

I am pleased that on this feast of Pentecost 2023, we are inaugurating our Diocesan Pastoral Plan which charts a course for our activity and ministry in the next five years. Titled "Transforming our Lives; Building our Church," it is the fruit of prayerful discussion and discernment over the past two years, in parish, regional and diocesan meetings. In our listening to the Holy Spirit through those discussions with each other, we have identified six pastoral goals and specific strategies to help achieve them at the diocesan and parish levels. Great autonomy has been given to each parish to determine the strategies that will best work in their circumstances. It is my prayerful hope that clergy and parishioners in each parish will embrace this Diocesan Pastoral Plan and consider best how to make it "live and breathe" in their local community.

The Diocesan Pastoral Plan has been published on our website. It is concise and well laid out, so I encourage you to take a few moments to read it. I also offer my sincere thanks to the members of the Diocesan Pastoral Planning Committee and to all those who offered input or joined in the discussion sessions that formed the basis of this plan.

The Holy Spirit enabled the Apostles to do things they could not do on their own. May that same Spirit empower us for the work of the Gospel, breathing life into this Diocesan Pastoral Plan and igniting us to realize its goals, as we carry on the mission of the Church.

Yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Daniel Miehm
Bishop of Peterborough