



Office Of The Bishop

Feast of the Divine Mercy, April 12, 2026

Dear Friends in Christ,

In the Gospel of Luke, we encounter the beautiful story of the disciples on the road to Emmaus. As they walked in confusion and discouragement, the risen Jesus drew near to them, opening the Scriptures and revealing the truth of God's love. Later they said to one another, "*Were not our hearts burning within us while He spoke to us on the way?*" (Luke 24:32).

This image of hearts set aflame by an encounter with Christ captures the hope I hold for our Diocese today.

Across Niagara Region and Haldimand County, many people are searching for meaning, belonging, and hope. Yet many have never encountered Jesus personally, or they have drifted away from the life of faith. Our mission as the Church is to walk with them—just as Christ walked with the disciples on the road—to help them discover the joy and freedom that comes from knowing Him.

With this mission in mind, I am pleased to introduce the **Bishop's Annual Appeal: Set Hearts on Fire**.

Through this appeal, we seek to raise **\$400,000** to strengthen two vital areas of our diocesan mission: **youth and young adult ministries**, and **evangelization and faith formation for people of every age and stage of life**.

Young people today are longing for purpose, community, and truth. Families desire support in raising their children in faith. Many adults are searching for deeper formation and opportunities to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ. Through this appeal, we will invest in ministries and initiatives that create spaces where people can encounter Christ, grow in faith, and become joyful witnesses of the Gospel.

The future of our Church depends on hearts that are alive with the love of Christ. When people encounter Him, everything changes. Faith becomes personal. Communities become vibrant. And the light of the Gospel begins to shine in new and powerful ways.

I invite you to prayerfully consider how you might participate in this mission. Your generosity will help our Diocese continue the work entrusted to us: proclaiming the Good News and helping countless people encounter the living Christ.

Together, let us walk the road of discipleship and allow the Lord to **set our hearts on fire**.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Gerard Bergie, D.D.
Bishop of St. Catharines