



ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL BASILICA



From the Desk of the Rector

January 2, 2022

For years we have known that a new Family of Parishes will be activated on July 4, 2022 involving the communities of St. Michael's Parish, St. Peter's Parish and St. Joseph Bakhita African Caribbean Community. I am pleased to announce that Fr. Daniel Bombardier (pastor), Fr. Chris Pietraszko and Fr. Sekar Raj have been appointed by Bishop Fabbro to serve in our family. I know they will do so selflessly, generously and collaboratively.

I totally and enthusiastically support Fr. Bombardier and his team. The time has arrived for me to retire to a more peripheral role by June 30, 2022. I have no anxiety at all about this because the matter has been part of my prayer and discernment for the past four years. During that time, through discussion and presence, I have been supported greatly by my family and trusted friends. I remain very happy and fulfilled in my ministry. I know I will miss it on a daily basis. I still have energy that makes me believe I would like to be part of making a difference in what will unfold in the future in parish life and our diocese. I am glad I feel that way and that is why I know now is the time to be guided to another yet-to-be-discovered path. I will continue some of the ministry I am already involved with including Catholic Education and police chaplaincy while remaining open to various possibilities of ministry inside and outside our diocese that may be present in the future. I'll have more to say about this transition period at a later date but I wanted to inform you now.

A new year has arrived and while we would like to just turn off a switch to darken the past year and put it out of our minds we can't – and we shouldn't. Any time in our history is a good time to search for light and hope. We may not easily understand or accept God's presence in this time of COVID-19 but we trust that God will take care of us and assist us in our search for a calm that comes from faith and prayer when everything else is in disarray. As a gift we have been presented with various opportunities to witness how the Spirit of God works. Communities have come together in mutual support. People have given up going on vacations, attending events and connecting in person so we can all remain safe. We have experienced responses to the pandemic that have been creative – responses motivated by love, compassion and selfless giving. These are small but significant examples of light in the darkness. Moving forward, how can we be signs of hope in 2022? Who needs me to be that for

them? Where do I need hope in my life? We may not know exactly when things will calm down but we have learned, through this crisis that we are all interconnected. We are the people of God called to serve. We celebrate the hope brought by the birth of Jesus. While we mourn our losses and struggle through reality we remind ourselves we are not alone. We are unconditionally loved. We are offered compassion and mercy. We can find rest. Someone accompanies us in our suffering. We are invited into a relationship with the source of hope and joy. We can look beyond the noise of the world and let the good news of Christmas inspire us to support one another in the dignity of being brothers and sisters.

We will get through these difficult times. We have already realized the importance of life given by God, and the value of love. In the days ahead I'm certain we will be renewed as a community sharing hope with far more compassion and care.

So let's move into 2022 with faith and optimism. Let's stay safe, remain open, assume goodwill, be accountable, be receptive in prayer, and enlarge our hearts.

Happy New Year!

Fr. Jim Moeller