



## Catholic Diocese of Victoria

Office of the Bishop

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October 23, 2010

My Dear Friends in Christ,

This autumn of 2010 we begin the inaugural year of our annual Diocesan Appeal, entitled, ***A Journey of Hearts and Hands***. It is a time of ***New Beginnings*** for our Parishes and Diocese as we look to the future in Hope.

As your bishop, I am constantly reminded of the blessings that our communities of Faith really are as I travel among our more than 30 parishes and missions. It is very evident that there are important needs in our communities, as well as much work that needs to be done in living out our discipleship in Jesus Christ. We are being called to: educate and form our Youth and Young Adults; to answer the call for Social Justice and to develop further initiatives to assist those in need in our communities; to develop pastoral initiatives and reconciliation opportunities among our First Nations Peoples and to reach out to our more isolated mission communities with both pastoral and financial assistance; finally there is a need to support our seminarians during their years of formation and to continue financial assistance to our aged priests who have served our Diocese for many years and are now in need of a reasonable and dignified retirement.

The ***Journey of Heart and Hands*** Appeal is designed to meet these important needs as well as assist the local parishes with their particular capital projects and pastoral initiatives. It is both a Diocesan Appeal, which allows us all to participate in the mission of the larger Diocesan community, and it is a Parish Appeal which greatly assists local needs. The ***Journey of Hearts and Hands*** Appeal was born after much prayer and discernment within our community and is a response to the feedback of a great many parishioners during our recently completed Pastoral Planning Year. An Appeal such as this is a work of Discipleship because it is based on Gratitude, a Gratitude to God for all that we have and a desire to use our Time, Talents and Treasure as a gift to God in building up the Kingdom, our Church and our community. In giving of ourselves God will certainly bless us and help us for he is never outdone in generosity. This inaugural year of our annual Appeal truly marks a ***New Beginning*** for our Catholic Community.

The ***Journey of Heart and Hands*** Appeal seeks to raise \$750,000 in support of Religious Education, Youth Ministries, Catholic Outreach, Seminarians and Retired Clergy, our Catholic Schools, as well as providing the funds necessary for the particular needs of each Parish. You will be learning more about this appeal and its goals in the coming weeks and will soon receive more information about it in the mail. Together, we can achieve much through this ***Journey of Hearts and Hands*** and ***New Beginnings*** will be a reality in our Parishes and Diocese.

I am deeply grateful for the Faith, Dedication, and Generosity of the People of God throughout our Diocese and I ask you to join with me in making our ***Journey of Hearts and Hands*** a success – to start afresh in Christ.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Richard Gagnon  
Bishop of Victoria