

My dear faithful of the Archdiocese,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

One year ago, as we entered Holy Week, we were all making the first adjustment to conditions imposed by the lockdowns. The Holy Week liturgies were celebrated privately by the priests of the Archdiocese, and within weeks, live streaming began in many parishes. In mid-June we were able to open our parishes to the faithful for Mass and aside from a lockdown in the early months of this year, the Church has been able to provide the sacraments. The grace of these sacraments has been of enormous benefit for those suffering from the fears and anxieties of the pandemic. Without the dedicated ministry of many volunteers across the Archdiocese, the gift of the sacraments would not have been possible. I express to all the volunteers my deepest appreciation for your generous service. On behalf of all the faithful, I wish to thank the priests of the Archdiocese. During this past year of constant changes, their imagination has been wonderful and their solicitude for the faithful under their care has been edifying. We have been blessed by their priestly ministry. Eventually conditions will improve. This will allow for more opportunities to gather together. I look forward to making pastoral visits across the Archdiocese and meeting many of you. I feel the neglect of this part of my ministry very much. I wish also to apologize for the many emails and communications which have not yet been addressed. If we can avoid another lockdown and closure of the Chancery, I hope to catch up with these communications very soon.

The past year has also brought many gifts from the Lord. One such gift has been our expanded appreciation for the simple beauties of our faith. Another is the gift of discerning the essentials, a task made easier when our regular routine is restricted. I pray that together as a local Church, we may carry these gifts well past this pandemic year. I am convinced that the Holy Spirit will use the challenges of the past year to draw forth from the heart of the Church a new spiritual energy for her essential mission, namely, evangelization, catechesis and the sacramental life of Christ. The signs of inventive imagination and generosity so evident in these past months, strengthen my confidence for our future ministry.

The approaching Easter mysteries always renew the Church. The self-emptying sacrifice of Jesus is glorified by the Father. As we live this mystery together in the coming days, may the profound joy of Easter pervade our being and carry us on toward a new Pentecost. May the intercession of St. Joseph guide us safely in the coming months.

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Archbishop of Kingston