



DIOCESE OF SAINT JOHN
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Office of the Bishop

January 24, 2016

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

I am asking for your participation in a project, about to begin, which is of utmost importance for the future of our diocesan church. The project involves a process of revitalization and realignment of our diocesan church. To date, I have met with the pastors and the parochial administrators of the three regions; I have received the unanimous support of both the *Council of Priests* as well as the *Diocesan Finance Council* to move forward with this project; and, a number of women involved in various leadership roles within our diocese have also encouraged me to make this goal a reality.

Pursuing the vision which was captured in our *Diocesan Pastoral Plan*, and embracing the vision of Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation, *The Joy of the Gospel*, we want our diocese to be a community of “missionary disciples”, an evangelizing community, which gives Jesus Christ to the world in which we live. To achieve this goal, we need vibrant communities focused on mission. I am asking you to give top priority to this project. I encourage you to take your place in the process.

The process will begin with a survey being administered throughout our diocese by a consulting firm, *Catholic Leadership Institute*. The survey entitled *Disciple Maker Index* will be done either on line or on paper from January 31 to February 21, 2016. Completing the paper survey could be done either after Mass on weekends and/or at a meeting of parishioners organized for this purpose. Then, the results of this survey as well as demographic and financial considerations, will enable the generating of potential models of parish life which will then be proposed.

It is vital that every parish and mission be involved. I want no one to be left behind as we move forward. Given that this process will eventually impact our entire diocesan church, everyone should be concerned and want to be part of this future planning.

I hope I can count on you. Please keep this project in your prayers.

Sincerely in Christ,

✠ Robert Harris
Bishop of Saint John