



## Roman Catholic Diocese of Victoria

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### **Love & Unity: The 2025 Bishop's Appeal**

As you receive this letter and brochure we begin the 2025 Bishop's Appeal, with the theme Love and Unity. Pope Leo said, "I would like that our first great desire be for a united Church, a sign of unity and communion, which becomes a leaven for a reconciled world." These words inspire us to come together as one family of faith, supporting one another in love and generosity. The Bishop's Appeal is more than a fundraising effort; it is a way for us to live out our call to be the Body of Christ.

This year, we are extending our generosity by reaching across borders, languages, and cultures. Here are the areas of support for the 2025 Bishop's Appeal.

#### **Vocations/Clergy/Religious Support**

In love and gratitude, we invest in the formation of current and future priests and pastoral leaders while also caring for retired clergy who have given their lives in service to our Diocese. These gifts ensure leadership continues to flourish for generations while honouring the lifelong witness of those who have already served.

#### **Local Missions**

Rooted in unity, our support helps sustain mission churches that bring the Gospel to some of Vancouver Island's most remote communities. Your generosity covers the essentials—operating costs, maintenance, and pastoral leadership—so that these small but faithful parishes can continue to thrive. Though few in number, they are powerful witnesses of prayer, welcome, and hope, reminding us that the Church is alive and vibrant in every corner of our Diocese. Mission churches on Vancouver Island are: Saints Peter & Paul (Gold River), St. Bernadette (Sayward), St. Joseph (Tahsis), Holy Cross (Hornby Island), St. Louis de Montfort (Lake Cowichan), Our Lady of Victory (Gabriola Island) St. Teresa (Pender Island) St. Mary (Port McNeil), Our Lady of Assumption (Alert Bay), St. Bonaventure (Port Hardy), and St. Theresa (Port Alice).

#### **Community & Relationship Building**

Love draws us together. Through communications, faith formation, and parish/school grants, the Appeal strengthens bonds of community and deepens our shared journey of faith. One example is the Filipino Potluck Gathering at St. Peter's, Nanaimo—a celebration of culture and fellowship made possible by a Community Building Fund grant. Alongside the joy, a moment of silence honoured lives lost in the Lapu-Lapu tragedy, reminding us that unity in Christ holds both joys and sorrows together.

#### **Parish Portion**

Of the funds that each parish raises, 20% will return to the parish. Some parishes use these funds for building updates, while others strengthen ministries that nurture faith and welcome. Many have partnered with smaller, remote or mission churches to tackle major repairs, creating networks of support. Last year, St. Andrew's Cathedral worked with North Island parishes to update the heat pump for the rectory, ensuring Fr. David John could minister safely all year. Thanks to your generosity, even the smallest parishes remain vibrant centers of prayer, hope, and community.

## **Diocese of Whitehorse**

In 2017, the Bishops of Canada implemented a twinning of northern dioceses with southern dioceses. Our Diocese, along with the Archdiocese of Vancouver, the Diocese of Prince George, the Diocese of Kamloops, the Diocese of Nelson, and the Diocese of London, Ontario, were twinned with the Diocese of Whitehorse to provide for needs in northern Canada. The Diocese of Whitehorse serves faith communities that are scattered across the vast wilderness of Yukon and Northern BC. Families often travel long, difficult distances to receive the sacraments and celebrate the Eucharist. Our own Bishop Gary Gordon, as well as Frs. Sean Flynn, Mike Favero, and Dean Henderson, spent time serving this northern diocese and know firsthand both the hardships and the joys of ministering in these resilient northern communities. This year, 5% of the Appeal will support this mission diocese, ensuring that even in the most remote communities, the Church remains a source of hope, joy, and communion.



*The Diocese of Whitehorse's Pastoral Centre*

## **Global Church in Need**

Love knows no borders, and neither does the compassion of the Church. Another 5% of this year's Appeal will reach the global Church through Aid to the Church in Need, supporting 23 Sisters of Nazareth and Sisters of Mercy in Ukraine's Diocese of Odesa-Simferopol. Even as war continues to disrupt daily life and drive up the cost of food, fuel, and utilities, these sisters remain steadfast in their vocation. These sisters provide humanitarian aid, comfort, and spiritual care in the name of Christ. By supporting the Bishop's Appeal, we are helping them continue this vital mission. Your generosity sustains their mission, ensuring that those who feel forgotten receive both practical aid and the assurance that God has not abandoned them.



*Sister Helena in the Diocese of Odesa-Simferopol (photo: ©Ismael Martínez Sánchez /ACN)*

## **Together in Love & Unity**

Through the Bishop's Appeal, we are one Church—bound together in prayer, generosity, and mission. Your gift to the Appeal is not just a local act of generosity; it is a global sign of the unity of the Church.

Thank you for considering a gift to the 2025 Bishop's Appeal Love & Unity.

Yours in Christ,  
The Appeal Office