



Christchurch: a diocese on mission
Pope Francis has asked the church
to mark this month of October
as an Extraordinary Month of Mission.

Dear Brothers and Sisters

In the Pentecost *Our Faith Our Future* proposal for restructuring of Christchurch city parishes I emphasised that we must ensure that our parish structures serve the primary mission of the church. Too often the great adventure of Catholic faith is held hostage to parish and diocesan structures that may have worked well in the past, but which have become tired and may no longer serve our current reality.

My desire is for parishes throughout our diocese where parishioners with priests work together bringing all people to a living and lively personal relationship with Jesus Christ. This is the heart of our Catholic mission and the reason that Pope Francis has named this month of October 2019 as an Extraordinary Month of Mission.

Healthy Christian communities have this clear mission: to present relationship with God in Jesus Christ as the only adequate response to the questions that surface in the ups and downs of day to day human life. Tragically we too easily lose sight of this focus becoming preoccupied with the systems, buildings, projects and secular methods of planning.

In promoting this Extraordinary Month of Mission Pope Francis is asking us to be more active in sharing our faith with others. However we know too that we are only able to share what we have already received and experienced.

At our Clergy meeting last month. A number of parishioners gave witness to priests of their personal experience of Jesus within the Catholic Church. Most inspiring among these were young people of our diocese in their teens and twenties. They reminded us priests that the first mission is not our mission to others, but our personal response to the mission of Jesus to each of us.

Let us continue to pray together the Prayer to the Holy Spirit, for this mission in our diocese, and that the personal mission of Jesus to each of us baptised will bear daily fruit in our lives.

Website for the Extraordinary Month of Mission. www.october2019.va

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