



Archbishop Murray Chatlain
Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas
P. O. Box 270, The Pas, MB R9A 1K4
chancery@keepas.ca
www.archdioceseofkeewatinlepas.ca

November 1, 2023

A few weeks ago, we heard St. Paul's letter to the people of Philippi: "I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. . . My God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to His riches."

St. Paul spoke honestly to his friends and supporters; that's how I speak to you now on how your support helps us serve Our Lord and minister among the people of northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

One of the most urgent messages coming out of our Synodal listening circles this past Fall was the toll that drugs are taking in the lives of our people. Tragically, so many of our families – parents, youth and children – suffer from the ravages of addictions to drugs such as crystal meth and opioids. There are no easy answers to this tragedy, but addiction counsellors presented us with viable ways and tools with which we can support and educate people as they work to move beyond cycles of addiction. With your support and through local AA groups and other area programs, we are working to address this crisis in our communities. And with Sr. Delia and Sr. Bing presenting retreats, workshops and counselling, we are in a strong position to help people in the spiritual components of their recovery.

Our September gathering of lay leaders, priests and staff was such a blessing! We are so thankful to the many local people who lead Sunday services, funerals and generally support the life of our mission parishes. As you know, a priest cannot always be in a community, and so, your aid allows us to support the efforts and ongoing formation of community lay leaders through workshops and study days.

Here's a picture of some of our leaders taken in The Pas in September at our Diocesan Study Days.



We continue our work at Reconciliation. Historically, our diocese ran six Residential Schools. All of us are impacted by this legacy. We offer Returning to Spirit workshops, and have participated in cemetery gatherings and information searches about unmarked graves. We try to use our available archive resources to support local Bands and families. There is still much work to be done.

Our diocese covers 725,000 sq kms across northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and is home to nearly 110,000 people of Métis, First Nations (Cree, OjiCree, Dene) and non-Native ancestry. But because just 18 priests, two religious sisters and one deacon serve in our 50 missions and parishes, some of our communities see a priest just a few times a year. Fourteen of our missions are accessible only by small plane, and many of our priests are pastorally responsible for up to five communities. And because our parishes are often small, isolated and suffer economic hardships, most cannot cover essential expenses such as heating and electrical bills, travel costs and salaries. Your support helps provide the means for priests to travel and visit all of our diocesan communities to minister the sacraments, such as I'm doing here at St. Theresa Point in northern Manitoba.



St. Theresa Point, MB Confirmation

I'm encouraged and know you will be too by this good news: rebuilding the St. Theresa Point church and the gathering place in God's Lake Narrows are underway, following fires that had destroyed earlier structures. The communities are over 450 kms north of Winnipeg and accessible by small plane, or ice-road. In addition to these two new buildings, four other new churches have been built in our diocese over the past 12 years in Indigenous communities – all with the support of each community's Chief, Council and Bands.

Because of initiatives such as these, you truly help keep the light of Christ burning. With your support, our pastoral response continues – even as our costs escalate.

Like you, our expenses are increasing at alarming rates – especially with the rising cost of food and gas. In 2022, it cost \$1,648,951 just to run the diocese. A major portion of that amount was designated to missionary food and travel, maintenance and repair of churches and rectories, and salaries. Most of our churches and rectories are in areas that are unable to pay their own operating costs because of economic conditions in their community. Your donation today will help subsidize these essentials, now and into the new year.

Your generosity last year helped raise \$210,319 to support the ministries of our Diocese. Thank you! Our goal this year is \$300,000. I hope you will help us reach this important goal.

What difference does your gift make to people of our North? Here's another example.

This past August, I spent time with youth seen here who had come to The Pas to attend our Youth Ministry's Retreat. When I asked what they most wanted prayers for, many answered simply "for a stronger faith."



Youth Retreat held in The Pas in August, 2023

Through God's goodness and with your generous support, we will have the means to answer that prayer and so many others. In our Cathedral, for example, we continue to offer a First Nations Mass every first Sunday of the month. That celebration includes many cultural pieces such as readings and hymns voiced in Cree, smudging for those who wish and collections taken up in a star blanket. The Mass concludes with a drum dance.

All of these ministries and opportunities involve expenses. Like you, we know that everything costs more; our expenses climb and our income does not! Your support is especially vital this year as we struggle out of a deficit position. Your gift in any amount will help meet so many of our ministerial and pastoral needs.

Please be assured of my gratitude and prayers as we work together with trust and generosity in our service to God and His people. For as St. Paul wrote, "To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen."

May God reward your generosity and protect you and all your loved ones,

Archbishop Murray Chatlain
Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas

PS: Your donation – in any amount – will make a lasting difference to so many people in our northern Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas. We are deeply grateful for any donation you can give.

PRE-AUTHORIZED GIFT PLAN

I wish to pledge \$ _____ per month for ___ months. I wish to pledge \$ _____ per month on an ongoing basis.

I hereby authorize the R. C. Episcopal Corporation of Keewatin (The Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas) to withdraw funds as indicated above from my bank account on the 18th day of each month.

(Please sign this form and enclose a void cheque for bank information).

Please send e-transfers to finance@keepas.ca (E-transfer Question: What is the Appeal? E-transfer Answer: BAA2023)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ONE TIME DONATION

\$50 \$75 \$100 \$500 \$1,000 Other: _____ **(Cheques can be made payable to R. C. Episcopal Corp of Keewatin).** All donations of \$50 and above will automatically receive an income tax receipt. If your donation is less than \$50 and you wish to receive an income tax receipt, please check this box: Yes

Please return the bottom portion of this form (and financial gift) to: Archdiocese of Keewatin-Le Pas, P.O. Box 270, The Pas, MB R9A 1K4
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