



"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." – Matthew 5:9

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On Monday, May 6th, His Holiness Pope Francis appointed me to become the 11th Bishop of Burlington. This June I will celebrate my 35th anniversary of priestly ordination and I cannot imagine a better vocation or happier life. I have served the people of Vermont in many capacities and roles, including most recently as the Diocesan Administrator and the Director of the Catholic Center at the University of Vermont. I now look forward to serving as your shepherd.

Because of your support, last summer 500 young people participated in the Totus Tuus summer camp. Our Catholic schools throughout the state are thriving with 2,000 students this year. The Office of Pastoral Ministries continues to offer many successful and fruitful retreats. Seventeen individuals entered the two-year Lay Formation Leadership Program this past fall, and 13 men and women recently completed the first of three years in a first-ever spiritual director training program.

Through your generosity Vermont Catholic Charities Emergency Aid assisted 1,268 households including 1,919 adults and 1,342 children in 2023. The diocese supports six seminarians in formation, and we are excited to announce that seminarian Luan Tran is being ordained to the transitional diaconate this June. These vibrant programs and significant accomplishments are only made possible by your generosity to the Bishop's Annual Appeal.

The theme for the 2024 appeal is "Year of Peace." While conflict may surround us in our personal lives, our community, and abroad, we recall Jesus' instruction from the Sermon on the Mount to be peacemakers — to bring our worries, frustrations, and conflicts to God through prayer, adoration, and confession, then through His grace become instruments of peace in the lives of our families and communities.

I prayerfully ask on behalf of all those we serve that you please consider an increase from your last gift. Of course, all gifts are appreciated. Please take a moment to read the included insert which illustrates the attributes of the saints who encourage our ministries.

Your sacrificial gift truly makes a difference and ensures that we will be able to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ throughout our state for years to come. I thank you for your consideration and support.

Our Lady, Queen of Peace, pray for us and for the whole world.

In Christ the Prince of Peace,

The Most Reverend John J. McDermott
Bishop-elect of Burlington, Diocesan Administrator