



Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The Jubilee Year has certainly been full of surprises for the Church, the Archdiocese and for many of us. And it is not over yet! Who would have thought that Pope Francis would not make it all the way to the end of the year he had started, and we would now have a new Pope. I surely didn't think my life would change so dramatically this year, as I became a bishop and recently your Archbishop. Although, Archbishop's Pettipas' retirement was expected, I feel it came so quickly.

God is really full of surprises! It might be frightening and difficult at times, but when I trust in Him, I find that these moments are always full of graces.

I give thanks to all who organized and participated in the deanery farewell celebrations for Archbishop Pettipas this summer and this fall. Every time he came back from one of them, he was so touched by the testimonials he had heard and the love he had received. We wanted this tour to end with a diocesan celebration at the Cathedral on October 4<sup>th</sup>. Again, thank you for those who participated and all who gave time and talent to make this a beautiful and meaningful event. It was my first celebration as Archbishop of the diocese, the anniversary of the dedication of the Cathedral and a joyous celebration of the Jubilee Year. I am so blessed to be here with you and having had the privilege to experience these great events of the past few months.

Although I became your Archbishop when Pope Leo accepted September 6 as the official retirement date for Archbishop Pettipas, I was absent from the region for most of that month. As a new bishop, I was expected to be in Rome at what is affectionately called "Baby Bishop's School", a 10-day formation for newly ordained bishops, held in September of every year. It was a rich time of learning from seasoned bishops and cardinals about different aspects of our new apostolate, and to meet men from all over the world who have just gone through the same life-changing experience. It is in moments like this that we really experience the universality of our Church. The canonisation of Carlo Acutis and Giorgio Frassati on that Sunday just came to confirm that universality even more.

Right after the formation in Rome, I rushed back because the Plenary of the Assembly of Bishops of Canada was going to start in Montreal the next week. There I was able to meet almost all the bishops of our country and learn what the Conference is working on. It is amazing to realize all that is happening in our Church.

Archbishop Gerard Pettipas left for Toronto on October 21, turning a page of history in our Archdiocese. I pray that his health continues to get better and that he will enjoy being in the big city again. We will see him back in the archdiocese often, I am sure.

As the month of October is close to its end, in the Liturgy we look to the end of times and the final return of Christ, before rejoicing to begin a new cycle at Advent, when we prepare to welcome Christ the Child at Christmas.

Through these seasonal letters from my office, I hope to share with you my experiences and priorities as your archbishop. May the Lord bless you in this liturgical end of year and in the new one about to begin. I am looking forward to meeting you and getting to know you and your community better.

In Christ Jesus our Lord,

+ Charles J Duval *CSSE*

*October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025*

