

A LOOK BACK AT THE PASTORAL YEAR 2022-2023 THAT IS ENDING

As summer and holidays approach, it's often a good idea to look in the rear-view mirror and see how far we've come. This look should be understood as a discernment rather than a summary. During this pastoral year 2022-2023, in our diocese, we have given ourselves a few guidelines, or if you will, we have identified a few priority calls. These calls stem directly from two synodal processes initiated, on the one hand by our diocese, and on the other by Pope Francis. In his pastoral letter "[In All Things, Welcome!](#)", Mgr Paul-André returned to the subject of welcome, identified as a "key to reflection and action" for the whole diocese. Rereading the Gospel of Jesus, he came to the following conclusion: "For a Christian, loving your neighbor means first of all welcoming him or her! To become a more missionary Church, it is important to welcome God, who always comes to meet us, and "others as they are, to integrate them into our communities and to accompany them".

At the start of the 2022-2023 pastoral year, we held a day of renewal, led by Father Yves Guérette, a priest in the Quebec diocese and lecturer at Laval University. Starting with the Gospel reading of the sending of the disciples on mission (Luke 10:1-11), he drew our attention to the importance and place of welcome in the life and ministry of Jesus. He also invited us to reread this text as much as possible and, in the light of it, to discern moments in our lives and in the lives of our Christian communities that can become spaces of welcome for everyone.

Throughout the year, particularly during the Advent-Christmas and Lent-Easter seasons, we have been raising awareness of the importance of welcoming people in our Christian communities and Church movements.

Among the other priorities identified, which have also been the focus of particular attention during this year, is the concern for the elderly who live alone. Their condition and situation are a constant invitation to "show them a generous, attentive and compassionate welcome". Then there is the urgent need to pay attention to young families, especially those from immigrant families. Through a "genuine welcome that is open to their concerns and hopes, that accepts their cultures and allows them to exercise their talents among us", the Church embodies the Gospel message. Finally, our diocesan Church noted the importance for parish communities of rediscovering partnership in mission. To embody this desire to walk better together, with Christ and with their brothers and sisters, priests in ministry have been following ongoing training, from autumn to spring, on the exercise of pastoral leadership.

Also, during this pastoral year, in a highly symbolic way, the diocese extended a special welcome to young people by bringing them together for a Eucharistic celebration on the feast of Christ the King. This was an invitation to the communities and movements to welcome them locally and offer them opportunities to grow in their faith.

The time has come for every Christian community to take stock of how far we've come, to identify and celebrate what has been a source of fruitfulness and what has enabled it to learn to walk together again. It is also an opportunity to humbly put our finger on the obstacles that have hindered our "common march". By becoming aware of these obstacles, we are already listening to the Spirit at work and opening ourselves up to adjustments and improvements.