



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

# DIOCESE OF SAGINAW

July 2024

Dear Friends in Christ,

Grace and blessings to all of you. As many of you know, for the past three years, I have been traveling across the diocese to pray a Holy Hour for Vocations in your parishes. I have been inspired by the number of people who have joined me for Eucharistic Adoration twice a month. I am confident that it will bear fruit.

But there is more that we can do and must do. Each of you play an important part in the ministry of vocations. Vocation work is the ministry of all the baptized. I am asking that you take your role in the work of vocations seriously. Families and local parish communities are the seedbeds for priestly and religious vocations. They are in your families and parish communities. The Lord has created each of us for some definite purpose. Therefore, God has not abandoned his Church and will certainly not leave us in this time of need. But we must all play our role in this work of the Church. "The harvest is abundant, but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest" (Matthew 9:37-38). The priesthood is essential for the Sacramental life of the Church. Without the priesthood, there would be no Eucharist, the Mass, and there would be no one to hear our Confessions, reconciling us sinners with our Father.

As Director of Vocations, Fr. Andy LaFramboise is leading us into the next phase of the implementation of our diocesan vocation plan. Our theme is "**Beg! Form! Call!**" The goal for this plan is 20 seminarians by 2030. With only four men currently in formation, this is a challenging goal but "nothing is impossible for God" (Luke 1:37). As part of this plan, we want to engage the assistance of our Mother, the Blessed Virgin Mary, asking her to intercede on our behalf for this important intention. Her role is to bring our intentions before the "Throne of Grace."

Beginning the first weekend of August, I am encouraging all parishes in the diocese to begin praying the *Memorare* for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and the religious life. This is a short and powerful prayer to the Blessed Virgin Mary, asking for her intercession and protection. This prayer can be prayed before Mass begins or after the final blessing. I also encourage you to pray the *Memorare* during parish meetings or other gathering. Families are encouraged to pray it daily in their homes. Prayer cards have been created for all of you. Please make the *Memorare* for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and the religious life a part of your daily prayer life. Let us storm heaven with our prayers, entrusting this intention to our Blessed Mother. She will not let us down.

Take positive action in your parishes by asking your pastor how you can get involved in vocation ministry and the Diocesan 3-Point Plan for Vocations. Fr. Andy and I need your help in creating a positive climate for vocations in your parishes. "It takes a village to raise a child" is a well-known proverb. It takes a parish to raise up men and women who will answer the call from the Lord to the priesthood and consecrated life. All of us actively engaged in vocation ministry, each doing our own part, will bear great fruit for the Diocese of Saginaw.

Sincerely in Christ,

+ Robert D. Gruss

Most Rev. Robert D. Gruss  
Bishop of Saginaw