



Diocese of Corner Brook and Labrador

November 28, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Grace and peace in our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Advent marks the beginning of another liturgical year. It is a time filled with pregnant hope and joy for the threefold coming of the Lord: His birth in our flesh from Mary's womb, His indwelling in the life of the Church and in the heart of all believers, and His future coming in glory, when all peoples will be gathered unto him.

It is a time when we journey together as people of God, putting aside our differences and divisions, and resolve to see one another as brothers and sisters, companions God sent us on the journey of reconciliation and healing.

Living as companions on the journey during a time of increasing polarization is not easy. Faced with the temptation to exclude those who do not think, believe or act as we do, the Church is challenged to do her best to open wide her doors to all who seek refuge within.

For more than a year this has meant observing the COVID-19 protocols instituted by our Public Health Department. Protocols of mask wearing, physical distancing, hand sanitation, staying home when one is sick and contact tracing that, when practiced in love for our neighbour, have led to a safe worshipping environment and a welcoming place for everyone.

Travelling together towards Christmas, this Advent, may look somewhat different from past years. Doing so together, in charity, faith and hope, continues to be front of mind. I pray that this may be a blessed and fruitful season, a time for new insight, growth and grace. May you take the time to welcome Jesus, to prepare the way for his coming once more. And may you recognize him in your neighbour, especially the one who challenges you to look beyond yourself.

Fraternally in Christ,

Bishop Bart van Roijen

