



OFFICE OF THE BISHOP
August 22, 2021

Prot. No. B 036/21

Dear Brothers in the Priesthood,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

In 2022 the Diocese of Charlotte will commemorate its 50th anniversary year. This coming year is a historic occasion to inspire our parishioners and the larger community to a closer relationship with the Lord.

The theme chosen for the golden anniversary year is “Faith More Precious Than Gold,” from 1 Peter 1:7: “...so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold that is perishable even though tested by fire, may prove to be for praise, glory, and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” Gold is recognized as a precious commodity, but even more precious to us is the gift of our Catholic faith.

An anniversary is a fitting time to reflect prayerfully and joyfully on our past, our present, and our future. The Catholic faith has deep roots in western North Carolina, beginning long before the founding of the diocese on January 12, 1972. Thanks to the sacrifices, hard work, and devotion of countless missionary priests, consecrated men and women religious, and faithful lay men and women, the diocese was born and has flourished. We have grown from 30,000 Catholics in 1972 to more than 500,000 today, making this one of the fastest growing dioceses in the country.

The 50th anniversary year will begin Wednesday, January 12, 2022, with Holy Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Patrick in Charlotte. To extend the celebration across our diocese, you are invited to offer Mass or lead a Holy Hour at your parish that day. One central event next year will be our 2022 Eucharistic Congress on September 9-10, 2022. In addition, there will be opportunities to celebrate more special moments throughout the year.

More information will be forthcoming this fall when you will receive a “playbook” containing ideas you may implement in your parish during the anniversary year, from organizing works of charity, to learning more about our shared history, to deepening our faith as Catholics. These ideas emerged from a collaborative process involving clergy and laypeople across the diocese. I hope you find them helpful in welcoming back and inspiring your parishioners to go deeper with their faith and in celebrating your own parish’s history and contributions to the growth of the Church in western North Carolina.

It is worth noting that this golden anniversary celebration is not about the diocese as a Church structure. As the Holy Father’s apostolic delegate said during the installation Mass for the Most Reverend Michael J. Begley, the first Bishop of Charlotte, “...the administrative

apparatus is not an end in itself, but a means to a higher objective. A diocese is established to unite the faithful in the bond of faith, of charity, of grace and Christian fellowship.”

Our 50th anniversary offers us an opportunity to give thanks to Almighty God for His many blessings and to grow closer as brothers and sisters in the faith. Let us pray that through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, patroness of our diocese, the Holy Spirit will guide our efforts.

Sincerely yours in Christ Jesus,

+ *Peter J. Jugis*

Most Reverend Peter J. Jugis
Bishop of Charlotte

