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To: The Clergy and Parishes of the Diocese of Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island

Date: March 20th, 2020

Dear Friends,

Amongst many other consequences of the pandemic, you are all aware of the significant financial impact that COVID-19 has had on the Canadian economy. We are receiving questions from parish officers about the potential financial consequences for parishes.

The diocesan office is continuing to assess the financial impact of the COVID-19 restrictions on parishes. The Diocese (through the Parish Relations Task Group) has waived payment of the March 2020 allotment for all parishes. Diocesan staff are investigating the impact of the Federal Government's relief plan and how that may impact parishes. The Financial Management and Development VSST will be holding a special meeting early next week to determine what other steps the Diocese may be able to take to reduce the financial burdens parishes may be experiencing. We are currently arranging for a special meeting of Diocesan Council to take place as soon as possible in order to make decisions about financial support for parishes.

The diocesan payroll for March 31st, 2020 will go ahead as normal.

Stewardship resources continue to be available on the Diocesan website and staff are available to respond to your questions (via email). We have experienced a significant increase in people signing up to make their financial offerings to their parishes through the PAR program. For information please contact Tammy Cummins. One other option for people making donations to parishes is 'Canada Helps'

Just a reminder that the deadline for filing your 2019 Parish Returns has been extended to April 30.

We are in a virtual state of emergency in both Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. We are in uncharted territory. While there is need for speed in making decisions to slow the spread of the pandemic there is also a need to be wise in how we can use the resources entrusted to us in order to continue the mission we are commissioned to do.

I am aware of the wonderfully creative ways that people are responding to the constraints of the moment in offering devotions, worship, bible studies and meetings by electronic and other means.

I pray God's blessing on your continued desire to serve one another in love.

The Most Reverend Ron Cutler
Archbishop of Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island