



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

May 5, 2016

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

We are all shocked and saddened by the sudden destruction caused by the wildfire in Fort McMurray, located in our sister Diocese of St. Paul.

The situation is grave and still developing, but Bishop Paul Terrio has advised that the flames were threatening at least one church in Fort McMurray, and of course we know many homes and other buildings have been destroyed. Across Alberta, and indeed across Canada, the outpouring of offers to help has been remarkable. The spontaneous generosity to the people of Fort McMurray demonstrates that the desire to be merciful resides deep in the human heart.

As part of our own response, and in solidarity with our brothers and sisters who have been affected by this disaster, I am asking parishioners to contribute to special second collections at Masses this weekend and on the weekend of May 13-14. Proceeds will be forwarded to the Diocese of St. Paul, where they will be shared equally between the Fort McMurray parishioners and the Fort McMurray Ministerial Association to be distributed to any local residents in need.

I encourage all parishioners in the Archdiocese of Edmonton also to consider making direct donations to relief for fire victims through the Red Cross. These donations will be particularly impactful, since they will be matched by both the Alberta and the federal governments.

Above all, I invite you to join me in offering urgent prayers for the needs of all those affected by the wildfire disaster: those who have been displaced from their homes, the first responders and volunteers who are serving them, and all those working so hard to bring the situation under control. May the Lord of Mercy offer them His infinite grace and protection.

Sincerely in Christ,

✠Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton