

Future of the Cathedral: A Letter to the Faithful from Bishop Richard

Brothers and Sisters in Christ

The future of our cathedral has been a concern of ours for a number of years. For many of us, it is an important place of worship, a sign of the unity in our Church and a symbol of the awakening of the Acadian people.

The study we undertook has shown us that major repairs are necessary in order to keep this building open. As a matter of fact, keeping this building open will require an investment of more than seven million dollars in the next ten or fifteen years. Neither the Diocese nor the parish have such financial resources at the present time. A second study, carried out throughout the Diocese, on the feasibility of a financial campaign, indicates that such funds cannot be raised. This impossibility has incited us to find other alternatives.

Between September 2010 and March 2011 different possible sources of financing from government and community agencies were explored by a committee. We have undertaken steps to have the cathedral declared an historical site. Such a recognition could help in securing a use other than as a place of worship.

Our intention is to initiate a dialogue at the diocesan level to gather the opinions of the faithful. It is important to make known the condition of the cathedral, we feel, and receive suggestions from the population on its future. We plan to meet those concerned by this question as early as next September in the different regions of the Diocese. The dates and locations of these meetings will be announced at a later date. Following these meetings, we will have to make a decision on the future of this building and if necessary consider other options.

May the Spirit of the Lord enlighten us with what God wants for His people.

**+ André Richard, c.s.c.,
Archbishop of Moncton**

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