



ARCHDIOCESE *of* KINGSTON

17 April 2023

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May the peace and joy of this Easter season be with you.

I am writing to update you on the status of progress toward creating a permanent archive for the records and artifacts of the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul (SP), the Religious Hospitallers of St. Joseph (RHSJ), and the Archdiocese of Kingston. The archives are necessary to preserve the historical records and legacy of these important religious orders and our communities. Planning for the development and ongoing maintenance of a permanent archive has been in process for several years. In 2016 a feasibility study was conducted by archive consultants to consider the potential of utilizing the recently decommissioned Church of the Good Thief (St. Dismas) as a permanent home for the combined archives. Public meetings were held with the Portsmouth community, the Sisters of Providence of St Vincent de Paul (SP), Religious Hospitallers of St Joseph (RHSJ), and the Anglican Diocese of Ontario. Ultimately, this plan was well received. After this process, the Anglican Diocese of Ontario withdrew from the partnership to pursue an independent plan for their archives.

A heritage architect conducted a comprehensive building assessment of the Church of The Good Thief in 2019. Costs to rehabilitate the building and create the archives were estimated to be a total of \$9,175,000 rendering the proposal to be cost prohibitive. Discussions with all partners associated with the archives proceeded in 2020 to find an alternative plan and an agreement was reached to create an addition to the Diocesan Centre on Palace Road at a cost of \$2,800,000 to house the archives. An endowment fund, created by the Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, the Religious Hospitallers of St. Joseph, and the Archdiocese of Kingston has been established to cover all construction and ongoing operating costs associated with the archives. Construction of the new archives will commence later this year.

This partnership initiative creates a unique opportunity to care for the past and serve the future of the living Church within the Archdiocese of Kingston. Further information about the archives will be shared in the Spring issue of Journey, which will be available in parishes in May 2023. I want to acknowledge the collaboration and steadfast dedication of our Religious Sisters as partners who have championed the archives as a sustainable, historical resource for the benefit of future generations. I also want to thank the Implementation Committee of 2019 that worked with all partners to find a solution to the need for a permanent home for the archives.

With a plan in place to secure the archives, we must now turn our attention to discern how the Church of the Good Thief may find a new purpose within the Portsmouth community. The Diocesan Building & Property Committee will now be tasked with a mandate to oversee a process to divest this property in a manner befitting its history and character. Heritage restoration requirements will be applicable to any future use of this property, ensuring that it remains an important and permanent feature of the Portsmouth community. The Committee will meet next month to proceed with this mandate. Please keep all involved in these two important undertakings in your prayers, asking the Holy Spirit to guide them in their stewardship.

With prayerful best wishes, I remain,

Yours sincerely in Christ,

+Michael Mulhall
Archbishop of Kingston

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