



THE DIOCESE OF BELLEVILLE

August 23, 2020

Dear Friends,

As I begin my second month as the new Bishop of Belleville, I wanted to write to you and thank you for the warm welcome I have received. Since being ordained bishop on July 22, I have visited with people at many parishes, social service agencies and organizations in our diocese. I am most grateful for your kindness as you welcomed me here as a shepherd for our Catholic community.

Even with all the challenges presented by the coronavirus, it is inspiring to see how our clergy, religious and lay faithful continue living our Catholic faith. I am especially grateful for your prayers and support for our parishes, schools, religious education programs and charitable services. As a pastor for many years, I learned that good things don't just happen, it takes people to make them happen. Thank you for making so much good happen here in southern Illinois.

Communication will be very important in our life together. In addition to future letters in your parish bulletins and a regular article I will write in our diocesan paper *The Messenger*, I plan to soon be using social media as a way of connecting with our many brothers and sisters in the 28 counties that are part of our diocese. You are also always welcome to contact me; my email address is: bmcgovern@diobelle.org. My mailing address is: Diocese of Belleville, 222 South Third Street, Belleville, IL 62220. You are always welcome to contact me with your prayer intentions, ideas, thoughts and concerns.

Please keep me in your daily prayers and know that I keep you in mine. May the Lord bless each of us with a deep, abiding friendship with Him and through Him, a communion of friendship, peace and love among us.

In our Lord,

Most Reverend Michael McGovern
Bishop of Belleville

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