



# *Central Diocese*

*of the Polish National Catholic Church*

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June 1, 2018

To the Very Reverend, Reverend Fathers and the Reverend Messrs., and my dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus our Lord:

*¡Viva el mes de junio!* That's Spanish for "Long live June," "Hurray for June." Hurray, indeed! And welcome to the month of vocations in the Polish National Catholic Church: June is Sacred Vocations month for us. June is the month we focus on our great need for priests, and on the need for significant donations throughout the PNCC to be made to the Clergy Pension Plan.

Our need of priests is dire and critical, but I am nonetheless hopeful and optimistic. Even though no Polish National Catholic families have sacrificed even one of their men, young or old, to our altars in the past twelve years, (and it doesn't look like any family will in the near future), I remain optimistic. Even though our seminary has been empty for that period of time, except for the occasional priest from another Church orienting himself there to work as a priest in the PNCC, I have good reason to hope because I have experienced God's providence. Our parish in Denver was declining but was pulled back from the brink of closure by an Hispanic priest from Mexico and 90 people of Mexican heritage who now comprise the great majority of that parish. St Francis, Denver, is growing, and is enthusiastically PNCC, and is flying 18 young people and 6 adults to Convo 2018 here next month.

Because Father Alfonso Castillo needs pastoral help there, I enthusiastically agreed to review applications from priest friends of his in Mexico to provide assistance to him, and subsequently serve our American parishes desperate for priests. In our Diocese, two priests, in fine parishes, are retiring next year. I have no one to fill them. A priest in our Diocese is on three parishes in Jersey. Three priests are on

two parishes each. And there are ailing and aging priests all over the place! And yet I am hopeful. So I say, *¡Viva México!*

With the increase in aging clergy comes the need for our Clergy Pension Plan to support them all. We collect for this vital entitlement throughout the year and especially in the month of June. We need more capital to invest, the interest from which the pension payments are made. From age 70, a PNCC priest can look forward to a monthly check in the amount of \$600; and his widow, a check in the amount of \$300. Please be generous in this drive. And so I say, in my optimism, *¡Viva el Plan de Pensión del Clero!* (Hurray for our Clergy Pension plan!)

I believe God is showing us a potential direction for the future of our Church; and that pathway seems to be presenting itself from south of the border. For the Methodist Church, that pathway is from South Korea, and for the Roman Catholic Church, from India among other sources. In light of all of this, Bishop Hodur has indeed blessed us with a most optimistic motto for our Church when he penned: *A través de la Verdad, el Trabajo y las Dificultades ¡Venceremos!*

Yours in Christ,

*Bishop Bernard*