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Very Rev. Maurice Fiolleau

Vicar General

March 29, 2017

To all the faithful of the Diocese of Prince Albert;

Greetings to each of you as we continue to journey through this Lenten season and move ever closer to Holy Week and Easter.

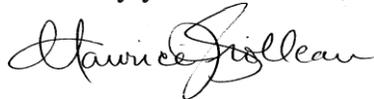
As you may know, last week on Wednesday March 22, 2017 the Saskatchewan Provincial Government presented their 2017-2018 budget and eliminated \$1.5 million dollars of funding for pastoral care services. Health Care in our province is going through profound changes. Many services which we once took for granted are now being challenged. What was once deemed as important has now been eliminated.

Pastoral Care Services provided a coordinator who worked to make sure that the spiritual needs of the patients and their families of all denominations and religions were met especially, when patients and their families were confronting issues related to a life-limiting diagnosis or death. The coordinator also ministered to staff members in need, as well as, coordinated pastoral care services with the Ministerial Associations. The spiritual needs of our people have been met in the past and they will continue to be met in the future, though the task will be more difficult without the coordinator in place.

In the Gospel this Sunday, we see Jesus tending to the needs of his friends, Martha and Mary who have just lost their brother Lazarus. Jesus comes to be with them in their time of need. In faithful imitation of Jesus Christ, the Church has seen the importance of serving the sick, suffering and dying in various ways throughout history. Healing involves not only treatment of a disease but embraces the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions of the human person.

I would like to encourage each of you to write to your local MLA this week and to voice your concerns about the elimination of pastoral care services in our provincial health care facilities. A sample letter is available at the entrance to the Church if you so desire to use it. This sample letter will also be available on the website at www.padiocese.ca

Sincerely yours in Christ,



Rev. Maurice Fiolleau

Vicar General