

Rejoice in the Lord

By Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Newark

Reflection—My Vision

My vision for the Archdiocese of Newark is the vision of a missionary disciple.

We tend to think of missionaries as other people (not us) who have a special calling and unique gifts. We have come to think of missionaries as clergy, consecrated religious or lay people who travel to distant lands and endure many hardships in order to preach the Gospel to those who do not know Jesus Christ. Pope Francis tells us that this image is not wrong, but it's incomplete. We are



all called to be missionary disciples of Jesus Christ who bring his good news to others—in our homes and workplaces, in our parishes and neighborhoods, and in our personal contributions of time, talent and treasure to the Church's worldwide mission. "Before all else," the Holy Father says, "the Gospel invites us to respond to the God of love who saves us, to see God in others and to go forth from ourselves to seek the good of others" (*The Joy of the Gospel*, #39).

In light of this Vision, I pray for the unity and solidarity of our people (clergy, religious, and laity) and I long for a Church that is one with the poor, especially immigrants; that is bold and enthusiastic in its proclamation of the Gospel; and that eagerly and consistently passes on the faith to future generations, especially those children and youth who are economically and socially disadvantaged.

I foresee a future where lay people are fully engaged in the life of our Archdiocese at all levels – and where young adults play a direct and decisive role in our worship, our faith formation, and our service to those in need. I see priests united with one another and with the people they serve. I see deacons, consecrated women and men, and lay people who feel empowered and included in their respective roles and responsibilities for building up the Body of Christ here in northern New Jersey.

My vision for our Archdiocese is one of genuine unity and solidarity in Christ. Our differences should enrich our Church, not divide it. The challenges we face – which are many – should bring us closer together and allow the Holy Spirit to give us the wisdom, courage, perseverance, hope, and generosity that we need to be successful as missionary disciples.

Sincerely yours in Christ the Redeemer,



Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Newark

Update – *Forward in Faith Together: Our Road Ahead*

As Pope Francis has stated, we are resolved to “follow the path of truth wherever it may lead” and to create a road forward towards healing for all who have been harmed by abuse. We know we cannot proceed with healing until we have acknowledged the suffering and injury and cleansed the deep wounds from the past.

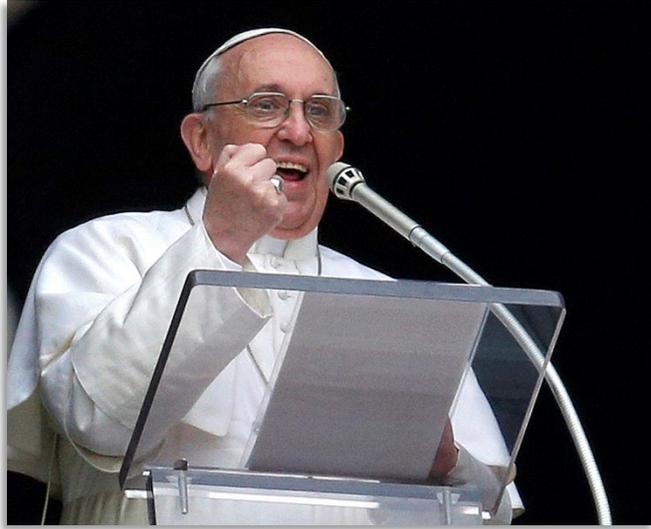
Yet, the path forward must involve far more than simply measures to address past transgressions. It must include an agenda for and commitment to the future. **Forward in Faith Together: Our Road Ahead** is a pastoral vision that calls for a more incisive engagement of the laity in the mission of their parish and the Archdiocese, as well as more direct and open communication with the clergy, religious, faithful and all people of good will. As a local Church, we are embarking on a process of pastoral conversion that makes the necessary changes in structures and strategies in greater service of our Mission.

The vision of **Forward in Faith Together: Our Road Ahead** is supported by six key pillars, each representing an area of action that calls for our continuing commitment. They are: 1) Protection of the Faithful; 2) Accountability, Transparency and Communication; 3) Archdiocesan Pastoral Planning; 4) Lifelong Faith Formation and Education; 5) Ongoing Formation/Support of Clergy; and 6) Active Engagement of the Laity. In the coming weeks, the full text of this pastoral vision and details on each of these pillars will be available for download and review on our website at forward.rcan.org.



A Message from Pope Francis: Words of Challenge and Hope

Nobody can go off to battle unless he is fully convinced of victory beforehand. If we start without confidence, we already have lost half the battle and we bury our talents. While



painfully aware of our own frailties, we have to march on without giving in, keeping in mind what the Lord said to Saint Paul: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor 12:9). Christian triumph is always a cross, yet a cross, which is at the same time a victorious banner borne with aggressive tenderness against the assaults of evil. The evil spirit of defeatism is brother to the temptation to separate, before its time, the wheat from the weeds; it is the fruit of an anxious and self-centered lack of trust.

— Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel*

My Prayer for You

Redeemer of all humankind, teach us to love God and our neighbor, to protect and care for each other—especially those who are most vulnerable. Make us humble, patient, pure of heart and wholly obedient to your Father’s will. Unite us as members of your Body, the Church, and free us from all that divides us and makes us unworthy of you. Amen. †

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.

