



**21<sup>st</sup> March 2019**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

### **Faith into Action – An introduction**

As Paul Bodenham explains in the document ‘Faith into Action’ we have applied for and been awarded a small grant from the national Caritas Social Action Network (CSAN) for two years. This has helped enable us, as a diocese, to collate what is already going on in our parishes to put our faith into action (through the online questionnaire during Lent 2019), and also to work towards the development of an umbrella diocesan co-ordinating body, a Caritas agency for Nottingham, which can assist us to harness, and develop still further, all that’s going on. The findings of the survey will help us, as a diocese, to pinpoint accurately what’s presently taking place, and to identify, in cooperation with our diocesan Justice and Peace Commission, areas where we might need to develop the scope of our outreach work.

All of this is going on at a most providential time when we are beginning to explore, over the next three years, the three spiritual themes of Encounter, Discipleship and Missionary Discipleship. A greater confidence to witness to Christ, through active participation in personal prayer, the sacraments and Sunday Mass, contributes to the sanctification of the world. But, in addition, the works of charity and justice, as well as involvement in the promotion of solidarity, justice, peace and the stewardship of creation, also contribute to the building up of God’s Kingdom. More and more it is recognised that our generosity of spirit as Catholics, and our commitment to charity and justice, provide opportunities to bring people into an encounter with Christ and his Church. Service of others, when understood as serving Christ in others, can help bring both the server and the one being served into a closer relationship with Christ.

It is one of the desired outcomes of ‘Faith into Action’ that it will offer parishes and groups ‘ways to discern how God is calling them to grow in missionary discipleship and to take practical steps to respond together’. I commend it you, and I would encourage Deaneries to invite Paul Bodenham to come and meet with them after Easter.

May this initiative, ‘Faith into Action’, bear much fruit in our diocese and in our greater outreach to others.

+ Patrick

**Right Reverend Patrick McKinney**  
**Bishop of Nottingham**