



The Diocesan Page

At the beginning of August, the Management Team and I reread what happened to launch the year in a relevant way.

When the pandemic started, I urged our pastoral staff to be in service. In May, I wrote a pastoral letter in solidarity with all the members of the Management Team: *Oser la proximité (Dare to get close)*. In this letter, I was inviting our pastoral staff to reread everything they had experienced in the first months of the pandemic; what they saw, what they heard, what they understood, but above all what they remember and how these experiences will transform our ministry.

The theme of this year is *Oser la proximité, autrement... (Dare to get close, differently...)* How to do our ministry differently; how to get out of our usual structures to meet others. Specifically, how to join community networks; how to get close to people and in specific the most vulnerable, the most fragile. How to reinvent all our means of communication. With the Management Team, I have chosen three areas that we will focus on this year. The whole communication block: can we learn to reach all the diocesans? Are we relevant to join and work with the community networks? The second pole is the pastoral care of the most vulnerable people: the sick, the elderly, the young, the poor, the destitute, the immigrants. Finally, the third pole: to be able to listen to the Word of God; how the Word of God comes to reinvigorate our actions. Let us remember that our primary mission, as Church, is to humanize the world in the light of the Word of God! We also realized that our pastoral staff, like all our diocesans, are more vulnerable. This pandemic is causing some stress for many of our staff. How to be more attentive to support one another.

I expect and hope from our pastoral staff and from all the baptized that we learn something from this time of the pandemic. That we listen better to people, being able to discern and becoming better bearers of hope; to be able to take the road and to create new paths. I am asking to all of us, what I try to live myself, to have some audacity: the audacity of the Gospel. What Pope Francis is asking is for us to get out of our comfort zones to meet people where they are. To be a Church on the outskirts, a Church on the way out! This is what I want and what I expect from us for the next year.

Mgr Claude Hamelin †
Évêque
Diocèse Saint-Jean-Longueuil