



Diocese of Richmond

Office of the Bishop

September 27, 2018
Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul

Dear Faithful of the Diocese of Richmond,

“Shine like stars in the world, as you hold fast to the word of life” (Philippians 2:15–16). When we look at stars, we are actually looking back in time, to the moment when light from those celestial bodies began traveling to our present location. Stars also provide guidance for navigation. In the same way, the commemoration of the bicentennial of the Diocese of Richmond in 2020 will provide a look back in time and will chart our course for the future.

The text from the Letter to the Philippians, which is the bicentennial motto, illuminates the two vital forces at work in each local Church: communion and mission. Communion refers to the bonds of fellowship that unite members of the Church to God and to one another. Mission designates the purpose of the Church, which is to proclaim the Good News of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ to all people. Communion keeps the Church intact; mission enables the Church to grow.

The commemorative year will run from January 19, 2020 to January 19, 2021. (The Diocese of Richmond was erected on July 11, 1820; the first bishop of the diocese, the Right Reverend Patrick Kelly, set foot on Virginia soil on January 19, 1821.)

Dynamic events and activities are being planned for the bicentennial: special, diocesan-wide Masses; pilgrimages to historic churches; service opportunities; education in multi-media formats; competitions to design a logo and compose a hymn; and the publication of a commemorative book. The centerpiece will be a Eucharistic Congress held at the Richmond Convention Center from Friday, November 6 to Saturday, November 7, 2020. Information about these events will be posted on the diocesan website (<https://richmonddiocese.org>).

Looking forward to the great anniversary of our local Church of Richmond, I invoke Mary, Star of the Sea, and Saint Vincent de Paul, the patron of our diocese, to help us carry out the bicentennial endeavor with vigor, generosity, and joy.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Barry C. Knestout
Bishop of Richmond