



Diocese of Plymouth
From the Office of the Bishop

December 2020

Dear Friends

As we all know, this has been an extraordinary year where our nation, and many other countries, have been afflicted with the scourge of the Coronavirus pandemic. This has had a massive impact on our lives in so many ways, and has caused much grief, sadness, difficulty and hardship for individuals and families alike. Many have lost their jobs and livelihoods. It is no surprise then that people have become weary, troubled and anxious with the situation they now find themselves.

The beautiful festival of Christmas is a time when we turn our thoughts to God breaking into our world with the birth of Jesus, the Christ child, who comes to save us with his peace and love, and does so in the most humble of circumstances. This brings us much cheer and hope. It is a festival where families and friends gather together to celebrate this joyous event.

This year there is much uncertainty about how we will be able to celebrate Christmas, and whether social restrictions will be imposed upon us for our own safety but, as a consequence, prevent us from celebrating Christmas with our loved ones in the way we normally do. Such uncertainty can unsettle us.

There are those, however, who live in a constant state of uncertainty and who are not able to find a stable home for whatever reason. Some struggle even to find the most basic shelter from the harsh winter weather. These are the homeless; these are the poor.

It is too such as these that the St Petrocs comes to offer assistance, who provide the single homeless with accommodation and a range of other support. This includes providing advice, training and resettlement.

So, in this time of pandemic, I urge you to generously support St Petrocs' annual Christmas Appeal. This will enable the charity to continue the invaluable work

they do in providing practical support to the homeless. In so doing, this will bring much needed cheer in this season of goodwill to those who not merely have no home but very little else besides.

With my prayers and every good wish for Christmas.

Yours devotedly,

+ Mark O'Toole .

Rt Rev Mark O'Toole
Bishop of Plymouth