



OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

September 2021

Dear friends,

A New Beginning in Hope

Do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand (Isaiah 41:10).

As the month of September fast approaches, and the start of another school year looms from behind the shadows, we look forward to a new beginning; a year filled with promise and hope. Over the past seventeen months, we have witnessed the state of society and our lives change in ways we might never have imagined two years ago. From the closing of borders to the adherence to strict protocols, life has been challenging, and for some, even devastating.

Throughout the pandemic, we learned many valuable lessons: we learned to depend on the support of family, friends, neighbours, our health care systems, and especially our faith communities. We learned that a world concerned with the plight of others is better than a world centered on ourselves. We learned that even though we could not practice our faith in person, technology made it possible for us to gather and pray virtually. Most important of all, we learned through the sorrow and pain how we depend fully upon the steadfast love and saving help of God, who never abandons us..

COVID-19 is just the latest hardship in a long line of civil unrest and human suffering. Once again, we have seen that, in difficult circumstances, God gives us the capacity to overcome the challenges through faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. As we embark upon a new academic year, may we know daily the joy of the victorious help of our Lord.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

✠Richard W. Smith
Archbishop of Edmonton