

**Installation of the Most Rev. Gary Gordon
Bishop of Victoria
Address of the Apostolic Nuncio - August 28, 2014**

My brother Bishops,
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

My first duty and pleasure as representative of the Holy Father in Canada is to transmit and offer each of you the greetings of Pope Francis: his love, his friendship and his blessing. A friendship, which comes to you with a gift: Bishop Gary Gordon is the gift of the friendship of Pope Francis shared with each of you who make up this local Church.

Dear sisters and brothers, today I invite you to welcome Bishop Gordon as a precious gift that the Lord sends to the Diocese of Victoria. Thirty-two years ago, the young Gary Gordon received priestly ordination and began a very fruitful ministry in the Archdiocese of Vancouver. Those who first encountered this young, zealous priest were struck by his fatherly care for young people, his outreach to those on the peripheries of society, and his deep empathy and compassion for our brothers and sisters of the First Nations. It was that unique pastoral relationship which led him to be called to shepherd the First Nations in the Diocese of Whitehorse for the past eight years. Bishop Gary's priestly and episcopal ministries have been marked and blessed by a sincere "passion for compassion" toward those imprisoned, and who seek a healing word to restore their wounded lives.

This past June, I had the joy of visiting the Diocese of Whitehorse. This gave me the occasion to see with my own eyes how much the people were sorry to lose their bishop. Yes, they were sorry but deep down inside they knew that they were making a gift to Vancouver Island, and they were glad to make this gift. The gift of Whitehorse becomes today the gift to Victoria.

Brothers and Sisters, and especially you the priests, religious women and men: welcome Bishop Gary Gordon with a grateful heart and with a firm will to collaborate with him, so that the Diocese of Victoria may present herself more and more "as the house and school of communion" (NMI, 43), a place of mutual help in walking the holy journey of life.

A new pastor represents also a new moment in the life of a Diocese. I wish every one of you to be protagonist in this new moment. Through your communion with your Bishop and among you, through your commitment to give priority to the charity (1 Pt 4,8), you will allow the Holy Spirit to write new and beautiful pages, pages worthy to be told, of the history of the Diocese of Victoria. It is the history of the fidelity of God accompanying his people and constantly renewing his miracles for his people.

Let us ask St. Augustine - whose memory we celebrate today – the grace to discover that behind the restlessness of the human heart and the dissatisfaction we often experience, there is a deep quest for God, the desire of God. An infinite and unquenchable desire: *"You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in you."*

And let us also be guided and helped by the Apostle Andrew - the first to be called by the Lord – to whom is dedicated your beautiful Cathedral. Andrew was known for bringing others to Jesus: whether the young boy with a few loaves and fish (cf. Jn 6,8-9), or foreigners in Jerusalem curious to meet the Master (cf. Jn 12,20-22), or, and most significantly, his brother Simon Peter (cf. Jn, 1,40-42).

The ministry of St. Andrew is a beautiful example of the evangelization – this passion to spread the Gospel of joy to which Pope Francis call us – which consists not only in telling others about Jesus, but bringing them to encounter him personally and to have fellowship with him. For it is only through such close communion and personal relation with Jesus that we can grow as disciples of the Lord.

Bishop Gary, today I pray – we pray – that you may have Augustine's restless heart and Andrew's perseverance and boldness of proclamation as you serve the Lord with gladness. As Pope Francis wrote so beautifully in *Evangelii Gaudium*, *"the Gospel tells us constantly to run the risk of a face-to-face encounter with others, with their physical presence which challenges us, with their pain and their pleas, with their joy which infects us in our close and continuous interaction. True faith in the incarnate Son of God is inseparable from self-giving, from membership in the community, from service, from reconciliation with others. The Son of God, by becoming flesh, summoned us to the revolution of tenderness"* (#88).

Dear Bishop Gary: through your ministry as Bishop of Victoria, and with the eager assistance and wholehearted collaboration of your priests, religious and lay faithful, we hope and pray that many will be filled with a passion for compassion for others, be brought to know the Lord, and become part of his revolution of tenderness. AMEN.