



13 March 2018

His Holiness Pope Francis  
Vatican City State

Your Holiness,

As Holy Mother Church marks today, 13 March 2018, the fifth anniversary of your election to the Chair of St. Peter, we the Bishops of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, along with all our faithful, wish to convey our sentiments of ardent and most sincere fidelity to you as our Holy Father and Universal Shepherd, along with the assurance of our fervent prayers and deep affection.

Your leadership has been one that has led us into an ever deeper experience of the Gospel and of the Kingdom, which has resounded in and beyond the Church and to the extremities of the world. We admire and are touched and challenged by your steadfast call to authenticity and simplicity, humility and mercy, as you live out your vocation in confirming your brethren in unity and charity. Your unwavering attention to the poor and the helpless, the marginalized and the broken, speak to every heart, every community. We are particularly attentive to that Joy that springs forth from living the Gospel with faithfulness and love and which truly animates our pastoral approach and sensitivity. Your petrine ministry has been marked by the growing awareness of the need for tenderness, compassion and hope to be foundational in our own ministries, and for this we are truly grateful.

Lastly, Most Holy Father, we wish to thank you for the liturgical memorial of Mary Mother of the Church. May the Blessed Mother continue to assist you in your divine mission and help us become more worthy sons and daughters of the Church under your guidance and with the Lord's ineffable grace.

Blessings of health and wisdom, courage and joy upon you and your ministry.

Fraternally yours in Jesus with Mary,

+ Lionel Gendron, P.S.S.  
Bishop of Saint-Jean-Longueuil and  
President of the Canadian Conference  
of Catholic Bishops