



## *Bishop McGrattan's* **PASTORAL VISIT**



### **What is a Pastoral Visit?**

According to the Code of Canon Law, the Bishop is expected to pay routine visits to the parishes of his diocese in order to familiarize himself with the pastoral needs of his people: "The Bishop is bound to visit his diocese in whole or in part each year, so that at least every five years he will have visited the whole diocese." (Code of Canon Law, Canon 396.1)

### **Why is this done?**

The pastoral visit enables the Bishop to maintain personal contact with the People of God. It is an occasion to reinvigorate those engaged in evangelization and to evaluate the effectiveness of structures designed for pastoral service. The Pastoral Visit also gives the Bishop insight into the state of divine worship, from which the parish draws its strength.

### **The Role of the Bishop**

The Bishop is the chief shepherd of his diocese and the visible sign of unity between his parishes. As a successor to the Apostles chosen by Jesus, the Bishop continues the ministry of teaching, governing and sanctifying the People of God. The Pastoral Visit greatly assists the Bishop in accomplishing this three-fold mission.

### **The Fruits of a Pastoral Visit**

For parishes welcoming the Bishop, the Pastoral Visit is an event of grace, reflecting in some measure that great visit with which Jesus Christ has visited and redeemed His people. The fruits of the Bishop's visit come by way of his prayerful recommendations in the areas of divine worship and pastoral work.

### **WHAT'S INVOLVED IN A PASTORAL VISIT**

If time and circumstances permit, the Bishop will:

- Celebrate Mass and preach the Word of God.
- Confer the Sacrament of Confirmation, within Mass if possible.
- Meet with the pastor and other clerics who assist in the parish.
- Meet with the Pastoral Council or, if one does not exist, with the faithful who collaborate in diverse apostolates.
- Meet with the Parish Finance Council.
- Meet with children, youth and young adults who are receiving catechetical instruction.
- Visit the school and other Catholic institutions dependent on the parish.
- Visit some of the sick in the parish, insofar as it is possible.