

Andrew and another of John the Baptist's disciples began to follow Jesus.  
Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, "What do you seek?" And they said to him,  
"Rabbi" (which means Teacher), "where are you staying?" He said to them, "Come and see" (JN 1:38-39).

Nathaniel asked, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see" (JN 1:46).



Dear Friends in Christ:

You hold in your hands a popular history of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Our archdiocese was established 175 years ago by Pope Gregory XVI on May 6, 1834. This history, written by Oldenburg Franciscan Sister Francis Assisi Kennedy, charts the life of our local Church, originally known as the Diocese of Vincennes.

The Servant of God Simon Bruté, our first bishop, began his episcopal ministry with only three priests, one of whom was on loan from the Diocese of St. Louis. There were only seven churches in the diocese, which comprised all of Indiana and the eastern third of Illinois. Yet by the end of Bishop Bruté's life just five years later, the Church of Vincennes had 25 diocesan priests and 20 seminarians serving an ever-expanding number of Catholics in 17 parishes and at 30 "stations" where Mass was regularly celebrated. Two religious communities had been founded; there were a college for men and an academy for women. Elementary schools enrolled 130 students.

It is my hope that, in this 175<sup>th</sup> year of our diocese, we will all be inspired by our ancestors to evangelize those around us who do not yet know Jesus Christ. Like Jesus and the Apostle Philip, we must extend hearty and sincere invitations to those who have yet to hear the Good News—"Come and see for yourselves!"

Our Church's mission today isn't much different from what it was 175 years ago. We are still under the mandate of Jesus Christ to invite people to "come and see"—to meet Him and to see what we are all about. But before we can issue that invitation, we ourselves must be living our faith. We cannot show Jesus to others if we ourselves are not reflecting his image.

This history will help all of us learn how our ancestors in the faith revealed the face of the Lord to others and how, over the years, they invited people to "come and see." By learning about our own past and celebrating it, we will be able to more clearly ask God to guide us through the next 175 years.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

+ Daniel M. Buechlein, A

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