

Social Justice:

Our diocese has had a long and storied history of engagement in issues, causes and projects that have to do with social justice. It continues today in a variety of initiatives throughout our region. Much of this has been inspired by the social teaching of the Church, which has its roots in Holy Scripture, the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, and in the modern era by the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII known as *Rerum Novarum*, written in 1891, in response to the conditions of life in the aftermath of the industrial revolution.

Clergy and laity of the Diocese took up the torch in the early years of the twentieth century by fostering adult education and co-operative action in response to poverty and despair resulting from exploitation. As a result of this leadership, oppressed people were given the tools to take control of their lives both collectively and individually. Emphasis was on the development of the whole person—physically, intellectually, psychologically and spiritually.

Today, with changing values, the influence of social media, a lot has changed. However, there are still hopeful signs in various activities aimed at achieving justice and securing help for our people ranging from the work of the local committee to secure a just distribution within our province of the federal equalization payments, to our diocesan committee for Development and Peace and our parish based St. Vincent de Paul societies. Numerous other local projects are ongoing.

These are busy times and due to the level of commitments of its members, the Social Justice Committee of the Diocese has been dormant in recent years.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul McGillvray