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20 April 2018

To the Faithful of the Diocese of London

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Re: Canada Summer Jobs Grant Program

Earlier this year, I wrote to you expressing my concern about the Canada Summer Jobs Grant Program. I decided that we should respond to the federal government's requirement for an "attestation" with a firm refusal to participate in a program that threatens the religious freedom enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights.

It was not a decision that I took lightly. Every year, camps, programs and offices all across the Diocese of London depend on summer job grants in order to hire young people. As a result of the government's values test, some \$35,000 of funding would have been lost, and with it the valuable job skills and life experience that summer students would otherwise have gained.

In order to meet the shortfall, we took up a special collection. I am pleased to announce that, thanks to the generosity of people and groups in our diocese, as well as some from outside the diocese, we have raised over \$50,000 to create summer job opportunities for youth in high school, college and university.

Our Senior Leadership Team will distribute funds to those who indicated they had intended to apply, and then develop a plan to offer remaining funds to parishes or groups in the Diocese of London who may be able to hire a student for the summer.

Thank you for your generosity. Thank you, as well, for supporting our stand for what is right and just, in our society where freedom of conscience and religion do matter.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Ronald P. Fabbro, C.S.B.
Bishop of London