

Reflections

by the
Most Reverend Thomas J. Murphy



July 31, 1978

To the People of God of the Diocese of Great Falls

Dear Friends,

On July 5, 1978, our Holy Father, Pope Paul VI announced that I was to become the Bishop of Great Falls, Montana. My own response to that appointment by the Holy Father was one of humility and deep gratitude.

On August 21, 1978, I will be ordained a Bishop and installed as the fifth Bishop of the Diocese of Great Falls. This event affects not only my life but each of you as priests, deacons, religious men and women, and laity of Eastern Montana. It is precisely because of you as the People of God that this approaching awesome event in my own life is given significance and understanding. A Bishop does not live in isolation, but rather in the context of a relationship to a people, a People of God who share a joy and hope in the Lord. It is because of that relationship that I eagerly await my coming among you and making Montana my home.

As the Church of Great Falls in Eastern Montana, you have shared and expressed your hopes for a new Bishop through the consultation process which took place in the Diocese last Winter. The final results of that consultation provide an excellent reflection on the needs of the church and the personal qualities and leadership abilities needed in your Bishop. I hope that, through our mutual ministry with, to and for one another, together we might be able to achieve and facilitate the vision which you articulated.

Where does all this begin? I believe our starting point as a People of God is around the table of the Lord in the celebration of the Eucharist. I would hope that, if you are able, as priests, religious and laity, you would join me on August 21st at the celebration of the Eucharist when I will be ordained and installed as Bishop of the Diocese of Great Falls.

Please pray for me as I prepare to assume the privilege and responsibility of becoming your Bishop as I will pray for you. May our joint prayers for one another achieve joy and hope in Christ.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Thomas J. Murphy". The ink is dark and the signature is written in a fluid, personal style.

Most Rev. Thomas J. Murphy
Bishop Elect of Great Falls