

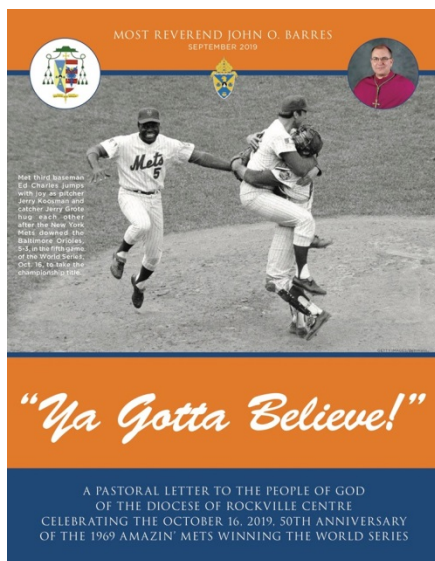


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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW PASTORAL LETTER FROM BISHOP JOHN BARRES CALLS ON CATHOLICS TO SEE THAT 'ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE WITH GOD'

- ***“YA GOTTA BELIEVE!” -- CONNECTS 1969 METS WORLD SERIES WIN WITH NEW ERA OF CATHOLIC EVANGELIZATION AND DRAMATIC MISSIONARY GROWTH***



ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NEW YORK - September 24, 2019 - Most Reverend John O. Barres, Bishop, Diocese of Rockville Centre released to the People of God a pastoral letter entitled, “*Ya Gotta Believe!*” The pastoral letter links the Fiftieth Anniversary of the 1969 New York Mets winning the World Series with the challenge of evangelization and *dramatic missionary growth* for the Catholic Church on Long Island.

With the attention of Mets fans on the current wild card race, Bishop Barres believes it to be a great time to connect the 1969 Mets with *dramatic missionary growth* in the church despite the negative news headlines and surveys that communicate decline.

Bishop Barres’ pastoral letter shows by example how the Mets -- a laughingstock before 1969 - did not let their losing record persist. They took charge and believed in themselves and changed their destiny to winners. “Drawing on this inspiration of the ‘69 Mets, the Catholic Church on Long Island can successfully pursue Catholic evangelization and *dramatic missionary growth* against all the odds and expectations,” Bishop Barres said. “Similarly, the Catholic Church on Long Island can serve as a model to help ignite *dramatic missionary growth* throughout the country.”

To read *Ya Gotta Believe!* online, visit www.amazinmetsanddramaticmissionarygrowth.com. To receive a printed copy contact the Diocese of Rockville Centre at 516-678-5800, ext. 221 or drvccommunications@drvc.org.



THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

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Nassau and Suffolk Counties. The diocese serves approximately 1,428,296 baptized Catholics* (total population in both counties is approximately 3 million). There are 133 parishes plus 1 campus parish in 115 towns. The diocese is blessed with 392 priests in active ministry, 801 religious women, 34 Brothers and 285 permanent deacons. In 2018, 15,446 baptisms, 14,714 confirmations, 13,638 First Holy Communion and 2,569 Catholic marriages took place in the diocese. There are 13,722 students in Catholic elementary schools; 10,512 students in Catholic high schools and 4,980 students in higher institutions. There are 45 Catholic elementary schools (41 parish or regional and 4 private), 9 high schools (2 diocesan, 2 parish and 5 private) and one Catholic college (Molloy College, Rockville Centre) in the diocese. In 2018, there were 75,727 children in parish Faith Formation programs taught by 10,000 volunteer catechists. In 2018, Catholic clergy and community provided consolation to families and loved ones of 9,955 deceased Catholics at 3 diocesan and 20 parish cemeteries. Catholic Health Services (CHS) of Long Island is comprised of six hospitals, three health care centers, four homes for the aged, a regional home care and hospice network, and a community-based agency for persons with special needs. More than 17,500 employees and 4,600 credentialed physicians work within the CHS system. Catholic Charities provides *Care With Dignity...Life With Hope* to the poor, isolated, vulnerable, and disadvantaged on Long Island. In 2018, more than 600 staff members and 400 volunteers provided over 1.4 million face-to-face services to 45,460 people of all faiths and backgrounds from 60 service sites in Nassau and Suffolk counties. The single largest outreach to the People of God on Long Island is through the diocesan media outlets. The diocese maintains vibrant Facebook, Twitter and Instagram platforms. Catholic Faith Network, the diocesan television station broadcasts 24/7/365 to over millions of homes; *The Long Island Catholic Magazine*, the official diocesan print publication is mailed 10 times per year to over 12,000 subscribers; the weekly LICatholic E-newsletter is emailed to 8,000 recipients. The diocesan website drvc.org averages approximately 18,000 unique visitors each month; *Fe Fuerza Vida*, the official Diocesan Spanish-language newspaper has a circulation of 11,000 and is printed ten times each year. (5/19) *As of 2018

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