



# Ecclesia

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEMBROKE

## 2018 Synod of Bishops: Giving a voice to youth around the world

In October 2018, the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod ("journey together" in Greek) of Bishops will be held in Rome. The theme of the gathering will be 'Youth, Faith and Vocational Discernment.'

Prior to this event, Roman Catholics (ages 16–29) were invited to participate in an online survey that will help shape the agenda of the synod. It is a clear sign from our Church of the importance in identifying the pressing concerns of young people and the role they will play in the future of our faith.

"Getting feedback from the young people themselves is always a good idea," said Yvette

Bourque of the Family Life & Youth Ministry Office of the Diocese of Pembroke.

"It is difficult to understand how people, especially of a different generation, are struggling in their lives and faith and what their experience of Church is if you don't ask them directly. Although it is important to get their direct feedback, it is a very large undertaking and not easy to compile all that information to come up with a direction to move forward with. There are so many different types of challenges depending on what part of the world you are from and what your culture is like."

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## Feedback from local youth

Courtney Maika is one young member of our diocesan family who expressed her gratitude at seeing the leadership of our Church reach out to its younger members. A life-long Catholic, she currently attends The Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Pembroke, and regularly attends the diocesan young adult ministry.

"I think the fact that the Vatican wants young people's input attests to its awareness that there's a greater gap caused by the cultural, moral and technological changes of the last twenty years or so between Catholic elderly and Catholic youth today than there was sixty years ago," said Maika, adding that it is vital for that gap to be bridged in order for the Church to continue to grow.

"It strikes me as an acknowledgement of the need for understanding between youth and Church leadership, and by 'understanding' I mean 'comprehension' rather than 'sympathy'."

Tanner Bourque is a young parishioner at Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in Petawawa. Like Maika, he also attends the young adult ministry of our diocese. He praised the effort of the Pope to seek input from the youth of the Church.

"I think it is definitely good that Pope Francis is reaching out, directly, to all the younger generation around the world about their experiences of Church and culture," said Bourque.

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*Courtney Maika and Tanner Bourque check out the online survey that will inform the Synod of Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment.*

## Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment— The survey

In his letter to "young people" on the presentation of the Preparatory Document of the Synod of the Bishops, Pope Francis wrote:

*A better world can be built also as a result of your efforts, your desire to change and your generosity. Do not be afraid to listen to the Spirit who proposes bold choices; do not delay when your conscience asks you to take risks in following the Master. The Church also wishes to listen to your voice, your sensitivities and your faith; even your doubts and your criticism. Make your voice heard, let it resonate in communities and let it be heard by your shepherds of souls. St. Benedict urged the abbots to consult, even the young, before any important decision, because "the Lord often reveals to the younger what is best." (Rule of St. Benedict, III, 3).*

Youth aged 16 to 29 all around the world were invited to provide their input via a survey until December 31, 2017. The survey goals, as outlined to youth on the survey website, were "to provide you with the opportunity to communicate, express and recount who you are and what you want to say about yourself."

The questions, which were available in six languages, covered a wide range of topics, including, How I see myself and how I view the world around me; Others and I; My choices in life; Religion, the Faith and the Church.



## 2018 Synod of Bishops

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Bourque emphasized that this initiative is a clear sign the Church recognizes that input from youth is essential in resolving an array of outstanding concerns.

"The dialogue the Church is initiating with young people is important because it shows that it welcomes their feedback and is interested in their struggles and concerns," said Bourque.

"It shows that the Church is open to hear the good, the bad and the ugly, so to speak. Giving young people a voice is one step in the process of drawing young people into the Church. I don't think there is one easy answer that will come out of this synod, but perhaps some clarity from the young people as to what they are looking for from the Church and what their needs are will help."

One particular pressing concern identified by Bourque was ensuring young people have the proper support mechanisms in place as they pursue their

relationship with God. This can be somewhat isolating when their social circles may not include other practising Christians.

"They are looking for someone to accompany them on their journey," said Bourque.

"No one wants to journey alone and many young people don't have a circle of friends, or even one friend, who is on that same journey. They often need to be courageous to join a faith-based group, like a Bible study or young adult ministry or go to a retreat by themselves, knowing no one. Many times, those groups or retreats do not even have one other young person attending. Not everyone will do this and it is easy for them to lose heart. That is why we have to continue to reach out to them, build relationships, keep making the invitation, get used to working with fewer numbers, pray and not give up."

To learn more about the upcoming Synod of Bishops, please visit [www.vatican.va/news\\_services/press/index.htm](http://www.vatican.va/news_services/press/index.htm)

## Feedback from local youth

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"Those direct responses will help him get a clearer picture of what struggles are there and how the Church may be able to better reach young people."

He also expressed his concern that young parishioners need more avenues to learn about their faith and bond more closely with their parish community.

"Anyone can get onto a website and learn about the faith," said Bourque.

"But, when you have a group of people journeying with you there is a spirit of comradery, accountability and motivation to come back. You feel supported and understood, which makes you eager to learn more and helps you stay on track. I realize this is difficult because of the lack of interest among many young people to learn the faith and come to church, but we have to try. Don't give up on us young people, there are some of us who want to learn and change our lives for the better. Some of us may need a little nudge at times."

## A discernment journey

By Orianne Dyck

I definitely wasn't a teenager who felt called to religious life. The oldest of three children, I loved being with my family and the only reason I wanted to leave was to explore the world and work to make it a better place. After graduating from Bishop Smith Catholic High School in Pembroke, I went to university and earned two bachelor degrees, and flew off to teach in the U.K., and conquer the globe. But while I was off exploring, I realized that although I loved the adventure and the people, it wasn't enough. So, I promised God I'd throw myself into Him when I got home. And I did. I was going to Mass faithfully, bringing Christ into the classroom as much as I could, doing youth ministry and young adult ministry, and I loved it. But it still just wasn't enough. I missed God, as if I hadn't seen Him in a while, even though I felt Him with me all the time.

I went on a mission trip with the Sisters of St. Joseph to Chinchá, Peru, with the Diocese of Pembroke in 2013. Seeing how they poured out their entire lives for God planted a seed in my heart. But that seed lay dormant for several more months until I went to Steubenville Toronto as a group leader, when a priest asked me if I felt called to religious life. And it bothered me so much that I realized there might be something to it. So, I talked to Father Kenney (shout-out to Our Lady of Lourdes Parish!) who helped me leave panic mode behind, and soon after I discovered the Daughters of St. Paul online. They seemed so relevant and real, and had such a heart for the emptiness, searching, and journeys of growth in people's lives. It wasn't the order that I would have thought of for myself, but for two years of discernment God kept drawing me back to them. It took me a while to figure out why.

Now, here I am, a postulant in a sweater vest, on the Pauline mission to use social communication to spread the gospel! Postulancy is the first step of training, essentially. It is two years of learning and of discernment. After those two years, if you discern to continue with the community, you have two years of novitiate, which is like nun boot camp—it's more intense training, looking specifically towards taking a vow, and although you haven't taken that vow yet, you are called "Sister." After the two years of novitiate, you take your first vow, which is valid for a year (and get a religious name added to your baptismal name). That temporary vow is renewed for several years before making that final vow for life.

It's been such a grace-filled journey. I definitely had many days of confusion and frustration and panic when I was discerning, and even now there are days I wonder what on earth I'm doing. But that's what makes it such a real journey of growth. God has met me so fully here and it's so humbling to have glimpses of what the Spirit is doing in the lives of others, as well as in my own life. I don't know what the future will bring, but I am so grateful that God has invited me here to love him and seek him and serve him with everything I am.



Orianne Dyck, third from left, with her postulancy group at Daughters of St. Paul in St. Louis, Missouri.

This whole journey of discovery has made me fan-girl-level excited for the upcoming Synod on Young People, the Faith, and Vocational Discernment. I know that I am not the only person who felt restless for something they couldn't figure out, but I was blessed to be surrounded by people who could help me figure it out. But so many young people do have a call to religious life and don't have the opportunity to consider or explore that option. Teenagers may have never been exposed to that way of life to know it's an option, and adults with careers, like me, may be confused about what can appear as conflicting calls. I hope this Synod will really explore the way Christ calls young people to the faith today, how young people yearn to be met in the faith, and how we can help all people find their calling, whether it be the big "married, single, or religious" or the little "how am I called to love in this moment?" I am definitely praying for open hearts during the Synod, and for all young people to keep seeking.

# Message from the Bishop

My dear faithful of the diocese,

In the Spring of 2017, I informed you in my article for *Ecclesia* of the *Ad limina* visit which the Bishops of Canada were making to the Vatican. Our visit took place in the last two weeks of April 2017 and I am confident that you learned of some of the details of the visit through the internet and traditional Catholic media. As much as I was looking forward to the visit, the experience was even more enjoyable and meaningful than I had expected. To be with the other bishops of dioceses in Ontario was a wonderful experience of fraternity and I had an opportunity to make a good visit to Fr. Michael Lund of St. Andrew's Parish in Killaloe who continues to study in Rome.

As I had mentioned in my article last year, one of the central reasons for the *Ad limina* visit is to pray at the tombs of the two great Apostles of the city of Rome, Peter and Paul. As I had planned, I had the opportunity to pray for the intentions of the priests, deacons and faithful of the diocese. This experience brought to me an even clearer appreciation of their intercession.

The administrative aspect of the visit—meetings with various Roman Congregations who assist the Holy Father in his ministry—were deeply enriching and were complemented by a memorable audience with the Holy Father. Our visit with the Holy Father was a great blessing. Pope Francis spoke of the need for us to teach and prepare young people for marriage, to allow Christ to be taken out into the world and for the Church to stand up and proudly yet humbly proclaim the Gospel. As bishops, we were reminded of the importance of prayer and preaching the Word of God and we appreciated his ability to mix serious reflections with gentle good humour. I am very thankful to the Lord that he allowed me to bring the intentions of the diocese frequently to mind and heart and to live an ecclesial experience that brought the Diocese of Pembroke to the tombs of the great Apostles and the successor of St. Peter in Pope Francis.

A reflection that grew in awareness for me during the visit was the grace-filled communion that we share in the Church. The heart-warming communion which we share with family, friends and fellow workers is well known to each of us. Complementing this common communion is the mystical communion we also share with Catholics throughout the world, many of whom we do not know and will never know in this life. This communion is based on the fact that Christ has called each of us to Himself in his Church.

The beautiful teachings of the Church, reflected most recently in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, remind each of us of this noble calling the Lord has granted to us. Having been created in the image of God, we have

also been incorporated into the Mystical Body of Christ through our baptism. This incorporation has been strengthened in the sacrament of confirmation, which more clearly reveals the apostolate to which each of the baptized is called, namely, to exercise the “splendid burden” of making God’s message of salvation known to the world. For this great exercise of love, the Eucharist and the other sacraments both nourish and strengthen the love at the heart of this “splendid burden”— the apostolate of Christ.

During our *ad limina* visit to Rome, this reflection came to mind for me on more than one occasion. In our discussions in the Roman offices, this apostolate to make the Gospel of Christ known to the world reappeared again and again. It brought to mind for me the example of many generous people of our diocese who are dedicated to this apostolate. I have been blessed to have experienced the remarkable dedication of many faithful laity and priests. Who are some of these examples? The many parents, catechists, teachers, those following a vocation in health care, those serving in public service to the community, our Catholic associations dedicated to the poor. And there are many others. I call to mind those have been given a ministry of prayer, especially our beloved seniors and infirm who have married the sufferings of their lives to Christ for the intentions of so many in the Church.

As much as I have been edified by this wonderful apostolate, it became clear to me that we must never lose our fervent desire to rededicate ourselves to this apostolate. My brothers and sisters, let us be aware also of how our decadence and self-seeking can harm this apostolate. Let us re-awaken in our hearts the knowledge that our happiness depends on our self-giving for Christ and our brothers and sisters.

In the ten years since my ordination as bishop of Pembroke, I have grown in appreciation for the many signs of the Church’s growth and vibrancy. Very often this growth is made evident in areas and spheres that we would least expect. Without doubt, the Holy Spirit continues to quietly guide the Apostolate of the Church and to allow the fruits of this apostolate to bring growth in unexpected ways. In the midst of trial, this has given me great hope for the future. Knowing that we are blessed participants in this Divine plan, let us continue to thank the Lord for the many blessings he has bestowed upon us and ask his grace and strength to take up this “splendid burden” of carrying Christ’s message of joy and salvation to the world.

**+Michael Mulhall**  
Bishop of Pembroke



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## 60th Anniversary— Father Roch Gagnon

June 1, 2018, will mark the 60th anniversary of the ordination of Father Roch Gagnon to the priesthood.

Born in Chiswick, Ontario, in the Township of Chisholm, Father Gagnon is the son of Pierre Gagnon and Germaine (née Pilon). A family of 14 children, they actively attended church and prayed the rosary every night.

“When I was young I went to church regularly, even on weekdays of Lent, before school,” said Father Gagnon. I served Mass often at the church and convent.”

It was during his youth that Father Gagnon first contemplated life as a priest.

“The idea of becoming a priest did not come all of a sudden,” said Father Gagnon, who attended Chiswick school, run and taught by Soeurs de l’Assomption de la Sainte Vierge until Grade 12. “I had that idea as young as 12 years old. Of course, I had two aunts (nuns) who no doubt prayed for my vocation to the priesthood. And my teacher in Chiswick for a period of seven years from grade 6 to grade 12, Sr. Joseph Alfred (Sr Éléonore Saumier), was also a great influence in my decision to become a priest.”

Father Gagnon attended Collège Sacré-Coeur in Sudbury, run by Jesuit priests. He obtained a B.A. from

Laval University, to which the Collège was affiliated. “Then I was sent by Bishop (William J.) Smith for my theology at St. Augustine’s, Toronto (Scarborough),” said Father Gagnon. “I was ordained in Chiswick on June 1, 1958, by Bishop Smith.”

Father Gagnon would go on to serve at a variety of parishes, starting as a Curate in Paroisse Ste-Thérèse in Temiscaming and Paroisse St-Pierre in Fort Coulonge. He then served as Pastor at Paroisse Ste-Anne in Ile-du-Grand-Calumet, St. Bernadette’s in Bonfield, Paroisse St-Jean-Baptiste in Pembroke, and Paroisse Ste-Thérèse in Temiscaming. He retired from being a full-time pastor in 2005 in North Bay, though he still answers the call to serve when needed.

“I replace on weekends in our diocese as far as Fort-Coulonge, Otter Lake and Cayamant,” said Father Gagnon. “I also replace in North Bay at St-Vincent-de-Paul, the Pro-Cathedral, and Holy Name. My old teacher, Soeur Éléonore, asked me to replace an aged priest, Monsignor Jean-Marie Paiement, a few times then I became Aumônier of the the Soeurs de l’Assomption de la Sainte Vierge, where there were between 30–35 nuns. I’m still part-time chaplain there.”



Reflecting on what makes one a good parish priest, he told of the need to listen for the Holy Spirit speaking through the parishioners.

“A priest must be listening to the Spirit which often comes through the words of the people,” said Father Gagnon. “So, he must listen to what his congregation is saying and act accordingly.”

## 50th Anniversary— Father Basil Tanguay

On June 1, 1968, Father Basil Tanguay was ordained in the Church of St. James in Portage-du-Fort, the town where he grew up and went to school, and the church where he met God and served his first Mass at the age of seven.

Father Tanguay left Portage after high school to explore the idea of becoming a priest. He attended St. Jerome’s College in Kitchener for a year and then went on to St. Augustine’s Seminary in Toronto for two years of study in philosophy and four years of theology.

In a story in *The Equity*, Father Tanguay noted this was during the 60s and the time of the Second Vatican Council and said he was “very much influenced by theology coming out of that.”

After his ordination, Father Tanguay’s first assignment was at Our Lady of Fatima in Renfrew. He credits Father Flynn as a being a wonderful mentor to him.

From Renfrew, he went to Temiscaming, a region where he would serve for several years, interspersed with assignments in Mattawa, Quyon and other parishes.

In the early 1990s, Father Tanguay, in an attempt to fill a void that he was feeling, audited a Scripture course at St. Paul’s University in Ottawa and ended up enrolling in the Masters in Pastoral Theology program. Upon completion of his Masters he taught at the university for three years. “It was a highlight of my

career,” he told *The Equity*, adding “I learned [from the students] that what they really appreciated was when you could talk from experience about something that you’ve read and reflected on.”

In speaking about the region’s waning religious community, Father Tanguay told *The Equity*:

“God chose for us to know Him, He wants us to know Him. I think that knowledge is meant to give some light to our path and some hope in our daily journey,” he continued.

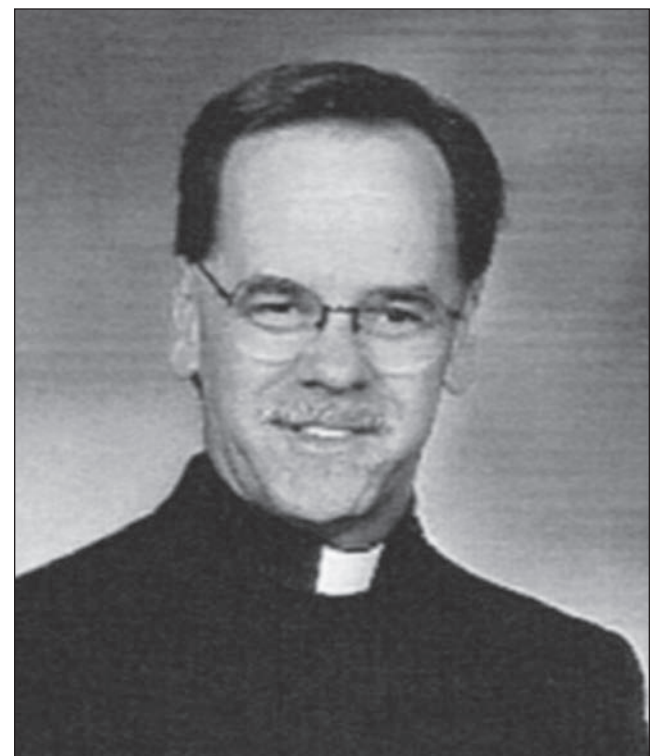
“But we have to be able to recognize His presence in the small things, to look at something in nature and be awestruck by it as a simple revelation of something of God ... A spark or a glimpse of something bigger than we are, something bigger than all of us. I love the idea of being a part of that.”

Tanguay considers himself to be on the same journey as those who fill his church pews. He, like them, is still searching and forever will be.

From this position, he likens his role in the community as that of a gardener.

“You may plant the seed and you may water it but you don’t provide the growth,” said Tanguay. “God does that.”

“If I feel I can provide opportunity and good seed, I think that’s about all it is,” he said. “It’s just nice to be part of the miracle of growth.”



After 49 years of preaching, he realizes that he doesn’t and isn’t expected to have the solutions to the bigger questions that people have grappled with for centuries.

“We’re all searching, and moving in that search,” said Tanguay. “If that’s the only truth there is, or the only truth we can agree on, I can live happily with that.”

*Excerpts from The Equity, May 17, 2017, page 5.*

# 50th Anniversary— Father Howard Chabot

Father Howard Chabot was ordained to the Priesthood by Most Reverend William J. Smith, at St. John Chrysostom Church, Arnprior, on Saturday, May 4, 1968. He was the youngest of five children born to George and Cecilia Chabot. He concelebrated his first Mass there the following day assisted by Monsignor Reg Dillon, Fathers John Green, Archie Afelskie, Douglas Bridge and Neil Willard. Interestingly, he recalled that he had to ask permission for con-celebration as it had not become a practice in the Diocese.

Attracted during a Parish Mission by the motto “*With the Lord is a plentiful redemption*”, Father Chabot set out on the journey to the Priesthood studying with the Redemptorist Fathers at St. Mary’s College, Brockville and St. Gerard’s Novitiate in Keswick, Ontario. Following a stint as a news reporter and photographer with *The Arnprior Chronicle*, he resumed studies at Saint Augustine’s Seminary in Scarborough and at the Grand Séminaire of Montréal. Post-graduate studies were at Divine Word International Centre for Religious Education in London, Ontario.

Father Chabot was director of various diocesan offices—Religious Education, Lay Apostolate, Social Services and Vocations. He worked as a probation officer, jail chaplain, police chaplain and served on various committees and boards in Renfrew County. He was also chaplain to the Sisters of Saint Joseph at their Pembroke Motherhouse. As a pastor, he was parish priest at St. Paul the Hermit Parish, Sheenboro, Quebec, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Braeside, Holy Name, Pembroke, Our Lady of Mount Carmel/Our Lady of Grace, Lapasse-Westmeath and Our Lady of Lourdes, Pembroke. Although retired from full-time parish pastoral ministry, he continues to assist with weekend ministry and is a frequent presenter at faith development workshops and retreat day preaching throughout the diocese.

Deacon Adrien Chaput, Director of the Diocesan Office of Faith Formation, has worked with Father Chabot on many of these projects and says, “Father has been an inspiration to me and others with his sense of humour, wisdom and positive attitude.”

He describes him as “a caring man who always takes the time to say hello and listen to you when you share.” “He has a great love for the Lord evident in his preaching and teaching and especially when he celebrates Eucharist and invites you to lift your hearts up to the Lord.”

## Father Chabot shared the following reflection:

The writing was on the wall. The letters stretched along the length of St. John Chrysostom Parish Hall: *You are a priest forever like Melchizedek*. I remember saying to the young people who had decorated the hall for my ordination and First Solemn Mass that the longest word up there was not Melchizedek. It was “forever”. It spelled out a commitment. God help me! It was like what many of my school friends from the same community had already said to each other on their wedding day. I was saying it to God and I had a great consciousness of needing God’s help and the prayerful intercession of Our Mother of Perpetual Help to live it out... forever.

The heroes of those days—John XXIII, J.F.K., Martin Luther King—had already passed on. Notwithstanding their age, they still seemed to my generation like athletes dying young who, as A.E. Housman’s poem declares:

“Smart lad, to slip betimes away /From fields where glory does not stay,

And early though the laurel grows /It withers quicker than the rose.”

Their laurels had not yet wilted and they each in their own way had given renewed vision and hope for a universal harmony that stirred the hearts of young idealists. And I believe that is what we were, the young men answering the call to priesthood in the sixties—idealists.

Such was the society of the day. And here I was “not knowing what was before me” ready to say “*Adsum – Here I am*” to the call from my Bishop in the ordination ceremony.

I must say that for all of the excitement and joy of my ordination day, the parish experience of that first year was both challenging and frightening. I am most grateful to the wonderful mentors I had. There was Father Jack Quinn who taught me the ways of parish ministry at a very practical level. Father Gerry Cooper who invited me to join him in “Project Involvement” and initiated me into youth ministry and one of the best-ever local diocesan religious education programs. Father Murray Tardiff had been a friend from before I went into the seminary for the diocese and there he was at the Cathedral Rectory where we enjoyed such great comradery. It was a great beginning. These were the men who helped set the foundation for my ministry. Others come to mind also, Francis Kennedy, Bernie Hunt, Alan Cox, and Bernie Sloan who began the journey with me back in Brockville. They accepted me as a brother and taught me the joy of priesthood.



Some may want me to speak to specifics of these “*first fifty years of forever*”, but I choose to recall the good, the true and the beautiful that allows me to continue to enjoy with gratitude what has been all in all 50 happy years. I pray that I have been a blessing to God’s people and ask forgiveness where I have failed.

On my ordination card back in 1968 was written, “In remembrance of the day when Our Lord made me His priest to bring to men His Love, His Life, His Pardon, and His Message.” It goes on to ask, “Please pray for me and for all those to whom I shall minister.”

That request remains. In time only the verb tense will change; for already chiseled into the rock of my tombstone are the words “Please pray for him and those to whom he has ministered.”

For all that has been I am most grateful and pray with the Church that the Lord who has begun this work in me will bring it to completion.

## Face of Ordination Souvenir from 1968...

*To the full extent of my power,  
Because I am a priest,  
I wish from now on to be  
the first to become conscious  
of all that the world loves,  
pursues and suffers;  
I want to be the first to weep,  
To sympathize and to suffer;  
the first to unfold and sacrifice myself,  
to become more nobly of the earth  
than any of the world’s servants.*

TEILHARD DE CHADIN



## 40th Anniversary—Father Kerry Brennan

May 13, 2018, will mark the 40th anniversary of the ordination of Father Kerry Brennan.

Early in his life, the native of Renfrew was actively involved in the church.

"I became an altar boy at an early age. I think I was about eight. I first thought of becoming a priest when I would go with my mother, who used to clean the St. Francis Xavier rectory," said Father Brennan.

"While she was cleaning I would often speak to the priests in the house. I remember Father Pat Blake, Father Rice, Father Emmett Murray, Father Jack Green, and Monsignor Raymond Clarke. I got to see them 'outside' the church setting. I often thought these guys are ok."

"As I grew older I remember Father Murray Tardiff sending me newsletters regarding vocations. This got me thinking more about a vocation to the priesthood."

It was during his time in high school that Father Brennan began to devote himself more to his faith, with a particular focus on prayer.

"Father Merlyn Ethier was Chaplain of St. Joseph's High School," said Father Brennan.

"I became more prayerful during my high school years, attending weekly prayer meetings with Father Ethier as leader. I would not consider myself charismatic, but I did enjoy the charismatic prayer meetings with Father Ethier."

Upon completion of his high school studies, Father Brennan entered St. Peter's Seminary in London, Ontario, in the fall of 1971.

"During my time in the seminary I became good friends with two priests who encouraged me and helped me along the way: Father Charlie Giroux and Father Doug Morris, both of whom have died. I would not have persevered without their help and guidance," said Father Brennan.

On May 13, 1978, Father Brennan was ordained at St. Francis Xavier Parish by Bishop Joseph R. Windle.

During the early years of his priesthood, Father Brennan served as an assistant to Father Adrian Flynn at Our Lady of Fatima in Renfrew from 1978-86. After that, he served at St. Martin of Tours in Whitney/Madawaska, then moving on to the Most Holy Name Parish in Pembroke, followed by Our Lady of Good Counsel in Deep River. He returned to Renfrew five years ago to serve at St. Francis Xavier.

Interacting with parishioners at the various parishes he served has brought great fulfillment in carrying out his priestly duties.

"I must say that walking with people as they prepare for and celebrate the sacraments is the most enjoyable part of being a parish priest. I also enjoy visiting the sick and elderly," said Father Brennan.

"Over the years I thank God for the many holy people he has placed on my path. In the various parishes of our Diocese where I have been privileged to serve, they were faithful companions on the way."

Upon reflecting on his years of service to the Church, Father Brennan was adamant he could not

have endured without the help of God.

"I credit Almighty God and the guidance of His Spirit as being the reason why I continue to enjoy ministry," said Father Brennan.

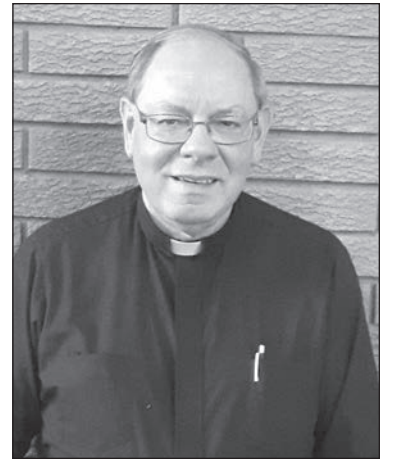
"So many times God has helped me with words that I

could not have come up with on my own when I have had difficult situations to handle. As I look back on my 40 years in the priesthood, these words of the Psalmist come to mind: 'Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord' (Ps 89:2).

Looking forward to the years ahead, Father Brennan noted that he is still absorbing as much knowledge as he can, extending his gratitude to those who have helped him along the way.

"I learned and am still learning, that people care less about how much you know, until they know how much you care," said Father Brennan.

"I am grateful to all of those teachers. Meanwhile, I press forward, trusting in the love of our God. For each passing year, for the good that can be accomplished, for the happiness that can be shared, I am deeply grateful."



## 25th Anniversary—Father John Burchat

On May 1, 2018, Father John Burchat will mark the 25th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood.

Born on January 17, 1966, in Kingston, Ontario, to Ben and Helen (nee Prince) Burchat, Father Burchat was baptized at St. Patrick's Parish in nearby Napanee on January 30 of that year. He is the youngest of four siblings.

"I was raised on my parents' farm in Tramore beside the Bonnechere River between Round Lake and Golden Lake, doing everything from vegetable gardening and other farm work to skidding logs with a horse," said Father Burchat.

"I attended St. Andrew's Catholic Elementary School in Killaloe and graduated from Madawaska Valley District High School in Barry's Bay in 1984."

Throughout his childhood, Father Burchat and his family were involved in church life in whatever community they resided in.

"Wherever we lived, our family always saw our parish community as home," said Father Burchat.

"My brother and I were altar boys. My sisters played the parish organ for Sunday Mass and sang. Our family home was always welcoming of our parish priests, thus enabling me to see them as both respected and real men."

"Having two aunts as Sisters of St. Joseph meant that the vocation to religious life was valued as a Christian way of life. As a teen, I was rather shy and did not attend a parish youth group. And yet, I always discussed religious topics with friends. A very influential Christian high school teacher also encouraged genuine examination and debate of religious topics as part of our history classes."

In recalling his path to serving God as a priest, Father Burchat told of having several religious awakenings as a teenager.

"First, I was moved by the realization that to live a life without faith is truly catastrophic," said Father Burchat.

"Secondly, through the witness of the Shroud of Turin, I was given an illuminating realization of the truth and implication of the Resurrection of Christ. During these years, I also participated in several retreats where the personal witness of the priests provided further compelling evidence of the attractiveness of a life lived in Christ. These experiences proved overwhelming enough to compel me to consider the possibility that the Lord may be calling me to be a priest."

In 1984, upon completing his secondary studies at Madawaska Valley, Father Burchat resided at Madonna House Apostolate in Combermere where he attended the Spiritual Formation program.

From there, he began priestly formation at Saint Peter's Seminary in London in 1985.

Finally, on May 1, 1993, he was ordained by Bishop Joseph R. Windle in Father Burchat's home parish of St. Casimir's in Round Lake Centre.

He served as Parochial Vicar at St. John Chrysostom Parish (Arnprior) and St. Francis Xavier (Renfrew). From there he moved to the position of Pastor at St. Ignatius Martyr (Maynooth), St. Anthony of Padua (Haliburton), St. Hedwig (Barry's Bay) and Our Lady of Mercy (Bancroft).

In July 2006, Bishop Richard W. Smith assigned Father Burchat to pursue full-time graduate studies at Dominican House of Studies in Washington, DC, obtaining a Licentiate in Sacred Theology. He was appointed as Pastor of St. John Chrysostom in Arnprior in 2010 by Bishop Michael Mulhall.

In his time as a pastor, Father Burchat believes the key to being a successful parish priest is being

passionate in loving those he serves.

"To be a good pastor is to be a spiritual father whose priority is to truly love the people entrusted to your care," said Father Burchat.

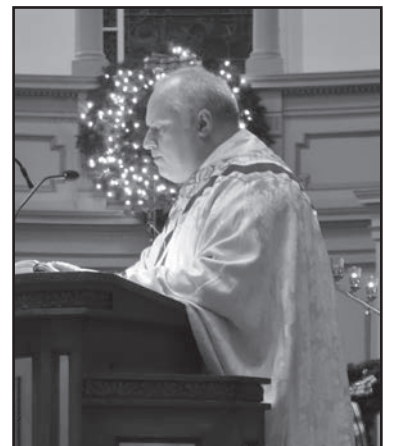
"Even as you try in various ways to guide your parishioners in

the way of the Gospel—its joys and demands—they must first experience your own genuine love for them, just as God first loves us. To be a good pastor also demands that you strive to have the heart and zeal of an evangelist with a docility towards being prompted and guided by the Holy Spirit to go out and bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to everyone."

He also mentioned that while serving as a parish priest can involve both challenge and joy, the variety of commitments and encounters that are a part of his life does provide spiritual fulfillment in his chosen vocation.

"I really enjoy the various dimensions of parish life and its routine of liturgical/pastoral cycles and then the many different kinds of interrupting demands that call forth the exercise of priestly ministry," said Father Burchat.

"I enjoy the life of prayer and study, and then passing on what I have contemplated of the Mysteries of Faith through conversation, preaching and the celebration of the Sacraments. I am always grateful for the many good priests, religious and lay faithful who have affirmed, taught and mentored me over the years."





## 10th Anniversary—Deacon Adrien Chaput

Deacon Adrien Chaput will mark the 10th anniversary of the ordination to the Permanent Diaconate on May 10, 2018.

Born and raised in Pembroke, Deacon Chaput was raised in a Roman Catholic family and was actively involved in parish life.

“During my youth, I was an altar server at St-Jean-Baptiste-Church which was my home parish,” said Deacon Chaput.

“I served there until I was in grade 10. One day I remember the Pastor, Father Marc Gauthier, saying to me that I should be the celebrant of the Mass as I was at that age taller than he. I laughed, but knew I was very much at home and where God had called me to be.”

That deep-seated relationship with God remained with Deacon Chaput throughout his life, inspiring him to contemplate pursuing the vocation of priesthood.

“From my youth, I knew that God had a calling upon my life,” said Deacon Chaput.

“I was discerning the priesthood until grade 10 and then met my high school sweetheart, Bernadette, and answered the call to the vocation of marriage. God also blessed us with a beautiful daughter, Mélanie. I always felt God had a plan, but I was unsure how it would come to fruition. I continued to discern God’s calling upon my life with my Spiritual Director and he, as well as our Bishop at the time, Bishop Richard Smith, encouraged me to continue the discernment process by entering formation in the Archdiocese of Ottawa.”

After passing the pre-requisite testing and preparation, and with the permission of Bishop Smith, Deacon Chaput began his formation in Ottawa in September 2004.

“As a candidate, I began a four-year period of studies during which time there was a mutual discernment between myself, those in charge of formation, the Bishop and his representatives,” said Deacon Chaput, further explaining how his wife accompanied him on this momentous journey.

“At the completion of my formation it was recommended that I be ordained. The program of formation for the Permanent Diaconate involves the participation of the candidate’s wife. This allows her to understand the potential impact of ministry on family life. I am so very grateful to my wife Bernadette for accompanying me fully on the four-year journey and giving her “yes” to the Bishop, allowing me to be ordained a permanent deacon.”

On May 10, 2008, Deacon Chaput was ordained by Bishop Michael Mulhall at St. Columbkille Cathedral in Pembroke. It was at that very location that he began his duties as a deacon.

“I was assigned and welcomed to assist at St. Columbkille Cathedral,” said Deacon Chaput.

“As a deacon, I am called to be a servant—as the Gospel mandates to all God’s people. I am to assist the Bishop and priests at the altar as a disciple of Christ who came not to be served but to serve. I am mandated to proclaim the Gospel and preach the homily when scheduled. I also assist in the preparation



and celebration of baptisms, marriages and funeral liturgies. In the mission of charity, I have been assigned as Spiritual Advisor for St. Vincent de Paul St. Columbkille Conference.”

Deacon Chaput shared that after 10 years of service, he continues to be inspired in serving God and the members of our faith community.

“My greatest joy is serving the Lord and his people,” said Deacon Chaput.

“I love to meet people where they are on this pilgrimage of life and share with them the love, mercy and compassion of our Lord Jesus Christ. I am very conscious of what St. Francis of Assisi said to his followers as he urged them to ‘proclaim the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words.’ Every day I thank God for calling me to serve in this way and I am grateful to my parents and all those who led me in the teachings and ways of our Catholic faith.”

## Our Lady Good of Counsel Mission Church demolished

By René Raymond

With progress comes the inevitable change to the face of every community, and this district is no exception.

Recently, the oldest building in town, the old Roman Catholic Church standing in Canadian International Paper (CIP) mill yard was demolished. In about 1882, long before the present town of Temiscaming came into being, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate established the church as a mission that was visited periodically. Within its walls many notable members of the Roman Catholic clergy celebrated Masses, officiated at marriages, baptism, and funerals.

Among these early priests who made their regular visits to the mission was one who was well known throughout the entire upper Ottawa region, Father Jean-Marie Nédélec. Many old timers knew him better as Father Brûlé. It is believed that Father Nédélec actually established the mission here.

The church was then part of the Mattawa parish and another well-known priest who officiated here and who is still remembered, was Father Nelson Duquette, who later became parish priest at Mattawa. This man’s broad



outlook, his dedication to the principles of Christianity, his association with all creeds, especially among the lumberjacks, earned him the name “the Protestant priest,” a nickname to which he often personally referred.

*Tem Times, Nov 18, 1966*  
*René (Gibou) Raymond*  
*Silver Fox Production*



## Parish Profile

### Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Pembroke

Over fifty years since being founded, Our Lady of Lourdes Parish continues to be a beacon of faith for the devoted members of our diocese in the city of Pembroke.

Our Lady of Lourdes Parish was established on May 2, 1962, by the Most Reverend William J. Smith, Bishop of Pembroke.

Father John F. Harrington was designated as the first parish priest, a title he would hold from 1962 until his retirement in 1989.

Construction was completed on September 15, 1963, and Bishop Smith was on hand to bless the church. The structure also included a parish hall located downstairs.

On March 12, 1967, a parish council was established, tasked with the organizational, spiritual and social development of the parish.

Perhaps the most pressing responsibility for early members of the parish was paying down the debt for the construction of the church. In December 1981, Father Harrington announced that the debt for construction of the church had been paid off. Later in 1982, when the parish was celebrating the 20th anniversary of its founding, the mortgage was burned.

Fast forward to 2012, and Our Lady of Lourdes celebrated the 50th anniversary of its founding. To commemorate this momentous occasion, a book was published, containing a history of the parish.

Since August 2005, Father Bill Kenney has served as parish priest. Though the church may be one of the younger structures in the diocese, it is not immune from needing renovations.

"The Property and Finance Committee undertook a series of renovations that began in 2009," said Father Kenney.

"We put forward a proposal to the parishioners and asked them to pledge money for three years to help support the work that needed to be done. The debt was paid off three years after construction ended. We began with replacing deteriorating bricks on the house with field stone, donated by Terry Kenny and James Lapointe, who at that time were renovating the old Mirimichi Lodge to make it into a retirement home. The stone they removed was identical to the stone used



in our church, since both buildings were built at the same time. The stone was sufficient enough to make a new stone face on the front of the house, resurface the face of the tower, and cover the new elevator entrance."

"The second phase was resurfacing the tower, which led to rebuilding it due to improper interior structure."

"The third stage was the building of an exterior elevator to access the basement. This third phase also included the renewal of the parish hall with new bathrooms, flooring, ceiling, paint, entrance and renewed kitchen facilities."

Father Kenney also mentioned that the parish is very willing to host events for a wide range of organizations.

"We open our facilities to diocesan events and to charities who wish to use the facilities for fundraising," said Father Kenney.

Father Kenney told of the great joy he receives from serving God's people.

"I have been blessed in my priesthood to have worked in parishes where I have come to know so many good people," said Father Kenney.

"Their faith inspires me and I hope that I have been able to help them on their faith journey."

Newly ordained Father Stephen Helferty, who serves as Parochial Vicar at Lourdes, also expressed his joy in serving in the parish.

"Our Lady of Lourdes is a vibrant parish with lots of life and activity," said Father Helferty, who also serves with Father Kenney at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish (LaPasse) and Our Lady of Grace Mission (Westmeath).

"This combination makes Lourdes a good place for a new priest to get his feet wet because of the opportunity to be involved in many different facets of parish life. I enjoy working with Father Bill—he is patient and kind, and very dedicated. It is interesting to note that he is one of the first priests I talked to about entering the seminary, as he was vocations director for the Diocese at the time, and now, as a priest, he is my first pastor."

*With notes from '50 years of memories in the faith life of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish' and 'Lift Up Your Hearts', a history of the Diocese of Pembroke, authored by Father Joseph Legree.*





# What is the Communion of Saints?

By Fr. Michael Smith

*“From Adam down to the present time all generations have passed away; but those who were perfected in love by God’s grace have a place among the saints who will be revealed when the Kingdom of Christ comes to us.”*

–Pope St. Clement I (late first century), from a letter to the Corinthians, quoted in the *Liturgy of the Hours*, Vol. III, p. 473

Every Sunday at Mass, in the Apostles’ Creed, we proclaim, “I believe in... the communion of saints.” What does this mean?

First, it is necessary to be clear about what the word ‘saints’ means. A saint, or holy person, is someone who lives in union with God, whether in this life or the next. In the New Testament, the word ‘saints’ refers to the body of believers (1 Cor. 16:15, 2 Cor. 1:1). ‘Saint’ does not mean being perfect in every way. Holiness is not the same as natural strength of character, physical strength, or intellectual prowess. All of these are good, but holiness can be present in the absence of some or all of these. To be made holy is to be perfected, or made complete “in love by God’s grace”, as St. Clement says in the quote above. In the end, we will be judged on the basis of how well we have loved. The degree of our self-sacrificing love, which is a gift of God, is the same thing as the degree of our holiness, which is really God’s love, the Holy Spirit, in our hearts (Rom. 5:5).

What is the “communion” among the saints? It is a sharing in charity and also in spiritual goods. We members of Christ form one body: the body of Christ, of which Christ is the Head. Every act of charity, however small and hidden, benefits the entire body. The opposite is also true: every sin hurts the entire body. Thus, as we are built up in charity, our lives immediately benefit everyone else. We need never worry about whether we are having an influence on anyone. If we are living the life of charity, our lives benefit everyone.

The “sharing of spiritual goods” seems like an obscure topic, but it can be illustrated by pointing to one specific spiritual good: prayer, especially the prayer of the Mass. The communion of saints consists of three groups of people: those who already see God face-to-face in heaven, those who have died and are still being purified (what we call purgatory: “purgation” or “purification”), and those of us still struggling here on earth. Those in heaven pray for both of the other groups, and their prayers benefit us all. We on earth pray and offer Mass for those still being purified, and our prayers benefit them. They, in turn, pray for us. Those in heaven, obviously, do not need others to pray for them.

In short, even the person who lives the most geographically isolated life is, in reality, a member of an enormous family: the family that has Christ as its Head, which exists in this life and the next. This family is what we mean when we say “Church”. “The communion of saints is the Church” (CCC, no. 946).

(For a more complete and technical treatment of this subject, see *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 946–962.)

## Adult Faith Retreat

By Elwood Fitzpatrick

The Diocesan Office of Faith Formation held its annual Adult Faith Retreat at St. Hedwig Parish Hall in Barry’s Bay on September 23, 2017. The theme was “Evangelization”, and the guest speaker was Fr. Kieran Kilcommons from Madonna House in Combermere.

The retreat opened with the Morning Prayer of the The Liturgy of the Hours in St. Hedwig Church, led by Sr. Sheila Whelan, a member of the committee.

Following Morning Prayer, Deacon Adrien Chaput introduced the guest speaker. Fr. Kieran is a member of the Madonna House Apostolate. He joined the Apostolate in 1989, and was ordained a priest in 2005. He served at St. Columbkille Cathedral in Pembroke for one year, spent three years at Madonna House in Combermere, worked in the Whitehorse Diocese for seven-and-a-half years, and recently returned to Madonna House in Combermere.

Fr. Kieran pointed out that the main points of his presentation would be based on the document “*Evangelii Nuntiandi*” by Pope Paul VI.

During the morning session, Fr. Kieran focused on the meaning of evangelization. He reminded us that our Church is a missionary Church. He defined evangelization as the Good News, the Gospel, the Kerygma — Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again. Evangelization is the preaching or proclaiming of this Good News. It is bringing people from a state of darkness to light. It is bringing back the truths of the Gospel that have been lost. It is remembering to stay tuned. It is about proclaiming Christ to those who do not know Him. It should result in changed lives.

He explained that our Liturgy keeps us informed about our Faith. Our Liturgy is rich in the Good News, starting with the collect of each Mass.

Evangelization must begin with yourself, informing yourself about the Faith and then bringing it to others.

Today, more than ever, we need to evangelize our culture, since we sometimes tend to be cafeteria Catholics, taking what we like and ignoring the rest. Communities are needed to go out and bring the Faith to others as the monasteries did in the early years.

Fr. Kieran outlined some tools to help develop and put evangelization into practice. These included: study — getting to know our faith more thoroughly through Scripture, papal documents, the lives of the saints, etc.; prayer — individual and group, intercessory, praise, and contemplative; poustina — a place to meet Christ in silence, solitude and prayer; detachment — letting go of material things; works of mercy (corporal and spiritual) — reaching out to others; adoration time; example — living life according to one’s call of life; fellowship groups; friendliness.

The morning session was followed by a wonderful catered lunch and a bit of time to walk about the grounds of St. Hedwig’s and the Academy.



The focus of the afternoon session was an examination of some of the obstacles to evangelization. Fr. Kieran listed the following: fear — of making mistakes, of failure, of being different; lack of faith; unconverted heart; certain situations in one’s life; and ignorance, as a few examples. He also shared a few examples of his own personal experiences of evangelization, some of which brought a chuckle from the retreatants.

The day ended with a message and blessing from His Excellency Bishop Mulhall, who was able to join the group for the afternoon session.





The Office of Faith Formation and Family Life and Youth Ministry Office  
of the Diocese of Pembroke Invite You To:

## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Sunday, April 8, 2018

2:00 p.m.–3:30 p.m.

St. Columbkille Cathedral

188 Renfrew St., Pembroke, ON

SOCIAL TIME IN HALL AFTER PRAYER SERVICE

For more information, please contact Deacon Adrien Chaput at  
(613) 732-7933 ext. 206 or [dcadrienchaput@pembrokediocese.com](mailto:dcadrienchaput@pembrokediocese.com)

## Saint Profile

### Saint John Bosco

John Bosco was also known as Giovanni Melchiorre or Don Bosco. He was born in Piedmont, Italy, on August 16, 1815. His birth came at a difficult time, just at the end of the Napoleonic wars that decimated the area, leaving people (including his parents) very poor. At the age of two, John lost his father, leaving him and his two older brothers to be raised by his mother, Margherita. Faith was a very important part of their lives, and John lived it out by attending church faithfully, and became very devout. When he was not in church, he was helping his family grow food and raise sheep. But despite their poverty, his mother always found enough to share with the homeless, who sometimes came to the door seeking food, shelter, or clothing. His mother's example had an influence on him in his youth, and John recognized that it was his calling to help those who were less fortunate. He began to teach catechism to the young boys of his area and invited them to Church. He also would do acrobatic tricks and stunts to draw them in and encourage them to come together so he could share a message with them.

At the age of sixteen, he entered the seminary at Chieri, on account of the family's poverty, many in the community assisted with the clothing he needed to begin this new journey. Once ordained a deacon, he continued his studies at the seminary at Turin. With the approval of his supervisors, he began to gather together the orphans and the less fortunate to share with them the Catholic faith. In 1841, after his ordination to the priesthood, he established a Festive Oratory, a type of Sunday school and recreation centre for boys in Turin where many young people had come looking for work during the industrial revolution.

His mother, Margueritta, was known as the housekeeper and mother of the Oratory. These newfound facilities accommodated 150 resident boys. There, the boys learned Latin and had religious workshops, and worked on a printing press. Father

John had also recruited ten other young priests to assist him in his work. Father John's gift of speaking the truth of the faith kept him in high demand as a teacher and preacher. It was said that he would stay up most of the night writing popular books in order to provide others with good reading.

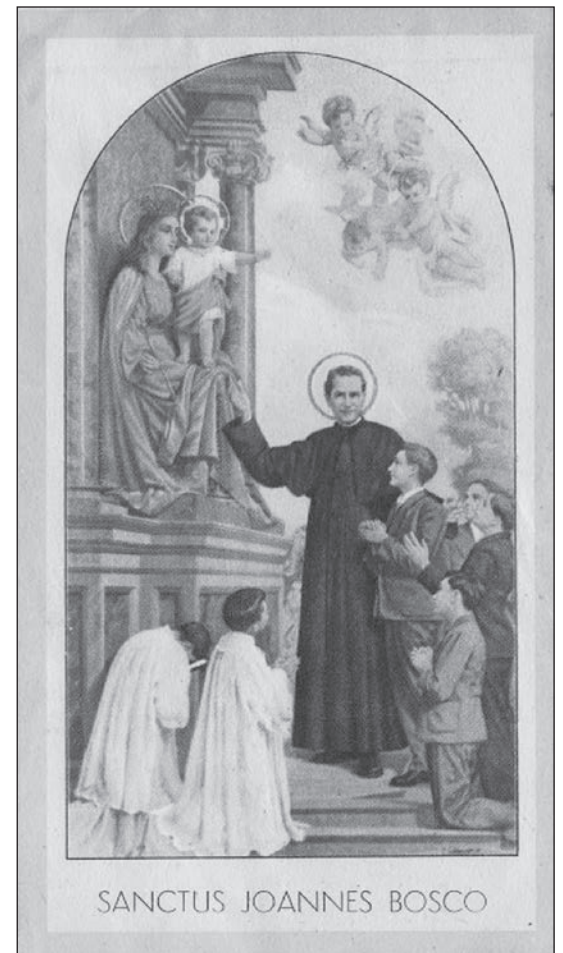
Father John earned the reputation of being a saint even during his lifetime. People acknowledge many miracles of healing and told of his kindness, sympathy and his gift of reading the thoughts of the boys by which he exercised a profound influence on them.

In 1854, Father John Bosco founded the religious order of Salesians, in honour of St. Francis de Sales, a saint whom he greatly admired. Its members devoted themselves to the education of poor boys. The society today is one of the largest religious orders of men in the Church.

St. John Bosco also founded a sisterhood called the Daughters of St. Mary Auxiliatrix. His last great work was the building of Sacred Heart Church in Rome, a task entrusted to him by Pope Pius IX after it had seemed to be a hopeless project. The holy priest, who was everywhere acclaimed as a saint and wonderworker, gathered funds for the church in Italy and France and somehow succeeded where others had failed. In doing so, he exhausted his health.

On January 31, 1888, Father John was called home to his eternal reward. It is reported that 40,000 people came to pay their respects as his body lay in state in the church at Turin, and his funeral resembled a triumphal procession. He was declared venerable by Pope Pius X on July 21, 1907. Pope Pius XI beatified him in 1929 and canonized him in 1934. He is the patron saint of apprentices, labourers, students, young people, school children, and editors.

As we celebrate the memorial of St. John Bosco on January 31 each year, it gives us occasion to join our prayers to his and ask him to intercede for us.



*Oh holy patron of the youth, I come to you with sincere confidence in your closeness to Jesus. Saint John Bosco, I need your help, I need your prayers, I need your intercession to God for His grace to help me with...*

*(state your intentions here)*

*With your love of Mary, our Mother, pray for me!*

*With your love for Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, pray for me!*

*With your love for all those who suffer, pray for me! Saint John Bosco, please pray fervently for the grace that I now ask from God our Father. In addition, please pray that I may have a sincere acceptance of the Will of God and a perfect trust in Him.*

*Our Father...*

*Hail Mary...*

*Glory Be... Amen*



## CELEBRATING MARRIAGE

DINNER BANQUET FOR MARRIED COUPLES

THURSDAY MAY 24, 2018

5:30-6:00 - Social time

6:00pm - Dinner

\$50 PER COUPLE

OUR LADY OF LOURDES  
PARISH HALLTICKETS MUST BE PRE-PURCHASED BY MAY 18TH  
CONTACT: YVETTEBOURQUE@PEMBROKEDIocese.COM  
(613)732-7933 EX. 208FEATURING: GUEST SPEAKER FR. DENIS LEMIEUX, CATERED DINNER,  
ADORATION, HONOURING COUPLES CELEBRATING SPECIAL  
ANNIVERSARIES

Sponsored by the Diocese of Pembroke

## NET retreat



Youth from the Barry's Bay and Pembroke areas joined a NET retreat on December 2, called The Search, at St. Hedwig's Parish in Barry's Bay. Twelve members of the New Evangelization Team shared their testimonies and presented dramas and talks for the six-hour retreat. The youth received prayer ministry from the team, and Fr. Justin Bertrand was present for confessions. The youth enjoyed the day, being able to talk and share their faith with others and also ask questions of the team about matters of faith and their experiences. The day ended with an invitation to consider attending the upcoming Steubenville Toronto youth conference, being held July 13-15, 2018.

## Oh come, Oh come Emmanuel

As the Advent season began, young children from the Pembroke area brimmed with joyful anticipation for the Nativity of our Lord. During this time of preparation, nine families and fifteen children deepened their understanding of the Advent season through catechesis, crafts, Music, games and community. This four-week program, offered at St. Columbkille Cathedral, focused on the significant teachings of our Church to get our hearts ready to receive Christ during this blessed time.

Week One focused on the meaning of Advent. Children, along with their families, created Advent wreaths to take home and use during the season. The second week focused on the tradition of the Jesse Tree and the significance of Christ's birth in relation to salvation history. Week Three explored the importance of the Holy Family and the Immaculate Conception. The final week illustrated the Nativity and the gift of Christ to the world.

Many families expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the program as they noticed their children grow in faith and understanding of the true meaning of the Christmas season. Our prayers are with you as we come together in hope, faith and joy to continue to celebrate the birth of our Saviour, who is Christ the Lord. Thank you to those who significantly helped to make Advent a special time of preparation for the children: Yvette Bourque, Deacon Adrien Chaput, Kate Hurley, Delores and Nancy Caverley, Dave and Jackie Beaupre.

In Christ, Angela Watson





## Family Formation—Haliburton style

Sometimes, a unique situation calls for thinking outside the box. In the early 2000s, the Family Formation program was purchased from the Church of St. Paul, in Ham Lake, Minnesota, and implemented at St. Anthony of Padua with the blessing of Father John Lacey as a solution to educating and involving families in parish life.

Haliburton County is a rare community in Ontario, in that it does not have a Catholic school—the closest Catholic schools are located in Bancroft and Bracebridge, both an hour away. Those who wanted their children to receive any Catholic instruction had to do it themselves.

“I guess in a sense we are ‘home schooling’ our children in the faith,” says Michelle Dulong, whose three children are in the Family Faith Formation program at St. Anthony’s, and now is an organizer.

In the formative years of the program, the class sessions were based solely on the materials from the St. Paul program. Over the years, other materials have been collected, so there are plenty of resources to draw from.

Originally, parents would meet with Father Lacey while the children were in ‘classes’ based on their ages. The children’s classes were taught by ladies in the parish, most of them retired school teachers.

Currently, there are nine families participating, with a total of 22 children ranging in age from 8 to 17. They meet monthly on Saturday afternoons.

“The children are divided into groups based on ages, and if they are receiving any Sacraments. So, for this year we have three groups,” explains Dulong.

The groups are:

1. Grade 3–7 children led by moms of these children
2. Confirmation candidates led by two parishioners
3. Teenagers led by Fr Scott Murray.

“In the few months that I’ve been at St. Anthony’s, I have had the opportunity to help with three of the Family Faith Formation afternoons. I was teaching the high school students. There are about 10 teens that participate. Their participation is encouraging and shows the faith and dedication of their parents,” says Father Scott Murray.



*Catechist Allison Hunter with Macie Hunter, Sirena McMullen, Daniel Wheeler, Evan Wheeler and Ella Gervais during one of the lessons.*

After the classroom sessions, the children and their families attend Mass and then share in a potluck dinner.

Other activities are organized to encourage involvement in the Church.

“One of the activities that we organize is what we call the ‘Children’s Participation Mass.’ This means that for the Mass, the children take over the church ministries of ushers, gift bearers, altar servers and lectors,” says Dulong.

Former parish priest Father Pat Dobec always encouraged parents to involve the children, and was very grateful for their service, notes Dulong.

“It is sometimes nerve-wracking, as a parent, to wonder if the children would do a ‘respectful’ job—but they always make us very proud. I have heard only positive comments from the parishioners. It has been such a great way to involve the children in the Mass and to give them a sense of responsibility for their parish.”

## St. Alphonsus selected in the creation of a Catholic parenting video series

Catholic media organization, Evango determined that their latest project on evangelization will focus on helping Catholic parents to raise joyful and confident children.

The six-hour video series called, *Me & My House*, will take a close look at parenting in God’s plan, the habits of successful parenting, the do’s and don’ts of disciplining, as well as many practical strategies for giving our children a strong foundation in their Faith for the years ahead of them.

Patrick Sullivan, the founder of Evango commented on why he thought this kind of project was long overdue. “Our apostolate focuses on evangelizing the already baptized; and most of the time that means listening in to the very real needs of the parishes and communities around us... Once we determined that parents were the ones reaching out for assistance, it just became a matter of figuring out how we were to attend to that need.”

The conception of the project actually began nearing the end of 2014, but funding issues and the lengthy production process led to the video series being wrapped up by the end of 2017.

“Funding is always an issue for an apostolate like our own. We rely solely on donations and the sale of books to fund our projects, so sometimes we have to be very patient,” said Patrick.

But that wasn’t the only thing that the Evango team had to be patient with. Maria Bugelli, the production

manager for Evango. put it this way: “The selection process wasn’t easy. We wanted our locations for the video series to be close to home, helping us to once again show off our home diocese.” To do so, the team filmed on location at local businesses, including a chip truck in Barry’s Bay and a used book store in Combermere.

Deciding where to film the Church portion of the series also gave them some trouble. “We have access to a lot of beautiful churches,” Maria said, “but ultimately the architecture, the history and the story that St. Alphonsus could visually tell our audience made the decision much easier for us.”

The Evango team worked at St. Alphonsus Parish in Chapeau, Quebec, for about a week. “Father Tim Moyle very kindly welcomed us and filled us in on more of the history,” notes Maria, “He even anticipated many of our needs before we got there. He was wonderful to work with.”

At the current speed of production, *Me & My House* is set to be released in early 2018.

To help finance the project or learn how you can pre-purchase the video series so that you or your parish have a copy as soon as it is released, please contact Maria at [media@evango.net](mailto:media@evango.net)

## A ‘just in time for Christmas’ donation



On December 19, just in time for Christmas, Sean Gribbon from the Renfrew County Right to Life, presented a \$750 donation of diapers and formula to Greta Landry-Masseau, Executive Director of First Step Options / Pregnancy Resource Centre serving young moms in the Upper Ottawa Valley.



# St. Patrick's parish celebrates its history of faith

One hundred and seventy-five years ago, devoted Christians from Ireland braved the harsh Canadian wilderness to build a new life for themselves. But they also built a foundation of faith that perseveres to this day. June 16, 2018, will see the celebration of the 175th anniversary of the founding of St. Patrick's Parish in Mount St. Patrick. It is the oldest parish in our diocese.

"Mount St Patrick holds a special place, not only in the history of the diocese, but in the hearts of many," said Father Ryan Holly, who serves as pastor at St. Patrick's.

"Many of the Irish families of the Ottawa Valley trace their immigrant heritage and their spiritual roots back to our parish. My own great-great grandmother was a Mulvihill from Mount St Patrick, who married my great-great grandfather upon his arrival from Ireland."

"A day of festivities will take place centred around a Mass of Thanksgiving that will be celebrated by Bishop Michael Mulhall at 10:00 a.m., followed by a procession to the Holy Well and a reception. It is hoped that many in the diocese and beyond who have family roots in this venerable place will see this anniversary as a homecoming to make the pilgrimage back."

In the fall of 2017, a monument was erected, marking the site of the first church that was constructed for the parish on Maloney Mountain. The monument also represents the first parish of the diocese, and will be blessed by Bishop Mulhall at the anniversary celebration. Displays and memorabilia will also be available for worshippers to view. It was in 1843 that Father John McNulty of County Mayo, Ireland, followed Irish settlers to Mount St. Patrick. Having a passion for spreading the work of God, he established missions in Eganville, Osceola, Douglas, Renfrew and Lake Clear.

At this time, the community fell within the boundaries of the Diocese of Kingston, later joining the Diocese of Bytown (Ottawa) in 1847. It was not until 1882 when the Vicariate of Pontiac was formed that St. Patrick's parish joined what would later be this diocese.

For life-long parish member Bill McAdam, the sacrifices made by early parishioners at Mount St. Patrick will be at the forefront of his thoughts during the anniversary celebration.

"I think of the first settlers; how they came here on horseback through the bush, cut down trees to



build themselves a log house and cleared the land to prepare ground to be able to provide enough food," said McAdam, who serves on both the parish council and the cemetery committee.

"One of their first priorities was to establish a church. We are grateful to Father John McNulty, the first parish priest of the diocese, for establishing this church here at Mount St. Patrick, and he will be remembered in the engraving on the monument erected where he established his church."

McAdam also noted the contributions of Father John McCormac, a native of County Limerick, Ireland, who arrived as pastor in October 1866.

"Father McCormac oversaw the building of the present church and established the Holy Well," said McAdam.

"The Holy Well was blessed by Archbishop Joseph-Thomas Duhamel of Ottawa in 1876, and it was placed under the patronage of Our Mother of Perpetual Help. Over a thousand visitors come each year to pray at the Holy Well."

McAdam also paid tribute to Father John Harrington, who served as parish priest for 25 years.

"He looked after the renovations to the church which included the building of a sacristy, new floors, new pews, stained glass windows, frescoe paintings on the walls and ceiling, a Casavant organ and hot water heating," said McAdam.

"He brought higher education to Mount St. Patrick. He had a school and convent built and arranged to have the Sisters of St. Joseph come to teach and extend the grades taught to grade 12."

Father Holly noted that parishioners at St. Patrick's have a deep affection for those early parish settlers.

"The parishioners at Mount St Patrick have a remarkable institutional memory and a deep respect for their ancestors," said Father Holly.

"That's a noble virtue in our fast-moving society that seems to give too little attention to history. The awareness of the sacrifices which were lived by previous generations keeps our parish moving ahead. The greatest attribute of those who have gone before us is that 175 years later there is still a vibrant little community of believers proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus. Hopefully, the sacrifices that we make to live out the Catholic faith in our little corner of the Kingdom will continue to bear fruit after we are gone."

*With thanks to Bill McAdam and the historical notes provided for this article.*



*Frescoes and altars were done during the renovations carried out by Father John Harrington.*



## International priests

*Pembroke Diocese is blessed to have several members of the clergy who come from various locations from around the globe. The Ecclesia will be publishing a series of introductory articles on these priests.*

**In this edition, the Ecclesia would like to introduce Father John Bosco Gali, OMI, who agreed to tell the Ecclesia a little bit about himself in his own words**

Father Gali was born in the Telugu-speaking village of Pannur, dedicated to “Our Lady of Good Health”, in Tamil Nadu state, located in the south of India. He was later raised in a neighbouring Catholic parish called Sendamangalam, dedicated to Saint Michael the Archangel.

“A majority of the population are Roman Catholics with Telugu speakers. My mother tongue is Telugu and I also learned in school the Tamil language, as my parents worked in Tamil Nadu state,” said Father Gali, noting that his native parish has contributed many members to religious vocations.

“Pannur parish has contributed one bishop and many priests and nuns to serve humanity throughout the world in the fields of social work, hospital management and educational institutions and missionaries in many countries.”

Father Gali told of how his native parish was the centre of both his faith and social life, providing a solid spiritual foundation that helped him to develop into the person he is today.

“I am from a traditional Catholic family and, therefore, the church is everything for us,” said Father Gali.

“The local parish campus is the centre of our lives. We enjoy gathering there for various celebrations such as Holy Mass, Rosary, choir, sports, athletics and games. Various participatory activities promoted us in the spirit of belonging to the Church of God. Our age group was a golden period in terms of the impact in the local church at every level. It is an experience never to be forgotten. My parish shaped many of us and what I am today is the contribution of the community of my parish: my loving parents and family, priests, teachers, catechists, my companions and religious sisters. My

native parish is one of the most self-sufficient and a vibrant community until today. I am so proud of it. All glory belongs to the Lord.”

From an early age, Father Gali heard the call to serve God, and was fortunate to have a family that encouraged him to follow this path. “The desire was there as a child that was nurtured by my God-fearing parents and grandparents and, in fact, the whole village gets involved in shaping many of our priestly and sisterhood vocations,” said Father Gali, “It is the faith of each of our Catholic families to promote at least one child to a religious vocation from each family. I have two siblings, one elder and one younger, married and settled in their lives.”

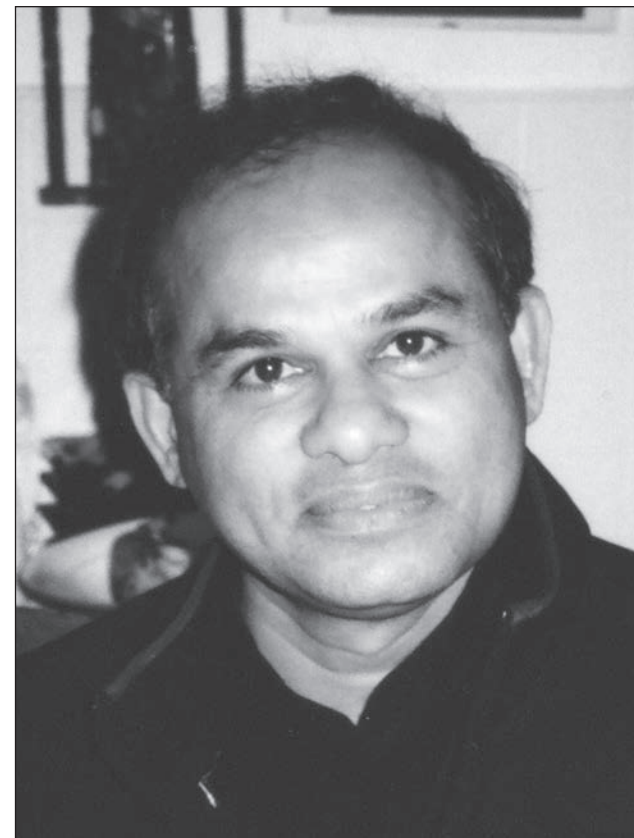
He studied at Sacred Heart Seminary in Poonamalle, Chennai (state capital of Tamil Nadu), focusing on philosophy and theology, and pursued a secular degree in history from the University of Madras. In addition, he also pursued a teaching degree as a regular priest student at John Paul II College of Education, located in the city of Pondicherry in the state of Puducherry. He was ordained into the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate on December 8, 1994, the day of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Fast forward to 2006, and Father Gali was provided an opportunity to serve God’s people overseas.

“It was proposed in a personal meeting by our Superior General, Guillermo Steckling, (now a Bishop in Paraguay) when he visited India to animate us in our annual retreat in 2006,” said Father Gali.

“It was he who had given me obedience to come to Canada. I arrived in Toronto on December 6, 2011. Now, I am a member of the Polish Oblate Province of Canada, known as the Assumption Province. It is a blessing from God and a great privilege of mine to be part of the apostolic works of the Polish Province originally envisaged for Polish immigrants in Canada. We also have a Canadian French-language Oblate Province and an English-language Oblate Province.”

Needless to say, residing in Canada was a sharp transition both in the natural landscape and weather patterns that contrast with the year-round warm temperatures of his native India.



“Canada is one of the most beautiful countries in the world,” said Father Gali. “It is a great experience to encounter different seasonal climates unlike our tropical climate. It was absolutely thrilling to experience snow for the first time in December 2011, when I arrived in Toronto. People are very gentle and friendly. Canada is an amazing country with unity in diversity, in which principle India is built. India, the largest democracy in the world, is multi-religious, multi-lingual, multi-cultural, just as Canada is.”

Father Gali serves as Parochial Vicar at St. Casimir parish in Round Lake. Not unlike the village he grew up in, living amongst the parishioners he serves has caused Round Lake Centre to become his home.

“Parish life is living in community. As a priest, you are privileged to encounter all groups of people like children, youth, families and the elderly. And my parish becomes my family,” said Father Gali. “Having been raised in a traditional Catholic environment, it is so inspiring to journey with a traditional community in Saint Casimir’s Round Lake. It has been a great privilege and the blessing of God that the Lord offered me an opportunity to serve here, and I am grateful to God”.

## Carmelite Study Group

*by Sheila O’Brien*

Our Carmelite study group at St. Andrew’s Parish in Killaloe continues to flourish as we study, ponder, and try to follow the counsels of our founder, St. Teresa of Avila, in our daily lives. Our intrepid President, Carmel Farmer, drives all the way from Quyon, Quebec, to lead us, and Pat Pristanski of Barry’s Bay is our Director of Formation. Our Aspirants have now been received into the formation program, which will continue for two years until their first promises.

This secular branch of the Discalced Carmelites is grafting us into an ancient order that dates back to the Prophet Elijah! It is also giving us a place in the Church that enhances our varied work and vocations as laypersons while gradually revealing to us our identity as Carmelite contemplatives.

We say “gradually” because the process takes many years and, of course, even when final promises have been made it will never be finished until we see Our Lord face to face. Since our goal is daily union with Him in prayer and obedience to His Will in all our thoughts,

words, and actions, it is indeed a lifelong adventure. We are happy to be sharing this journey with others and to have such wonderful mentors. We are also excited to be attending the Canadian Carmelite Congress for the whole order in October 2018, where we will be able to meet the Carmelites of all communities.

If anyone who feels called to this way of life as a layperson within the Carmelite order, we will be accepting new Aspirants in the spring.

Please contact our Director of Formation, Pat Pristanski, at 613-756-2267.



## St. Vincent de Paul 10th Anniversary celebration

In this modern era of technological convenience and domestic economic prosperity, it is easy to forget that not all prosper. For many of our fellow citizens, every day is a struggle to endure the hardship of poverty.

Ten years ago, several people of our diocesan faith community saw a need to address this reality and took action.

Members and guests of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SSVP) of Pembroke St. Columbkille Conference gathered in October at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Pembroke to celebrate the 10th anniversary of their founding.

"Tonight, we are celebrating," said Muggsie Boland, chairperson of the SSVP Pembroke Conference, during her address at the event.

"We are a strong, growing, evolving society. All of our hard work and presence is more recognized in the Pembroke community today. Thank you for all of your time and energy. We're 75 members strong. We operate solely on volunteers, have no paid staff, and all donations go directly to the needy in Pembroke and area."

Speaking about how the local branch of SSVP came into existence, Deacon Adrien Chaput recalled, "Bishop Richard Smith asked that Peter Grabowski and I assess what might be one of the greatest needs in our area. I shared that on Tuesday to Friday our brothers and sisters could receive a good and nutritious meal from the Salvation Army but on Saturday, Sunday and Monday there was no place where they could receive a nutritious meal. Peter was very familiar with the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul and he contacted the council in Ottawa and organized our first meeting. Thus, our local council was formed and we opened our doors on October 7, 2007."

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is tasked with not only providing meals via the soup kitchen, but also addressing other basic needs for the less fortunate and with home visits to assess particular needs.

When the branch opened, a total of 336 meals were served in its first year. As of 2016, that number has grown to 6,801 meals, confirming the need for the society.

"We are a soup kitchen. Our first obligation is that. We serve a hot meal 3 days a week all year around; Saturday, Sunday and Monday," said Boland.

To accomplish this, volunteers must shop for food, plan menus, prepare work schedules, canvas and pick up donations, set tables, ensure sufficient food supplies and cleanup after serving meals.

"Our second obligation is to our home visits," said Boland.

"We have a strong committee, which answers and receives calls daily. Once a call is received, two of our committee members meet with the client and discuss their needs. These needs are as individual as the caller. Our mandate for home visits is rent, hydro, heat and emergency food."

Bishop Mulhall, speaking at the Eucharistic celebration that preceded the gathering, noted that the generosity of the volunteers should inspire all members of the Christian community.



"They are taking Christ right to the very suffering of those who are poor, and they are also identifying Christ in them," said Bishop Mulhall.

"It is a beautiful sign to me, and to so many other people in our community, of how the Holy Spirit is working through them. It is the Spirit that is compelling them to do it. What they do is of vital importance. But what it does for them is not just make them happy in a human way, but it gives them a great confidence that Christ is close to them."

Deacon Chaput also echoed those sentiments in expressing the great joy that volunteers realize in serving to the needy.

"What is most rewarding in serving the poor is to know that to welcome a sister or brother in need is to welcome Christ," said Deacon Chaput.

"There is nothing more uplifting than to meet people where they are on this journey and to continue to reach out and give them a hand up. Life is not easy at times, but it is surely nice to know that Vincentian members are there to provide a welcome and meet people with the love and compassion of Christ."

The society is always in need of donations and volunteers. For more information, please contact: The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul St. Columbkille Conference at 613-732-9058.

## Celebrating the journey to reconciliation

Where once there was division, a recent celebration has acted as a bridge between Christians and their respective beliefs.

On October 28, 2017, St. Columbkille Cathedral was host to a Lutheran-Catholic common prayer service in commemoration of the Reformation. More than 300 people participated in the celebration. Noted guests included Bishop Rev. Dr. Michael J. Pryse, Bishop of the Eastern Synod, and Bishop Susan Johnson, National Bishop.

"This Prayer Service was first proposed by local Lutheran Pastors Bruce Thompson (St. Timothy's Evangelical Lutheran Church of Pembroke) and Paul Roellchen-Pfohl (Zion Lutheran Church Pembroke)," said Father James Beanish.

"The Prayer Service itself was based upon a service that was first held in Lund, Sweden, on October 31, 2016. This event was attended by Pope Francis at which

he spoke of it as being part of a 'common journey of reconciliation.'

The Reformation (also known as the Protestant Reformation) was initiated by Dr. Martin Luther in 1517 with the publication of *Ninety-five Theses on the Power and Efficacy of Indulgence*. Luther would eventually be excommunicated from the church, but would spur the creation of the Protestant branch of Christianity.

As bitter as the division was, both faiths have aspired in recent years to restore a positive rapport with each other.

"For fifty years, there has been an ecumenical dialogue between the Lutheran World Federation and the Catholic Church," said Father Beanish.

"The 500th Anniversary of the Reformation was seen as an opportunity to enhance this dialogue and to continue to advance along the road of reconciliation. This common prayer has since been prayed in numerous dioceses across Canada, including with Cardinal Thomas Collins in the Archdiocese of Toronto."

According to Father Beanish, this endeavor is essential to seeing the Reformation in a more positive light.

"The Reformation has benefitted all Christians in so far as it has compelled each of us to try to explain and share our faith with each other as clearly as possible," said Father Beanish.

"This is a journey of self-realization as much as it is the recognizing and appreciation of our neighbours, brothers and sisters, and friends in Christ. To that end, there can be no doubt that this event has prompted further soul-searching and head-scratching common to all prayer in Christ."

Father Beanish also told of the inspiration derived from the celebration, giving praise to the performance of the choir.

"The music and voices of the choir added greatly to the commemoration, and all who attended could not help being moved by the sincerity of the participants hoping for reconciliation," he said.



## A Musical Offering at Our Lady of Fatima, Renfrew

Our Lady of Fatima Parish once again echoed with joyous music and song, as Renfrew natives Jessica Belanger (Soprano) and Nicholas Walters (Organ) presented *A Musical Offering* this past October 13, their third such production.

The concert achieved a twofold objective of continuing to provide an invigorating, live musical spectacle for the greater Renfrew area, and assisting in raising funds.

"These events have generated a tremendous amount of good will in the wider community," said Father Ryan Holly.

"Nick and Jessica were eager to have a third such concert, and graciously did so for the benefit of our elevator project at Our Lady of Fatima. The sharing of their talent, and to see the way they have grown in their own respective abilities, is really extraordinary. To see the charitable aspect in terms of their willingness to give back to our ongoing physical needs is just a tremendous opportunity for the parish."

"Our concert at Our Lady of Fatima was a great success. Not only was a significant amount of money raised for the church, but it also inspired a tremendous amount of goodwill and fellowship in the community," said Walters.

"Jessica and I were very pleased to collaborate, once again, with Stephan Grasmuck, trumpet, and Danielle Vaillancourt, mezzo-soprano, who are consummate, professional musicians and equally wonderful people to work with. This year we were also joined by Lorraine Hansen, flute, and Michael McSheffrey, baritone, which enabled us to broaden the scope of our repertoire and made the experience that much more enjoyable."

Audience members also had the privilege of witnessing the presentation of an original musical piece.

"Perhaps the biggest difference between this performance and previous iterations of the *Musical Offering* Concert Series was the program itself," said Walters.

"Father Holly commissioned Montreal-based composer Jonathan Embry to write a piece specifically for our concert. This piece, titled "In Paradisum", was premiered by Jessica, Danielle, Stephan and I in the presence of the composer. It was very well-received!"

Though not the first such concert for the parish, the complexities of such a live event still remain.

"Selecting repertoire for a concert of this magnitude is no easy task," said Walters.

"Not only is it necessary to consider voice types and instrumentation, technical limitations and the organ specification, the program has to be diverse enough so as to not get boring and also precisely-timed (taking into consideration the time for introductions, intermission etc.). Jessica and I exchanged many an email and phone call to try and devise a balanced and exciting program of some well-known, and lesser-known, pieces from the sacred music repository that has been handed-down to us from generations past."

Father Holly made note of the power that music and singing has in bringing the faithful closer to God.



"St. Augustine very famously said 'Music has an ability to touch us in a way that spoken words on their own cannot,'" said Father Holly.

"It has a way of elevating the soul, a way of dusting off everyday life, and bringing us to an elevated knowledge of the presence of God. The liturgy is meant to be sung."

Walters also shared his own special connection to God via these concerts performed at the parish.

"Some musicians, by virtue of their instruments and training, perform in concert halls, others in arenas, still others in clubs and bars. But as an organist, I'm privileged to make music in churches," said Walters.

"In the course of the many hours that I've spent preparing for the *Musical Offering* concerts (not to mention for Masses and other events!), I've naturally developed a connection with the organ at Our Lady of Fatima. Equally as powerful is the connection I've developed with the church itself—the beauty, vastness and resonance of the space; the wonderful artwork; the altar and tabernacle; the occasional lingering smell of incense; the silence and darkness that accompany late-night practice sessions. All of these things contribute to a sense of peace and tranquility that I often experience at the organ."

"The spiritual fulfillment that I experience does not present itself so much during concert performances as it does during time spent alone, practicing, or when accompanying the Mass. That being said, I regularly call on God before performances for strength, support and to guide my fingers and focus my mind!"

## Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College Celebrates New Degree-Granting Status

By Maria Reilander

Having reached the significant milestone of achieving degree-granting status this spring, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College in Barry's Bay gathered on September 30 with alumni, donors, and friends to celebrate and give praise to God for the blessing of a new Catholic college in Canada.

Following a social hour on campus, guests gathered at the local community centre for the evening banquet. Speakers at the dinner included Bishop Mulhall, the Honorable Justice Christopher Corkery (former Board Chairman), Richard Sauro (Chairman of the Board), Dr. Keith Cassidy (President), Emma White (student), and Michael D. O'Brien (Artist and Writer in Residence) who gave the Keynote Address. A portrait of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom's first president, Dr. David Warner, painted by alumna Anne-Marie Doyle, was unveiled during the evening celebration. In

addition, the Board Chairman presented Dr. Cassidy with the Catholic Culture Award for his commitment to Catholic higher education and his selfless work at the College, as well as his skilled leadership under which the Provincial Government's degree-granting power was given to Our Lady Seat of Wisdom.

In the keynote address, renowned Catholic artist and author Michael O'Brien spoke of his own witness of the school's early days, its growth over 17 years, and its present success. He quoted Sacred Scripture: "If the Lord does not build the house, in vain do its builders labour" (Ps. 127:1) and emphasized how much its achievements and effectiveness are the result of God's graces at work.

Third-year student Emma White thanked the past and current faculty, staff, and supporters for the many personal, spiritual and intellectual benefits she received in studying at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College, and for making it possible for her to receive a degree.



Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College expresses a special "thank you" to everyone who has taught, worked for, studied at, and supported what we fondly remember was "OLSWA" or "The Academy." We are grateful for this opportunity to praise God for all the blessings received, including degree-granting/college status. May the adventures continue and new goals be attained as Canada's newest Catholic college journeys into the future.



## Diocesan Rosary rally

Christians in communities across Canada gathered in October to publicly recite the Rosary, an annual movement known as the Public Square Rosary Rally.

Here in our diocese, rallies were held in Barry's Bay and Pembroke.

"I wanted to organize this rally because each year, Canada Needs Our Lady holds the Public Square Rosary Rally, with rosary rallies in cities all across our country," said Laurie Mintha of Most Holy Name of Jesus parish in Pembroke.

"Last year, there were 337 groups simultaneously praying for our country and the world all across Canada."

The root of Mintha's efforts to organize the rally began in 2016.

"That year I organized a small rosary rally in my parent's basement," said Mintha.

"Twenty-two people attended. It was after that I decided to do it publicly for 2017."



I spoke with my parish priest and Deacon Adrien Chaput about it. These yearly Public Square Rosary Rallies take place on the Saturday closest to October 13, the feast of the last apparition of Our Lady of Fátima and The Miracle of the Sun."

Sixty-five people attended the event, held at the Pembroke Amphitheatre along the Ottawa River. Initially, it appeared that inclement weather would plague the event.

"Pembroke had a heavy rain earlier that morning, but as we were beginning to set up for the rally there was a hole in the sky with no clouds," said Mintha.

"As we were saying the third Joyful Mystery, the sun came out! It was beautiful to see."

This year's rally took on special significance as the 100th anniversary of the Miracle at Fatima was celebrated. For Mintha, the event was an attempt to bring her closer to that sacred place.

"I've always wanted to go to Fátima but couldn't afford to go," said Mintha.

"To me, praying the Rosary close to that day publicly meant I was in Fátima, spiritually."

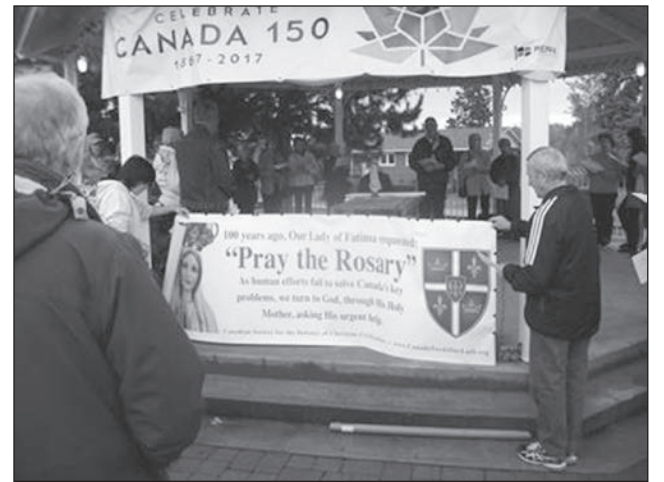
But the rally was also a direct appeal to God to intercede in the various hardships present in our society.

"As human efforts fail to solve Canada's key problems, we turn to God, through His Blessed Mother, asking His urgent help," said Mintha.

In Barry's Bay, Gord MacKenzie of St. Hedwig's parish took the initiative to organize a prayer rally for the Rosary.

MacKenzie wrote an article on the importance of the Rosary and submitted copies to other parishes, inviting parishioners to attend the rally in Barry's Bay.

"Back in 1917 at Fátima, our Lady gave the three children the mission of telling the world that she was profoundly displeased with the impiety and corruption of mankind," read MacKenzie from the article he wrote.



"She warned that if man did not amend his ways, a terrible chastisement would come. Unfortunately, the atmosphere prevalent today in 2017 is not markedly different than that of 1917; that is with respect to the overall morality of our country."

MacKenzie went on to explain his firm belief of the power of prayer in making a positive change in the world.

"Throughout history there have been numerous stories of how the prayers of a few, supplemented by the power of God through the Blessed Virgin Mary, have changed the course of history in spite of seemingly overwhelming odds," said MacKenzie.

Held at Zurkowski Park near the centre of Barry's Bay, MacKenzie admitted he wasn't sure how many people would show up.

"I printed 50 programs, thinking maybe 30 to 50 people would attend," said MacKenzie.

"We had close to 150 people. There were a lot of people I didn't recognize, so they must have come from the other parishes. The event went very well, better than I anticipated. Being in the centre of town, it took a little bit of intestinal fortitude to pray the Rosary out loud. The people there were quite happy to stand up and be noticed."

## A lesson learned in the pro-life movement

By Susan Dagenais

I have so much to learn...

Recently, I read in the Catechism of the Catholic Church that 'Jesus' in Hebrew means "God saves." I knew that 'Emmanuel' means "God is with us", but I didn't know the meaning of Jesus' name. How powerful is the name of Jesus!

Accepting the role of President of Renfrew County Right to Life seemed to be an insurmountable task. I definitely was not the woman for the job. It was simply overwhelming! How could I stop abortion?

I remember blurting out somewhat indignantly, as I come from a long line of women who feel quite at home questioning the status quo: "Margaret, don't you ever get discouraged?" I was directing my plea to our dearest nonagenarian Margaret Thuemen. "What with 40+ years of writing letters to government officials, standing prayerfully through all kinds of crazy weather at Life Chains and Marches for Life, attending countless meetings, licking stamps, editing and mailing out newsletters, don't you ever just get discouraged?" And today we have not only legalized abortion but also euthanasia!

When I had finished my tirade, Margaret was staring up at me with those eyes, those loving eyes. And then she simply smiled, shook her head and, ever so softly, said, "No."

I marvelled at her faith! How is one to win this fight? I have so much to learn.

Victor Hugo helped me shed some light on this incredible woman and her faith.

*Have courage for the great sorrows in Life*

*And patience for the small ones*

*And when you have laboriously accomplished your daily task go to sleep in peace.*

*God is awake.*

And now I get it! Well, at least I think I do. Just fall asleep with the sound of Jesus' name on my lips.

Jesus

Jesus

And so, our Celebrate Life Banquet began with, "This is God's fight. God will save his people. We must use our greatest and most powerful weapon. Prayer." Now I have learned that one word will suffice: 'Jesus'.

At the same Celebration of Life Banquet, the Father placed Deacon Dr. Bob McDonald in our midst that evening. Deacon McDonald helped to shed light on

our world. He reminded us never to depart from Jesus, because when we do depart from him, we lose the way, falling deeper into a darkness of our own making. We lose the truth, becoming convinced of false doctrines, and we lose our life, which is the life of God. Then we kill others and we kill ourselves, since we have lost the vision of who we are, who our neighbour is and who God is.

There it is again! 'Jesus'! Stay focused on Jesus.

That same night, the Father also sent us Donnalee Loback from First Step Options. Donnalee shared with us an anecdote of hope. It is the story of a mom who, in her darkest hour, chose life for her little girl.

I have so much to learn, but I can see the common thread in all of this: 'Jesus'.

Let us not despair, but instead, in our hour of need, in our darkest hour, call upon the name of the One who saves: 'Jesus'.

Better still, let us keep the name of Jesus always on our lips. Let us direct to Him our prayers for those who reject Him and Life.

Jesus

Jesus

God saves.