



Ecclesia

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEMBROKE

Celebrating God's mercy

Divine Mercy Sunday (also known as The Feast of the Divine Mercy) is a special observance when Christians are not only provided an opportunity to be cleansed of our sins, but also to grow closer to Jesus Christ by devoting ourselves to acts of mercy when possible.

Sister Maria Faustina (born Helena Kowalska on August 27, 1905, in Glogowiec, Poland) of the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, reported being visited by Jesus Christ. Wearing a white garment, two rays—one red (representing blood), the other pale (symbolizing water)—shone from his heart.

According to her diary, Jesus asked Sister Kowalska to paint his image, saying:

'Paint an image according to the pattern you see, with the signature: 'Jesus, I trust in You'. I desire that this image be venerated, first in your chapel, and then throughout the world. I promise that the soul that will venerate this image will not perish.'

The first Mass where this painted image was displayed occurred on April 28, 1935. Known as the Divine Mercy image, it is located at the Sanctuary of the Divine Mercy in Vilnius, Lithuania.

Sister Faustina died on October 5, 1938, at the age of 33. On April 30, 2000, she was canonized—Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska of the Blessed Sacrament—by Pope John Paul II, who also proclaimed that from that year forward the second Sunday of Easter would be celebrated as Divine Mercy Sunday.

Divine Mercy celebrations in our Diocese

St. Hedwig, Barry's Bay and St. Mary's, Wilno

Divine Mercy Sunday has been celebrated at both St. Hedwig's Church and St. Mary's Church for about 15 years.

Among the different devotions are novena, the Chaplet of the Divine Mercy (prayers organized similarly to a rosary), the Hour of Great Mercy (a time of prayer traditionally at 3 p.m.), and the Plenary Indulgence granted to those who receive the Eucharist and celebrate reconciliation on Divine Mercy Sunday.

As Father Jan Wadolowski explained, there is a special relationship between receiving the Eucharist and receiving forgiveness from Jesus Christ.

"Our Lord wants us to realize that since the Eucharist is His own Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity, it is the Fountain of Life," said Father Wadolowski, referring to the remarks made by Jesus to Saint Faustina:

'Whoever approaches the Fountain of Life on this day will be granted complete forgiveness of sins and punishment.'

"The Eucharist is Jesus, Himself, the living God. So many people do not really understand it. They either see no need to receive Holy Communion, or they receive it simply out of habit," said Father Wadolowski.

"Our Lord's promise of complete forgiveness is a reminder and a call. It is a reminder that He is truly present and truly alive in the Eucharist, filled with love and waiting for us to turn to Him with trust. It is a call for us to be washed clean through Confession and Holy Communion. He is offering us a new beginning."

Of special note is the annual pilgrimage of Polish-speaking faithful who make the journey to St. Mary's to celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday in their native language, which first started 10 years ago. Bishop Tomasz Bronakowski of the Diocese of Lomza, Poland, was the special guest for this year. Every year the pilgrimage is organized by the Conference of the Polish Priests for Eastern Canada, whose chairperson at the present time is Father Janusz Blazejak, OMI.

"Every first Saturday after Easter Sunday many Polish pilgrims come by cars or buses to St. Mary's Church in Wilno from different corners of Ontario and Quebec," said Father Wadolowski.

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Original painting of the Divine Mercy (by Eugeniusz Kazimirowski in 1934). This is the only painting which was done under the indications of Sister Faustina when she was still alive, unlike the painting by Adolf Hyla which was done in 1943 after Saint Faustina's death in 1938 but still the most known.

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"Holy Mass and all prayers, Divine Mercy Chaplet are spoken in the Polish language. Pilgrims like to pray together in their native language and very often they have tears in their eyes. And one can feel the presence of the Lord among His people. They are moments of joy. It is a Lord's Grace and joy to be together with pilgrims in these very special moments. Saint Sister Faustina is bringing people to Merciful Jesus, especially those who are lost and without hope."

Holy Canadian Martyrs Parish, Combermere

Divine Mercy Sunday is also celebrated at Holy Canadian Martyrs Parish in Combermere. For parish priest Father John Lacey, this was the thirteenth year that he has celebrated Divine Mercy Sunday. It was first brought to his attention during his time as parish priest at St. Anthony of Padua Mission in Haliburton, Ontario.

"A parishioner, John Skinner, provided information about the wonderful devotion that he had discovered while in Calgary," said Father Lacey.

Upon researching Divine Mercy Sunday further, he made the decision to celebrate the devotion in the parish.

"That first year in Haliburton there were about 50 people who attended, or twice the number expected," said Father Lacey.

"That told us that we needed to print more booklets! So, the next year we printed an additional 50 booklets for a total of 75, only to find that even this number wasn't sufficient. By the third year, we had people travelling from as far away as Lindsay to attend the celebration in Haliburton, so beautiful was the event for those who participated."

Upon being assigned to Holy Canadian Martyrs in September of 2015, Father Lacey assumed there would be no need for Divine Mercy Sunday to be celebrated since the devotion was already held in nearby Barry's Bay.

However, several local parishioners encouraged Father Lacey to organize a celebration at Holy Canadian Martyrs. Each year, a member of the clergy from the Diocese of Pembroke is invited to speak to the parish community. This year, Father Ryan Holly was the guest speaker.

"Father Holly spoke to us of the consequence of our experience of mercy, and how we are to bring the experience of mercy to the world that surrounds us. Sharing with us his memory of studies in Washington, he spoke of a parish in a modest section of the city where there was a large banner across the entranceway that read 'Sinners Welcome'. Inside the church by the main exit was another banner that read 'You are returning to the world, Saints needed.'"

As Father Lacey explained, Christians who embrace the act of mercy also embrace the forgiveness and love that Jesus gives us.

"The celebration of Divine Mercy is truly a beautiful gift to the Church and to the world," said Father Lacey.

"It reminds us of how deeply Jesus loves us, and how sincerely he wants to forgive us. As regards the experience of mercy, sometimes the difficulty is not a lack of willingness to forgive others; the difficulty is in being able to forgive oneself, and to believe that one is truly forgiven."

"Our faith can tell us that we are forgiven, but to feel forgiven is a much deeper matter. It is herein that the power of the Devotion lies: the prayers, and the image of Jesus as 'The Divine Mercy' helps us remember, even if we have difficulty believing, that we are truly and completely forgiven by God."



Message from the Bishop

My dear faithful of the diocese,

Today as I write this message for you, we are celebrating the great and holy feast of Pentecost in the parishes throughout the diocese. I pray that this feast day may open our hearts to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in the life of the Church that we may fulfill the privileged calling we have received from Christ to be his disciples.

The Holy Spirit is sent forth in abundance into the hearts of the faithful, and the Church becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit. This same Spirit impels the Church to go out and give witness to the resurrection of Jesus, to give to the world the gospel of light and truth. As new members are brought into full communion with the Church they receive the abundance of the Holy Spirit through the sacramental life of the Church. The sacraments of baptism and confirmation hold a special place in this holy dispensation.

In these days of late spring, it is a great joy for me to confer the sacrament of confirmation in the parishes of the diocese. The parents of our young adults have been given the sacred responsibility for the upbringing of their children and their introduction into the faith of the Church. The parents are assisted in this task through the guidance of our priests, catechists and teachers. I am always thankful for the generous dedication of these ministries, which bear much fruit in the life of the Church. At the time of confirmation, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are conferred in a special and unique manner—the gifts of wisdom and understanding, counsel and fortitude, knowledge, piety and the fear of the Lord.

This year I have reflected in my homily on the gift of wisdom. This wisdom allows us to participate in the goodness and beatitude of God, to accept his fatherly guidance in the way of the commandments. St. Paul speaks of a mysterious wisdom hidden with God from eternity, which is granted through the Holy Spirit to the faithful. This wisdom allows us to appreciate and understand the spiritual realities which seem hidden from ordinary life. If we accept the Holy Spirit in our daily life, this gift of wisdom permeates deeply into our Catholic life and allows us to accept the seeming paradoxes of our faith, which seem such foolishness to those who live entirely for this world. The fundamental paradox of our faith is the victory of the cross. The Holy Spirit teaches the faithful of the hidden mystery of the cross which leads to the resurrection of Jesus. In baptism we are baptised into the death of Jesus so that we might share in his resurrection. “Anyone who wishes to be my disciples”, Jesus teaches us, “must embrace his cross daily and follow me.”

We live with the crucifix in our homes, in our schools, in our hospitals and we mark ourselves with the Sign of the Cross when we pray to keep this wisdom of the Spirit close to our hearts. In times of difficulty and suffering, the loving Lord invites us to embrace the wisdom of the cross and to embrace the enormous challenges of illness, age, infirmity and human weakness.

In another fundamental manner the wisdom granted by the Holy Spirit allows us to confront the spirit of deception alive in our midst. This has always been the reality in which Catholic Christians live, and this challenge will remain always.

Unfortunately in our present experience, this spirit of deception continues to grow and permits the existence of a pervasive culture of death, of which Pope St. John Paul II spoke during his pontificate. This spirit of deception leads to many evils including a rampant greed, widespread injustice, abortion, euthanasia, violence and war, and the endless search for the pleasures of earthly life. Words and meanings can be manipulated and are often cruelly twisted to present a deceptive message. The vigilant Christian calls upon the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to know and love the truth.

As an example, this wisdom helps us to appreciate that suffering can have salvific value, that self-denial and generous self-giving can lead to the path of true joy, that our lives are not our own but God’s, that every life from conception to natural death has inconceivable value and beauty.

In this light we are able to see also the tragedy of well-meaning citizens who are lured into an almost compulsive habit of spending through the greed of others, and the absurdity of doctors and other health care professionals, being compelled by authorities to participate in euthanasia. In the same way, the wisdom of the Holy Spirit allows us to confront the efforts of those who wish to limit the fundamental duty of parents in the education of their children. The Holy Spirit allows us to oppose the efforts of those who wish to remove God from public discourse and give free license to present a government-sponsored system of values and ethics. And maybe, most importantly, the Holy Spirit gives to us, in our weakness and sinfulness, the power to overcome the deception which discredits the mercy of God, destroys all hope, and leads to a deadly despair.

An uncle of mine who died many years ago did not enjoy the possibility of very much formal education. He was a man of great love, great simplicity and great wisdom. When confronted with a situation which had twisted a falsehood into a seeming truth, he would remark: “I don’t quite know what the problem is but I know that this just can’t be right”. This is a wonderful example of living the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. His faithful sacramental life gave him the powerful wisdom to smell a problem and to avoid the path of deception being woven. With time and assistance, the community of the Church allows us to better identify the reality of a situation and to follow the path of God’s fatherly teaching which keeps us on the path of his beatitude. But often the first step is this instinctive revulsion from a proposition that just can’t be right.

My dear faithful, in this time of special challenge as Catholics, let us allow the Spirit to live and work in our lives, so that we may follow the instincts which the Spirit gives. Let us then give and seek the assistance of our brothers and sisters in the Church so as to help us to understand the complexity and challenges of present earthly reality. And through the intercession of the Blessed Mother and the saints, may we find our way to the treasures of eternal life.

+Michael Mulhall
Bishop of Pembroke



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Heaven and Hell

By Fr. Michael Smith

This article has its origin in a request made to me by *Ecclesia's* editorial board. It seems that heaven and hell are topics of interest among some youth groups and also groups of young adults. Given that I have never been to either heaven or hell, except metaphorically, I shall rely on Catholic teaching and theology to present the basics.

I have already mentioned purgatory in a previous article, with reference to the offering of Masses for the dead. I refer the reader to the February 2018 issue of *Ecclesia* (www.pembrokediocese.com, "News and Events").

Heaven

First of all, it is necessary to clear out of the way some beliefs which, despite their grip on the popular imagination, are not in keeping with Catholic teaching. I am referring to the idea that when we die we leave our bodies behind *permanently*, and that, if we go to heaven, it is only our souls that are with God in eternity. (By 'soul', I mean our innermost spiritual self, that by which we are alive, that by which we are who we are.) On the contrary, every Sunday at Mass, we proclaim, "I believe in... the resurrection of the body." Eternal life in its fullness does not mean that only the soul is in union with God; it also means that just as Jesus rose from the dead, we too will rise. Here, our imagination fails us. We need to get rid of the idea that the resurrection is like waking up from sleep. Just as Jesus' crucified body was transformed in an instant to become a very different kind of body, so it will be with the matter/energy of which our bodies will have been composed.

The reason why the resurrection of the body figures so prominently in the Christian faith is that Jesus did not come to save souls only; he came to save people. A human person is not just a soul, but a body-soul unity. When we say that we believe in the resurrection of the body, we are saying that God will make us whole.

The soul in union with God, although a true teaching, is not our eternal destiny. It is a temporary state, as we await the resurrection of the body.

But that is not all. Jesus came to earth not only to save the human race, but also to renew all creation. St. Paul writes, "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labour pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies" (Romans 8:19-23).

We look forward not only to the resurrection of our bodies, but also the renewal of creation. What this will involve we do not know. What we do know is that it will be unlike creation in its current state, subject to decay and death. In the midst of this new creation, together with the Virgin Mary and the saints, "we will be like [Jesus], for we will see him as he is" (1 John 3:2).

What, then, is heaven? Heaven is union with God, seeing God face-to-face ("beholding God"), being "alive" in God (St. Irenaeus). This is why God made us. In light of this, the fullness of heaven, or, to put it another way, the fullness of the Kingdom, will be for us to be resurrected from the dead in union with Christ, and united with God the Father, in the Holy Spirit, as part of the new creation.

'Heaven' has a secondary meaning by analogy. It also means the temporary state by which the soul, freed from all residue of sin, is in union with God, as it awaits the resurrection of the body.

Finally, to continue the analogy, there is a third, more extended meaning. To the extent that a holy person is in union with God in this life, something of heaven has already begun. It is not the beatific vision, but it certainly is union with God. Notice Jesus' use of the present tense in the following verses: "Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes *has* eternal life" (John 6:47). "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood *have* eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day..." (John 6:54). [emphasis added]

(See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 326, 1024-26, 1794-95. See also St. John Paul II, General Audience of July 21, 1999, at <https://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP2HEAVN.HTM>)

Hell

One can almost hear the chorus of objections: "Why even mention hell? How could a good and loving God ever conceive of such a thing? What kind of God would send anyone to hell?"

Our culture is fickle with regard to these objections. Let there be a news report about someone who has committed an abominable crime, and there will be a new chorus, this time wanting to stoke the flames. Thankfully, God's mercy is more steadfast than that of our present culture.

To speak of hell is to speak indirectly of the mystery of human freedom. We have one eternal destiny: heaven, union with God. Jesus did not say, "I go to prepare two places for you..." At the same time, God always respects our freedom. God offers eternal life to us, and he wants our acceptance of this gift, a gift that surpasses by far anything we could ever deserve.

The fact that God always acts in dialogue with our freedom means that unless we are innocent children, whether in age or spirit, we have the possibility of saying "No" to this eternal destiny.

Here, we must not imagine that we could find ourselves in hell by surprise, as unsuspecting people who were tripped up by some breach of a commandment of which we were unaware. No, rejection of eternal life would have to take the form of an explicit decision made once and for all and finalized at the moment of death; or, what amounts to the same thing, serious sin committed knowingly and freely, with never a trace of repentance.

Our imagination fails us here again. Our imagination uses various images to describe this mystery. For example, the pain of hell is described as "flames". This, however, is an image. In speaking of hell, we are not speaking of a geographical location. Whereas heaven is union with God, our ultimate happiness, hell is to have separated oneself from God. The pain of hell is the pain of self-imposed estrangement from God. If God could be said to "send" someone to hell, it is only to ratify the decision that the individual has already made. Once again, God does not treat us like robots; God respects our freedom.

(See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1033-1036. See also St. John Paul II, General Audience of July 28, 1999, at <https://www.ewtn.com/library/PAPALDOC/JP2HEAVN.HTM>)

Unanswered questions

We are left with questions, the answers to which are hidden from us in this life: How many people will go to heaven? Is there anyone in hell? If so, are there many people in that state?

There are theological theories of various stripes concerning these questions, but the most obvious answer is: We don't know. While putting these questions aside, our bias ought to be in favour of the power of God's grace, the victory of Christ over evil and death, the effectiveness of God's plan of salvation in Christ, and the vastness of God's mercy. God's grace is more powerful than the forces of evil.

Conclusion

In light of these reflections, and in an effort to maintain a proper emphasis, I conclude with some simple maxims in the form of advice:

Love and trust God. Love and defend your fellow human beings, especially the poorest and most vulnerable. If you are aware of having sinned in a serious way, put it all behind you once and for all and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Be at peace with God, others, and yourself. Forgive everyone, including yourself. Open wide the doors of your heart to Christ. Have a bold confidence in God's mercy. Live in hope of eternal life and resurrection.

All is grace, a participation in the life of God. It is all God's work. What God wants is our "Yes", a "Yes" which itself is moved by God's grace.

Parish Profile

St. John Chrysostom, Arnprior

With one of the oldest churches in the Diocese of Pembroke, the parish of St. John Chrysostom has grown from its humble pioneer roots into a vibrant faith community in Arnprior.

As in many of its sister communities along the Ottawa River, the first settlers to arrive in Arnprior were drawn to the area via the lumber industry.

It was in 1852 that Father John McNulty from Mount St. Patrick first visited the Arnprior area to attend to the faithful, as did Father Joseph Bouvier from Renfrew in 1854.

Father Bouvier would see to the construction of a chapel in 1857, with the cornerstone of the structure blessed by Bishop Joseph-Bruno Guigues. By this time, there were some 40 families in the area.

In 1865, Bishop Guigues determined that the size of the chapel was insufficient to accommodate members. More land was acquired and the structure was expanded in 1869.

In 1871, the construction of a church was commissioned and completed two years later. By 1887, the parish was home to some 300 families. It would be only a matter of time before a new church would be needed for the ever-growing population of Arnprior at that time.

That time would come in 1906 when the foundation for the new church was laid. The project would be overseen by then pastor, Father Alphonse Chaine. The blessing and laying of the cornerstone was overseen by Most Reverend Narcisse Z. Lorrain, Bishop of Pembroke, on July 1, 1907, and dedicated to St. John Chrysostom. The design of the church is referred to as Romanesque Revival, originating from Medieval Europe with a combination of Roman and Byzantine styles.

It should also be noted that the new church was constructed around the older structure. Upon the installation of the roof on the new building, the old church was dismantled with workers removing pieces of the structure through the doors and windows of the new church.

Father Chaine would see to various projects during his 41 years of service to the parish. This included the construction of a Separate School in 1876, followed by the construction of a presbytery. He would then later acquire and convert a private residence into a convent, extending an invitation to the Sisters of Charity from Halifax to take up residence at the convent.

In the decades that followed, a variety of projects to maintain the upkeep of the church took place. Of note was the fundraising drive led by Father Reginald Dillon to redecorate the church and construct a parish

social centre. The social centre was completed in 1959, with the redecoration of the church finished in 1964.

Spurred by the Vatican Second Council, further renovations to the church were started in 1968, with Mass being celebrated in the parish hall from June to December of that year. Upon completion, Most Reverend William J. Smith, Bishop of Pembroke, accompanied by then Monsignor Dillon, rededicated the church on April 27, 1969.

Presently, the church will once again be renovated to maintain its stunning architectural appearance.

"The parish recently completed a repair and restoration of the church bell tower and is presently entering a second phase of restoration of the stonework of the entire façade," said Father John Burchat, who has served as pastor for eight years.

"This will be the most extensive work ever done on one of the oldest and largest churches in the Diocese of Pembroke."

Key to the maintaining the church structure is the charity of parishioners.

"The active parishioners of the parish are a very generous people," said Father Burchat.

"In addition to their donations, we hold an Annual Parish Harvest Festival in October along with a Direct Appeal to help with the extraordinary capital expenditures."

He also told of the great joy he experiences in participating in the various celebrations that come with his duties as parish priest.

"I enjoy everything about being a pastor and celebrating the Sunday Eucharist, which is the culmination of our life as a Christian community in the Body of Christ," said Father Burchat.

"I enjoy providing the Sacraments of the Church for the important moments in our lives: Baptisms, Confirmations, Holy Communion, Christian Marriage, the Sacrament of the Sick, and Christian Funerals. With the grace of Christ, I try to shepherd a parish family where everyone can come for spiritual nourishment and for Christian hope, which strengthens us in the ups and downs of life. I also take seriously the call for the New Evangelization by way of programming, like our extensive parish-based catechetical formation for all the sacraments, our Challenge Youth ministry and our annual Catholic vacation Bible school."

Assisting Father Burchat at St. John Chrysostom is Deacon Michael Doherty. Having served at the parish for 10 years, he will be celebrating the 15th anniversary of his ordination to the Diaconate this June.

"I enjoy being with the parishioners and sharing with them the love of God and listening to them



through their struggles of life and family situations," said Deacon Doherty.

"Being there for them when they lose a loved one, and giving them hope and consolation, sharing with them during their happy times such as Baptisms of their children and weddings. Breaking open the Word of the Lord in homilies after the Gospel readings, and serving as deacon at the Masses on the weekends and during the week day Masses."

Also, assisting in the pastoral duties at the parish is Anda Sprudz, a part-time staff member during the school year for the past 10 years.

"Serving in the parish allows me to express my faith, trying to show others varied forms of participation in parish life, and gives me a sense of purpose, coupled with the weight of a great responsibility," said Sprudz, adding that it was her hope that other parishioners will see how they, too, can take on larger role within the parish.

"Though most of my work is now administrative, hopefully at least one person has come to see that involvement in the St John Chrysostom community is multi-faceted, everyone can find their place, and that the benefits of participation extend to both themselves and others. Come and see!

With thanks to Father Joseph Legree, author of Lift Up Your Hearts.

Saint Profile

Saint Isidore the Farmer

By Deacon Adrien Chaput

Feast Day: May 15

Beatified: May 2, 1619

Canonized: March 12, 1622

Saint Isidore was born in Madrid in 1070 AD. His family was poor, and they loved and served God. Isidore and his family believed that it was important to show love for God by helping those in need. They often gave away what little they had because someone else needed it more. At a young age, barely able to swing a sickle or a hoe, Isidore offered to work for a wealthy landowner from Madrid named Juan de Vergas, and worked faithfully on his estate outside the city. Isidore, just like his parents, had a very deep and rich faith.

Isidore met and married a very religious woman named Maria Torribia (also known as Maria de la Cabeza). Isidore and Maria had one son together who died unexpectedly as a child. Their grief motivated them to believe that their son's death was a sign from God and therefore vowed to live a life of perfect continence. Although they always loved each other, they spent their time caring for those in need and praising God.

Like Isidore, Maria also became a saint. Isidore was also known for his great love for the poor and those who were oppressed. Everyday Maria always kept a pot of stew over the fire because of Isidore's habit of bringing someone home for dinner and she always wanted to take good care of them. There are many accounts of him supplying them with food. It was also noted that he strived to ensure that all animals were properly treated and to this we hear of a miracle attributed to Saint Isidore once when he was feeding the pigeons. It has been told that on a cold winter day on his way to the grinding mill with a sack of wheat, he walked by a flock of woodpigeons and they were scratching hard at the ground for food. With love and compassion for the poor birds, Isidore poured out half of his bag of wheat to feed them despite those who mocked him for doing this. However, upon entering the mill, his bag had miraculously refilled and even produced double the amount of flour that it normally would have. These are only some of the accounts of a faithful servant who dedicated his life to the Lord and to assist those who were in need.

Isidore died on May 15, 1130, and was declared a saint on March 12, 1622, with four very notable Spanish Saints which included; Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, Teresa of Avila, and Philip Neri. Together, the group is known in Spain as 'The Five Saints'. His body has been found incorrupt. Saint Isidore is the patron Saint of farmers, peasants and day laborers.

As we prepare to plant our gardens and crops we may want to take a moment and ask St. Isidore to intercede on our behalf as we pray the following Prayer.

Prayer to Saint Isidore the Farmer

Almighty God and Father of all. You give to all the opportunity to harvest the good things of Your creation and to build up Your kingdom. By the prayers and holy example of Saint Isidore, inspire us to be diligent in our laboring and to have trustful hearts that rely totally on Your loving providence. Help us to care for creation and



use it for its highest good; to bring true charity to those around us. Through the intercession of Your faithful servant St Isidore, help all who sow and reap abound in harvest. May all who work the land be treated fairly and be allowed to share in the fruits of their labor. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever Amen. St Isidore the Farmer Pray for us.

There is certainly something to be said for hard work and good stewardship of wealth. But, from the Catholic perspective, there is a great deal more to be said for charity and spiritual devotion. In St. Isidore, we see that God values these virtues in poor laborers.



The 80th Annual Pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Ann, Cormac

Sunday July 29, 2018

TRIDUUM – 7 p.m.

Thursday, Friday, Saturday, St. Ann's Church

11:00am - Shrine Mass - Most Rev. Michael Mulhall, Bishop of Pembroke

2:00pm - Healing Mass - Guest homilist Father Denis Lemieux
with the theme "Evangelical Hearts"

Preferential seating in the shade will be given to those with lawn chairs. Free rough camping available.

In memoriam: Deacon Niilo Kuisma

Deacon Niilo Kuisma, a permanent deacon of the Diocese of Pembroke, entered into eternal peace on Thursday, May 3, 2018, after a long, courageous battle with cancer. Condolences from within the Diocese and beyond were sent to his family, friends and parish community for the loss of such a great person. Deacon Niilo was a loving husband of Marilyn Dale Kuisma (Cull), beloved father to Niilo Kuisma (Javiera), Kathryn Martin (Robert), and Kristine Morrissey (Derrick). His grandchildren are Kaitlin, Kyle, Chase, Mason, Norah and Olivia.

Deacon Kuisma was born in Finland. He grew up in Thunder Bay and attended Laurentian University in Sudbury, where he enjoyed playing the great sport of football that he loved. He and his wife Marilyn met and, living God's plan for their lives, entered into the Sacrament of Marriage on September 6, 1969.

Deacon Niilo spent his career in Health and Safety chiefly in the mining sector in the North.

He was happy and proud to contribute to both his local community and the Catholic community. He was involved in many sports and coached minor hockey.

Over the years, Deacon Niilo met many people, and it has been said that he was a man with a gift of faith that he did not take for granted. Rather, he used it to help lead others to embrace this beautiful gift. He was never afraid of work or the challenges that it set before him.

"He would be present to minister in any situation with the love and compassion of Christ," says Deacon Adrien Chaput.

In the year 2000, he and Marilyn began another journey with the Lord. Another Brother Deacon Don Smith shares about that special time.

"If there is one word that comes to mind when thinking of Deacon Niilo Kuisma, it is total dedication. We began the formation program for the Permanent Diaconate together in 2000, after being sponsored by Bishop Brendan O'Brien," reflects Deacon Don Smith.

Deacon Smith recalls that each and every week, regardless of the weather, Niilo and his wife Marilyn drove to Ottawa from Deep River and never complained about the distance. On a few occasions, the program had to be cancelled due to bad weather and they had to turn around and drive right back home. There was never a complaint. Marilyn served as organist at Evening Prayer.

"We were ordained together on May 22, 2004, along with Fr. Ryan Holly who became a transitional deacon and went on to priesthood the following year," says Deacon Smith.

Pastors in the diocese have remarked to Deacon Smith about Niilo's dedication. He served on RCIA teams and loved to celebrate baptisms. Another priest friend noted that Deacon Kuisma's preaching was superb.



"Sadly, he began another journey about seven years ago with cancer. I never heard him complain. He was undergoing chemotherapy for several years. The disease finally took him and we have to say 'I'll see you later to a dedicated brother deacon,'" says Deacon Smith.

The funeral liturgy was celebrated in his home parish, Our Lady of Good Counsel, in Deep River.

"There were a number of priests and deacons present, which speaks of the respect with which he was held," says Deacon Smith.

"Rest in peace Brother Niilo. We pray for you as you begin the next chapter of your journey, the journey into eternal life with God."

Meeting diocesan priests from afar

The Diocese is blessed to have several members of the clergy who come from various locations from around the globe. Ecclesia is publishing a series of introductory articles on these priests for our readers to learn about.

In this edition, Father Cyril Okebanama agreed to tell Ecclesia a little bit about himself in his own words.

Father Okebanama hails from Ihitte Uboma local government area of Imo State, Nigeria. He is the fifth of seven children born to Innocent and Rosanna Okebanama.

"My parents were teachers and as teachers, they gave all their children a good education up to university level," said Father Okebanama.

"We are devoted Catholics and even our extended family by marriage are Catholics."

Like many of his peers in clergy, Father Okebanama was active in the church in his youth, participating in a diverse array of activities.

"As a little kid, I joined a group (pious association) known as The Block Rosary and I was once the president of this group," said Father Okebanama.

"The members gathered together every day at any time we wanted in the evening to say the Rosary, sing some choruses, read some passages of the Bible and have one of us explain the passages read to others. The members were involved in other things like corporal works of mercy."

Such works included helping the elderly, particularly those who were alone or widows, by performing manual labour on their farms.

His other duties included leading parishioners in song prior to the start of Mass, followed by reading and explaining passages from the Bible.

"I then later joined an alter servant association in my parish and I was mostly the person our parish always

chose to help seminarians engaged in apostolic work in my parish. I later decided to be a priest, which led to my joining a religious congregation known as the Sons of Mary Mother of Mercy Congregation."

He pursued 11 years of study prior to becoming a priest, including four years of study in theology at Seat of Wisdom Seminary in Owerri, Nigeria. He would later be ordained to the diaconate on December 20, 2010, by Most Reverend Dr. Ronald Herzog, Bishop of Alexandria, U.S.A. He was ordained to the priesthood on July 9, 2011, at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Alike Obowo, Nigeria by Most Reverend Dr. Solomon Amatu, Bishop of Okigwe.

It would only be a few years later that Father Okebanama would be called to serve God's people in Canada.

"I was already working in Cameroon when I was called by our superior general to come back to Nigeria and prepare for my coming to Canada," said Father Okebanama.

"I came because I was needed here in Canada and in obedience to God and to my superior and willingness to serve God and humanity. I left Nigeria on the 10 of August, 2015, and arrived here in Canada on the 11 of August, 2015."

In adapting to life here in Canada, Father Okebanama told of the notable difference in the interactions between parish priest and parishioners.

"The most challenging thing I find in Canada is what I call loneliness, owing to the fact that in Nigeria, the parishes where the priests live are always full of people who come to do personal adoration, visit the priests, do practices like choir practices, cook, wash cars and clothes for the priests, iron clothes for the priests and



run other errands for them, whereas here in Canada, the priests do all for and by themselves."

Of course, there was also the reality of adapting to the winter season.

"The winter here is another thing because there is nothing like winter or snow in Nigeria, but I try to cover myself very well and always keep warm as much as I can," said Father Okebanama.

Father Okebanama currently administers to the faithful at St-Thomas-d'Aquin in Astorville, St. Bernadette in Bonfield and Sacred Heart in Corbeil. Upon reflecting on what he savours most about serving God in Canada, Father Okebanama told of the peace that prevails in this country.

"I so much love and desire peace in my life and Canada, in general, is for me a peaceful country," said Father Okebanama.

"Priests are very safe here in Canada, so I now have the type of peace that my heart desires. Finally, Canada in general helps me to live very well my life as a celibate, for it gives me the right atmosphere I need to always reflect on my life and to concentrate on my work."

St. Ann's "Walk the Opeongo Line" Pilgrimage, July 26–29

This will be the third year that pilgrims make the walk from Renfrew to Cormac for the feast of St. Ann. Perhaps it's becoming an annual thing? The larger pilgrimage to St. Ann's, in which "Walk the Opeongo Line" participates, is celebrating its 80th anniversary this year! Thousands of pilgrims will once again gather at St. Ann's Shrine, Cormac for Masses with Bishop Mulhall and Fr. Denis Lemieux.

2018 also marks the 175th anniversary of the founding of St. Patrick's Parish, Mt. St. Patrick. Those who walk the Opeongo Line will not be disappointed at the end of their first day's labor. The beauty of the church and the generosity of the parishioners will make even the most worn-out pilgrims forget their aching feet.

New this year will be a talk given at St. Patrick's by Derek Murray, PhD, the first evening of the pilgrimage. Professor Murray's doctoral thesis focused on settlement along the Opeongo Line, specifically in Brudenell, which is just a few kilometers from Cormac. His talk will concentrate on the questions of "success" and "failure" in the Canadian government's mid to late 19th century project to colonize the expanse of land from Ottawa to Lake Huron, known then as the Ottawa-Huron Tract. There will also be time for questions following his talk. All are welcome, even if you don't walk to Mt. St. Patrick!

Once again, the pilgrimage is being made possible through the generosity of those along the route. The meals, places to rest, washroom facilities, and much more are provided by volunteers and benefactors from the parishes and communities. Part of the purpose of a pilgrimage is to give people an opportunity to be hospitable in a new context, and there is no shortage of hospitality along the Opeongo Line! Our Lady of Fatima, St. Patrick, St. Joseph, and St. Ann are all smiling on the good people of whom they are patrons.

For more information on all aspects of St. Ann's "Walk the Opeongo Line" Pilgrimage, please visit the website walktheopeongoline.com. We start walking on Thursday morning, July 26, and we reach St. Ann's on Saturday afternoon July 28.



Second annual celebration of marriage evening a huge success

by Elena Afelskie

In only its second year, the annual diocesan Celebration of Marriage supper was a wonderful evening of food, fellowship, encouragement and prayer. Held at Our Lady of Lourdes parish in Pembroke, the evening brought together around 90 people at Our Lady of Lourdes parish hall in Pembroke for a catered meal followed by a talk on marriage and a time of Adoration.

The food was fine and the talk, given by Fr. Denis Lemieux of Madonna House, was a great time of insight, blessing and encouragement for the married couples present. As he joked early on, "The white elephant in the room is that I am, in fact, not married. Nevertheless, as a spiritual director and confessor, I often hear the hardest parts about living out your great vocation." Born of his experience, he spoke of the need to live out the Sacrament of Marriage no matter the difficulties that might arise. Touchingly, his final words were those of gratitude: "Above all, I thank all of you married couples for living out your vows." Fittingly the talk was followed by a short time of Adoration and blessing facilitated by Bishop Mulhall. Perhaps one of the greatest encouragements of the evening was celebrating Catholic marriage together with couples of all ages struggling to live out their call to love in the midst of a hostile culture.

Perhaps a slight variance on the words of St. Catherine Siena best sum up the evening: "[Catholic married people], become who you are and you will set the world on fire." Please consider joining us next May for this diocesan event. You will leave full of food, and hope for marriage and the family.



Caitlin and Paul Rivett-Carnac, who will celebrate five years of marriage in 2018, joined the celebration on the suggestion of friends who attended last year and because they believe support for marriage is important.



First time attendees and Pro-Life advocates Barb and Robert Austin wanted to celebrate marriage with like-minded people.



Returning participants Mary and David Tesluk travelled from Combermere for the second time to be part of the celebration that promotes marriage. It's especially meaningful for them as they approach their 25th wedding anniversary in July!

Former gangster to speak at Pembroke Cathedral

A novel approach for a Catholic mission will be presented for the Pembroke area parishes in October, as a lay evangelist now living in Ireland speaks on three evenings at St. Columbkille's Cathedral.

John Pridmore was once a serious "face" in London's East End. His jackets were tailored to hold his machete and knuckledusters, and his drug deals made him wealthy. He nearly killed a man outside a nightclub to impress a mob boss. Then something extraordinary happened.

His book, *Gangland to Promised Land*, recounts his journey from the criminal underworld to Christ. John will share his story of God's love, God's mercy and God's healing from Monday to Wednesday, October 1–3. Mission services will begin each evening at 7:15 and last about one hour.

Pridmore has spoken around the world and shared his touching and amazing story with various groups. He addressed a crowd of a half million young people in the presence of Pope Benedict at the World Youth Day in Australia in 2008 and has spoken in parishes and high schools in Europe, America and Australia. His powerful story reveals God's mercy and has inspired hundreds of thousands to grow in their faith. He has worked in the Bronx with the Friars of the Renewal and has had occasion as well to work with Saint Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

His visit to Pembroke has been arranged by Father Howard Chabot who is sponsoring the event in co-operation with the Pembroke area parishes as a way to celebrate his 50th anniversary as a priest. "It allows me to give back something to the people I have had the joy to serve," said Father Chabot. "It also allows me to give witness to what I have experienced in working with young men and women as a Probation Officer—namely, that God's love is for everyone and God's love shared with others has a transforming effect for the good".

Mr. Pridmore will briefly address parishioners at Holy Name Church, Our Lady of Lourdes Church, and St. Columbkille's Cathedral at parish Masses on the last weekend of September to introduce himself and extend an invitation to the Mission events of October 1–3. Check your parish bulletin in September for more details, and please pray for God's blessing on this event.



Mission Prayer

Heavenly Father, we pray that our Parish Mission may be a time of grace and renewal for all. We ask you to bless all the families in our community, especially those who are experiencing difficulties. Bless the old, the young, the poor, the sick, the unemployed and those in sorrow or despair. Help us, dear Lord, to grow in faith and love of you and of each other. Amen.

First communion donation



The children of Cathedral Parish used the new program BLESSED in preparation for First Holy Communion. Inspired by the teachings of the program about charity and acts of kindness, they collected canned goods over a period of four weeks and presented them to the Saint Vincent de Paul Society for their Lenten Food Drive.

The catechists and children made the presentation of food to Deacon Adrien Chaput and Ms. Muggsie Boland, Chair of the St. Vincent de Paul Society St. Columbkille Conference on Palm Sunday. "These children and their catechists are truly amazing in their generosity," said Deacon Adrien Chaput.

ATTENTION: Students and Teachers — Pembroke Mission Update

At press time today, it was announced that arrangements have been made for Mr. John Pridmore to address student assemblies at a number of schools in our area during the Catholic Mission scheduled during the first week of October 2018. He will share his story at Bishop Smith Catholic High School in Pembroke on Monday morning and at Saint Joseph's High School in Renfrew on Tuesday afternoon. Senior elementary students in Pembroke will have the opportunity of hearing Mr. Pridmore at Holy Name Church on Monday afternoon and he will be available to those student wishing to attend an assembly at Madawaska Valley District High School on Wednesday of that week, Elementary students from Saint Andrew's and Saint John Bosco elementary school will be invited to the MVDHS noontime gathering. As a lay evangelist, Mr. Pridmore has spoken to millions of young people around the world sharing his remarkable story as told in his best-selling book *"From Gangland to Promised Land"*. Mission services will be held at the Cathedral Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evening beginning at 7:15. All are welcome!

Our Lady of Lourdes students embrace the season of Lent

A group of students at Our Lady of Lourdes elementary school embraced the season of Lent this year by completing a craft sale to raise money for the St. Vincent de Paul Society St. Columbkille Conference.

"I believe it's extremely important to teach children and encourage children to help with charitable causes," said Jennifer Gagnon, a teacher at Our Lady of Lourdes in Pembroke.

"I knew I wanted to do something special with my Grade 3/4 students for Lent, something to really encourage them to put their faith into action. We've talked a few times this year about making sure our actions match our words, and how we can share God's love with others. Feeding the hungry is definitely one of the ways. We had been talking about ways we could practice extra fasting, prayer and almsgiving during Lent. We decided we could practice almsgiving by donating time and effort into raising money for those in need."

It was decided that the local branch of the St. Vincent de Paul Society would be the beneficiary of their work.

"I knew a bit about St. Vincent de Paul Society after volunteering a few times with the Our Lady of Lourdes youth group about 8 years ago," said Gagnon.

"I know how important and necessary the work of St. Vincent de Paul Society is to the Pembroke area, and I wanted to introduce my students to the organization. I think it's important that they understand and are aware of the needy right in our own community, and to empower them to reach out and help, even as young people. I invited Deacon Adrien (Chaput) to come and speak with my class so they could learn a little more about the work St. Vincent de Paul does."

With that, the students put their creative energies to work by making a variety of crafts.

"We made sock bunnies, decorative crosses, lollipop bunnies and painted pots," said Gagnon.

"A few parent volunteers came in for a couple afternoons to help, which was wonderful. One of the educational assistants working in my class donated some larger crafts to sell, such as an Easter wreath and Easter egg tree."

Upon completion, efforts then turned to raising awareness within Our Lady of Lourdes school in order to generate sales. Posters advertising upcoming craft sales were made, and daily announcements were delivered on the school public address system.



"I communicated about our sale through a letter to the families in our school, as well," said Gagnon.

"The crafts were sold to the students and families at Our Lady of Lourdes during Holy Week, each day at lunch hour. It was an amazing turnout. The families and students were very supportive and many made extra donations, as well."

A grand total of \$541.15 was raised and presented to Deacon Chaput.

"I was and am still very moved by such generosity of children at such a young age," said Deacon Chaput.

"These beautiful children are truly concerned about our brothers and sisters in need. Their teacher, Mrs. Gagnon, is amazing, as well as her assistants Catherine Habraken and Katharine Hickey."

Gagnon expressed her hope that her students will continue to take part in charitable activities going forward in their lives.

"It's so important to learn to be so grateful for everything we have, to be aware of the needs around us, and to be empowered by the words of Mother Teresa that 'we may not be able to do great things, but we can all do small things with great love,'" said Gagnon.

"These small acts of kindness make such an impact. I believe children who learn this will grow up to be active, helpful and loving members of society, who participate in making God's world a more peaceful and kind place."

A silent pilgrimage

By Susan Dagenais, President, Renfrew County Right to Life

It was a dreary Thursday morning as we set out for the nation's capital clad in rainwear, umbrella in hand. The forecast was for showers all afternoon. It would have been so much easier to stay home, but we knew we were doing the right thing. We were once again going to be, as Fr. Tom Lynch says, "tangible reminders that we will not go away until we have achieved the protection of all human life."

We disembarked at St. Patrick's Basilica. At Mass, Cardinal Thomas Collins spoke words of encouragement to the large congregation. He asked that our March be a pilgrimage, a silent pilgrimage. Cardinal Collins suggested that we not buy into the loud clamber and chants, but that we allow our silence to speak loudly.

I prayed that Cardinal Collins would repeat this peaceful message on Parliament Hill. That is exactly what he did.

The crowd gathered on the Hill was as diverse as it was numerous: infants, teenagers, grandparents, clergy, and Sisters.

Just as we turned toward Wellington Street to begin our peaceful pilgrimage, the sun burst forth, shining brightly upon us. I believe that, in that moment, Our Lord was smiling down upon his people headed into a peaceful battle, one that we know will be won, for we trust in Our Lady's promise that her Immaculate Heart will prevail.

For those of you who would find the March for Life too daunting physically, please join us in Pembroke on Sunday, October 7, at 2:00 p.m. for the Life Chain, a quiet and prayerful hour where we stand united with God in solidarity for the sacredness of life.



A man of God: Fr. Joe Legree

By Susan Dagenais

Dr. Thomas Dodds Sr. delivered a beautiful baby boy into the waiting arms of his parents, Austen and Mary Ellen Legree, on August 20, 1930. This boy, Joseph Clement Austin Legree, would become a revered parish priest and an author.

Joseph Legree's life was to be anything but sedentary. Were his early years perhaps a foreshadowing of the extensive travel and more than 14 years of research he would effect, culminating in a history of Pembroke Diocese?

In the 1970s, Bishop J.R. Windle invited Father Legree to update the history of the Diocese of Pembroke. Bishop Windle was undoubtedly pleased with the results of Father Legree's endeavours. He wrote in the Foreword, "Father Legree set upon the task with superhuman effort that involved research and personal interviews that have produced discoveries of heretofore untapped material."



Fr. Guy Desroches, C.Ss.R., Fr. Joe Legree, Archbishop Paul-André Durocher

du-Cap in Trois-Rivières eight times. The tranquility of the Cap beckoned Father back year after year, he says.

Joseph Legree grew up in Douglas during the Depression. In 1938, his father moved the family to Griffith then to Esmonde, where he supervised the building of St. Joseph's Hall. The family returned to Douglas in August of that year. Three teachers who he affectionately and respectfully recalls are Mrs. MacDonald, Sister Leona and Sister Bertille.

Elementary school was challenging for Joseph Legree, since he was the target of several bullies. At one point, Joseph's parents moved to Calabogie in the hope that the bullying would stop. One winter, Joseph was shoved into the boards of the local rink where a protruding nail punctured his skin. He had to be hospitalized for blood poisoning. After that event, Joseph's father set up a punching bag in the back kitchen. "He didn't teach me anything. He just set up the punching bag. 'Go to it' was all he said." During the winter of 1941, Joseph contracted pneumonia, and was homeschooled for the rest of that year. His parents continued to inspire in him a love for history and to guide him in the faith. Joseph completed high school at St. Michael's in Douglas in 1948. He attended Saint Patrick's College in Ottawa

for grade 13 and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in the spring of 1952.

Joseph then studied at Le Grand séminaire de Montréal. Two thirds of his courses were in French and the rest were in Latin. "For a little 'Anglais', that was a challenge!" Ninety-two students began that year and only 68 finished.

In 1956, four priests were ordained in the Diocese of Pembroke—Father Joseph Legree, Father Jack Green from Deep River, Father Ken Bradley from Eganville, and Father Raphael Glofsheski from Barry's Bay. Each was ordained in his home parish.

Father Joseph Legree vividly recalls his ordination on June 3 at 4 p.m. at St. Michael's Church in Douglas. Bishop William J. Smith officiated. Among the congregants, Mary Ellen Legree, Joseph's mother, was present along with his Aunt Beasie and his Uncles Matthew and Tom. It was a cloudy day. Joseph Legree was prostrate on the floor during the Litany of the Saints when suddenly the sun shone brightly through the stained-glass windows. "That day was kind of like my life, darkness and light."

After Father Legree's ordination, he was given several successive assignments throughout the diocese.

He served at St. Andrew Parish in Killaloe with Father James Schruder, and then St. Anne Parish in Mattawa with Father Victor Pilon. He was part-time curate in Campbell's Bay with Father J.R. Windle, a Doctor of Canon Law who was working part-time at the Matrimonial Tribunal in Ottawa. Father served in Fort-Coulonge for a short time, and then was sent to Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Renfrew to help during Father Roney's illness. He served at St. Martin of Tours Parish in Whitney, where he had two missions, Canoe Lake and Cache Lake. In 1961, Father Joseph was appointed to the Cathedral for one year. He later taught religion at Madawaska Valley High School. He served in Eganville, then at Resurrection of Our Lord Parish in Ottawa, then in Vinton and Sheenboro.

From 1972 to 1990, Father Legree was parish priest in Combermere. There are many people still in Combermere who fondly remember him.

Today, at 87 years of age, Father Joe Legree resides in his own home in Douglas, just a stone's throw from his family home. He still concelebrates Mass on Sundays at St. Michael's Church and celebrates Mass on weekdays in his own home.

Lift Up Your Hearts

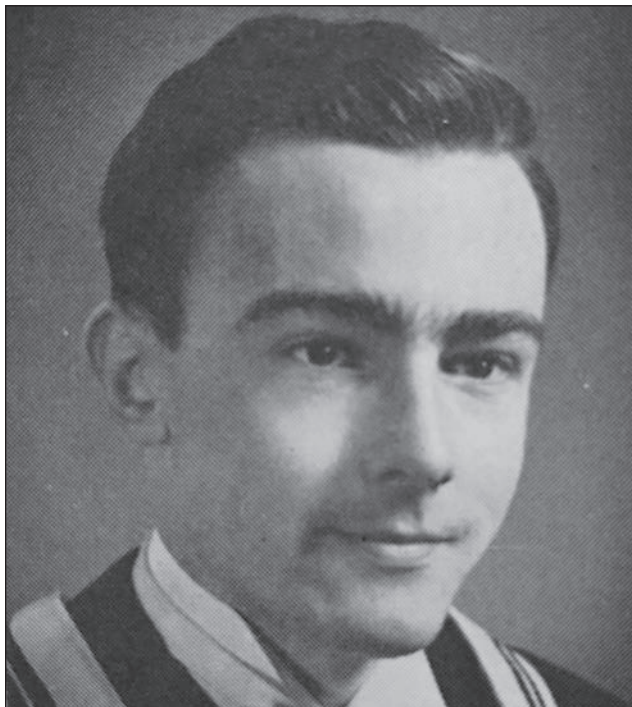
Rev. Joseph C. Legree

Bishop Windle wrote that the book is "...invaluable, unrivalled in precise detail, a source of unequalled opportunity for many to appreciate the hopes, the tears, the trials, as well as the triumphs of our past. The prized possession of all who are interested in the Diocese of Pembroke..."

Father Legree fondly remembers his years with the Catholic Youth Organization (CYO). He and Father Kennedy from Calabogie would charter a bus to take 30 youth to Eganville, Renfrew and Arnprior. "We would get the owner of the bus lines, Joe McGahran, on the phone and he would say, "CYO, CIO, CRO, or whatever you want, you got going." "We wanted to provide opportunities for our youth to meet and interact with other Catholic youth."

At one time, there were more than 150 youth from five parishes involved in the CYO. There were also Father May from Vinton, Father Thomas Tait from Campbell's Bay, Father Bréard from Calumet Island and Father Joseph Gravelle from Otter Lake. "It was an achievement for us, getting all the youth together."

Father Joseph has also travelled with busloads of pilgrims from Combermere to Le sanctuaire Notre-Dame-



Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call: Latest news from Pembroke Diocesan Council of the CWL

By Pat Weller, Past President, Pembroke Diocesan Council

Members gathered from across the diocese on April 28 for the Spring Meeting of the Pembroke Diocesan Council of The Catholic Women's League of Canada. St. James Council of Eganville and Our Lady of Nativity Council of Pikwakanagan co-hosted the meeting. Members have been collecting socks as one means to assist the most vulnerable in response to the provincial council's focus on *homelessness*. In total, 340 pairs of socks plus some mittens, scarves, hats and slippers were brought to the spring meeting and then given to local agencies for distribution. Diocesan officers continue to workshops on their respective standing committees. The spring meeting heard Sheila Beilawski explain Resolutions and Elaine Turner discuss Christian Family Life.

On May 4, councils in the diocese participated in *12 Hours of Prayer for Palliative Care* with a focus this year on mental health. The Catholic Women's League of Canada is committed to supporting the sanctity of life from conception to natural death and working to ensure all life is protected.

The Annual Pembroke Diocesan Convention took place on Saturday, May 26 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Pembroke. As a show of respect for the Indigenous community, a smudging ceremony took place at the opening of the convention. The diocesan council acknowledges Our Lady of Nativity council in Pikwakanagan for facilitating this ceremony. Ontario Provincial President Anne Madden brought greetings from the provincial council, presented a workshop on mentoring, and explained the current status of the National Strategic Planning process aimed to renew and reinvigorate the League. Bishop Mulhall,



Spiritual Director for the Diocesan Council, addressed members, discussed issues with them, and celebrated the convention Mass.

The national theme, *Inspired by the Spirit, Women Respond to God's Call*, initiated by National President Margaret Ann Jacobs in 2016, speaks directly to our mission statement that we are "...a national organization rooted in gospel values calling its members to holiness through service to the people of God."

The provincial focus of *homelessness* has prompted members to become more aware of the plight of the homeless, especially in our own communities. A monetary collection was taken up at the diocesan convention for The Grind Pembroke, a local agency

offering shelter and services to the homeless. A representative from The Grind Pembroke was in attendance at the convention to receive the collection and inform delegates of their services.

The diocesan theme, *Promote Leadership and Increase Membership*, serves to encourage members to become involved and embrace the friendships, bonds, and learning opportunities that come from belonging to the League. All women are encouraged to see what the CWL has to offer. If there isn't a council in your parish, you could be the seed to start one. Mary, Our Lady of Good Counsel and League patroness, is our guide and model for our "yes" to service to the people of God.

Catechists' sharing on "Blessed"

By Lance Patriquin and Katharine Hickey

What do you get when you combine the internet, world class animation, beautiful and engaging workbooks, and dedicated and committed leaders in the Catholic faith? You have a dynamic new and fresh preparation program for First Reconciliation and First Holy Communion that engages young people like never before.

In preparation for these sacraments, the young parishioners of Cathedral Parish in Pembroke have been using the new program "BLESSED" from Dynamic Catholic. Dynamic Catholic is a U.S.-based organization that has as part of its mission statement "to re-energize the Catholic Church by developing world-class resources that inspire people..." and a vision of being the "innovative leader in the New Evangelization, helping Catholics and their parishes become the best version of themselves." To say that they are living up to these goals would be an understatement.

BLESSED is a truly inspired teaching program that is current and engaging for today's children, as they journey toward a better understanding of themselves and their relationship with God. Using a total of 84 short animated films from an Emmy award winning studio, the program's goal is to engage the senses, and

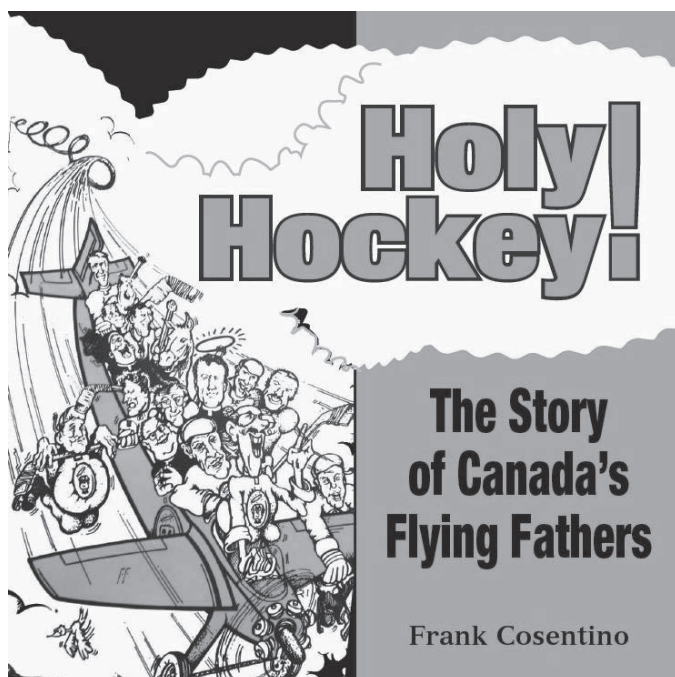
enhance the learning, so that the children can apply simple and practical lessons in their own lives. The films are all based around Ben and Sarah and their pet gerbil, Hemmingway, and offer the children an opportunity to bond with them and their experiences over the span of the program. By the end, there is an emotional connection with the characters and the experiences they have in common with the children. Hemmingway offers the children some humour with his antics throughout the series in a way that is fun and innovative.

The animation is just one part of the program. The workbooks provided for each child are rich in colour and illustrations and intricately tied to what they have viewed in the video. The use of fill-in-the-blank and true and false questions in the book were well received by the children. As well, the program is available online, so if a child is absent for a session, they could catch up at home with their parents.

From the catechists' point of view, the ease of implementing the program was impressive. There is much less preparation time needed, as the program structure is so good. The Leaders' Guide offers a lot of information that can be used to enhance the experience. The videos are entertaining, without losing

the important theological teachings required for the reception of the sacraments. The number of sessions and amount of time required for this program is more than past programs used in the parish, but the feeling is that the children are better prepared for their journey when the sessions are done. Having talked to parents who have had children participate in past programs, some felt that there were not enough hands-on activities for the children. This is more of a learning curve for the catechists, rather than a flaw with the program. Depending on the length of your sessions, other activities can be added or videos skipped to offer a truly flexible teaching program.

This is the second program from Dynamic Catholic that our parish, St. Columbkille Cathedral, has used, with the other being DECISION POINT in preparation for Confirmation. They are both highly recommended and truly meet the standard of the Dynamic Catholic mission statement. For parishes that would like further information on these exciting new programs, please contact Deacon Adrien Chaput, Director of the Office of Faith Formation and Leadership Development at 613-732-7933 Ext 206. For more information about Dynamic Catholic, visit www.dynamiccatholic.com



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Holy Hockey

Canada's
Flying Fathers

\$25

*All proceeds donated
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Holy Hockey

THE STORY OF CANADA'S FLYING FATHERS

The Flying Fathers Hockey Club began in 1964 in North Bay, Ontario. A group of priests from the North were brought together to play a team from local radio station CFCH to raise funds for local charities. It was a huge success, drew more than 3,000 fans, and was the talk of the community. As some of the priests said, "It was better than bingo."

The following year, they broke the attendance record at North Bay's Memorial Gardens, drawing 5,300 fans. They were joined by Pembroke Diocese priest Father Pat Blake, who remained with the team until its forty-fifth year. Through those years, they travelled across Canada, into the USA, and to Europe. These "Globetrotters of hockey" had an audience with the Pope, compiled more than 900 wins, and lost only a handful of games. They raised more than \$4 million for charity, not to mention the sheer joy and laughter they brought to their audiences with their hilarious antics on the ice, "playing and praying for a better world."

And it was at times hilarious. Read about the many ways a goal could be scored, some worth six points! If you saw them in action, you'll have a smile on your face as you remember their antics. And, if this is the first time you've been introduced to the Flying Fathers, the chuckles and outright laughter will be worth the price of the book. Enjoy!

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Parish Suppers 2018

St. Lawrence O'Toole, Barry's Bay, ON

Will not be having its annual parish supper

Holy Canadian Martyrs, Combermere, ON

Will not be having its pancake breakfast this year

Sunday, July 29

St. Bernadette, Bonfield, ON

Bonfield Church Picnic

Sea Pie; Home-Baked Beans, Full

Course Meal, Assorted Home Pies

Games: 1:30 p.m. – 5 p.m.

Meal: 3:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

le 29 juillet, dimanche

Sainte-Bernadette, Bonfield, ON

Pique-nique paroissial de Bonfield

SeaPie; Fèves au lard; repas complet;

tartes assorties faites à la maison,

Repas – 15h30 – 17h00

Sunday, August 5

St. Martin of Tours, Whitney, ON

Annual Turkey, Ham & Baked Bean

Supper. Country-style home cooking

Take-out meals available. Games for all the family.

Article Bingo. Raffle tickets. Canteen,

St. Martin's Parish Hall, 1:00 p.m.

Adults: \$13.00; Children 5-12: \$5.00;

Five and under: Free

1:00 p.m.

Sunday, August 12

St. Andrew's, Killaloe, ON

Supper & Bazaar

Turkey, ham, stuffed pork, baked beans,

Salads, rolls, pies and desserts

Entertainment, bingo, garage sale, raffles

Adults: \$13.00; Children 4-12: \$5.00;

Children under 4 free

1:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, August 12

St-Thomas D'Aquin, Astorville, ON

Annual parish picnic from 1:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Serving our famous Canadian supper of seapie,

homemade beans, coleslaw,

homemade raspberry, blueberry, and lemon pies.

Games, music, and ticket draw

At East Ferris Community Centre, Astorville, ON

Supper starts at 3:30 p.m., take-out beings at 4:30 p.m.

Sunday, August 19

Our Lady of Grace, Westmeath, ON

Turkey Lunch & Supper

Bake/Sale Tables, Bingo, Draw Tickets,

Grab bags. Air Conditioned – Take-out

available – Wheelchair accessible

Westmeath Community Centre

Adults: \$15.00; Children (5-12): \$6.00,

Four & under: Free

12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Sunday, August 19

St. Hedwig Parish, Barry's Bay, ON

Turkey dinner following

Mass at 1 p.m.

2 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Sunday, August 26

Our Lady of the Angels, Brudenell, ON

Turkey, Ham & Baked Beans

Live entertainment, bingo, country market

Adults: \$13.00; Children 10 & under: \$6.00;

Children under 4: free

Served from 1:30 – 6:30 p.m.

Visitors' Mass at 1:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 2

St. Mary's, Wilno, ON

Chicken Supper

Home-Cooked Meal

Plates served from 1 p.m.

Take-out available

Elevator/Wheelchair accessible

Adults: \$15.00; Children under 10: \$5.00

Mass at noon. Everyone welcome!

Sunday, September 6

St. Ignatius, Maynooth, ON

Parish Supper and Bazaar

Turkey, Ham and Beans

Bingo, Crafts and Draws.

Adults: \$15.00; Children 10 and under: \$5.00

12 p.m. – 6 p.m.; Mass at 11 a.m.

Sunday, September 9

Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Lapasse, ON

Turkey and ham dinner

Mt. Carmel Hall

Adults: \$15.00, Children under 12: \$6.00

Children under 4: free

2:30 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Sunday, September 9

St. John the Evangelist, Campbell's Bay, QC

Turkey, Ham & Homemade pies

Adults: \$15.00; Children 12 and under: \$6.00

Toddlers: Free

3:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Sunday, September 9

Our Lady of Mercy, Bancroft, ON

Ham & Roast Beef,

Homemade salads, baked beans and pies

Raffle Tickets, Silent Auction, CWL gift shop

Religious articles

Take-out meals available

Adults: \$13.00; Children under 12: \$6.00

Children 5 and under: Free

11:30 a.m. – 6 p.m.

Mass at 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m.

Sunday, September 16

St. Columbkille Cathedral, Pembroke, ON

Roast Beef, Ham & Bean

Supper with assorted salads, and Bazaar

Adults: \$15.00; Children under 10: \$5.00

11:30 a.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Everyone welcome!

Sunday, September 23

St. Jean Baptiste, Pembroke

Turkey & ham dinner

Take out available; Handicapped accessible

11:30 a.m. – 7 p.m.

Adults: \$15.00, Children: \$5.00

Sunday, September 30

St-Alphonsus, Chapeau, QC

Turkey, beans and all the trimmings

Chapeau Arena: 12 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Adults: \$15, Children under 12: \$7.00

Sunday, October 7

St. Casimir, Round Lake Centre, ON

Roast Beef & Bean Supper

Take-out available. Wheelchair accessible.

Crafts, Bingo, Draws, Great Food.

Supper at 1:00 p.m.

Adults: \$15.00; Children under 12: \$5.00;

Under 5: Free

Mass at 11:30 a.m. Everyone welcome!

Sunday, October 14

St. John Chrysostom, Arnprior, ON

Annual Harvest Festival Roast Beef Dinner

Adults: \$14; Children: \$6; under 6 free

11:30 Mass: Dinner 12:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Parish Hall

Sunday, October 14

St. Joseph, Allumette Island, QC

Roast beef supper

St. Joseph Family Centre

One sitting at 5 p.m.

Tickets must be purchased in advance

Contact Donna at 819-689-2558

or Sharon at 819-689-2907

Sunday, November 4

St. Matthew the Apostle, Madawaska, ON

Annual Turkey, Ham & Bean

Supper – Raffle Tickets

Community Hall, Madawaska

12 noon – 6 p.m.

Adults: \$13.00; Children under 10: \$5.00;

Three & under: Free

2017 Financial Report for the Diocese of Pembroke

Diocesan Finance Council
His Excellency, Bishop Michael Mulhall
Rev. John Burchat
Mr. James McCluskey
Mr. Fred Sinclair
Mr. John Huff
Mr. Paul Morris

We are now presenting the 2017 Financial Statement of Operations for the diocese. The information reports Revenue and Expenses for 2017 in the form of pie charts.

The figures show that for the 2017 fiscal year, the diocese reported an operating surplus of \$234,171. Within this surplus is the non-recurring annual revenue item from Health & Benefit Surplus of \$29,439. Without this Health & Benefit Surplus, revenue would have been reported as \$204,732.

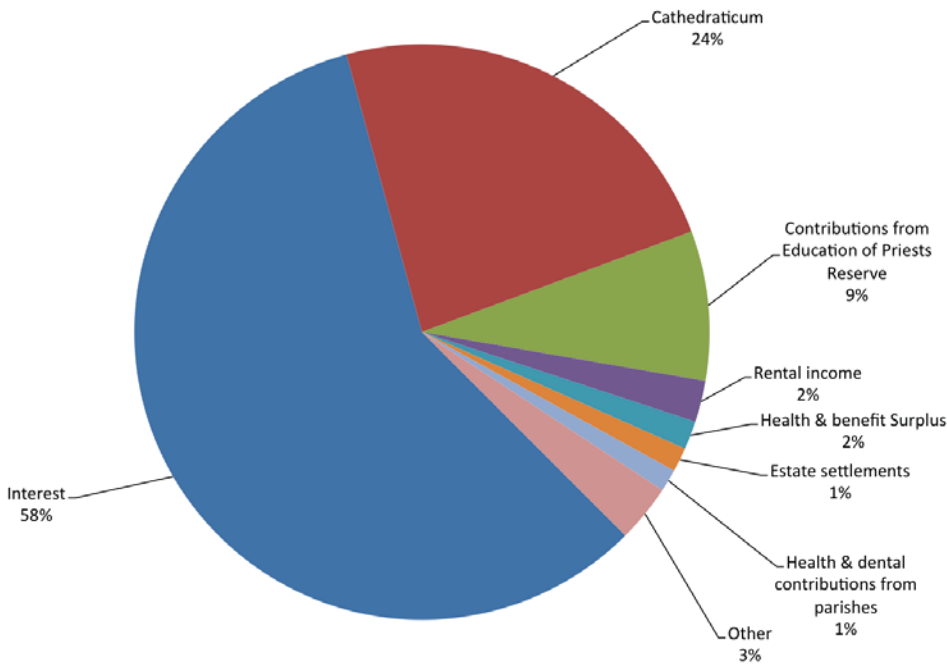
The Chartered Professional Accounting firm of Scott Rosien Black & Locke has been engaged by the diocese for the preparation of the year-end Financial Statements of the Roman Catholic Episcopal Corporation of Pembroke. These Financial Statements support the information reported in the Revenue and Expense Pie Chart.

We are grateful to our parishioners and their parishes and we thank each one of you for your financial support. The parishes and diocese depend on your continued generosity in support of the mission of the Church. We also sincerely thank the members of the Diocesan Finance Council for their guidance in the financial matters of the diocese.

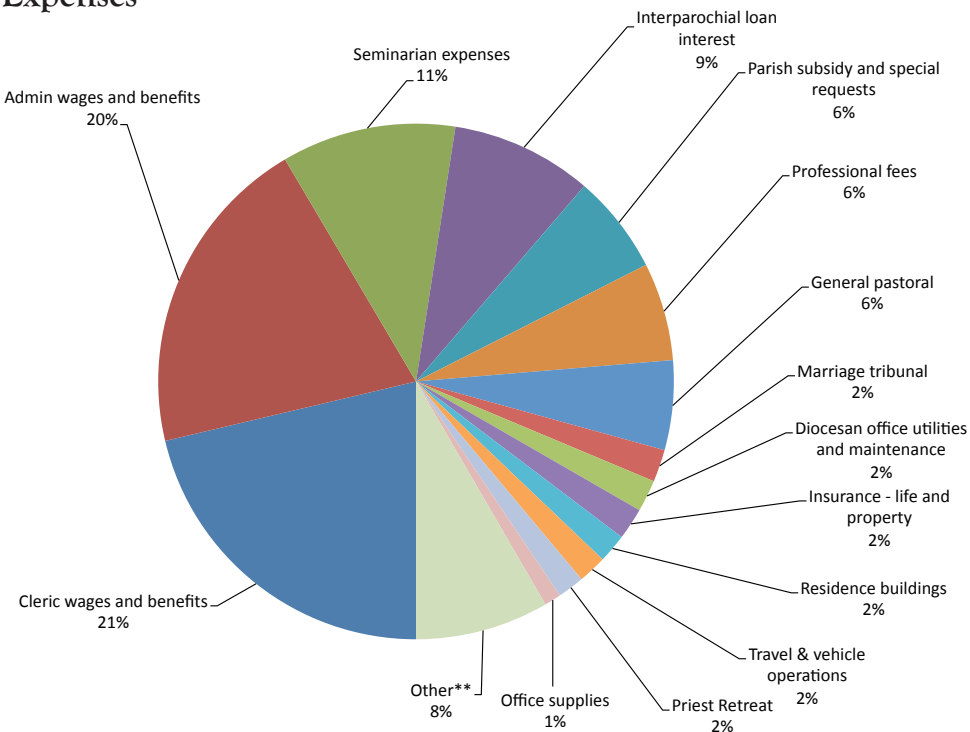
Thank you for your stewardship and may God bless you.

If you have any questions concerning the information presented, please contact Mr. Paul Morris, Diocesan Financial Administrator at paulmorris@pembrokedioocese.com

Revenue



Expenses



Revenue		
Interest	58.3%	1,073,231
Cathedraicum	23.6%	433,955
Contributions from Education of Priests Reserve	8.4%	154,621
Rental income	2.2%	42,903
Health & benefit Surplus	1.5%	29,439
Estate settlements	1.4%	25,000
Health & dental contributions from parishes	1.3%	23,131
Other	3.3%	59,726
Total	100.0%	1,842,006

* Analysis of Other		
Seminary collection	1.2%	21,122
Priest retreat contributions from parishes	0.7%	12,800
Donations	0.3%	5,350
Marriage preparation course fees	0.2%	4,359
Other	0.9%	16,095

Expenses		
Cleric wages and benefits	21.3%	342,400
Admin wages and benefits	20.2%	325,111
Seminarian expenses	10.9%	175,743
Interparochial loan interest	8.9%	142,543
Parish subsidy and special requests	6.2%	100,000
Professional fees	6.1%	98,830
General pastoral	5.6%	90,295
Marriage tribunal	2.0%	32,627
Diocesan office utilities and maintenance	2.0%	32,140
Insurance - life and property	2.0%	31,921
Residence buildings	1.8%	29,128
Travel & vehicle operations	1.8%	28,809
Priest Retreat	1.7%	26,826
Office supplies	1.0%	16,852
Other**	8.4%	134,610
Total	100.0%	1,607,835

**Analysis of Other		
Ecclesia	1.2%	19,996
Marianhill - accommodation costs	1.0%	15,922
Needs of the Canadian Church	0.8%	13,232
Bronson Place apartment rent	0.7%	12,003
Youth Adult Ministry	0.6%	10,014
Mass intentions	0.6%	9,975
Religious office	0.6%	9,630
Ordination	0.6%	9,065
Telephone	0.5%	8,103
Other	1.7%	26,670