



Ecclesia

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEMBROKE

Celebrating the newest Deacon in our diocese

This past August, family, friends and clergy gathered at St. Francis Xavier Parish in Renfrew to witness the ordination of Michael Coyne of Renfrew to the Transitional Diaconate.

The son of Donald and Eleonore Coyne, he was born in North Bay, where he lived for only 6 years whereupon his family relocated to Carleton Place. In due course, his family would move to his father's ancestral birthplace of Renfrew.

Deacon Coyne had been active in his faith via the local parish in Carleton Place.

"I was an altar server at St. Mary's Church in Carleton Place for many years growing up," said Deacon Coyne.

Deacon Coyne noted that parish priest, Father Peter Murphy, was a positive force in his life.

"Father Murphy was a close friend to the family, and he was a frequent guest at our home for meals. He had a large personality and for me that was fascinating to observe as a child. I considered Father Murphy to be a mentor to me. When I was a boy he was always available to answer my questions about what it was like to be a priest."

Call to faith

From an early age, Deacon Coyne felt the pull to something greater beyond the superficial reality of life.

"I believe that I have always felt to some degree, even as a child, a call to something beyond what I was physically experiencing in the world around me," said Deacon Coyne.

"This feeling was the catalyst that first impelled me to seek out the advice of my pastor to understand what a call to priesthood meant. This call was initially for me in my early formation not a clear knowledge but more a comfort in its idea of living life not just for myself and my desires."

It was later on in his 20s while travelling the world that the call to serve God in the priesthood solidified.

"My experiences of other unique cultures exploring their faith in unabashed joyfulness resonated with my own faith journey. It was at this stage of my life I finally heard the call to priesthood with a clarity that could not be ignored."

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Seminary experience

Deacon Coyne would enroll in St. Augustine's Seminary in Toronto in 2014.

"Seminary life, I have found, is in many ways structured upon a stewpot ecosystem type dynamic," said Deacon Coyne in sharing his reflections on seminary life.

"What I mean by this is that there's a great value to immersion in multiple experiences, academic, spiritual, social, that help shape and nurture the seminarian's vocation to priesthood. The seminarian, through his own free choice guided by his authentic belief of God's call to priesthood, immerses himself into this mix of formative experiences. A spiritual bootcamp, if you like, intended to continually invite self-reflection of one's inner development of this sacred call. It is in many ways like our Catholic faith balanced in a dichotomy, the seminary is as rewarding as it is challenging. But if I had to choose one word reflecting its best characteristic or its greatest ideal, that word would be 'family.'"

Ordination day

Overseeing his ordination was Archbishop Michael Mulhall. During the homily, His Grace made specific mention of when Deacon Coyne eventually goes forth to preach the Gospel, he will not only do so for the faithful, but for himself.

"When you preach, you feel it in your heart," said Bishop Mulhall shortly after the ordination.

"We (priests) know we would be such hypocrites if we weren't living up to the basics of what we are saying. We're all falling short because of our sinfulness, but if I wasn't making the effort, how could I possibly ask others to make the effort?"

His Grace also told of how God knows us better than ourselves. This, in particular, has special meaning for those, like Deacon Coyne, who hear and obey God's call to serve in religious vocations.

"That's a mystery we never really comprehend," said Bishop Mulhall.

"How could all these contingencies, variables and what seem like accidents be partly accident, but more providence of God? We look back and say 'I could not have done this on my own and something has taken place here with God's guidance.' That's the realization that comes with age and it really is startling."

With his ordination to the Diaconate complete, Deacon Coyne had some time off before returning to complete his studies at St. Augustine's. As he nears the completion of his journey to becoming a priest, he told of the crucial support he has received from his family.

"My family has been for me the rock of my formation to the priesthood," said Deacon Coyne.

"They have supported my vocation to the priesthood, always carried in the characteristic of understanding, not pushing or judging, but simply present and expressing their love and support. I cannot understate this value as a mature vocation to the priesthood and I am thankful for their support and encouragement over the years, they truly have been the principle formators in my faith journey."



Message from the Bishop

Extraordinary Missionary Month,

October 2019

My dear faithful of the Diocese of Pembroke,

This is the first edition of *Ecclesia* since my appointment to the Archdiocese of Kingston. I have remained as Apostolic Administrator of Pembroke in these past months, and this will continue until the new Bishop of Pembroke takes canonical possession of the Diocese. We all await the news of the new Bishop's appointment, and we continue to pray for the new Bishop and for his ministry in Pembroke. I hope this appointment will be announced in the coming months.

The ceremony of my installation as Archbishop took place in Kingston on May 3, and the summer seems to have passed by very quickly. This is understandable with the new faces and places that I have encountered and with the busy schedule that my responsibilities have presented in Kingston and Pembroke.

This edition of *Ecclesia* gives me the opportunity to express my deep appreciation to the Lord for the opportunity to serve the people of Pembroke Diocese over these past years. I have spent almost 12 years in the Diocese. These have been among the happiest years of my life. I wish to thank each of you in a special way for your prayers and for the example of Catholic faith which I have been privileged to experience. This example has left a deep impression upon me, and I trust that it will serve for me as a wonderful example of the Catholic faith being lived in the difficult and challenging reality of today's society. I wish to express my thanks also to the clergy, with whom it has been an honour to serve the Lord and the people of the Diocese. The priestly communion that we have shared remains precious. The example of priestly service given to the Diocese has been a constant inspiration for me. A number of priests have died in these past years. Let us continue to pray for their souls after so many years of faithful service.

A significant aspect of our lives is change. My move from Pembroke to Kingston has been relatively gentle. Many times, as I was adjusting to my new environment, I thought of the many families who need to relocate frequently for work. This is a practice which is becoming more common in family life.

When our vocation is dedicated to service in the Church, these changes can also be sudden. The religious



Sisters and the priests know this reality well. We follow the wishes of our religious superiors and accept a new direction in our vocation for the good of the community. For me, this experience of the past months has been very much easier because of the people who have assisted me with this change. It has been a great joy for me to move to a diocese which borders both the Diocese of Pembroke and the Diocese of Peterborough. Both locations are very familiar for me, and many of the parishes of the Archdiocese of Kingston are found within the broad area of the "Ottawa Valley". Above any commonalities between places, the aspect which remains constant is the faith lived today. Our mission is identical. We are to bring Jesus Christ to the world in the Word that we preach and the Sacraments which give us life. Our baptismal faith never wavers, and the challenge of contemporary life remains the same. This crumbling culture of Western society calls forth the best of men and women who wish to follow Christ and live their faith to the full.

The change of place opens many new doors of learning and experience. I look forward to learning much more about the history of the Archdiocese of Kingston, which was erected almost 200 years ago, in 1826. It is the second-oldest diocese in Canada after Quebec City, and this history is well appreciated by the religious, faithful and priests of the Archdiocese. The magnificent Cathedral of Kingston is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception. In these early months, the protection and guidance of the Blessed Mother have been a wonderful consolation. This precious experience will remain with me many years.

My dear faithful, let us continue to support one another in prayer. May the Lord grant to the Diocese of Pembroke many blessings in the years to come.

+Michael Mulhall
Archbishop of Kingston
Apostolic Administrator of Pembroke



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Parish profile

St-Thomas-d'Aquin, Astorville

Parishioners at St-Thomas-d'Aquin in Astorville continue to not only embrace their faith, but to make strides to ensure their faith community remains intact for years to come.

It was in the late 1800s that the first settlers from other parts of Quebec arrived in Astorville (then known as Levesqueville until 1905), with Reverend Moïse Legault being the first missionary to the faithful there.

In those early years, Astorville was a mission to the parish in Bonfield. With no roads, clergy had to make the arduous trek via bush trails to the community. Nonetheless, Father Georges Gagnon established both a chapel and school under a single roof in 1887. His successor, Father Henri Martel, was responsible for building the rectory in Astorville.

Father Antonin Astor was appointed the first pastor to Astorville in 1902 and oversaw construction of a new church and relocation of the chapel school to the church. In the following years, the church was destroyed by fire and rebuilt in 1913.

In the mid 1950s, a new rectory was constructed, with the older, larger rectory being sold to the Daughters of Wisdom. They were introduced as the new teaching order to Astorville in 1956 and were assigned to the two-room school house in the community.

In September of 1963, Father Joseph John De Bont arrived at the parish and determined that a new church needed to be built. Plans were made for the design and fundraising initiatives, but Father De Bont would leave this world to join the Lord in May 1965.

Father L.J. Gauthier was named parish priest, bringing with him experience in building both churches and rectories at Rapides des Joachims and Rolphton. Under his leadership, a new church was completed in 1966 that could seat 400 people, and was dedicated to St-Thomas-d'Aquin. Bishop William J. Smith would bless the church on May 7, 1967.

Currently, Father Cyril Okabanama, S.M.M.M., serves as parish priest.

Deacon Tim Foster has been a member of the parish for 33 years, having moved to Astorville in 1986 to pursue his career in the Ontario Provincial Police. He has served in the Permanent Diaconate for the last five years, and also serves at Paroisse Sacré-Coeur in Corbeil.

Deacon Foster told of the effort of parish members to engage with young families in the community to become involved with the church.

"We have what's called a Parish Renewal Committee," said Deacon Foster, admitting that, like other parishes, it is a struggle to attract youth back to the parish fold.

"It is a challenge, but we're working on it. On the first Monday of every month we have children's liturgy, which we haven't had in years. We also have a gathering at the end of mass—coffee, tea and desserts—and we've noticed an increase in attendance. Obviously when the children come, the parents come out with them. We now get more altar servers than we had before, so it is growing."

The parish has also experienced a major renovation in recent years.

"There was a major upgrade a couple of years ago; the rectory hadn't been renovated in years," said Deacon Tim, who explained that the costs of the renovations were shared with two other parishes.

"We share a common priest with two other parishes. So they share the cost of his home, food and all the other expenses." Costs are divided on a population basis between St-Thomas-d'Aquin in Astorville, Paroisse Sacré-Coeur in Corbeil, and Paroisse Ste-Bernadette in Bonfield.



For more than 75 years, members of St. Thomas Aquinas have held an annual fundraising picnic on the second weekend of August at the local community centre. It is at this event that attendees get to enjoy a local delicacy called cipaille (translated into English as seapie).

"It's made with beef, pork and chicken with salt, pepper, onions and a 'bouyon' sauce," explained Deacon Foster. "You put a layer of meat, a layer of crust and you repeat that three times. The pies are cooked in large cauldrons at outdoor ovens beside the church."

The Knights of Columbus have also assisted in helping to keep senior members within the community.

"The challenge we have is trying to keep the older people living here because there are no services for them here," explained Deacon Foster.

This reality often forces seniors to relocate to nearby North Bay where retirement homes and apartment complexes can be found.

"What has helped us is that the Knights of Columbus in our municipality have supported the building of three villas that contain a total of 30 units," said Deacon Foster. Two of the villas are located in Astorville, while the third is located in Corbeil.

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

St. John the Evangelist Parish, Campbell's Bay, Quebec, celebrates 100 Years

Kathleen Ranger, CWL Secretary/Treasurer

On Saturday August 24, a mass at 5:15 pm and a reception that followed marked 100 years since the establishment of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Campbell's Bay.

Recently appointed parish priest Fr. Michael Goring referenced the 100 years in his homily with congratulations and wishes for the parish to continue for many years in the future.

Mr. John Lawn who has spent all of his life in the parish gave a brief history of the parish. He spoke of the erection of the first building known as the "Basement Church". The first pastor was Rev. Fr. William Murray who was instrumental in building a convent and a rectory and saw to the completion of the present St. John the Evangelist church in 1938. Mr. Lawn mentioned the many parish priests who served over the years and the many improvements they made.

After mass the Catholic Women's League invited everyone to join them in the Parish Centre downstairs to share in food and drinks and a 100th anniversary cake, with wine to toast the occasion. About 75 parishioners and visitors attended and told stories of their memories of the parish over the years.

Mr. Richard Bowie, a 94-year-old parishioner who spent his life as an active member of St. John's Parish had a tale to tell of his young days in a young parish when he was an altar server. He spoke of the time the first Catholic School in town burned down and the students attended school in the "Basement Church" until a new building was built just behind the present church building.

It was a momentous occasion enjoyed by all who attended.



Photo credit: THE EQUITY

International priests

The Diocese of Pembroke 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 for our readers to learn about.

In this edition, Father Roman Majek agreed to tell our readers a little bit about himself.

Born and raised in the town of Koden in eastern Poland, Father Majek, like many of his fellow priests, spent time as an altar server at his parish, where the liturgy was predominantly in Latin. He was surrounded by many Christian influences that planted the seed towards his path to the priesthood.

"As far as I remember being a young boy for some reason I wanted to be a priest," said Father Majek. He is a member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

"It was a kind of a process; including good Catholic atmosphere at home, good and dedicated pastor of the parish and the fact that in my town there were the Oblate Fathers doing their ministry. Occasionally, during vacation time, there were seminarians coming to help. Contact with them, their joy and good sense of humour influenced my decision."

He enrolled in the Oblate Fathers seminary in Obra, Poland, and was ordained on June 16, 1979. As the Oblate Fathers are dedicated to missionary work, it was only a matter of time that Father Majek would himself be dispatched to serve God's people somewhere in the world.

"During my study in the seminary, we were occasionally asked in what kind of ministry we'd like

to be involved after the ordination," said Father Majek.

"I was always asking to be sent to missionary work possibly in Africa. This did not materialize. Out of 8 Fathers ordained with me, 4 were sent to Madagascar. I was asked to do a special ministry in Poland to work with deaf and mute children, which I did for 4 years. My superiors did not forget, however, that I was asking to be a missionary working abroad, so they asked me to pack up my belongings and go in the opposite direction to Canada, which actually came to me as a surprise."

He arrived in Canada on January 6, 1987, and was assigned to numerous parishes: St. Casimir Parish in Toronto for three years, then Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Welland, Ontario, also for three years. The next parish was St. Casimir Parish in Vancouver for six years, then the Holy Rosary Parish in Edmonton for 12 years. He then moved onto Lady Queen of Poland Parish in Edmonton for the next six years, and at present serves at St. Mary Parish in Wilno and St. Casimir Parish in Round Lake Centre.

"When I arrived to Canada I was already 35 years old and language is always a challenge," said Father Majek reflecting on the challenge of adapting to his new surroundings.

"Beside that, I think I was fitting into Canadian reality quite well without any big problems."

When asked what he found most fulfilling about serving God's people in Canada, Father Majek made clear there was not one particular aspect of his vocation that stood out. In fact, he remains content in his varied priestly duties.

"Actually, almost everything," said Father Majek.



"I like the liturgy—English and Polish, which is an extra challenge. I like to pray, I like to visit sick people. I like doing things that make improvements and make things better. I'm enjoying being a priest."

St. Theresa's Centennial Celebration

*By Madeleine Paul, secretary,
St. Theresa Parish*

On September 14, 1919, Father E.A. Letang was appointed the first resident pastor in Temiscaming, Quebec. On September 28, 2019, St. Theresa's Parish marked its 100th anniversary with a Mass and celebration. The parishioners gathered to rejoice at the perseverance and strong faith that has allowed the parish to succeed and flourish for 100 years.

The Centennial Mass was held in St. Theresa's Church. It was originally built in 1930 and is the third structure and current site of worship for the parish. The church was beautifully decorated in gold and navy blue accented with candles and flowers. The celebration began with the joining of three choirs (St. Theresa's French choir, St. Theresa's English choir and Kipawa's English choir representing Our Lady of the Lake Mission). A special feature included women who were named 'Theresa' to lead the procession. This procession also included a delegation of CWL members, followed by a number of priests from the diocese (Msgr. Douglas Bridge, Father Roch Gagnon, Fr. Basil Tanguay, Father Jean-Paul Rochefort, Father Michael Smith, Father Michael Goring, Father Scott Murray and Father Fortunatus Rudakemwa), and Archbishop of Kingston Michael Mulhall presided at the Centennial Mass.

The following gifts were presented at the offertory procession:

- Ladies with the first name Theresa gave roses to the Saint. They asked her to protect the parish.
- A young father brought his children to be blessed. Through the intercession of St. Theresa, they asked the Lord to protect and strengthen their family, all families of Temiscaming and all families elsewhere in the world.



Msgr. Douglas Bridge, Fr. Basil Tanguay, Father Jean-Paul Rochefort, Father Michael Smith, Father Michael Goring, Father Scott Murray and Father Fortunatus Rudakemwa), and Archbishop of Kingston Michael Mulhall were on hand to celebrate the 100th anniversary of St. Theresa's Church in Temiscaming. In attendance but missing from photo, Father Roch Gagnon.

- A Basket of harvested goods were brought to the altar. The community of Temiscaming thanked God for the daily bread He gives them and are committed to sharing with those who hunger.

- A mill worker offered a piece of wood, to say "thank you" to the Lord for the gift of the nature, and to Rayonier (the local pulp and paper mill), who provides employment to many people from here and elsewhere. They prayed for the unemployed.
- A Bible, bread and wine were also brought to the altar giving thanks to our Lord Jesus Christ who sustains us constantly through His word, His Body and his Blood.

Approximately 200 people attended the celebration including: the Mayor of Kipawa – Mr. Norm Young, and the pastor of the Holy Trinity Anglican Church – Reverend Derek Neal. Also, in attendance were former parishioners and priests who travelled as far from Rouyn, Markham, Ottawa, Brampton, Kitchener, Sudbury and North Bay. In an endeavor to celebrate this special occasion, each parishioner was given a souvenir bookmark.

After the Mass, parishioners proceeded to the parish hall for a delicious brunch, reminiscing and fellowship. A historic timeline was displayed, and all guests received a nostalgic fact sheet highlighting special moments that reflected the history of the parish over the past 100 years. The celebration ended with memorable speeches by the Archbishop, former priests and invited guests.

A heartfelt thank you went out to all those who attended and a special acknowledgment was given to all the volunteers that lent a helping hand, worked tirelessly to ensure the 100 year anniversary was a golden success.



2019 Pilgrimages

Pilgrimage to Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré 2019

This year's Diocesan Pilgrimage to Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré, led by Father Justin Bertrand, was a memorable and spiritual experience for the 27 participants involved. The pilgrimage offered all present the chance to visit not only Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré, but also St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal, Notre-Dame-Du-Cap in Trois Rivières, and the sanctuary dedicated to Ste-Marguerite in Verenes, just outside of Montreal.

Pilgrims were given the opportunity to pray and discover the profound spiritual heritage of these holy sites, as well as taking part in many restful activities that fostered communion and fraternity, not to mention an impromptu concert! The experience was enjoyed by all and many look forward to returning next year.

St. Ann's Cormac

The 81st annual pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Ann in Cormac once again drew hundreds of faithful from the Diocese of Pembroke and far beyond. The Tridium took place on the evenings of July 25–27 with Mass and Homily given by Father Brian J.T. Clarke. On Sunday July 28, His Grace, Archbishop Michael Mulhall celebrated the Eucharist during outdoor Mass at the Shrine.

Walk the Opeongo Line

The fourth year of the pilgrimage along the Opeongo Line from Our Lady of Fatima, Renfrew to St. Ann, Cormac, had about 90 pilgrims! The hospitality of the locals and others who came to provide meals and refreshments along the route was once again incredible. Father Scott Murray who organizes the annual pilgrimage expressed his sincere thanks to everyone who made the pilgrimage possible.

Participants in the pilgrimage shared that "It was the experience of a lifetime. We prayed a lot, laughed a lot, and suffered a little!" and that the Liturgies were prayerful and meaningful and the music for them was awe-inspiring and beautiful.



Diocesan pilgrimage to Ste-Anne-de-Beaupré 2019

Others said, "The final trek from Cormac Park to the Shrine with the whole group praying the Rosary and then hearing the bells tolling as we neared the church sent chills down my spine as I reflected on the true purpose of the Walk as a reminder of our Life Journey."

"The pilgrimage was a real gift. It was a delight journeying with so many friends, old and new,

and the conversations and time together was so blessed. I was touched by the profound generosity and hospitality of so many strangers who fed and cared for us, and I have already seen fruits of this pilgrimage in my own life from the intentions offered up during it."



Walk the Opeongo Line

Photo credit: Bernard Morris



Right: St. Ann's, Cormac

Why do bad things happen to good people?

By Fr. Michael Smith

“Christ did not do away with suffering. He did not even wish to unveil to us entirely the mystery of suffering. He took suffering upon Himself [...].”

—Second Vatican Council, from the Closing Messages, December 8, 1965

“If we are absolutely grounded in the absolute love of God that protects us from nothing even as it sustains us in all things, then we can face all things with courage and tenderness and touch the hurting places in others and in ourselves with love.”

—James Finley

Introduction

It was the summer of 1982. I was a student chaplain at University Hospital in London, Ontario. One patient, a woman who had been flown in from another country, was convalescing after neurosurgery. She said to me, “There is a question that is puzzling me: Why do bad things happen to good people? If you have any ideas about that, please let me know.”

I had very few ideas, and I knew enough not to share what little I had with a person who was looking more for compassion than answers. Also, I knew that this woman was not of the Christian faith, and so an important avenue of approach to the question was not available to me, at least not at that moment.

The question, however, has never left me. If anything, some aspects of my life-experience have served only to highlight it.

Framing the question

Every question contains a series of assumptions, unspoken ideas that the one asking the question holds to be true. The question, “Why do bad things happen to good people?”, contains at least two assumptions.

The first is that for every tragic event that occurs, there is a reason to be found in the grand scheme of things. I would challenge that assumption. At least sometimes, an accident is simply an accident. Sometimes, also, a disease is simply a disease. The human body is limited. The same can be said of the mind.

A second assumption in the question is that there are two kinds of people, “good” and “bad”. This assumption, likewise, ought to be questioned, or at least it needs some nuance. Each of us is a mixture of good and bad. That being said, there are, indeed, bad things that happen that are not at all the fault of those who suffer the calamity.

A key to happiness: being at peace with not knowing

If we are reflective people who want to live at a deep level, it will be natural for us to want to understand why things happen, to probe into the deeper meaning of events. This is perfectly normal. The human mind can be a powerful tool in unlocking for us the mysteries of how the world works and the reasons for our being here. Our minds are powerful, that is, up to a point.

For most, if not all of us, there comes a time in life when we bump up against a major life event that we cannot explain. It could be a tragedy, or simply a string of events that cause us pain or otherwise affect us adversely. We wrack our brains and come up with nothing. When this happens, we face a choice: either we walk away from the question, or we become ill. It is sometimes in our best interest to “close the file” and move on.

Much as it is natural and healthy to use our minds to probe the mysteries and hidden meanings in life, so is it natural and healthy to face and accept situations where we don’t have the answers. When we learn to live with mystery, uncertainty, and paradox, this brings peace. It implies a level of trust that reality still makes sense, that our lives are still held in God’s Providence, but that the key pieces of the puzzle are beyond our reach at that point. We trust that the answers will come in God’s good time, or even in eternity.

The incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ as paradigm for our lives

Although we often cannot know the deeper meaning of individual events that occur in our lives, there is nonetheless an overall pattern that God’s self-revelation in Jesus Christ makes known to us. It is the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

When God became one of us in Jesus, God entered fully into the reality of human life, with its joys, but also with its suffering and tragedy. In doing this, God made a choice to be subject to the vulnerability to which all of us are subject. Another way of putting it is to say that in Jesus, God saves us *through* our humanity; God does not save us *from* our humanity. God has entered into the depth of human pain and sorrow to redeem it in the person of Jesus.

Many suffering people ask, “Where are you, God?” Since God has become one of us, the answer to the question is that God is within every suffering person in the midst of that suffering. What is done to each person is done to Christ.

This truth sheds new light on our mortality. God is within us at all times, including times of suffering. This is true “now and at the hour of our death.” Jesus, without ever being unfaithful, went to the limit in sharing our mortality. Because of Jesus’ sacrifice, God is forever present in our darkest moments, and the Holy Spirit gives consolation and hope precisely at those times when everything else in our experience tells us that there is no hope.

Jesus rose from the dead. At the very moment when death, our last enemy, overtook him, he conquered that enemy. Jesus is alive, body and soul, beyond the death of his body. Through the Holy Spirit, Jesus continues to be present and active in the world, and specifically in our lives. Jesus shared our suffering and death so that we could share his triumph. For us, as well, death now leads to resurrection. True, there is no resurrection without first passing through death, but also there is no death without resurrection.

The power of God’s love is such that God can make good come from evil. The death of Jesus on the cross was the greatest evil the world had ever known. Through Jesus’ resurrection, the cross has been turned into the greatest good. Since this is true in the life of Jesus, it is also true in the sorrows and trials of our lives. What is true of Christ is true of us, his members.

The last word: Trust God

It was October 2001. Fr. Jack O’Flaherty, a colleague at St. Peter’s Seminary in London, was in hospital with terminal cancer. A day or two before Fr. Jack died, another colleague asked him, “Do you have a word to give to us back at the seminary?”

Fr. Jack replied simply, “Trust God.”

I can think of no better way of summing up this topic. We are involved in a mystery that is infinitely bigger than we are. The whole universe is held by a loving God who has done the maximum to bring us into union with God and the whole of creation.

Trust God.

For further reading

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Saint profile

Saint Vincent de Paul, 1581–1660

His given name was Vincent. He was born in April 1581 in Pouy, a village near Dax in Gascony, located in the southwestern part of France. He was the middle child of a poor peasant family of six who had great faith. His family farmed and Vincent learned quickly, at a young age, to take care of the family responsibilities of the farm. When his parents became aware of his capabilities, they encouraged him to leave the farming duties to start a journey in studies, which they entrusted to the Franciscan Order of the Convent of Dax. His abilities were so great that he was hired to tutor children of a nearby wealthy family. Vincent would then use the monies he had earned to attend the University of Toulouse where he studied theology. Vincent was ordained to the Priesthood on September 23, 1600 at the age of 19.

In 1612, Vincent was named Pastor of Saint-Médard in Clichy, a poor rural parish just northwest of Paris. As Pastor, he experienced the priesthood in a way unknown to him, being filled with such joy.

But change came quickly—in less than a year Cardinal Bérulle recalled him back to Paris to become chaplain to the Gondi family and tutor to their children. In January of 1617, Father Vincent was on the Gondi estates in Picardy, where he heard the confession of a dying man, who told Madame de Gondi that he would have been doomed without Father Vincent's ministry. Madame de Gondi encouraged Father Vincent to give a homily on general confessions, which created such a response that other priests were called to help hear all the confessions.

During this time, Father Vincent was conscious that the poor were not being evangelized or receiving the help they needed. With this new call to help, he became the parish priest in Châtillon-les-Dombes in the southeast of France, working with his fellow priests to develop a more faithful way of life. In August 1617, while preparing for Sunday Mass, a parishioner brought news of the illness and poverty of an entire family in the parish. Father Vincent then preached on the needs of this family, by the afternoon the people of the parish responded in overwhelming numbers by carrying them food and supplies. Father Vincent then made an invitation to the interested women of the area and urged them to continue their generosity and with his guidance they formed a group which became the first Confraternity of Charity.

In December 1617, Madame de Gondi succeeded in her request that Father Vincent return to their family to give Missions in various towns and villages. In 1619, at the urging of Monsieur de Gondi, King Louis XIII appointed Father Vincent Chaplain General of the galleys with responsibility for the spiritual care of all the galley convicts allowing them to experience God's love, mercy and forgiveness.

While continuing his day-to-day routine, Father Vincent was experiencing a great conversion from within. Firstly, he was being drawn to a closer connection with the poor, who were becoming

the centre of his life. Secondly, he was also being transformed in his priesthood, where he was developing a closer loving relationship with Jesus and seeing the world in a different light with the Light of Christ. Father Vincent continued giving local missions to the people and felt called to set aside money for a religious community to these missions. Father Vincent asked the Jesuits and other communities, but none were able to accommodate his apostolate. After seeking the guidance of Father Duval, he received the assurance that God had a call for him to preach Missions.

He founded the Congregation of the Mission in 1625 to share the Gospel with the poor people of the countryside. The Archbishop of Paris accepted the Congregation, giving them the Collège des Bons Enfants for a motherhouse. In 1628, the Congregation gave its first retreat to candidates for the priesthood in preparation for their ordination. Father Vincent was also called to serve as a Spiritual Director for a growing number of people, one of whom was a widow, Louise de Marillac, in whom Father Vincent saw great leadership potential from a caring compassionate person. Father Vincent had organized a federation of noble women to serve the poor of the area and they became known as The Ladies of Charity. The Confraternities of Charity was growing and spreading so quickly with so many people that Father Vincent found it difficult to oversee all these groups, so he turned to Louise de Marillac. Father Vincent then took on the responsibility of the Hôtel-Dieu, a large hospital in Paris.

He faithfully continued his work of taking good care of everyone until his death on September 27, 1660. A witness said, "At the moment of his death, he surrendered his beautiful soul into the hands of the Lord, and seated there, he was handsome, more majestic and venerable to look at than ever." Father Vincent was beatified on August 13, 1729, by Pope Benedict XIII. He was then canonized on June 16, 1737, by Pope Clement XII. Saint Vincent de Paul is the Patron Saint of charities, hospitals, leprosy, lost articles, prisoners, volunteers, Saint Vincent de Paul Societies, Vincentian Service Corps, and Sacred Heart Cathedral Preparatory.

From this wonderful Saint's life many were drawn by his love, mercy and compassion for the poor that many charitable organizations were founded and one of the organizations was called the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

At present in our Diocese we have the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, Saint Columbkille Conference, here at the Cathedral in Pembroke and on October 7, 2019, we will be celebrating our 12th anniversary. At this conference we have been and continue to provide nutritious meals every Saturday, Sunday and Monday for our brothers and sisters. We also make home visits where we meet with our brothers and sisters to help them with their daily needs and to help in all possible ways giving them a hand up.



It is a great joy to share that the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul today is present in more than 150 countries on five continents. It has 800,000 active members and more than one million volunteer members. Praise God for all who help to take good care of our brothers and sisters, with that same love and desire to serve with the love of Christ. Let us ask Saint Vincent de Paul to intercede on our behalf as we pray.

Prayer to Saint Vincent de Paul

*O Glorious Saint Vincent de Paul,
The mention of your name,
Suggests a litany of your virtues:
Humility, zeal, mercy, self-sacrifice.
It also recalls
Your many foundations:
Works of Mercy,
Congregations,
Societies.
The Church gratefully remembers,
Your promotion of the priesthood.
Inspire all Charitable Workers,
Especially those who minister,
To both the spiritually
And the materially poor.
O Lord, give us the grace,
That You bestowed upon,
Your servant St. Vincent de Paul,
To relinquish the temptation,
Of material things,
In our holy effort,
To minister to the poor.
Amen.*

Diaconate retreat 2019

By Deacon Robert Wilson

The makeup of each of our lives, given to us by God, could be described as made up of moments in time. How we spend these moments in time make up the path that we follow.

With thoughts such as these, a community of believers made up of the Diocese of Pembroke permanent diaconate family ventured forth upon what is commonly referred to as a retreat.

This retreat took place in Arnprior, Ontario, at the Galilee Centre on August 6–8.

‘Living the gospel in truth and love’

The foregoing words describe the theme chosen, with retreat director, Fr. Denis Lemieux from Madonna House, guiding us on our way.

Aptly chosen as well was a thought piece in the form of a poem titled ‘A servant’s heart’, by Deborah Smith Plemmons.

In keeping with the theme of our retreat, the following is an excerpt from that poem ...

*A servant’s heart
does willingly all things;
for it’s pleased to see
all the blessings it brings.*

*A servant’s heart
knows how to love;
it gives all the glory
to God, the father, above.*

Fr. Denis Lemieux’s presentation was made up of five sessions, spread out over 3 days. These ‘talks’ included questions, answers and a sharing of one another that was interspersed with mass in the chapel and silent prayer throughout the three days.

Early on, it became clear that the troubled time we are living in at present, with its daily challenges, including the issues and assaults in relation to ‘Holy Mother Church’ must be addressed with love and truth.



The gospel of our lord and saviour, Jesus Christ must become the centrepiece in how each of us lives out our lives.

In carrying out this mission, the ‘who am I’ aspect, along with the importance of humility and sacred trust through prayer, set us on our way.

Fr. Lemieux shared a story revolving around a newspaper editorial, at one point asking its readers to respond to the question ‘What is wrong with the world?’

One of the responses came from renowned author, G.K. Chesterton who, uncharacteristically, chose brevity in his response, with 2 simple words: “I am”.

In a further examination of ‘self’, another quote from Catherine Dougherty “What you do matters ... But not too much, it is who you are that matters most.”

The third session centred on what role the church takes in our lives. Much was said on this subject, with 3 thoughts resonating.

1. the church as a community of love, arises from the silence of God.
2. love, giving of one’s heart to another. Could this be the essence of the church?
3. what about the mystical church? The expression of God’s love. The church is a holy place... A holy state.

In session four there was an accentuation placed on the importance that the lives of the saints (the forerunners) play and what we have to learn from their lives. Some living a very ordinary and sometimes simple existence and others akin to royalty, all having a sense of God and a watchfulness of the heart, through prayer.

The closing session featured a ‘marian’ dimension of the gospel.

In discussing the joyful mysteries, much evolved, including an insight on ‘the visitation’ ... relating to our daily lives.

“The moment that God is given to us ... We must go outward ... Outward towards the ‘other’ (our neighbour) with an approach of love and joy as our breastplate.

This retreat, these moments in time could be described in many ways, not the least of which is an amazing encounter with Christ!

With profound thanks to Archbishop Mulhall for allowing us to receive this beautiful retreat. To Fr. Denis Lemieux for his insightful talks, the organizational skills of Dcn. Adrien Chaput, and the love and care shown to us by the staff and management at the Galilee Centre.

We must, all of us, be reminded that we are constantly surrounded by God’s love and mercy in the form of our earthly brothers and sisters.

Pastoral Appointments

Archbishop Michael Mulhall, Apostolic Administrator, announces the following clergy appointments, to take effect October 10, unless otherwise indicated:

- Rev. Peter G. Proulx has resigned as Pastor of Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Pembroke, and is on sick leave.
- Rev. Steven F. Ballard, while remaining officially Pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Petawawa, is on sick leave. This takes effect immediately.
- Rev. Moses Nwosu, S.M.M.M., is appointed Pastor of Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Pembroke.
- Rev. Mitchell W. Beachey is appointed Administrator of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Petawawa, in addition to being Pastor of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, Deep River, and St. Anthony Parish, Chalk River. This appointment takes effect immediately.
- Rev. Michael Lund is appointed Administrator of St. Michael Parish, Douglas, St. Pius V Parish, Osceola, and Sacred Heart Mission, Cobden.
- Rev. Fortunatus Rudakemwa is appointed Administrator of Paroisse St-Pierre, Fort-Coulonge, Paroisse St-Charles-Borromée, Otter Lake, St. Elizabeth Parish, Vinton, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Mission, Waltham.
- Rev. Scott Murray is appointed Administrator of Paroisse Ste-Thérèse, Témiscaming, and Our Lady of the Lake Mission, Kipawa, while remaining Pastor of St. Anne Parish, Mattawa.
- Rev. Réal Ouellette is appointed Parochial Vicar of Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish, Deep River, St. Anthony Parish, Chalk River, and Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, Petawawa. This appointment takes effect immediately.
- Rev. Peter Do is appointed Parochial Vicar of St. Anne Parish, Mattawa, Paroisse Ste-Thérèse, Témiscaming, and Our Lady of the Lake Mission, Kipawa

Catechist formation day

An open invitation was made to all Francophone parish communities to come and experience the Mass explained by Father Michael Smith. The formation day was held in the Parish Hall at Ste. Bernadette's Parish in Bonfield, Ontario, on September 14, 2019. It was a wonderful day with many attending from different parishes.

"I really enjoyed the faith formation on the Mass presented by Father Michael Smith. It enhanced my knowledge in my role as permanent deacon in providing faith-based education to the youth in our community. The knowledge I gained will also enrich my relationship with our Lord Jesus, especially during the Mass."

—Deacon Tim Foster, Bonfield

"The formation day at St. Bernadette Parish in Bonfield by Father Michael Smith of the Diocese of Pembroke on "The Mass Explained" was excellent. I find it important to attend Mass regularly and now I understand more fully the different parts of the celebration. Also, I learned that the entirety of the Mass is an encounter with the Lord. For me knowing this allows me to be more present in my participation at the Mass."

—Pauline Rochefort,
St-Thomas d'Aquin, Astorville



*The Office of Faith Formation of the
Diocese of Pembroke invites you to our*

Catechist Formation Day

Location: Most Holy Name of Jesus Parish, Pembroke, ON

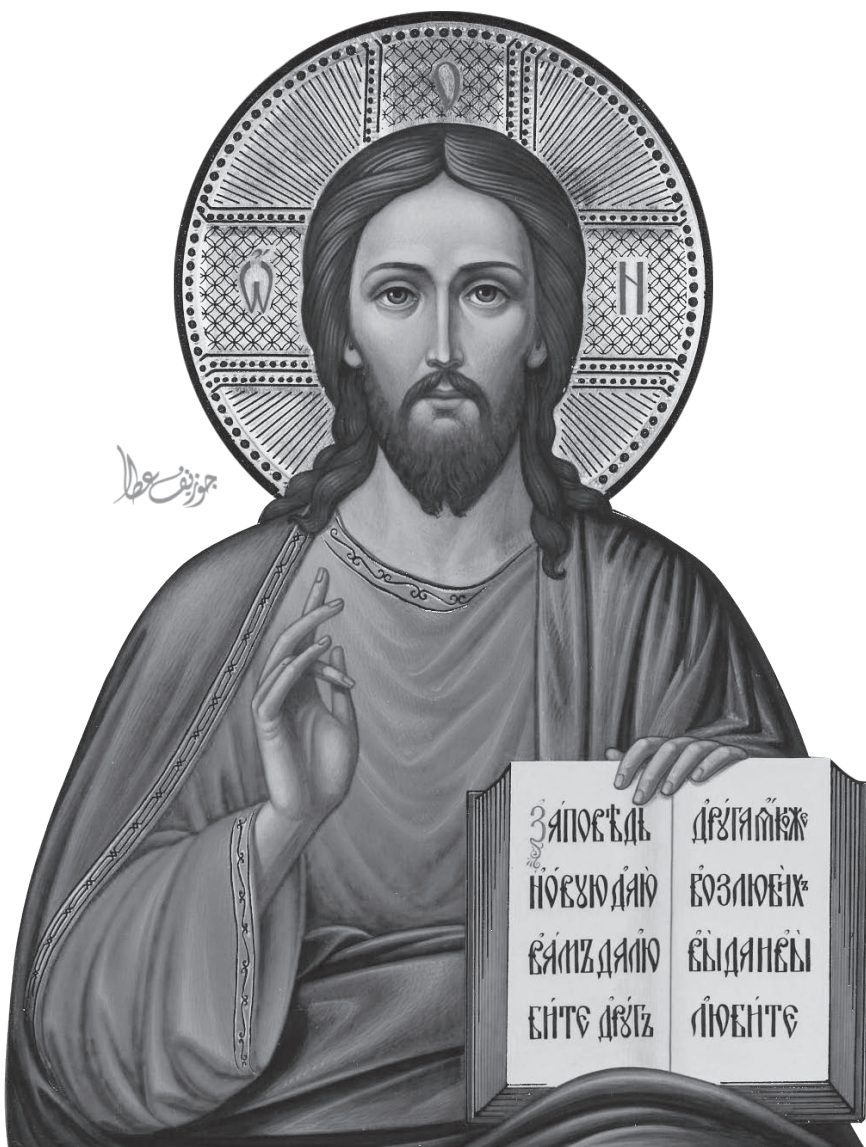
Time: 09:30 a.m. Mass; 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (lunch provided)

When: Saturday November 2, 2019, All Souls Day

Who: A formation day open to everyone.

Guest speakers will be Father Ryan Holly from Our Lady of Fatima Parish, Renfrew, and Yvette Bourque, Director of Family Life and Youth Ministry. Registration is necessary.

Registration required: Please contact Deacon Adrien Chaput at the Diocesan Office of Faith Formation at (613) 732-7933 ext. 206 or dcadrienchaput@pembrokediocese.com by October 31, 2019.



Steubenville Youth Conference, Toronto

By Brian Wheeler, St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Haliburton

My Steubenville experience has been an incredible journey. For five consecutive summers, the Steubenville conference has not only been an event of tremendous faith, but also of friendship and emotion. To be in a room with hundreds of other teens who are feeling the exact same emotions as you, makes you feel truly connected to each and every one of them, sharing in the same love that God has for all of us. During this time, I have met some amazing people, created strong friendships that last to this day and have experienced something that anyone who hasn't attended yet, is truly missing out on.

Many thanks to chaperones Yvette Bourque, Kyle Philips, and Father Justin Bertrand, for accompanying the youth, and making the summer conferences available to the youth of the Diocese of Pembroke.



The Steubenville Youth Conference was held in Toronto July 12-14, 2019.

Community Friendship Meal, Renfrew

A collaborative effort of parishioners and students at Our Lady of Fatima parish is striving to bring good food and friendship to those in need.

"I believe we are moving into the third year of offering the soup kitchen," said Jason Dedo, Chaplain at St. Joseph High School (SJHS), Renfrew, who explained how it was established.

"It is now referred to as the Community Friendship Meal. Often, some school staff and local clergy meet for breakfast/lunch after school masses for socializing and dialogue concerning our common concerns and initiatives. Our former Principal, Brennan Trainor, was the first to suggest that we try a soup kitchen at a local Catholic church and involve students from SJCHS."

"St. Paul's Anglican Church in Renfrew had been offering a community meal/soup kitchen for a couple of years at that point and we had some students volunteer there. This was also an opportunity for our school's food services class to have a practical experience serving and preparing a meal for the community. When a food services class is not running, students who are part of our school's chaplaincy team prepare and serve the food."

Dedo noted that it came as no surprise that there was a need for soup kitchen in the community despite its relatively small population. In fact, some who come are there for more than just a meal.

"The community friendship meal is open to the community," said Dedo.

"People come for different reasons. Some come out of need and some come for companionship, to meet friends or simply to enjoy a home cooked meal. There will always be a need for people to gather and socialize, as well as a need to feed the hungry. A couple of people have shared that they feel accepted and enjoy the inclusive atmosphere. Some people come because they have a need to be listened to, to have meaningful conversation with others and to get out of the house."

SJHS pays for the food and receives donations from patrons. Our Lady of Fatima parish also provides support by donating items such as beverages and desserts.

Not only has this endeavour delivered a much needed service for those in need, but it also has reinforced the strength of the faith of those involved.

"This has been a real blessing to our Catholic school community," said Dedo.

"This has developed into a ministry in service to the community that is a partnership between Our Lady of Fatima Parish and SJHS. This has strengthened an already very positive relationship between school and parish and also the home, as several parents have volunteered their time with us to prepare and serve meals as well. Personally, this has been an enriching part of my ministry as chaplain of SJHS. It is a joy to work with so many eager and passionate students and parishioners. This ministry has been a real blessing in so many ways."

With that in mind, Dedo also made note of how volunteer work plays a imperative role in our overall journey as Christians.

"As Christians, I believe that it is vital for our spiritual growth that our faith journey includes active participation in our faith communities," said Dedo.

"The centrality of the Sunday Eucharist in this journey is most significant, as are the words we hear at the dismissal, to 'Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life'. These words invite and challenge us to be the face of Christ and to show the love of Christ to our brothers and sisters. We do not have to look very far to find good causes and people in need, within and beyond our parish families. To serve others is one of the greatest opportunities we have to share our lives, our faith and our love for others. I find the words of St. Teresa of Calcutta most inspiring in this respect: 'Faith in action is love, and love in action is service.'"

The Community Friendship Meal is open every second Wednesday from September to June. For more information, including those interested in volunteering, please contact jasondedo@gmail.com



RCRTL announces inaugural essay contest winner

Renfrew County Right to Life (RCRTL) launched its first annual essay writing contest in 2019 with the goal to inspire youth to take a good hard look at some of the controversial issues that plague Canada and our world.

"We are pleased to announce that 2019 first place winner is Bishop Smith Catholic High School student Nancy Secker, who wrote a very thought-provoking essay entitled *Women's rights and Human Rights*," said RCRTL President Susan Dagenais.

The truth about abortion

By Nancy Secker

Abortion has been an ongoing issue. Whether it is a women's rights issue or a human rights issue has become the pressing debate of the twenty-first century. The truth is, abortion is both a women's rights issue and a human rights issue. The cruel process that takes place during an abortion and the devastating effect abortion leaves on women makes it both unethical as well as a women's and human rights issue.

Firstly, abortion is cruel and unethical because of the process itself. Many people have debated whether abortion is actually taking a human life or simply removing some tissue from a woman's uterus. But due to modern science, it is made clear that abortion is, indeed, taking the life of an unborn child. Dr. Maureen L. Condic, Assistant Professor of Neurobiology and Anatomy at the University of Utah, has the proof that an embryo is, in fact, a human life. Dr. Condic states:

"Embryos are not merely collections of human cells, but living creatures with all the properties that define any organism as distinct from a group of cells; embryos are capable of growing, maturing, maintaining a physiologic balance between various organ systems, adapting to changing circumstances, and repairing injury. Mere groups of human cells do nothing like this under any circumstances."

After hearing something like that, it is hard to argue for abortion being ethical. It is hard to say that an embryo, with its own unique cells and unique genetic coding, would be simply boiled down to a clump of cells that belong to a woman. With all this evidence, it is clear to see that abortion is truly stripping the life away from an individual human person. When they suck or drag that fetus out of the womb, they are killing and causing pain to an innocent, defenceless, child.

Lastly, abortion is unethical and cruel because of the effect it leaves on the mother after the surgery has taken place. Many women who have had abortions say no one told them what to expect emotionally after having the abortion. Every year at the National March for Life, women can be seen holding signs and sharing their stories on why they regret having an abortion. One woman shared her experience of how having an abortion dramatically changed her life for the worst. She shared this statement:

"I was sitting quietly in my bedroom and, suddenly, my entire world went black. It was as if in the space between breaths, my entire existence lost all meaning... I began having severe anxiety attacks... I had no idea at the time that this was due to the rapid drop in hormones experienced as a result of the abortion. No one had told me this could happen."

The abortion industry does not inform women about these side effects of abortion and they do not relay the amount of pain that can come out of this lethal operation. Overall, abortion is causing the most post-surgery harm to the women, who not only have to worry about potential medical risks, but also have to worry about the emotional pain and mental illness that may arise from this situation.

In conclusion, legal abortion is an unethical trap snagging and controlling the women of today by lying and giving them a false sense of freedom. There is nothing freeing about a gruesome act of murder and an overall feeling of physical and emotional pain after everything has happened. However, people can help make a change by protesting the lack of laws on abortion, by giving support to women who are expecting, and by helping spread the word about places that help women who are pregnant and do not have the means to go through the pregnancy on their own. Sites like www.choice42.com help give women the resources they need to get through their pregnancies. Overall, it is important to realize how unethical and cruel abortion really is, and it is important to help women see that there are other options and that abortion does not have to be their only choice.



Celebrating 30 years of the Dominican Republic Experience

Believing that ‘experience is the best teacher’, a young Father Bill Kenney considered the potential impact that an experience in a Third World Country could have on students.

In January 1988, he talked with Sr. Celia Turcotte of the Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception about the possibility of students from Bishop Smith Catholic High School (BSCHS) making a trip to their missions in the Dominican Republic. After consultations, a proposal, presentations, and finally approval, three students—Christine Gervais, Paula Spotswood and Michael McCann—were chosen to make the inaugural trip to Yamasa in spring 1989. Father Kenney, Pastoral Minister, BSCHS, and John Stunt, Superintendent with the Roman Catholic Separate School Board, would accompany them.

On June 29, 2019, the celebration of 30 years of the Dominican Republic Experience (DRE) demonstrated the resounding success of the initiative. Almost all of the 30 years of trips were represented by DRE students, teachers, school board members, and clergy, along with special guest Grey Sisters Dominican Republic.

Father Kenney expressed his gratitude that the project has continued throughout the years, allowing so many young persons to experience a world very different from ours.

“We are only 20% who live as we do, Third World populations are 80% and many live in far worse conditions than the people in the Dominican Republic. Having our eyes opened and our hearts aware makes all the difference in how we live our lives,” said Father Kenney.

Jason Dedo, now Chaplain at St. Joseph’s High School (SJHS) in Renfrew, was a participant in the second year of the DRE. “My, how it has grown and evolved since then!” he stated.

The trip now includes in the range of 20 students from both BSCHS and SJHS. They take with them bags of medical and other supplies and stay with Dominican host families rather than at the convent as in the early days, in order to truly experience the culture.

Dedo said that as a student so many years ago, he felt very privileged to be part of the Dominican Republic Experience.

“It was my first time on an airplane and my first time to a Third World Country. I remember well the tremendous welcome we received from the Dominican people wherever we went. The contagious happiness of the people, their acceptance and generosity to strangers. Very quickly I became aware of how fortunate we are in Canada and how much we take for granted...”

Dedo will be an adult/staff participant in the 2020 Experience, which will be 30 years since his experience as a student.

“It has been most intriguing to see the evolution of the Experience over these three decades and to be part of this ministry. Faith is at the centre of this Experience, and always should be. This is what makes this Catholic and distinct as a faith formation experience. There has always been the sense that Canadians are helping the poor and vulnerable of the Dominican Republic through fundraising, construction of homes and providing food and medical supplies. These are significant elements of the Experience. But just as significant is the sharing of faith between the two cultures and for many of us Canadians, learning to be more like the people of the Dominican Republic—more Christ-like.”



Father Justin Bertrand in the Dominican Republic.



Father Justin Bertrand, Sister Lenore Gibb, Sister Noelia Hernandez, Sister Altagracia Contreras, Sister Natividad Rosa, Sister Mercedes Ramirez, Sister Catherine O’Shea, and Father Bill Kenney at the June 29, 2019 celebration of 30 years of the Dominican Republic Experience.



Father Bill Kenney in the Dominican Republic in the early days.

30 years of ministry at Stillpoint House of Prayer

Amidst the varied challenges that the faithful of our Diocesan family must endure, there is a place where we can escape in order to rest and reacquaint ourselves with our faith amidst the natural wonders of our region.

This past August 10, friends, neighbours and patrons of Stillpoint House of Prayer gathered to celebrate the 30th anniversary of its founding.

"A House of Prayer is marked by the four marks of silence, prayer, hospitality and simplicity," said Sister Betty Berrigan, Directory of Stillpoint House of Prayer.

"From its very inception on July 9, 1989, Sister Maria Mousseau (founder and director) insisted that our mission statement would read that we welcome people of 'all faiths' to be able to come here for quiet rest, relaxation and retreating. Sister Mousseau had the initial inspiration and oversaw the renovations of the former McCrea farm home."

Located along the picturesque Madawaska River in Springtown, just south of Burnstown, this home was originally established in the 1800s as an inn for lumberman working in the area. Known as 'Stopping Place', it had a well earned reputation for providing hospitality to all who visited. Years later, it would become a farmstead that was eventually purchased in order to establish Stillpoint.

The tranquil surroundings provide an ideal atmosphere in support of the Stillpoint mission statement of enabling persons of all faiths to grow in relation to self, God and others by offering a quiet space to 'Come Aside and Rest Awhile'. (Mark 6:31)

"Being situated on a point of the beautiful Madawaska River, many people are drawn to come because of being so close to nature," said Sister Berrigan.

"The river is felt often to be an instrument of therapy and healing. The staff offer spiritual direction, three healthy meals a day and an opportunity for evening prayer together."

It was Sister Mousseau, a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph, who would ultimately give this spiritual oasis the name 'Stillpoint'. It was in the spring of 1988, shortly after the transfer of ownership began, that Sister Mousseau visited the site, which had not been occupied in 10 years. By that time, the land had become overgrown with hay and some wildlife had even returned. Despite this, an air of tranquility prevailed.

For the remainder of that spring and summer, on every Sunday afternoon, she would take a lawn chair with her to the property *'to wait, to listen and to take in all that nature was offering and could offer in the future.'* It was the peace and silence of the site that ultimately inspired Sister Mousseau to grant it the title that still holds to this day.

The anniversary celebration also saw a change in the spiritual director of Stillpoint with the departure of Sister Berrigan.

"I will be leaving Stillpoint after 21 years of service here. I followed Sister Mousseau after ten years," said Sister Berrigan.

Born in Timmins, Ontario (raised partly in Sheenboro, QC), Sister Berrigan entered the Sisters of St. Joseph in September of 1953. She would become a teacher, having taught at a number of schools within the Diocese of Pembroke. Upon completing her terms as General Superior of her community, she was asked to relieve Sister Mousseau whose health had become fragile.



Sisters Patricia Amyotte of the Sisters of Providence (Kingston), who has worked there for six years, and Sister Helen Russell of the Sisters of St. Joseph (Peterborough) will remain to oversee this important ministry.

"I will miss the wonderful friends and people who come here, the faith-filled supporters of Stillpoint and the many groups of women and men that continue to come for spiritual sustenance," said Sister Berrigan.

"When people who come want some help in prayer and the living of a more spirit-filled life, we are ready to help them. It is a very rewarding and humbling role to play in the life of another."

For more information on Stillpoint House of Prayer, including details on how to schedule stays at the facility, please visit <https://www.stillpoint.ca>.

Retirement: Deacon Robert McDonald

Deacon Doctor Robert Charles McDonald is retiring from the Diaconate after 28 years of service.

"I am now going on 80 years old and am feeling my age," said Deacon McDonald.

"My wife and I intend to stay right here in Barry's Bay. The people of St. Hedwig's Parish have taken us into their hearts and we regard all of them as our friends. We enjoy the parish church very much as it is clearly steeped in prayer and devotions," said Deacon McDonald.

Though he shall forever hold the title of deacon, he will miss the various duties of his religious vocation.

"In spite of my retirement, I will continue to be a deacon for the rest of my life. I will miss being in the sanctuary for the Mass and I will miss my preaching ministry. I will also miss taking the Viaticum to my friends who are unable to attend Mass," said Deacon McDonald.

His post-diaconate plans will include more writing and spending more time with his wife, Rita.

"I will be deepening my prayer life and my appreciation of scripture, especially with the work Scott Hahn who has opened up the Word of God for me in a marvelous way," said Deacon McDonald, who

previously authored *'The Catholic Family: Image and Likeness of God'* in 2000.

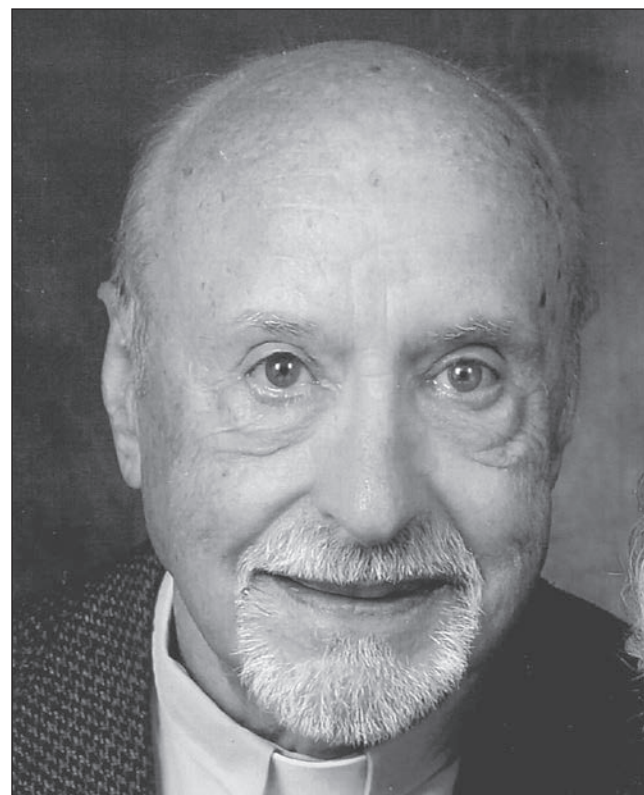
"Also, my wife and I can spend much more time together and enjoy some long-neglected activities such as holidays and watching wholesome movies and eating out more."

Deacon McDonald also extended a special thanks to the various individuals who assisted him throughout his years of service.

"I wish to give my heartfelt thanks to Father Pawel Ratajczak, Father Joseph Hattie, Father Christopher Shalla, and Father John Burchat for their kindness to me in my diaconate work," said Deacon McDonald.

"I also wish to express my gratitude to the good people of St. Hedwig's Parish for their love and support which they have continually extended to me for the past 28 years. It has been a joy and a privilege to serve at the Table of the Lord on their behalf."

"I also want to remember the great Monsignor Ambrose Pick who welcomed me into his parish family," added Deacon McDonald. Monsignor Ambrose Pick was the pastor at St. Hedwig's at the time of Deacon McDonald's ordination, and served at the parish for 25 years.



"It was he who got Bishop Joseph R. Windle to ordain me, since he very much wanted to have a preacher to help him out. Naturally, I want to thank good Bishop Windle, now deceased, for having ordained me in and for St. Hedwig's."

Remembering a pioneer of Madonna House: Marité Langlois

This past March, members of Madonna House Apostolate and the greater diocesan family mourned the passing of Marie Therese (Marité) Langlois, one of the pioneer members of that faith community.

Born in Montreal, QC, she was the youngest of 3 siblings. Upon completing her studies at Sacred Heart convent in Montreal, Langlois would briefly pursue work in the secretarial field before enrolling at McGill University, Montreal.

It was there that an acquaintance, Margie Conroy, told Langlois about Madonna House, encouraging her to spend a week there during the Christmas season in 1950. In the summer of 1951, Langlois returned to Combermere to attend the Summer School of Catholic Action. This would lead her to discern if God was calling her to serve as a lay apostle.

Langlois ultimately made a promise of stability with Madonna House on May 3, 1952. Thus would begin years of service to God and the poor.

She was assigned to the newly opened Marian Centre Edmonton in 1955 that served transient men. From there, she would take the lead in establishing the Catholic Information Centre, also in Edmonton.

Years later, Langlois would journey to the West Indies to assist in the opening of a house in Carriacou. It was the first such mission house established outside of North America. She would later be appointed as Local Director of a second house in the West Indies in Victoria, located on the island of Grenada.

Madonna House Combermere member Trudi Cortens shared her experience working with Langlois in the West Indies.

"In 1961, Marité, Elsie Whitty and I were assigned to open our first overseas mission on the small island of Carriacou, Grenada West Indies, at the request of Bishop Justin Field, OP. Our mandate included teaching

catechism, nursing and a variety of other parochial works," recalled Cortens, who first met Langlois in Combermere in 1953.

"Marité was appointed to organize the very first Catechetical program on the Island, which meant giving weekly catechetical instructions (the imparting of religious knowledge) at the different schools. In addition, separate classes were given to prepare children for their first Holy Communion and Confirmation. Highly qualified, she was deeply appreciated and loved by the many students and teachers and they never forgot her. Two of the students, Genevieve Enoe and Irene DeRoche, are now members of the Madonna House Apostolate."

Langlois's hard work did not go unnoticed to members of the local clergy there.

"Father Francis Carr, Order of Friars Preachers (OP), the parish priest not only for Carriacou, but also for the neighbouring islands, was deeply grateful and much encouraged to have the children properly prepared for the reception of the sacraments," said Cortens.

"Bishop Justin Field (OP), who often visited our Island coming on the weekly schooner, the only means of reaching the islands, was always impressed with the calibre of Marité's work and her beautiful spirit of service to the Island and to the Diocese."

"It was always a joy for me, and a gift as the director of the mission, to work together with Marité," added Cortens.

"Her generous nature and willingness to respond to the many needs that daily arose in our everyday lives, was a great asset to our small community. Her joy-filled and gracious nature simply won the hearts of everyone; she never forgot what a special gift it was for her to serve the people of Carriacou and I never forgot what a beautiful gift she was to our Madonna House community."



Langlois would return to Combermere in 1971 and remain there for the rest of her days with only a couple of short mission house assignments. In Combermere she excelled towards hospitality, remaining vigilant to the needs of all those who stayed, and ensuring they always felt welcomed.

That devotion to others, amidst the life of poverty that she lived, is perhaps the greatest gift Langlois leaves for all who knew her, and an inspiration to our greater Catholic community to always strive to share God's love when the opportunity presents itself.

*"Well done, good and faithful servant;
enter into the joy of the Lord."
(Matthew 25:21)*

Retirement: Nicole Bertrand

Nicole Bertrand retired on June 27 after nearly 25 years working in the Cathedral Rectory/Chancery Office as a cook and cleaner. She began in 1994 and recounts that over those years, she worked under three Bishops—O'Brien, Smith and Mulhall. She worked for Father Pat Tait for 18 years and Father Jim Beanish for 13.

"They had hearts of gold, I had two good bosses. I loved my job and enjoyed coming to work," stated Bertrand.

She says she enjoyed cooking lots of special meals for occasions like ordinations and holidays.

"It was busy. Back then there were seven or eight here (in residence, including nuns), and I sometimes worked a six-day week."

In retirement, Bertrand plans to spend time with her family including her three grandsons and tending to a big garden at her home in Demers Centre. She'll also remain involved with the Catholic Women's League (CWL) and the Daughters of Isabella order in Ottawa.

Surveying her surroundings, Bertrand noted, "It's like my second home and like family here. I will miss them all."



The “Sœurs de la charité d’Ottawa” Leave Fort-Coulonge

Submitted by Sister Cécile Brizard, s.c.p.

July 7, 2019 was a memorable day, although it was filled with sadness. The “Sœurs de la charité d’Ottawa” left Fort-Coulonge after 84 years of service in “Saint-Pierre” Parish. Sisters who had resided in Fort-Coulonge and many of their friends were present for the occasion.

Mass was celebrated at 10:30 a.m., but many guests arrived much earlier. The last three Sisters who resided in “Couvent Saint-Michel” arrived with three Sisters from Ottawa and surroundings: Sisters Danielle Pelletier, Suzanne Vallières, Éveline Joannis, and Claire Lamarre; Sister Jeanna Dufault with Sisters Denise Perreault, Clotilde Denis and Lucile Beauchamp; Sister Cécile Brizard travelled with Sisters Yolande Campbell, Micheline Ouimet, and Alice Labrie. Members of the Provincial Council: Sisters Claire Cardinal, Provincial Superior, and Councillors Lucie Carpentier, Hélène Roch, and Mariette Séguin came from the Motherhouse in Ottawa.

All Sisters were greeted by Mrs. Suzette Adam and Mrs. Marielle Sirois, Associates of the Congregation, and were given a blue corsage.

Knights of Columbus and Daughters of Isabella formed a guard of honour at the church entrance, and the sixteen Sisters were escorted to the front pews. Father Justin Bertrand, Parochial Vicar, replacing Father Réal Ouellette, Pastor, who was on sick leave, was the main celebrant. Msgr. Douglas Bridge, former Vicar General, was present in the sanctuary.

The parish choir was directed by Mrs. Carole Morin, who is also an Associate as well as the parish organist. In his homily, Father Bertrand, referring to the Gospel of the day, spoke of the mission of the Sisters during 84 years in the vineyard of “Paroisse Saint-Pierre” and the Municipalities of Fort-Coulonge and Mansfield/Pontefract.

After the Mass, many parishioners and visitors proceeded to the Knights of Columbus Hall for a festive banquet. As is custom in the area, the participants feasted on sea-pie, mashed potatoes, vegetables, and coleslaw. A magnificent cake decorated with the religious community’s crest, prepared by Mrs. Rachel Nadeau, was served. Mr. Clayton Denault filmed the entire event in view of preparing a commemorative DVD.

Seated at the head table were Msgr. Douglas Bridge, native of Fort-Coulonge, Father Justin Bertrand, Parochial Vicar, and the last three Sisters of the “Couvent Saint-Michel”: Sisters Jeanna Dufault, Danielle Pelletier, and Cécile Brizard. Also present were Sisters Claire Cardinal, Provincial Superior, and Lucie Carpentier, Councillor and Provincial Secretary.

At the end of the banquet, a prayer of thanksgiving was sung by Mrs. Carole Morin, followed by Sister



Seated from left to right : Sisters Cécile Brizard and Danielle Pelletier; middle row standing: Sisters Denise Perreault, Éveline Joannis, Clotilde Denis, Lucile Beauchamp, Jeanna Dufault, Claire Cardinal, Lucie Carpentier, Claire Lamarre; back row (some are partly hidden): Sisters Micheline Ouimet, Alice Labrie, Yolande Campbell, Hélène Roch, Mariette Séguin, Suzanne Vallières.



Cécile Brizard who entertained the attendants with a humorous poem. Msgr. Bridge then shared some stories growing up beside the Sisters. His Anglophone father had a special place in his heart for Sister Françoise Romaine, a United States native, with whom he could converse in English.

Father Bertrand shared a message of thanks from Father Ouellette who regretted his absence. He offered his best wishes and a souvenir of a wooden plaque on which he had sculpted the figure of St. Peter, patron of the Parish, holding the keys. The Associates of the

Community offered their best wishes in a text written by Mrs. Carole Morin, head of the group, and read by Mrs. Suzette Adam, event planner.

Sister Claire Cardinal, Provincial Superior, in the name of the 135 Sisters who lived in Fort-Coulonge, thanked the people of the area who always helped and cooperated with the Sisters in their mission of charity.

Lastly, the last three Sisters shared a grateful farewell, and reassured everyone that they were leaving with memories of a loving and generous people.

The celebration will be long be remembered.

St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Haliburton, celebrates “Gifts of the Spirit” retreat

By Jean Schlicklin-Tyler and Peg Flowers

After months of planning by the retreat committee consisting of Father Casmir Muobike and CWL members Monica Brown, Peggy Flowers and Jean Schlicklin-Tyler, the three-day celebration began in early May. The working of the Holy Spirit could be felt during the preparation, as the program took shape. Planning included the participation of the St. Anthony's Family Faith Formation families during their monthly meetings as they prepared hearts and doves with the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit written on them. The fruits of the Holy Spirit worked in the community as Lakeside Church and Environment Haliburton came on board to make the event a truly ecumenical effort.

The opening of the retreat was an evening performance of a one-woman play enacted by Sr. Nancy Murray, OP, about the life of Sr. Dorothy Stang, SND. St. Anthony of Padua Catholic Church, Lakeside Church and Environment Haliburton teamed up with participants from other local churches to view the event which was as educational as it was inspirational. The opportunity to have Sr. Nancy come to Canada was an example of how the Spirit was working for the event. The day before Jean Schlicklin Tyler called her in the winter, there was a cancellation in Sr. Nancy's very busy schedule that would free up her schedule and allow her to come.

The play presented the life and death of Sr. Dorothy Stang as she shared her love of the people of the land in Brazil. Sr. Nancy shared this story using some of the footage from the BBC report after Dorothy's death in the rainforest. Sr. Dorothy had lived with the people of the land, standing with the composinos as they were challenged by big business. She held the Beatitudes from the Gospel in her hands as she was threatened at gun point. The hired gunmen shot her six times, sending shock waves into the forest and across the

world. Sr. Dorothy Stang from the Sisters of Notre Dame, martyred in 2005, was an outspoken advocate for the poor, and for protection of the Amazon rainforest.

Sr. Nancy has performed more than 900, one-woman plays around the world about other holy women like St. Catherine of Siena and Sr. Dorothy. She brings to life their story while she connects the message of justice and faith to the local community. Sr. Nancy draws a link to this woman of courage and to us in our own community. She shares Dorothy as an example of integrity amidst the challenges of climate change with communities searching for justice. If you are interested in learning more about Sr. Dorothy you can look up her story, “The student, the nun, the Amazon” online. The play called “Rooted in love, Sr. Dorothy” can be seen on the web as well.

The retreat continued Friday and Saturday at the parish with three other women. Sr. Kitty Bethea, OP, a member of the same Adrian Dominican Community as Sr. Nancy; Jen Esch, a young executive from Michigan; and Joanie Tyler, a college student from the local parish. Each presented their reflections on the working of the Holy Spirit in their lives, encouraging participants to seek the Holy Spirit personally in their own lives. The Friday evening service allowed participants time for reflection and prayer. Joanie Tyler presented music with pictures of the crosses from the church, as well as inspirational photos she had taken on her travels. The Christ candle was the centre focus as individual candles were lit during Eucharistic Adoration and personal confessions with Fr. Casmir, Pastor of St. Anthony, and Fr. Ron Meyer of the Peterborough Diocese.

On Saturday afternoon there were several workshops. Sr. Kitty led participants in a Bible study of the gifts of the Spirit. There were opportunities for discussion with thoughtful sharing. The second workshop

included opportunity for the youth to focus on their relationship with the Spirit led by Sr. Kitty. The adults were in another group with Jen Esch who presented a PowerPoint of her journey, highlighting the fruits of the Spirit. These were thoughtful reflections with both speakers providing insights to ponder by sharing their courage in stories of the Holy Spirit.

After the workshops, parishioners gathered to pray the Living Rosary in the church. The rosary was spoken in many languages including French, Spanish, Czech, Polish, and Igbo, a Nigerian language. The rosary comes alive in a renewed way when each individual leads one of the Hail Mary or Our Fathers as participants stand together in a large circle, representing the rosary in the church. St. Anthony organist, Marina Maughan, played a chorus of “Gentle Woman” between each decade, which brought a deeper resonance of hope for the community. The Special Mass included participation of the young people from the FFF program doing the readings, with parishioners singing songs of the Holy Spirit in preparation for Pentecost. Throughout the retreat there were opportunities to experience the working of the Holy Spirit as our faith was shared in the moments of prayer and reflection.

The retreat ended after mass with a delicious potluck dinner in the hall, which was decorated by FFF members using the gifts and fruits of the Spirit all around the room. Closing prayers included photos taken during the retreat with highlights from all the events. The parish website has some pictures of the retreat for the community to enjoy as well, thanks to our parish secretary Catherine Wheeler. Overall, the power of the Holy Spirit touched the lives of many during the retreat as well as in the following weeks. It is with grateful hearts that we thank all who participated and worked together with the Holy Spirit to touch the lives of our parish community and beyond.



Above: Jean S Tyler, Fr Casmir, Nancy Murray, OP, and Sr Kitty Bethea, OP.

New Year and New President at Seat of Wisdom College

Submitted by Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College

The Opening Mass of Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College's new academic year on September 16 was one of special significance: It begins the College's 20th year, and is the first under the leadership of the new president, Dr. Ryan Williams.

As they have done each year, the president and all the faculty of the College voluntarily take the Oath of Fidelity to the Magisterium, the teaching authority of the Church. This commitment to teaching the liberal arts with the guiding light of God's revealed truth is a distinguishing feature of the school. For two decades, Seat of Wisdom has been providing young people with the "truth that sets them free," and the tools to go out into the world and live their faith. Over 550 young people from around North America have studied at Seat of Wisdom, and an additional 100 are currently studying in the three-year Bachelor of Catholic Studies degree program.

The Opening Mass was celebrated by Chaplain Father Blair Bernard of Madonna House and Associate Chaplain Father Joseph Hattie, OMI. Fr. Blair gave a beautiful homily about keeping focus and trust in God during the College's growth. He encouraged his listeners, with the examples of Mother Angelica and Catherine Doherty (the foundress of Madonna House), reminding them how God provides for all those participating in His work. Convinced of God's guiding hand on Our Lady Seat of Wisdom, given the great odds at which the College has steadily continued out its work and has grown, he proposed that members of the College practice a Marian confidence and decisiveness. In confidence and trust, we must invite people to collaborate in the work of the College through financial gifts and prayers; if people like what the College is doing, they need to know it is up to them whether the College will have the means to carry out its mission. In closing, he encouraged everyone to remember that the school's mission, and ultimately the mission of each individual, is to be in the presence of God before all else.

Following the homily, faculty of the school came before the altar to take an Oath of Fidelity to the Magisterium. In doing so, faculty re-committed themselves to the goal of the College: the education of its students in the Catholic Liberal Arts Tradition that is in line with the teaching authority of the Magisterium and the Holy Father. By humbling themselves in such a way to the Word, the faculty at Seat of Wisdom show that not even the greatest amount of knowledge can compare with the infinite wisdom of God.

Following the Mass, Dr. Ryan Williams gave his president's address. He expressed his great love for and commitment to Catholic higher education, which brought him to Seat of Wisdom, and shared how seeing people discover the truth is a great treasure to experience. He encouraged the members of the College to strive for magnanimity, "greatness of soul": to hope, expect, and dream greatness for others, the world, and themselves. The surprise should come when we fail, not when we succeed. "I want you to dream big with me.



I want you to pursue excellence. I want you to realize how great you are, because your greatness is a reflection of God—the greatest of all." Williams concluded by inviting the school to join in a "Hail Mary" to the College's faithful patroness, Our Lady, Seat of Wisdom.

Dr. Ryan Williams holds a doctorate in philosophy from The Catholic University of America, Washington D.C., a Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (the "Angelicum"), Rome, Italy, and a B.A. in Philosophy and a Master of Philosophy from Boston College. His varied work experience includes: working for the Episcopal Conference of Kenya where he developed and implemented a philosophy program for two Kenyan seminaries; serving as Academic Dean of

for Rockville Centre's Seminary of the Immaculate Conception; serving as the Associate Dean for the New York Archdiocese's St. Joseph's Seminary; and most recently, working as an ontological engineer at Cycorp, an AI company in Texas.

Founded in the year 2000, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College currently offers a three-year Bachelor of Catholic studies with courses in History, Literature, Philosophy, Theology, Classical and Early Christian Studies, Sacred Music and more. It is applying to receive approval from the Ontario government to offer a four-year degree by the fall of 2020. It encourages students with different kinds of educational backgrounds to apply, whether they have been schooled at home, or at a private, public, or international school.