



# Ecclesia

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PEMBROKE

## The Faith lives on... Preserving history in times of change

On May 14, 2006 the parish of Ste Bernadette in Bonfield, Ontario celebrated the 100th anniversary of the construction of its current church building. One of the focal points of the anniversary celebrations was the completion of a five-year restoration of the interior of the church featuring the installation of a magnificent altar, almost an exact duplicate of the original which was removed during renovations in the 1960s. Deacon Albert Benoit said that the restoration "brought the church alive again."

The altar came from the church of St. Louis de France in nearby Chiswick, which had been closed and was later demolished in 2007. The altar, which long-time parishioners say was imported from France, was built in four sections. This made the move surprisingly easy when volunteers from Bonfield arrived with scaffolding and a large farm trailer to pick up the altar. "It is an incredible altar, a real work of art", said Deacon Benoit, "an expression of the faith of our parents and grandparents." Half a dozen of the families worshipping at St. Louis de France have now transferred to Bonfield.

Due to shifting populations and declining numbers of clergy, several churches in the Pembroke Diocese have been closed in the past few years. The decision to close a church, whether the building itself is demolished or sold, is never an easy one. Commenting on the transfer of the St. Louis de France altar to Bonfield, Deacon Benoit said "it has been a real comfort to the Chiswick parishioners to know that it will continue to serve as a reminder of the faith and

spirit that helped build our rural communities."

Some of the other faith communities affected by closures have chosen to create memorials in their parish cemeteries or other public spaces to commemorate the places of worship that were so important to the community.

The church of St. Henri in Grand Désert, a mission of Bonfield, was also closed. Parishioners there decided to erect a monument to the early settlers in the old cemetery where most of the pioneers were buried. The cross and bell from St. Henri were incorporated into a monument built by Ron Boissonneault, a descendent of pioneer Nicette Boissonneault who built the Grand Désert church.

The church of Our Lady of the Snows in Stonecliffe was built by Ontario Hydro in 1949 following the flooding of the Stonecliffe and Mackey churches by the construction of the Des Joachims dam and generating station. The population served by the church was enlarged by the construction of Atomic Energy of Canada's nuclear plant and nuclear power demonstration station at Chalk River and Rolphton. By early this decade the population had shifted away from the rural parish and it was no longer feasible to maintain the church.

Components of Our Lady of the Snows went to a number of different locations where they will continue to support the faith, as they did in their original setting. The Stations of the Cross were the first to leave the building,

...continued on page 2...



*Above: Volunteers from Holy Canadian Martyrs Church in Combermere install the Tabernacle obtained from Our Lady of the Snows in Stonecliffe.  
Below: On May 14, 2006 a special mass marked the 100th anniversary of the construction of Ste Bernadette Church in Bonfield. The magnificent altar relocated from nearby Chiswick was a centrepiece of the restoration.*





*Preserving history, continued from page 1...*

being sent all the way to Yamasa in the Dominican Republic to serve the mission of the Grey Sisters of the Immaculate Conception.

A chance meeting between a parishioner of Our Lady of the Snows, on holiday in Latchford Bridge, and a member of the congregation of nearby Holy Canadian Martyrs parish, Combermere, led to the re-use of much of the liturgical furnishings in the Combermere church. Built in 1961, Holy Canadian Martyrs Church was badly in need of a facelift, and after several hours of volunteer labour the altar of sacrifice, altar of repose, side altar, tabernacle, presidential chair and numerous other articles of liturgical furnishings were on their way from Stonecliffe to Combermere where they were stored for over a year before being employed in a massive renovation of the church building. Ray Pastway, one of the leaders of the renovation effort and one of the many volunteers in the project said, "every single item that we got, we used."

As a final memorial to Our Lady of the Snows, the heavy bronze bell was carefully removed from the steeple with a system of pulleys. A team of local parishioners led by Winston Chartrand, including Keith Pichette, Bruce Pichette, Fred Vickery, Wayne Jennings, Tom Jennings, Guy Campbell and Bill Donnelly moved the bell to Old Mackey Park on the shores of the Ottawa River. Now located in a memorial gazebo which also incorporates the cross from the steeple, the bell is within sight of the foundation stones of the old Mackey church, St.

***Above Right: Ron Boissonneault coordinated the building of a monument to the church of St. Henri in Grand Désert. The monument incorporates the bell and the cross that stood on the steeple of the demolished building.***

***Below right: The bell and cross from Our Lady of the Snows in Stonecliffe were built into a monument in Old Mackey Park, on the shores of the Ottawa River. Below left: Keith Pichette, Winston Chartrand and Fred Vickery were a few of the volunteers that worked on the monument. The bell was originally part of the church of St. Narcissus, which was demolished in the construction of the Des Joachims hydro dam. The monument is within view of the foundation stones of the old church.***

Narcissus, from which it was removed in 1949. The memorial was dedicated with an open-air mass on August 24, 2008.

In nearby Rapides des Joachims, Quebec, which has also been affected by shifting population and employment, the statue of St. Joseph which stood in front of the church has been painted and repaired by Pauline Godreau and will spend the winter in her garage in Rolphton. Parishioners Leonard and Diane Leclair hope to create a memorial incorporating the statue in Rapides des Joachims cemetery. The Church of St. Ann in des Joachims still stands, but the property has been sold and converted to secular use.

Deacon Frank Martel was instrumental in finding a new home for the statue of St. Gregory which adorned the Church of St. Gregory in Feronia, which has also been sold. In that case Deacon Martel searched nearby communities for an institution which might be interested in the statue, and it now resides in Powassan, at St. Gregory Elementary School.

Whether it involves the relocation of much of an entire church interior, or simply driving a statue a few miles up the road, the ongoing service to the Catholic faith of these artifacts remains a source of comfort to those who have seen their churches closed, and an inspiration to the recipients.





# A message from Bishop Mulhall

## My dear Faithful of the Diocese of Pembroke:

As I am writing this short message to you in early September, our summer is over more quickly than ever. The school year has already begun and we are enjoying some of the best summer weather of the year. Everyone seems to hope that the good weather will last until Thanksgiving and soothe the impression of a lost summer. We shall see.

Several significant events have taken place in the past months, which I think fitting to mention in this edition of **Ecclesia**.

In June, many pilgrims from our diocese traveled to Quebec City for the 49th Eucharistic Congress. My own experience was similar to those of many others with whom I spoke. Simply stated, I was deeply impressed with the faith of the pilgrims and by the teaching and testimonies offered by the speakers chosen for the Congress. Many of these testimonies detailed the personal lives of heroic Catholics and the role the Eucharist played in giving them strength and consolation amidst the tragic and sometimes horrific circumstances of their lives. The week almost seemed like a week of retreat and I would give serious thought to attending another Eucharistic Congress in the future. Keep this in mind for the next scheduled Congress in Dublin in 2012.

The July 1 announcement of the recipients of the Order of Canada marked a turning point in our lives as Catholics in Canada. The decision to award the leading abortionist in Canada with Canada's highest civilian honour testified to the fact that our government, and those representing our Head of State, had taken the deliberate step to coerce the common moral sensitivity of the country. Our elected

government and our appointed representative of the Queen gave the impression of standing aside while those with responsibility for awarding the Order of Canada have attempted to force a positive moral value on the killing of an unborn child. Our government has taken sides in the pro-life debate. Regardless of the manipulated terminology used by those who made this decision, it results in an attempt to assign legitimacy and moral goodness to the act of killing an unborn child. This step will have tremendous consequences. Government will presume to take the position of defining moral good for Canadians. In the future, doctors may not be able to exercise their conscience with regard to unethical medical procedures. Private individuals, Churches and believers will be required to adhere to moral truths created not by God, but primarily by governments. How quickly history repeats itself and how often humanity tries to make God absent from our personal and communal lives? Those who have attempted to replace God's proper place in the world He created are a sad testimony in the pages of our human history. Please reflect and pray about these matters. The Catholic Church has confronted these difficulties throughout history and will continue to do so in the future but the most important task for us now is to identify the injustice for what it is and then work together and pray together towards addressing this danger.

I wish to recognize and support the decision of the Madonna House Community, which decided to return the Order of Canada bestowed upon their foundress Catherine. This decision was a courageous one, and at the same time very difficult. I am thankful for their witness and I pray that these acts will bear much needed fruit in this critical stage in our nation's history.

Throughout July, a pilgrimage from Pembroke made its way to Australia for the World Youth Day. Despite the long journey and the inevitable discomforts that a pilgrimage brings, the graces and memories of Australia will remain for a very long time. This was my first World Youth Day and I was overwhelmed by the enthusiasm of the faith of the young people that I met. It almost seemed as though they did not want the experience to end. And this, we pray, will help to foster that deep-rooted conviction which will allow them to live exemplary catholic lives. Everything that I saw in Australia convinces me that this indeed is taking place through God's Providence. A day after the completion of the celebrations I found the Cathedral of Sydney full of young pilgrims praying before the Blessed Sacrament and venerating the relics of a young Italian patron of the World Youth Days, Pier Giorgio Frassati. This will be one of the most lasting memories that I will hold for the future.



† Michael Mulhall,  
Bishop of Pembroke



## Ecclesia

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**“Ask the Religious Expert”** – An invitation goes out to all the faithful of the diocese to send in questions about any aspect of the Catholic faith. Whether it is liturgy, morality, sexuality, theology or any other, your questions will be answered by “The Religious Expert”. This column will likely run in each issue. To send in your questions, please e-mail [info@diocesepembroke.ca](mailto:info@diocesepembroke.ca) or write to “The Religious Expert” 188 Renfrew St. Pembroke ON K8A 6X1.

## Pilgrimage to the Holy Land with Father Réal Ouellette February 9th to 20th, 2009

For more information, contact Fr. Réal.  
(819) 683-2056 (Fort-Coulonge)  
website : <http://padrereal.blogspot.com>  
email : [padrereal2002@yahoo.ca](mailto:padrereal2002@yahoo.ca)

# Seminarians are on a prayerful journey of reflection and discovery

Prayerful support is requested for three young men from the Pembroke Diocese who have embarked on personal journeys of discernment to ascertain their calling in the Lord's service.

Peter Do of Deep River and Scott Murray of Tramore were preparing to enter St. Philip Neri Seminary in Toronto as this issue of Ecclesia was preparing for publication.

They are following a spiritual path already undertaken by Michael Goring of Pembroke, who has just entered St. Augustine's Seminary associated with the Toronto School of theology after two years at St. Peter's Seminary in London, Ontario.

Father Bill Kenney of Our Lady of Lourdes parish in Pembroke says it is heartening and inspiring to see these candidates search out their calling.

"It's wonderful to see that sincerity and desire in their hearts," he comments.

As the English vocation director for the diocese, Father Kenney oversees the Church's responsibility to work with young men who feel they may be experiencing the Lord's call.

While he is delighted to encourage those who express an interest in a religious vocation, Father Kenney is equally determined to help them determine the authenticity of that call.

"It is the Church's responsibility as much as it is their responsibility to discern that call," he explains. "The Church must be confident that they are truly called by God."

The discernment is achieved through prayer, ongoing support and an open door for honest discussion and reflection throughout the eight-year course of study to become a priest.

And the dialogue begins well before that journey is undertaken.

Father Kenney encourages any young man who feels he might be a candidate for service to the Church to search out the truth.

"Go and talk with the Bishop. Talk to your parish priest, and feel free to talk to your vocation director," he counsels.

"The priesthood has been a very wonderful life," concludes the man who vividly recalls his own entry into the seminary 36 years ago.

"Don't be afraid to search it out."

## Meet the seminarians of the Pembroke Diocese

### Peter Do

Born in Berlin, Germany, in 1990, Peter moved with his family to Deep River when his father took a position at the Chalk River Laboratories in 2002. Thus, the final two years of his elementary schooling were spent at St. Mary's Catholic School and he just graduated in June from Mackenzie High School.

Peter, who has been an altar server since his family lived in London, Ontario, says no one was surprised by his decision to pursue post-secondary studies in a seminary.

"People say when they see me up there (at the front of the church) they think, 'This boy will make a good priest'," he remarks.

The calling became a serious consideration for him during his first year of high school. He remembers reading a book about a priest at the time.

"I was filled with a sense of peace. I just knew that this was what I was supposed to do."

Peter's first year of studies will focuss on philosophy, general theology and perhaps Latin. After three years at St. Philip's, he will earn a Bachelor of Catholic Thought. If he continues, he will engage in another five years of study leading to the diaconate and the priesthood.



Peter Do

### Scott Murray

Born and raised in Tramore, Scott is a member of St. Andrew parish in Killaloe.

He has spent the past three years as a student at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Academy in Barry's Bay – an experience that has confirmed his religious convictions.

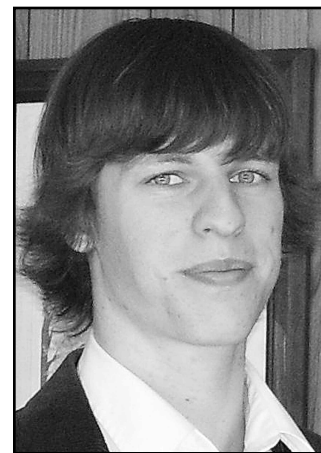
"It's a great school," he says of the positive, engaging and supportive atmosphere of a thriving Catholic community.

"You learn to be really proud of it," he says. "It's something you love about your life."

Scott counts his elementary Catholic education and his scholastic career at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom as important steps in his journey to the seminary.

It was in grade seven that he began to think about the possibility of a future in the priesthood.

With his Academy credits, he will earn his Bachelor degree in two years.



Scott is looking forward to opportunities for reflection and worship through daily Mass, and learning more about what the priesthood really means.

"I've been wanting to go for awhile," he notes. "I really want to take this step towards finding out if it is my vocation."

Scott Murray

### Michael Goring

Michael earned a degree in engineering before he entered St. Peter's Seminary in London. There, he immersed himself in combined studies in philosophy and theology.

At St. Augustine's, Michael will pursue his Master of Divinity degree over the next three years. His fourth year in the program will be more focused on theology and pastoral responsibilities, integrating all of the theology encountered thus far.

Michael is looking forward to the challenge of a full university course combined with the formation activities of a seminarian.

One of his first weekends in Toronto was devoted to silent retreat, something the seminary as a whole experiences on a regular basis.

"These are golden opportunities," Michael comments. "It's a wonderful way to get recollected and put things in perspective."

This summer, he opted to spend three weeks in a monastery with a contemplative community.

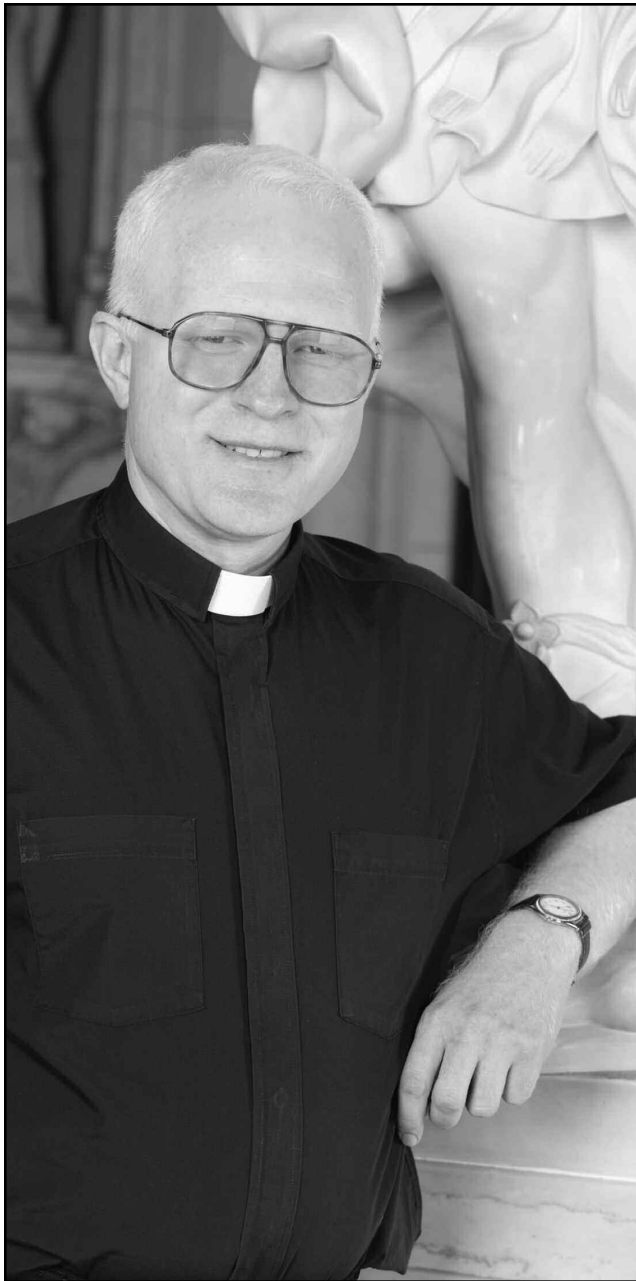
He admits that the contemplative course is a far cry from his previous experiences in the busy, high-tech environment, and he says that it has been an important aspect of his personal journey of discernment.

At this stage in his religious studies, Michael is beginning to look forward to the year he will spend away from academia, serving as a deacon in the Pembroke Diocese.

He speaks for all three seminarians when asked what message he would most like to convey to the diocesan congregations:

"I would ask people for continued prayers and support," he concludes.





# Father Michael Smith returns to parish service

After 16 years as a professor and formation advisor at St. Peter's Seminary in London, Ontario, Father Michael Smith has returned home to the Ottawa Valley.

He arrived back in the diocese on May 28, and spent the summer assisting at St. Columbkille's Cathedral during the absence of Father Ryan Holly who was studying, and Father Pat Tait, as he recovered from heart surgery.

On September 2, Father Smith began his new duties as parish priest of St-Jean-Baptiste Parish, Pembroke.

"It feels very good to be back in parish work," he reports. "I'm looking forward to being with people and involved in their lives and their relationships with God."

Father Smith says there are many parallels between his academic life and parish life.

Noting that he went away expecting to focus on the pursuits of higher learning, he admits that he was pleasantly surprised to find that his most important work there was pastoral in nature: providing spiritual direction and formation work with the seminarians.

During his time at St. Peter's, he lived in community with a group of about 10 seminarians whom he mentored.

He is thankful that he never lost touch with the "people aspect" of his calling.

While he admits that he has had a lifelong love of reading: theology, philosophy, and "just about everything", he notes that: "People are more fascinating than books, however. The years I have

spent in formation work have taught me that a boring person is never to be found. Everyone has a story, and the story is invariably captivating."

Father Smith admits that a priest's duties often take him into the most difficult times for his parishioners. Being available to support them, and to accompany them in their relationship with God, is the most important work a priest can do, he believes.

"There's a certain joy that comes from it," he notes.

With all this talk about community and enthusiasm for human stories, does Father Smith have any anxiety about the singular role of a parish priest?

"A priest may live alone in a rectory, but it's not a particularly solitary life. He spends most of his days and many evenings with others," he notes.

Nor is Father Smith having any second thoughts about leaving academia for hometown living. Both lifestyles have had their appeal for the Pembroke native, and it was only after a year of prayer and careful reflection that he made the original decision to accept the invitation to join St. Peter's faculty.

"This great adventure, although not always easy, has been a wonderful, enriching experience," he comments. "I have done what I can for the seminary and the academic world."

"It is time to plant permanent roots in my home diocese, and to embrace the exciting challenge of parish ministry," Father Smith says.

"I'm looking forward to the future with hope and with enthusiasm."

## 'Cultivating Seeds of Faith'

*An Adult Faith Formation Program in the Mattawa Zone*

Thursday Evenings

September 25th, 2008 – October 30th, 2008, from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

at F.J. McElligott Secondary School, 370 Pine St., Mattawa, ON

This program will also be offered in the **Renfrew Zone** during Lent 2009. Information will be sent to parishes in January.

Please contact your parish office or contact Jason Dedo at (613) 732-7933 ext. 206

or [jasondedo@diocesepembroke.ca](mailto:jasondedo@diocesepembroke.ca), at the Diocese of Pembroke for more information.





# WORLD YOUTH DAY 2008

## WE WERE THERE! - SYDNEY AUSTRALIA

By Yvette Bourque

After two years of preparation, the 36 pilgrims representing four zones of the Diocese of Pembroke finally set out on the journey to the “Land Down Under”. Forty hours of travel did not diminish the excitement of meeting the host families of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Melton, Victoria, suburb of Melbourne. These families, along with their parish priest, Fr. Martin Fleming and other parishioners, worked very hard to prepare for our visit for the “Days in the Diocese” portion of World Youth Day. Over the four-day stay the two groups from opposite ends of the earth connected in so many ways, despite cultural differences. Food, song, prayer, faith and friendship were shared among all ages. When it came time to leave our newfound friends and depart for the second leg of the journey, the trek to Sydney, there were many tears. How surprised everyone was at how close we had grown to these people who were strangers just days before. The faith of the young people from Pembroke had made an impact on them and they were sad to see them leave.

The next eight days in Sydney were filled with amazing grace from above, whether it was a beautiful liturgy, deep and passionate catechesis from the various Cardinals and Bishops or quiet times of adoration. We experienced dynamic keynote speakers

like Christopher West and an incredibly emotional re-enactment of the Stations of the Cross.

Local Australians, especially police, wished us well and smiled at us. We enjoyed praise and worship with a multitude of people, and had a glimpse of the beauty of Australia’s Outback and God’s wonderful creatures that can only be found there – we could not help feel the power of the Holy Spirit.

Pope Benedict XVI, along with Cardinal George Pell of Sydney, welcomed, encouraged and challenged all the youth of the world, not just the Catholics, to search for the truth and follow Jesus Christ with their lives bringing Him to all who may not yet know Him. Randwick Race Course, the site for the Sunday Mass following the overnight vigil, was packed to capacity with over 500,000 people from every corner of the earth to worship our one, true God. The Holy Father’s homily was full of inspiration, encouragement and reflection. It can be found on the Vatican website [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va). The following is part of his homily...

“Dear young people, let me now ask you a question. What will you leave to the next generation? Are you building your lives on firm foundations, building something that will endure? Are you living your lives in a way that opens up space for the Spirit in the midst of a world that wants to forget God, or even rejects him in the name of a falsely-conceived freedom? How are you using the gifts you have been

given, the “power” which the Holy Spirit is even now prepared to release within you? What legacy will you leave to young people yet to come? What difference will you make?”

A special “thank you” goes to Fr. Réal Ouellette, Fr. Mirosław Olszewski, OMI, Fr. Paul Burchat, Deacon Adrien Chaput, all the chaperones, Wendy Zakrzewski, Martin Bertrand, Bernadette Robinson and anyone else whom I may have omitted, for all their help in the preparations of the pilgrims and fundraising.

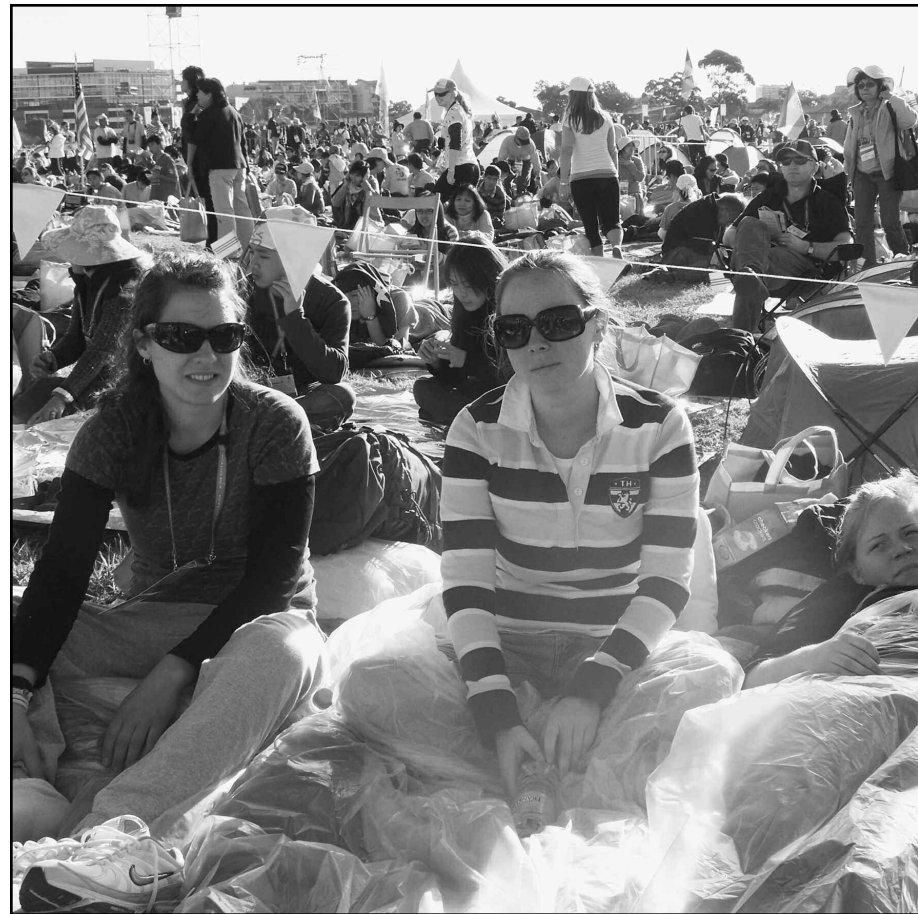
The pilgrims wish to thank the people of the Diocese of Pembroke, the CWL and Knights of Columbus Councils, and the Sisters of St. Joseph who gave generously during the Banner collection or made personal or group donations to help cover some of the costs. Thank you all again for your prayers and various other ways you have supported the young people. May God bless you all and may God bless us with another group of amazingly open, respectful, disciplined, faith-filled young people for our next journey to Madrid, Spain in 2011 for the 26th World Youth Day.

*Yvette Bourque, is Director of the Family, Life and Youth Ministry Office of the Diocese of Pembroke.*



*Above left: Caption*





World Youth Day is best described by  
those young people who have experienced it...

## Pilgrim Perspectives

*WYD'08 opened up a whole other side to my faith. I'm overwhelmed by the awesomeness of the Catholic faith and want to continue searching for my mission in life.* - Stephanie, 21

*When the Holy Spirit comes upon you, you feel amazingly filled with gifts and love. The Holy Spirit will hit you randomly and you will not know when. That time for me was seeing Pope Benedict for the first time and I cried.* - Hollie, 21

*It was amazing to see that we are certainly not alone in our faith. To see thousands of young people rushing the door for mass was incredibly encouraging.* - Megan, 18

*WYD has opened my eyes to a better me and has helped me to become a true witness of God and His teachings!* - Justin, 17

*It was very powerful to partake in a Mass with hundreds of thousands of youth from every corner of the world. It showed that our Church is a truly universal church.* - Michael, 18

*The power I received came in a form so much more than I ever imagined or expected. I can feel His presence in my life and I love it!* - Jacinta Ferri, 17

*I feel incredibly blessed to have had the opportunity to participate in World Youth*

*Day, Sydney, 2008. Traveling halfway around the world to celebrate the Eucharist with His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI and half a million Catholic youth was amazing. Now, having twice seen how young adults from nations across the globe can come together in peace and harmony to praise our Lord amidst the ugliness in today's world, my hope for our future grows. By the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, I have seen firsthand that we truly can be witnesses to all that is and was meant to be beautiful in this world - and that is something I will never forget.* - Kanan Hunt, 25

### Reflection from Ashley Prince, 20

A few years ago I wrote down 50 things I wanted to do before I die. Some were simple things like learn to play guitar, learn to drive a tractor, etc. Then there were some with more meaning like go on a spiritual journey. I found this list when I returned home from World Youth Day 2008 in Sydney, Australia. To be completely honest I don't even remember writing that wish down but it seems it was something I was destined to do. My spiritual journey did not start in Australia though. It began when I returned home. While we were in Australia it was easy to practice your faith and feel the presence of the Holy Spirit everywhere. During our whole pilgrimage there were crowds of people cheering and singing in the streets proud to be Catholic and proud to be representing their country at this amazing event. World Youth Day provided the fundamental building blocks for us to live a more holy and sacred life with many guest speakers, concerts and catechesis. I didn't realize this or even absorb it until I returned home. After I reminisced about all the wonderful things I saw (like koalas, kangaroos and the Blue Mountains) and all

*continued on page 8...*

*Above left: Caption*



*World Youth Day - continued from page 7...*

the interesting and generous people I met like our host family in Melton, I was eventually able to digest the meaningful transformation that went on inside me. No longer did I think of religion and God and the Holy Spirit as something I could have, it was now something I needed in my life. I craved for that spiritual connection.

World Youth Day helped me realize that this powerful feeling was something I needed to work at everyday so that I could achieve eternal happiness. "You will receive the power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you and you will be my witnesses." (Acts 1:8) This theme could not be more fitting. We all received the power in some form or another and it will forever change the way we live our lives. How incredible and inspiring it was to see so many young people who all believe to gather at such an amazing event. This experience was life changing. It changed the way I view my faith and more importantly how I live my life. Nothing could replace it and nothing can take what I received away from me.

### Reflection from Fr. Mirosław Olszewski, OMI

These were my first World Youth Days. I used my vacation to participate in this event; moreover, I gave up visiting my family in Poland. I asked Father Provincial to allow me to take part in this pilgrimage, together with the young people from the Diocese of Pembroke. My first experience was the joy that I felt with the young people, ready to take on the difficulties of the voyage to Australia. We spent 40 hours in travel, tired, fatigued, but happy. The group was disciplined and cheerful.

We discovered the hospitality of the Australians. We were welcomed cordially everywhere, with people asking us where we were from, and wishing us a fruitful visit. Before WYD, the Australian media were not well disposed to the event. They were concerned with theft, drunkenness and drugs. When WYD began, the journalists changed their minds, as something unique happened – young people who were

prayerful, full of song, and with a sense of humour, took over the buses, trains, subways and even the sidewalks of Sydney. Even the police participated in the joy – it is noteworthy to mention that during WYD the crime rate in the city dropped significantly.

During WYD I heard confessions, and was able to notice the fruits of this event: conversions. The Church in Australia expected young Catholics to be energized by WYD, and it was not disappointed.

Cardinal George Pell, whom I met personally, mentioned that because of the large crowds the Pope was not able to arrive by car for Sunday mass – he had

to be transported in by helicopter.

An experience which I felt very deeply was the vigil with the Pope on Saturday night, along with Eucharistic adoration. During the adoration, the silence and attention of the multitudes gathered at the stadium greatly impressed me. After that, it was time to bunk out – under the stars.

I hope that in three years time, I will be able to once again attend WYD – this time in Madrid, Spain. To each and everyone – thank you for your prayers during this time of pilgrimage.



*Above left: Caption*

### Did You Know?...

## Ordinary Time

The term "Ordinary Time" can be misleading. When referring to the context of the liturgical year, the term "ordinary" does not mean "average or common". Ordinary comes from the word "ordinal" which means "counted" or "numbered". Each of the weeks of Ordinary Time has a number (for example, the Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time).

Some Sundays in Ordinary Time are named for the feast or solemnity they commemorate such as Trinity Sunday (first Sunday after Pentecost), the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ (second Sunday after Pentecost) or the Solemnity of Christ the King (last Sunday in Ordinary Time). Ordinary

Time is full of memorials and feasts of the saints.

Ordinary Time comprises the longest season of the liturgical year and occurs in two sections. The first part occurs between the liturgical seasons of Christmas and Lent, beginning on the day after the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord (usually a Sunday) and continues until Ash Wednesday. The second part occurs between the liturgical seasons of Easter and Advent, beginning on the Monday after Pentecost Sunday and continuing until the First Sunday of Advent.

The Ordo, or official Liturgical Calendar of the Church, offers the following reflection on Ordinary Time:

"Lasting 33 or 34 weeks, and covering almost two-thirds of the Church's year of grace, Ordinary Time is a quieter period, when the people of God reflect on the fullness of the paschal mystery of the Lord's dying and rising. Sunday is the highlight of

each week's work and prayer, faith and hope, joy and suffering; each Sunday is also the beginning of another week in the Lord's service (Ordo, "Pastoral Notes" p. 11, 2007-2008).

During this time, no particular movement or aspect of the Christian mystery is celebrated but rather the gospels refer us to accounts of Jesus' life and ministry."

The liturgical colour for Ordinary Time is green, which symbolizes growth, new life and hope. In the tradition of the Church, green came to symbolize the life of the Church following Pentecost – the "birth" of the Church – as well as the hope of new life in the resurrection.

The lengthy season of Ordinary Time gives the people of God time to reflect on the mystery of Christ through the Sunday Eucharist – the climax of each week.



# Youth

in the diocese

## Family, Life and Youth Ministry Office

By Yvette Bourque

It has been a very busy spring and summer with two large and fruitful events, the Eucharistic Congress in June and World Youth Day in July. Now it is time to look to the fall and winter and what ministries and training are available both inside and outside of the diocese for people to take part in. The following three items are of particular interest.

NET Ministries - The National Evangelization Team of Canada (NET) reaches almost 30,000 young people across Canada and Ireland each year with a message of Jesus Christ and His saving grace. These young adults live a year in formation on a team and travel across the country evangelizing other young people through school and parish retreats with various themes including Confirmation. In response to the 49th International Eucharistic Congress, NET has prepared a special retreat theme that explains the gift of the Eucharist to youth. Called "The Real Presence", the theme has been widely used and well-received by teens across the country. Also quite new is the "family retreat" where the whole family can take part and grow in faith together.

NET Ministries has been evangelizing youth and families in the Diocese of Pembroke for many years with great response. A team will be in the diocese from Friday, January 9 to Tuesday, January 20, 2009. For more information on cost and how to host a team, please go to [www.netcanada.ca](http://www.netcanada.ca). To book a retreat for your school or parish contact Yvette Bourque at (613) 732-7933 ext. 208. The dates fill up fast. Call early to avoid disappointment.

Young Adult Ministry (age 18-35) has begun one Friday a month from 7-9 pm at St. Columbkille

Cathedral with Bishop Mulhall. This ministry will run monthly throughout the entire year. Dates for the next two months are November 14 and December 12. Dates for 2009 will be posted in the New Year. The evening consists of music, teaching lecture, group discussion, exposition, prayer and Benediction ending with a social time and light refreshments. All young adults are encouraged to come and grow in faith and fellowship with like-minded friends. If you wish to receive e-mails from the FLYMO on updates, events and reminders related to young adult ministry, please e-mail Yvette at [yvette.bourque@diocese.pembroke.ca](mailto:yvette.bourque@diocese.pembroke.ca).

Canadian Youth Workers' Conference in Toronto: December 4 - 7, 2008. For more information please see [www.campusfire.com/cywc](http://www.campusfire.com/cywc). This is a non-denominational conference, however the Archdiocese of Toronto is working with the conference organizers to plan specifically Catholic components in which all can participate during the conference. Reports from participants in the Archdiocese of Vancouver were very positive and we encourage all to participate in this incredible educational event.

*Yvette Bourque, is Director of the Family, Life and Youth Ministry Office of the Diocese of Pembroke.*

## Vacation bible school fun in Pembroke

By Nancy McCluskey

This summer Our Lady of Lourdes' Parish Hall in Pembroke was transformed into a beach for one week of K4J (Kids for Jesus) "Surfin' with the Holy Spirit" vacation bible school fun. Eighty-seven children from the ages of five to 13 joined us for beach-style games and activities that centered around learning how to team up with the Holy Spirit to become a Daring Duo. The children learned that the Holy Spirit is a constant friend who gives them strength to do what they need to do to be happy and one with God.

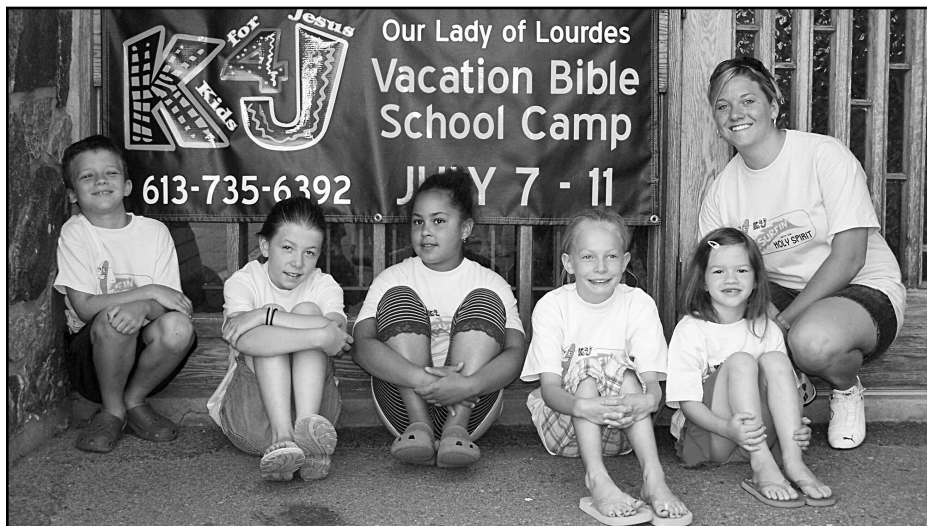
Each morning our "Lifeguards" (children in grades 6-8) taught us about a missionary saint who loved God without limits. They used skits and catchy songs to show us that we can call on the Holy Spirit each day to help us grow in grace and daring to be a modern day missionary.

Song, games, crafts, lessons and even snacks reinforced different aspects of how we can live with the Holy Spirit as our friend. Every activity we used reminded the children of the beauty of God's love for each of us. On the last day the children and parents took part in a very special "Birthday on the Beach" party to celebrate the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost - the birthday of the Church. The celebration began with Mass and then the children performed a wrap-up show of all the songs they had learned during the week. The day ended with a fantastic beach party barbeque with lots of birthday cake for everybody.

This was Our Lady of Lourdes' third vacation bible school. During the summer of 2006, our theme was a

Circus of Stars where we focused on God the Father. In 2007, it was Win the World for Jesus with a focus on the Church. Watch for our K4J Vacation Bible School next summer: Summertime BLAST with a focus on the Holy Eucharist.

Last school year Our Lady of Lourdes Parish also offered a K4J after school club. The club met twice a month and used crafts, games and snacks to learn and practice a new virtue each month. The children earned a new badge each month when they practiced putting their newly learned virtue into practice at home and school. This year the club is hoping to be bigger and even better than last year.



Above left: Caption



# Experiencing the love of Jesus in the Eucharist

by: Miriam Weston

The Eucharistic Congress in Quebec City evoked a greater love for Our Lord Jesus in the Eucharist. This was a beautiful commemoration of the 400th anniversary of Quebec City. Effigies of the saintly Bishop Laval, first bishop of Canada, Marie de l'Incarnation, Blessed Dina Belanger, Jean de Brebeuf, Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha and other Canadian saints were made in honour of these founders.

The highlights of the event were the three-and-half hour Eucharistic procession through the streets of Quebec, the ordination mass of 12 Quebec priests, and the culminating Mass on the Plains of Abraham attended by over 50,000 people. The Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, sent messages and blessings to all involved. Dignitaries at the event included Jean Charest, Jason Kenny and Governor General Michaëlle Jean. Approximately 15,000 people gathered for the week-long activities, and they exuded love of God and neighbour. The joy of the participants was felt as one walked through the streets noticing the smiles on the faces of the people. Rosaries, Mercy

Chaplets and other invocations were being prayed as people participated. Songs and music in praise of the Creator filled the air. There was a peacefulness within the city - a Divine presence.

Two large Eucharistic chapels were available for adoration. Here thousands adored our Lord Jesus in His Real Presence in the Eucharistic Host. Many people took advantage of the Sacrament of Reconciliation which was available before each Holy Mass.

Cardinals, bishops, priests, religious, and lay people gave talks on the many aspects of the Catholic faith. People came from every corner of the world to share in the fellowship and love of Christ. Men, women and children came from Africa, Europe, Australia, South America, and Asia. Many orders of nuns, brothers and priests were there in groups. Some newer orders were there.

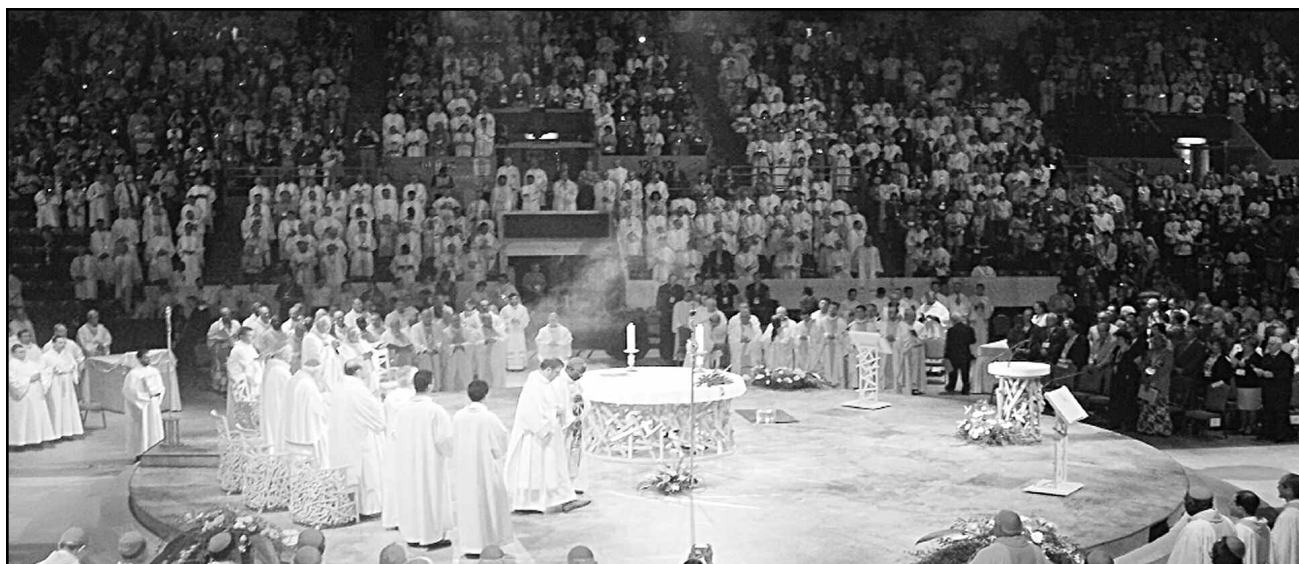
In one building kiosks were available for the participants to obtain free information from Catholic organizations. Notable among these were: Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Academy, Campaign Life Coalition, lifesitenews.com, familiacanada.net, the Priestly

Fraternity of St. Peter, Knights of Columbus, Foundation of Mary Immaculate, and many others.

Approximately 1,500 priests were there, with 250 bishops and 40 cardinals. Salt and Light TV provided extensive coverage which was then broadcast to EWTN. Many other television, radio, print, and Internet media were present from Canada and other countries.

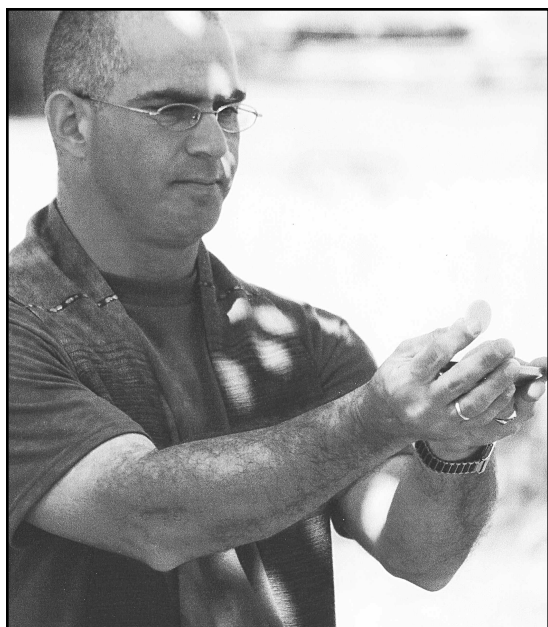
Greater participation at Holy Mass and increased Eucharistic adoration programs are foreseen. It is hoped that this event will bring fruits of many vocations and of greater charity toward God and neighbour in Canada and the world in the days to come.

*Miriam Weston attended the International Eucharistic Congress along with a group of young adults from the Pembroke Diocese.*



Above left: Opening ceremonies at the The Colisée Pepsi. Above right: The Eucharistic procession.

## Rev. (Major) Jean-Yves Fortin



Reverend (Major) Jean-Yves Fortin, Priest of the Diocese of Pembroke and Chaplain in the Canadian Armed Forces, died in Kingston, Ontario, on Saturday, May 3, 2008 at the age of 45 years. He was the son of Rémi Fortin and the late Gaëtane Leblanc. Following his studies at St. Paul's Seminary, Ottawa, he was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop J.R. Windle on July 13, 1991, in paroisse Saint-Pierre, Fort-Coulonge, Québec. He served as assistant at Temiscaming, and as pastor at Corbeil until he became a member of the

Chaplaincy Services in the Canadian Armed Forces.

During his studies in preparation for the priesthood, he joined the Naval Reserve. He then became Chaplain in North Bay at the rank of Captain, and transferred to the regular force in 2000. He served in Petawawa, Meaford, Gagetown, Haiti, and was promoted to the rank of Major in 2005 when he was posted to the Royal Military College, Kingston, where he was serving at the time of his death.

Msgr. Douglas Bridge, a personal friend of Fr. Jean-Yves, has commented, "Fr. Jean-Yves was very committed to his ministry in the Armed Forces, and especially to the students he served in Kingston. His love for the Church, his devotion to duty, his sense of humour and his communication skills were a source of support and encouragement to everyone he met."

Fr. Fortin is survived by his father, Rémi Fortin, and his step-mother Orvella Nadeau, his brothers Denis (Diane Kenney), François (Manon Crêtes), Luc (Cathy Amyotte), his sisters Nicole (Claude Béchamp), Céline, his nephews and nieces who loved him greatly, Mélanie, Charles, Julie, Isabelle, Sophie, André, Nicolas, Carl, Annie, Benoît, Michel, Louis and Jean-Luc as well as many aunts and uncles.

The funeral Mass was held on May 8, 2008 presided over by Bishop Michael Mulhall and assisted by Bishop Donald Thériault and many confrères.





## The CWL Annual provincial convention was held at St. John Chrysostom parish in Arnprior

process for awarding the Order of Canada be re-examined to ensure that recipients more appropriately reflect enduring and shared Canadian values. A petition prepared by an executive committee was circulated to all members for signature and copies were provided to take back in each diocese.

The keynote speaker, Sister Jocelyn Monette, nds, Executive Director of the Catholic Biblical Association of Canada (CBAC) walked members through the Hebrew scriptures and pointed out the many references to the use of stones by the Jews, to mark special occasions, to serve as perpetual memorials, and as a figurative representation of the Messiah. In the New Testament, she reminded us that Jesus called Himself the living stone rejected by the builders and therefore with the rock of Jesus in our life our burdens are not heavy.

Debra Lefebvre, a nurse, and founder of BUY-A-NET Malaria Prevention Group, told members that malaria kills one child in Africa every 30 seconds and that we could prevent this by purchasing bed nets. A \$6.00 bed net, which lasts five years, would save one life and \$350 would purchase enough nets to save a whole village. She told us that Buy-A-Net is a Canadian charitable organization which aims to prevent malaria, one village at a time, by distributing long-lasting insecticide-treated bed nets and anti-malaria medicines for free. Uganda is the first target Country where seven-million nets are needed.

Rev. Philip Kennedy, President of Catholic Missions in Canada (CMIC), thanked members for their contributions which allowed \$4-million a year

to be provided to mission dioceses and that from those dioceses 11 new priests were ordained in 2007 and 41 new seminarians were supported. In honour of the 100th anniversary year of CMIC the provincial council presented Father Kennedy with a donation of \$1,000.00.

Bishop Peter Hundt, Auxiliary Bishop of Toronto and Spiritual Advisor to the Ontario Provincial Council, spoke on our call to Be Living Stones, a people with a living faith, connected together to endure and nurture each other; to focus on the positive and continue to tune ourselves in to the voice of God.

The ladies of Pembroke Diocese outdid themselves in making everyone welcome in their diocese and took the unexpected power failure and two fire drills during the business sessions in stride. The 403 members and spiritual advisors in attendance, from across the province, were enriched by the lively spiritual program prepared by Pauline Krupa for the business sessions as well as the chance to celebrate daily Mass in the beautiful 101-year-old church of St John Chrysostom. We had many occasions to socialize; were well fed each day and entertained every night by a variety of superb local talent. We attended 'Prom Night' on Monday where we had to sing for our supper and then danced the night away with the 'Prom King', spiritual advisor for Peterborough diocese Father Tom Lynch, and 'Prom Queen', past provincial president, Pearl Keon. At the Tuesday night banquet, the head table guests were piped in by Father Kennedy (CMIC) and we were inspired to leap up and participate in the after meal entertainment provided by the 'Blues Lady' Maria Hawkins. Members went home re-energized, refreshed and full of new ideas of how to attract new members and enrich current members in their councils.

By Suzanne Mullins, Diocesan President, CWL, and Mary Lou Watson, Communication Chair, CWL

The Ontario Catholic Women's League Provincial Council met for the 61st annual convention in Arnprior, from July 5-9, 2008 to hear reports of accomplishments of the past year and to set goals for the upcoming year. The Convention theme was Love One Another – Called to Be Living Stones.

Two resolutions, "Bill C-484, Support for Unborn Victims of Crime Act", and "Creating a National Strategy to End Child Poverty", submitted by the Hamilton Diocese, were passed by convention delegates and have been forwarded to the national council for consideration at the national convention in Winnipeg in August. Two other resolutions, also submitted by the Hamilton diocese, were not passed. The resolution, "Informed Consent - Induced Abortion" was defeated, and "Extension of Temporary Resident Permits" was postponed indefinitely because it is expected that the passage of bill C28 will resolve this issue.

A letter from the assembly was sent to the Governor General, requesting that the Order of Canada presentation be revoked and not be bestowed upon Dr. Henry Morgentaler. Further, it was requested that the nominating



Above left: Bishop Mulhall presides at the opening mass. Above right: Flags and banners in the recessional. Above centre: Lorette Noble, CWL National President.



# Parish Profile

## Paroisse Ste-Anne - Ile-du-Grand-Calumet

The history of this parish, which dates back to 1846, parallels the history of settlement in the Ottawa Valley itself.

Believed to be the oldest parish in the sector, Ste-Anne served as a base for the early missionaries who traveled the Ottawa River. Arriving from Ottawa or Montreal, they would have ventured from Ste-Anne to various settlements in the region and into the bush to minister to the workers in the lumber camps.

Its strategic location above the rapids made Ste-Anne a natural centre, a safe spot in an untamed and rugged terrain.

From that hub, a wide presence of Catholicism extended, leading to the establishment of missions in places such as Lapasse on the Ontario side of the river and, in Quebec, Portage du Fort and Thorne, which later became known as Otter Lake.

The priest presiding at the chapel of Ste-Anne would travel by canoe, horse or sleigh to these outposts to minister to the people, say Mass and celebrate the Eucharist.

Calumet Island was such a hub by the early days of the twentieth century that a second chapel was constructed at the upper end of the island to serve the people living in that area.

This brief review of its roots reveals Ste-Anne to be a parish rich in history that inspired a broad circle of influence in terms of geography. The Catholic faith was nurtured and served over a broad region from the heart of this small community.

The history of Ste-Anne continues to thrive in many aspects of parish life. The church itself is a tribute to the past, with its beautiful plaster arches and architectural detail. Passersby see a simple French country church that fits into the agricultural landscape of the island. Those who step inside find themselves in an elaborate church very similar to the interior of St.

Columbkille Cathedral in Pembroke.

Visitors attending a regular Mass at Ste-Anne will also find a welcoming, vibrant congregation there to greet them. The parish serves approximately 190 families. Many of the current members bear family names that have been in the church records for multiple generations. Others have moved to the rural oasis amid the beautiful Ottawa River more recently to enjoy a summer vacation property or retirement.

"There are more newcomers now than there have ever been," comments Parish Priest Rev. Basil Tanguay. There are now about 140 families in the parish.

Even so, he notes that there is still plenty of room for growth at Ste-Anne. The general trend toward smaller families and the percentage of retirees means that a large number of newcomers does not immediately translate into an increase in congregational size.

But Rev. Tanguay is quick to note that Ste-Anne remains a lively, active Catholic community.

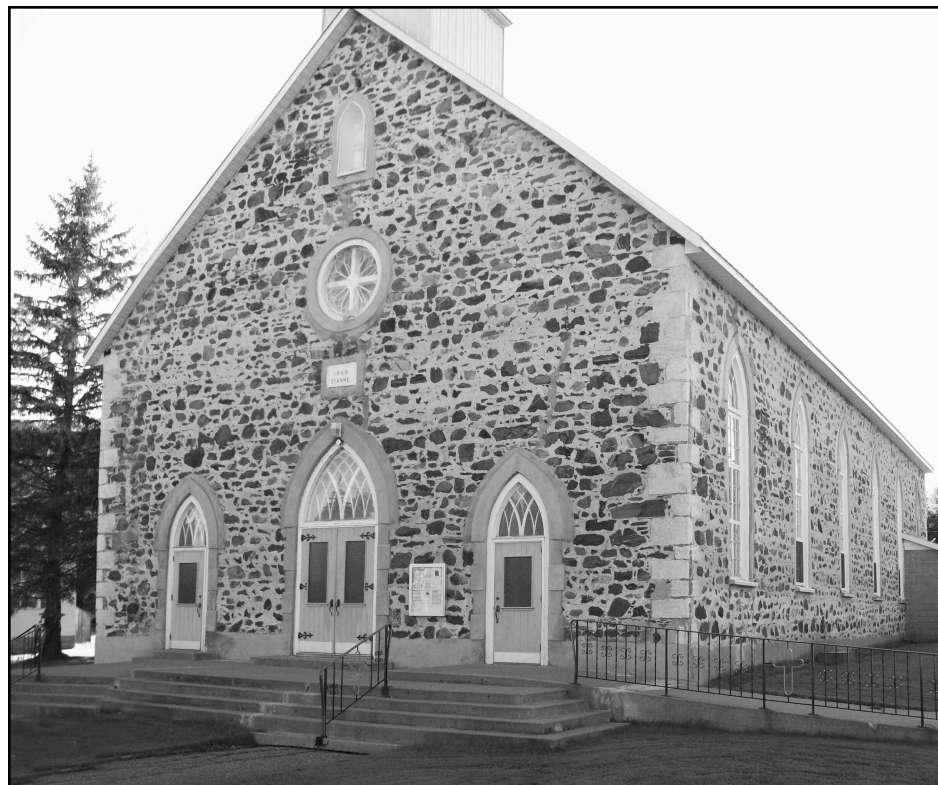
"You'll see young folks," he says. "You'll note a good rate of participation."

The priest is gratified to see the large number of local children who take an active role in Mass and parish life on Ile-du-Grand-Calumet. He also makes special note of the talented choir and organist who serve the congregation.

"People take pride in their church," he says. "It's a wonderful community where family is extremely important."

"Islands have their own culture, their own identity," Rev. Tanguay concludes, noting that there is a spirit of independence and self-reliance that has built over a long period of time in which the residents of necessity depended on their own resources.

*All are welcome to experience this living example of "island culture" in the heart of the Pembroke Diocese. Mass is celebrated at 9:00 a.m. on the second and fourth Sunday of each month. Services are predominantly French, with a reading or announcements or the intentions offered in English.*



## Sr. Marie-Marthe Séguin

Individually and as a Church we are called to be a people of faith, hope and love and a people who concretize that faith, hope and love in our service to others. To the degree that we are that people, we become signs and sacraments of Christ's healing and renewing presence among us. Sister Marie Marthe Séguin, religious, teacher, pastoral worker and friend, was such a person. The hope that so characterized her life, the hope that she instilled and fostered in others, especially those who were most in need of that hope, was rooted in faith and expressed in loving service. Sister Marie Marthe chose to channel that service through a loving and generous response to God's call to profess vows of poverty, chastity and obedience in the religious community of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur of which she was a member for 75 years.

As it did for many of her religious sisters, that service for many years, took the form of teaching in the Catholic School System primarily in the Pontiac County communities of Otter Lake, Bryson and Calumet Island. Sister Marie Marthe not only imparted knowledge to her students, more importantly, by her example, she endowed them with the values and principles that enabled them to lead rewarding and productive lives based on the teaching of Christ and his

gospel. The schools in which she served became more than institutions of learning. They were Christian communities rooted in faith, built on hope and expressed in love.

After her retirement from teaching Sister Marie Marthe continued to serve the people of Otter Lake in a variety of ways as a pastoral and community volunteer. She was open and available to the needs of all people at all times and her special gift was that of responding to those who were forgotten and sadly overlooked by most of us. In the true spirit of the gospel, wherever there was a need, she provided. We are better for having known her and witnessed her goodness. Sister Marie Marthe died in Gatineau on August 28, 2008 at the age of 95. May her gentle and generous soul rest in peace.







*Above: His Eminence Stanislaw Cardinal Dziwisz. Below Bishop Mulhall joins Cardinal Dziwisz at the celebratory mass in Wilno.*



## Celebrating Polish heritage in Wilno with Cardinal Dziwisz

Saturday, June 14, was an important date in the calendar of St. Mary's Parish in Wilno, and in the Polish-Canadian community. On this day, the oldest Polish parish in Canada, the cradle of Polish-Kashubian settlement in our country, hosted His Eminence Stanislaw Cardinal Dziwisz, the former personal secretary of John Paul II.

Cardinal Dziwisz came at the invitation of Father Janusz Blazejak, OMI, Provincial of Assumption Province, and President of the Polish Priests' Conference for Eastern Canada. His Eminence presided at the solemn Eucharist. Among the distinguished guests were Bishop Michael Mulhall of Pembroke, Bishop Jan Ozga from Cameroon, Fr. Andrzej Madej, OMI, Superior of the Delegation Sui Iuris in Turkmenistan, Father Mervin Coulas, Zone Leader of the Barry's Bay Zone, Father Chris Shalla, Pastor of St. Hedwig Parish in Barry's Bay, Monsignor Ambrose Pick, and 20 other priests from as far as Montreal and Windsor.

In his homily, Cardinal Dziwisz said, "The original settlers [Kashubians] did not come here empty-handed - they came with faith in their hearts. Their faith was their guide in this new reality. When they had built their homes, they began thinking about churches. They wanted to live their lives as a Christian faith community that would gather for prayer and Holy Eucharist. This gave deeper sense to their lives and alleviated their longing for the homeland they had left behind. This opened their hearts and minds to a new land, to new people, to new callings."

The Cardinal was also pleased that the St. Mary parish is a place with a distinctive devotion to the Divine Mercy. The Sanctuary of the Divine Mercy in Lagiewniki is located in his home diocese of Krakow. Cardinal Dziwisz celebrated mass in a special chasuble with the Divine Mercy motif - this vestment he later offered for the use of St. Mary parish.

Witnessing the celebration was a large crowd which overflowed from the church into the parking lot, probably the largest religious gathering in Wilno's history.

After the gathering, Cardinal Dziwisz visited the parish cemetery, and prayed at the grave of Father Stanislaw Kadziolka, who as a young curate, baptized him in Poland in 1939. On Sunday morning, June 15, the Cardinal met with parishioners of St. Mary, and then left for Brampton, Ontario.

## Travelling Mary - A brilliant connection between parish, home and school

At St. John Bosco Catholic School in Barry's Bay and George Vanier Catholic School in Combermere, a statue of Mary is taken home by a student whose family has requested her to visit for a week. She has become known as the "Travelling Mary". She comes with a bag filled with a diary, rosaries, prayer books, medals and a doily to place under her in the home. Each family, if they wish, may write a note in the diary about Mary's visit. The family is invited to spend some special time in prayer using the prayers included. The rosary may also be prayed. This is one way families can spend time in prayer and reflection. Some request her for a special family event such as a birth, christening, Easter, Christmas, or when there is a special need in times of crisis or sickness. Mary has given many families a sense of serenity and peace over the past years with her visits.

The story of the Travelling Mary began in 1998 with Stephen and Sandra Coulas of Barry's Bay. In the fall of 1998 Stephen was diagnosed with terminal cancer at the age of 41. The Coulas' had three children, two girls attending St. John Bosco Catholic School and a son who would begin school the following year. Stephen grew up in Combermere and attended George Vanier Catholic School himself. Both communities of Barry's Bay and Combermere offered

prayers for the family. As a family they wanted to say thank you to everyone for all of their prayers but a simple "thank you" didn't seem enough.

One day Sandra was watching a program on TV about a nun who donated a statue of Mary to a prison for inmates to pray with for a month. Requests for

Mary at first were slow but then a list had to be made because of all the requests. Sandra decided that this was the way in which the Coulas family could thank all the people for their prayers.

Sandra went to the parish priest to ask his opinion and by the time she had left he had donated the first Mary statue for St. John Bosco Catholic School. The statue for George Vanier Catholic School was ordered through the Sacred Heart League of St. Hedwig's Catholic Church and when Sandra went to pay for it she was told that someone had paid for it already. To this day she does not know who it was.

Sandra then approached the schools with the thought of uniting home, school and church with the Travelling Mary Statue. Thus the Travelling Mary began her travels.

Unfortunately, Stephen died February 21, 1999. But he was able to see the realization of the vision of the Travelling Mary begin in each school.

As a family it is hard to believe it is 10 years since the Travelling Mary began her visiting. This is a very strong message of Mary's power in the world. The hope is for Mary to continue travelling to families in these communities and to spread her message of peace and love.



*Above left: The Travelling Mary at St. John Bosco Catholic School. Above right: The Travelling Mary at George Vanier Catholic School.*

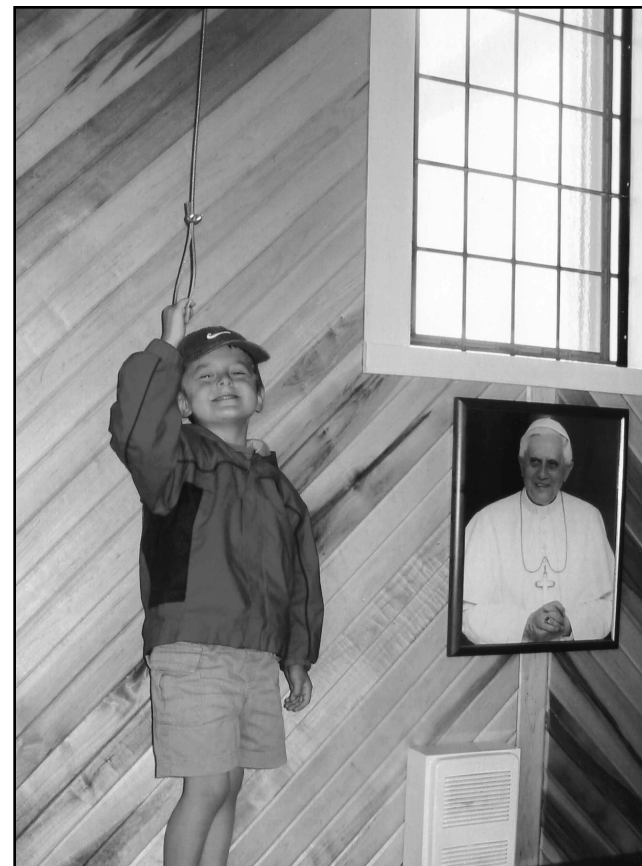




*Above: On August 25, Bishop Mulhall presided over an opening mass at Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Academy in Barry's Bay. Sixteen faculty and adjunct faculty members of the Academy teaching staff made a Profession of Faith and swore an Oath of Fidelity. Right: On May 21, 2008 family and friends gathered at a mass and award ceremony celebrating 50 years of CWL membership for Émelia Benoit of Ste Anne Parish, Ile du Grand Calumet. Émelia, seated at centre, was joined by Fr. Guillmette, daughters Mavis Pigeault and Thérèse Gagnon and other friends at Sacred Heart Manor, Fort Coulonge.*



*Above: This year was the 165th anniversary of St. Patrick's Church, Mount St. Patrick. Seen here are Dianne Litchfield and Keanan Hunt with the Mother of Perpetual Help banner, and Kerry and Heather Coulterman with the St. Patrick's banner.*



*Above: Five-year-old Sloan McLean was pleased to ring the bell of the newly-renovated Holy Canadian Martyrs church in Combermere 11 times on July 11, in honour of Quebec City's 400th anniversary.*

## Natural Family Planning - The Catholic Church's approved (and often misunderstood) method of birth regulation.

### "NFP: Common Questions and Answers"

by Ellen Hrkach

#### What is Natural Family Planning?

Natural Family Planning (NFP) is a safe, moral and effective way to avoid and plan pregnancy. Simply put, it is based on an awareness of a woman's fertility. With NFP, a couple learns to interpret certain signs in the woman's body that indicate her fertile and infertile times and the couple plan marital relations accordingly.

#### What are some of the benefits of NFP?

NFP is medically safe. There are no harmful chemicals, devices or health risks. NFP also gives a woman more awareness of what's going on in her body and can assist her in recognizing health problems sooner. It is 99% effective in avoiding pregnancy and can also work well in planning pregnancies, even if the woman does not have 'regular' cycles. NFP costs less than other forms of birth control and once you learn it, there are no continuing costs. It's immediately reversible at any time. Periodic abstinence improves communication and gives husband and wife a deeper respect for each other. Most importantly, NFP is morally acceptable. All major religions, including Catholicism, accept the use of NFP by married couples when there is serious reason to postpone pregnancy.

#### How many different organizations teach NFP and aren't they all the same?

There are two basic types of NFP organizations: ones which teach a mucus-only method and those which teach the sympto-thermal method. So, no, they are not all the same.

In Canada, the sympto-thermal method is taught by Serena, although there are couples who teach for the Couple to Couple League. Both organizations stress a cross-checking symptomatic method, which includes temperature, mucus and other signs.

With regard to mucus-only methods, there are several: the Billings Ovulation Method and Creighton Method, to name a few. These are mucus-only methods but offer their own approaches.

For couples with infertility issues, NaPro Technology (Natural Procreative Technology) has a high degree of success helping couples conceive naturally.

#### What about the devices which claim to be able to predict ovulation?

Many of the devices available online like Lady Comp and Baby Comp are very expensive, much more expensive than taking an NFP class with a certified instructor. If couples want to spend a lot of money and have a small monitor do all the calculation, then this could work for them. However, I don't recommend it because of the price.

There are also ovulation predictor saliva test strips which, although cheaper than the devices above, are still expensive. One site offered 10 strips for \$10.00,

but another offered only five for \$20.00. Given that there are 30 days in most months and that the strips would need to be used for at least 12-15 of those days, this could offer a less expensive alternative to the devices, but would still be more expensive than taking a class from certified instructors.

#### Isn't NFP the same as the old rhythm method?

Modern NFP is not the same as the old rhythm method. Calendar rhythm was developed in the 1930's and did not work well with women who had irregular cycles. There have, however, been many developments since the 1930's which make modern NFP much more effective in avoiding pregnancy. The critical difference is that modern NFP bases its fertility interpretations on what's happening in the current cycle, whereas rhythm was largely dependent on past cycles.

*Ellen Hrkach and her husband, James, have been a certified NFP teaching couple for the Couple to Couple League since 1984. They are chastity educators and have been working on marriage preparation programs in the diocese for 24 years. Ellen is the author of the Catholic novel, Emily's Hope (www.fullquiverpublishing.com). She is also a regular columnist on Amazing Catechists.com website. Couples who wish to receive training in Natural Family Planning from certified instructors in the Diocese of Pembroke can contact the Family, Life and Youth Ministry Office at 732-7933 Ex. 208.*



## A P O L O G E T I C S 1 0 1

# What is the truth about God?

*In this series, the author lays out a common sense approach to understanding and defending the Catholic Faith. Part 1 appeared in the Advent 2007 issue of Ecclesia.*

**By Andrew Baklinski**

In my last article we examined the idea that there is objective truth – that there are truths that are true because they are true, independent of what people think about them. We came to this conclusion by carefully looking at alternative theories of truth (namely forms of skepticism and subjectivism), seeing that they cannot stand on their own. The question is now posed, “What is the truth about God?” In other words, is there a God and can you know him or can you ‘prove’ his existence? But before we can talk about “proving God” the question begs to be asked, “do we even need to?” In other words, is there a relationship between faith and reason?

A few weeks ago a story came across my desk written by a Catholic priest who left the priesthood and faith to become a humanistic (read atheistic) psychologist. By his own admission, the author was led ultimately to disbelief in God by concluding that it was impossible to prove God by pure reason unaided by faith. In short, the author came to believe that his faith was no longer reasonable, leading him to leave it. This idea that faith is unreasonable is widespread in our modern age.

What is “faith”? St. Paul writes that “faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Heb 11:1). Faith is also knowledge based on authority. By this definition, it becomes evident that everyone has some kind of faith because almost everything we know comes from what others tell us. It is not likely that many of us were alive in 1914 when World War 1 started, yet we place faith in authority – our teachers, history books, etc., that tell us about this event. It is not so much a question of do you have faith or not, but in what or in whom do you have faith? Even atheism, which claims there is no God, is in a sense a type of religion with its adherents professing a certain ‘faith’ – that there is no God. The realization that everyone has faith allows for a commonality between believers in God and the believers in ‘other things’ and thus the question for both groups becomes one of “what is most reasonable to believe in?”

Reason can be understood as the power by which we know natural truth – all truths that can be understood, discovered or proven by our own intellect. The modern understanding of reason has become narrowed to mean only scientific reason – all those truths that can be measured quantitatively or corroborated directly by experience. That God falls outside of this realm is evident, and this perhaps explains the difficulty that people formed by modernist Enlightenment influences have in approaching belief in God. After all, you can’t exactly weigh or measure a being who is outside of time,

space and matter! Believers in God are labeled as unscientific, unrealistic and even fanatical, and their “blind” religious faith as completely unreasonable. But, if we understand reason as being more than scientific reason then it is possible to consider the reasonableness of faith. If there is truth, then both faith and reason have a relationship to it – they are both ways of coming to know truth, and thus can never contradict each other. They are, in fact, allies. Pope John Paul II wrote that: “Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth – in a word, to know himself – so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves.” (Fides et Ratio)

Pope Benedict alluded to this relationship between faith and reason in his now famous “Regensburg Address” which was given in the fall of 2006 in Germany. Although the secular media attacked the Pope for what they saw as a condemnation of Islam as a violent religion, they missed the point entirely. A close reading of this talk reveals that our Holy Father really is trying to begin anew the dialogue about the relation of faith and reason in the modern world. That this dialogue is urgently needed is evident in present

When looking at the relationship between faith and reason, several objections come to mind. What about brilliant thinkers who have held that belief in God is irrational? Granted, there have been intellectuals who have rejected the message of Christianity (Nietzsche, Marx, etc.), but there are also many gifted thinkers who have embraced the faith, sometimes after a heroic struggle against it (Augustine, Aquinas, Galileo, Newton, Chesterton, Lewis, etc.). The charge that reasons for the faith are only after-the-fact rationalizations, does not invalidate the logical validity of the arguments. Also, does it take away from the merit of faith if one has rational reasons for it? No. God gave us the gift of reason, and we are to grow in it in all areas of our life, including our faith.

The issue that was posed by the priest turned atheist has still not been acceptably addressed: “Can you prove God by pure reason unaided by the light of faith?” The simple answer is yes, you can prove that there must be a God using logical reasoning and you can even come to know certain things about this God but this knowledge will necessarily be limited without divine revelation. We can know that there needs to be a ‘first cause’ or an ‘unmoved mover’ but we cannot know anything about this God – that He is our loving Father and we His children. We need God to tell us

## Scripture commands:

*“Always be ready to give a defense for the hope that is within you”*

culture, which is beset by a moral relativism that threatens to undermine the very foundation on which our civilization is built – Christianity.

Do we need to give reasons for faith? Yes! Scripture commands: “Always be ready to give a defense for the hope that is within you” (1 Pet 3:15). Deep down, we all want to know why we believe what we believe. God created us in his image, giving us among other things the gift of intellect by which we can come to know him. True faith can never contradict reason although at times it may be above or beyond reason. Reason can never prove all the truths of faith, but it can refute all objections brought against faith. It is one of the supreme beauties of the Catholic Faith that it is completely reasonable.

Perhaps one of the most crucial reasons for giving reasons is to build common ground with those who do not know God. Yes, one can try to win others to the faith by ‘beating bibles over their heads’, telling them that they are going to hell, but this is not attractive or effective apologetics. On the other hand, dialoguing in a calm, rational way about truths of the faith can be very effective – especially when this is backed up by a lived example. There is much common ground between the believer and the unbeliever, when they are united in a search for truth.

these things Himself. The medieval formula, “faith seeking understanding”, or “I believe so that I may better understand” describes how we should approach the faith. Once we have said yes to God in faith our understanding follows, aided immensely by our faith. It seems that the priest in question embraced a form of rationalism believing that everything known by faith is provable by reason, but as we have seen, this is not the case.

I often tell my students that reason can bring us to the door of faith, but only we, with the grace of God can walk through. Christ Himself says: “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Rev 3:21). Faith is a gift, not something that is attained by endless argumentation: however, as mentioned, the obstacles to faith can be cleared away through a proper use of reason. How beautiful is the gift of reason that God has given us and may we all, each according to all own capacities, be inspired to use it for the greater glory of God!

*Next issue: “Proofs for God”*

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